



Chamber Gets \$100,000 Grant From Assembly

Once again, The Queens Chamber of Commerce received a \$100,000 grant from the State Assembly in order to facilitate the development of minority and women-owned businesses throughout the borough.

"This grant allows them to continuously do outreach to minority and women-owned businesses, which not only helps those that are already functioning but also help those in the preliminarily work for those that are looking to form a business," said Audrey Pheffer, who is the Chair of the Assembly's Consumer Affairs and Protection Committee.

Pheffer, along with Queens Assemblymember Mark Weprin, the chair of the Assembly's Small Business Committee, secured the grant for the Chamber for the third year in a row.

"The [Chamber] board has made an effort to expand the chamber's base through Queens. and Queens being the most diverse count in the world it really has so many resources," Weprin said. "This grant is earmarked for that cause, hopefully help to expand the networking that goes on to help them all thrive and grow."

Pheffer said that it is important to give resources to organizations that provide assistance to businesses, and the Chamber is the prime example of that type of organization.

"The organization is important because it represents businesses throughout Queens County – the small guys and the large guys," Pheffer said. "During these economic times, we need a strong Chamber."



Assemblymember Mark Weprin, Chamber First Vice President Carol Conslato, Assemblymember Audrey Pheffer and Chamber Executive Vice President Jack Friedman in Albany as the Chamber thanked the legislators for securing a \$100,000 grant for the Chamber.

Chamber Hosts Installation Breakfast

During the Queens Chamber of Commerce's recent Installation breakfast, the board of directors unanimously reelected the current slate of officers, Al Pennisi, President; Carol Conslato, First Vice President; and Gerard Thornton, Treasurer; for another term.

Pennisi said he was honored to be reelected to serve as President, and reflected on all of the wonderful accomplishments the Chamber had during the past year. He spoke about killing the congestion pricing proposal and securing approval for the Willets Point redevelopment project as well as hosting numerous networking events and seminars.

He also spoke about the prospects for the year ahead, which included the Chamber platform of lowering taxes and finding more resources for small businesses.

"Even in a bad economy, the Chamber will act as a catalyst for businesses," Pennisi said, referring to the organization's 98-year history of accomplishment for the Queens business community.

In addition, the Chamber also recognized Chuck Callahan, President of Plaza College and Chair of the Chamber's nominating committee, for his 25 years of service to the organization.

Queens District Attorney Richard Brown performed the honorary swearing in and praised the Chamber and its officers for their leadership in the borough.

"The Chamber does a great deal in the county to lower violence and increase the quality of life," Brown said.

During the breakfast, the Chamber also confirmed the slate of directors who will serve from May 1, 2009 through April 30, 2012 including:

Thomas L. Bosco, Deputy General Manger of LaGuardia Airport

Hank Auffarth, Senior Vice President Herald National Bank

William R. Blake II, President of Blake Agency

Kenneth J. Buettner, President York Scaffold Equipment Corp.

Joseph Farber, Partner, Farber Rosen & Kaufman P.C.

Joseph Ficalora, Chairman, President & CEO, NY Community Bank

Joshua E. Bienstock, Director of Resolve It, Inc.

Thomas Eagar, Consultant, BBDM Consulting

Jeffrey E. Levine, President of Levine Builders

Vincent L. Petraro, Law Offices of Vincent L. Petraro, PLLC

Caryn Schwab, Executive Director, Mount Sinai Hospital of Queens



Chamber President Al Pennisi will serve another term as President, and he spoke about the Chamber's accomplishments in 2008.