



Board of County Commissioners

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Hunterdon Allocates Federal Funds For Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Plan

Hunterdon County's Commissioners approved an agreement Tuesday with the County's Chamber of Commerce Foundation, to provide \$358,000 in federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds to support and enhance the development of small business opportunities in Hunterdon County.

Commissioner Board Director John E. Lanza stated, "Assisting local small businesses that have been negatively affected by the pandemic, and now inflation, is a key priority for the Commissioner Board and also a specific use for the ARP federal dollars.

This Board has been very clear from the beginning that American Rescue Plan monies will be used in a targeted and meaningful manner that make a lasting impact in our community."

The funding will allow the Chamber Foundation's Center for Business and Entrepreneurship to provide small businesses and start ups with greater access to its state of the art technology and will assist in providing access to hard to obtain capital, among other activities, according to Chamber of Commerce President Chris Phelan.

Phelan noted, "The New Jersey Small Business Development Center closed its location at Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) which was previously the most accessible site for County businesses. This presents both a need and an opportunity for the Foundation's Center to fill that gap and provide a more comprehensive service for Hunterdon businesses."

Commissioner Shaun C. Van Doren stated, "Many businesses continue to be under tremendous stress now, especially restaurants, who face rising supply and energy costs from record inflation. The inflationary challenge comes on the heels of the pandemic that forced many businesses, including numerous restaurants to permanently close their doors.

I am proud that we are making this targeted investment in helping our small business community by giving the Chamber of Commerce Foundation resources to match businesses with expert coaching, networking, and one-on-one assistance that they may need."

Lanza noted, "The allocation of ARP funds by the County has followed the parameters put in place by the federal law and is designed to meet important public needs.

Some examples of the investments made by this Board to date include laying high-speed fiber optic lines, supporting our food pantries, encouraging economic development and tourism, investments in clean water, and now providing crucial small business growth and development services through the Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Center for Business & Entrepreneurship."