



The Small Business Voice

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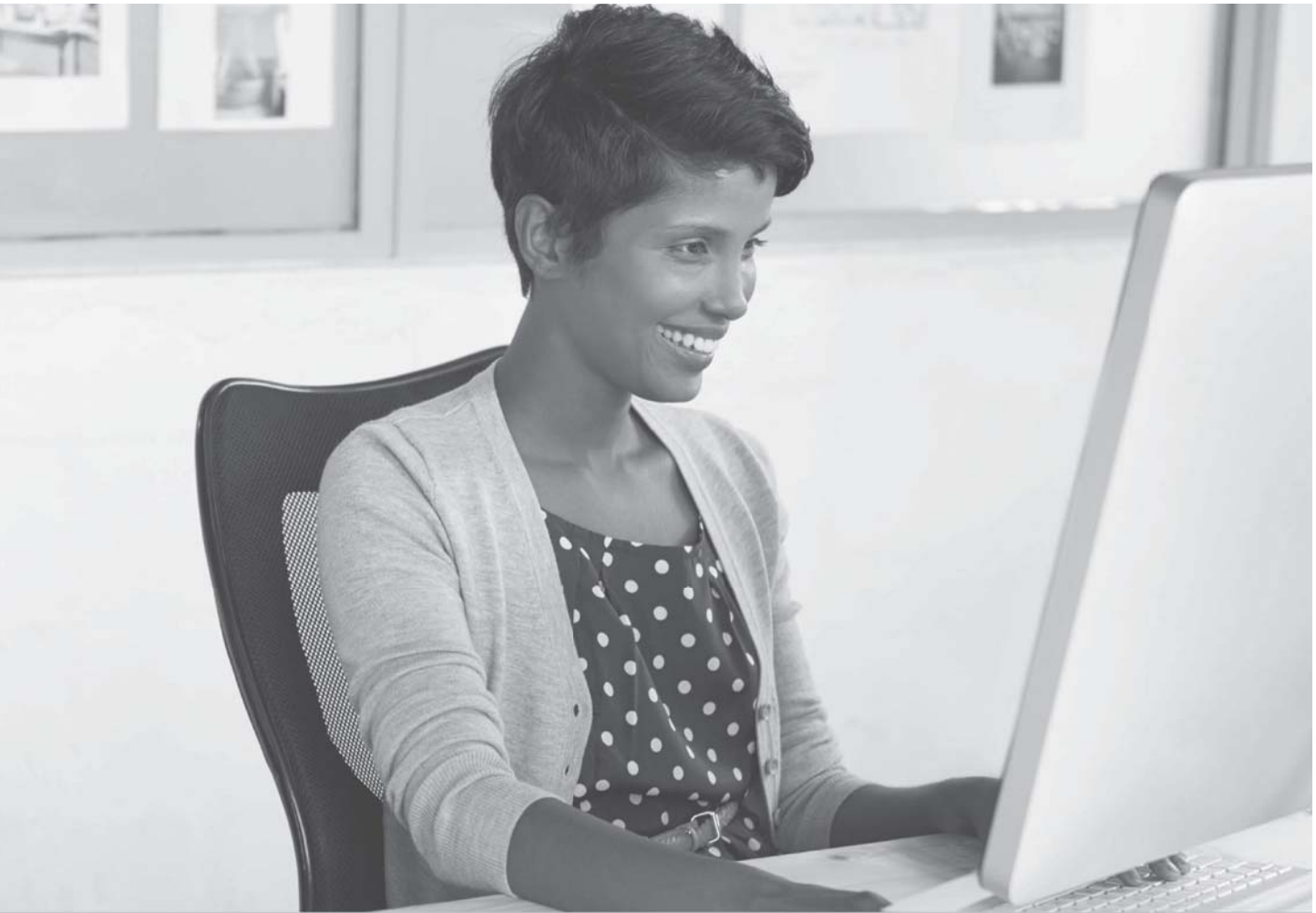
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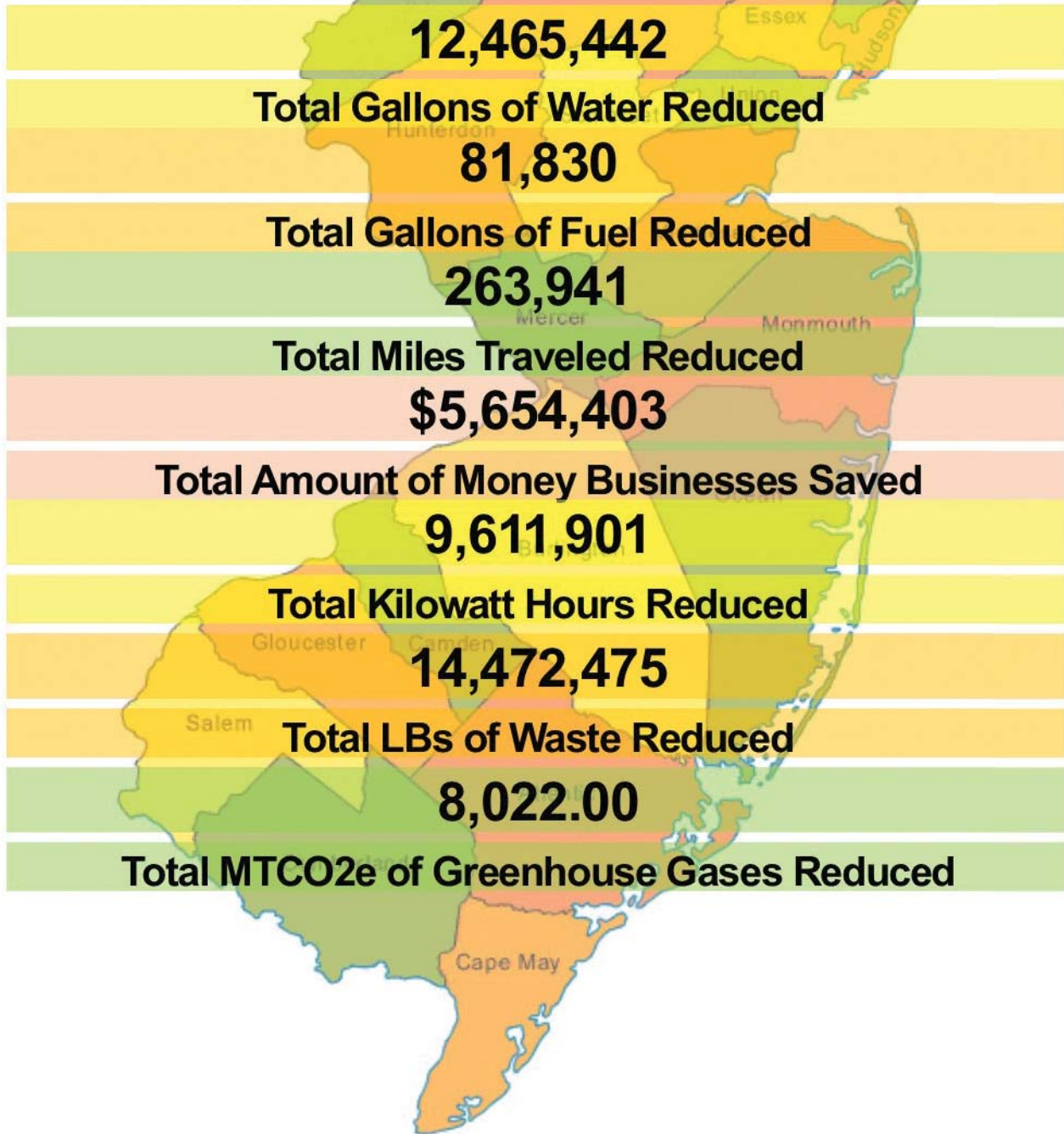
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Registry Members Make a Difference





Sustainability: Good for N.J. Businesses

By Deborah K. Smarth

Small and medium-size businesses might think that sustainability is only achievable by large companies that have the capacity and resources to develop comprehensive plans and hire dedicated sustainability staffs. However, this is a misperception.

The most successful sustainability strategies start with simple, low-cost initiatives that all firms can accomplish. There are real opportunities for small businesses to yield significant benefits from the adoption of basic environmental best practices.

For businesses interested in sustainability, but not sure where to start, the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC) offer pro bono sustainability consulting and technical assistance. Over the past two years small businesses across New Jersey have taken advantage of this no-cost service to find ways to integrate environmentally friendly practices into their day-to-day op-

The Environmental Protection Agency provided funding to the New Jersey Small Development Center at the Rutgers Business School in Newark, New Jersey, helping establish the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry. To date more than 135 businesses spanning 31 sectors have improved their environmental performance through their involvement in the Registry, which is a free program open to all small businesses in the State. Positive environmental results have been achieved by these businesses in the areas of energy, water and waste reduction, which translate to more than \$5.5 million saved. The EPA views this project as a positive model for other Small Business Development Centers around the country to consider.

**Joe Bergstein, Program Officer, Region 2 EPA
Pollution Prevention and Climate Change Section**

erations. NJSBDC's expert counselors work with business owners to identify ways to increase efficiency through energy conservation, waste reduction, pollution prevention, streamlined procurement and risk management. Businesses are provided a baseline assessment of their environmental footprint, and a series of recommendations on

how to implement sustainable practices.

Small business owners can take advantage of this service, by visiting <https://www.njsbdc.com/sustainability-consulting/>.

In addition to no-cost environmental counseling services, NJSBDC, in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, has developed the New Jersey Sustainability Business Registry (NJSBR) (<http://registry.njsbdc.com/>). The registry was created to recognize and promote sustainable businesses across the state.

The NJSBR is open to companies of all types and sizes and there is no

From manufacturing to retail establishments every business in New Jersey can take steps to become more sustainable. We hope businesses across the state use the NJ Sustainable Business Registry as a tool to learn what businesses in their sectors are doing to reduce their impact on the environment and are inspired to do the same.

Athena Sarafides, Supervisor, NJDEP Office of Sustainability

Continued on next page.

Sustainability: Good for Business

Continued from previous page.

cost to join. Businesses that have implemented five sustainable practices are eligible to create their NJSBR profile and receive membership benefits.

NJSBR membership benefits include free marketing and promotional materials, including the use of the NJSBR logo on your business website, a “Sustainable Business” seal which can be displayed on site, a promotional profile of your company’s environmental efforts on the website, along with recognition and eligibility for the annual NJSBDC Sustainable Business Award. The NJSBR also offers comprehensive online resources to help organizations set and meet their sustainability goals.

Businesses can apply online at <http://registry.njsbdc.com/> to be-



Sustainability means using and reusing all waste products. Arlees Raw Blends, known for its raw, cold pressed juices in Princeton, NJ, keeps food out of the landfill by sending its waste to a local farm.

come recognized for their sustainability efforts.

Ultimately, it makes great business sense, to run a sustainable, environmentally responsible business. New Jersey small business owners should explore integrating sustainable business practices for

three very simple reasons.

- Sustainable business practices increase profits and reduce waste;
- The practices small businesses need to adopt to increase sustainability are not that hard to implement; and,
- Sustainability increasingly transfers into good PR; especially positive brand association and stronger community engagement.

Businesses interested in learning more about how sustainable business practices can positively impact their companies should reach out to NJSBDC to schedule a no-cost sustainability consultation. Businesses already committed to implementing eco-friendly practices should take advantage of the benefits provided by the NJSBR by becoming a member today. *Deborah Smarth is the NJSBDC network Chief Operating Officer/ Associate State Director. NJSBDC Headquarters contact information: 973-353-1927, or at sbdcIN-FO@njsbdc.com.*

As Manager of the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, I know it is critical to collaborate with the Small Business Development Centers of New Jersey for regulatory compliance, pollution prevention and raising environmental awareness across a wide spectrum of businesses in our State. Our partnership has reduced air emissions, hazardous waste generation and water pollution and now we are providing the resources for these business to identify and implement sustainable actions, which benefits the environment, community and the business itself. I am very proud of the work we have done and look forward to the continued success of our joint programs.

**Ky Asral, Manager,
NJDEP, Operations & Coordination
Air Quality, Energy and Sustainability**

NJSBDC Sustainability Program

Recognition & Reliable, Cost-free Assistance for Businesses 'Going Green'

By Deborah Smarth

For 40 years, the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers, also known as America's SBDC New Jersey, has provided comprehensive services and programs for New Jersey entrepreneurs to help expand their operations, manage their growth, or start new ventures.

Up until recently, NJSBDC's consulting services focused primarily on core operational activities, such as helping entrepreneurs develop business plans, obtain financing, identify new markets, develop marketing and sales strategies, learn recordkeeping and accounting skills, find procurement and international trade opportunities, commercialize technology, and develop an E-commerce presence.

Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and its long-standing working relationship with the Office of Sustainability at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the NJSBDC network has now added sustainability as a new specialty field to its vast repertoire of services. The new specialty offers prompt and easily accessible services and a business friendly approach to help New Jersey small business owners start or expand environmentally conscious practices.

One component of this program focuses on the pro-bono and confi-

dential management consulting services for which the NJSBDC is renowned! Whether you want information about starting or expanding a sustainability program, or a strategy to help you deal with an existing environmental concern, the NJSBDC will provide you with an expert counselor who is knowledgeable in all facets of sustainability, energy conservation, waste reduction, pollution prevention, toxics mitigation, and disaster preparedness.

In addition to the no-cost environmental counseling services, the NJSBDC, in collaboration with the DEP BES team, has developed a **New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry**. The registry is a website <http://registry.njsbdc.com/>, where businesses can apply on-line and become recognized for their efforts in adopting or increasing their commitment to as few as five sustainable practices from a menu featuring dozens of sustainable actions pertinent to any small business.

In addition to many other free benefits, membership and recognition in the Sustainable Business Registry is a credible way for a business to project its commitment to society and the environment, as well as a factor that can add to its

growth and competitive advantage.

Registered businesses receive a "Sustainable Business" seal they can display at their location, and are entitled to use the New Jersey Sustainable Business logo on their company stationery, website and promotional materials. Registered businesses will also be eligible for a new NJSBDC Sustainable Business Award.

As an added benefit, Sustainable Jersey (SJ) municipalities, interested in working with their small businesses, can receive 15 points if they promote and work with their business to join the NJ Sustainable Business Registry by implementing the Sustainable Jersey Green Business Recognition Program Action.

To take advantage of the no-cost consultations, or for help with the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry criteria or application, email your request to **NJSBinfo@NJSBDC.com**. An experienced sustainability consultant will be happy to speak with you in person, on-line, or by phone. You can also find out more about these programs by visiting the Sustainability Consulting page on NJSBDC's website <http://www.njsbdc.com/sustainability-consulting/>.

The NJ DEP has been a significant collaborator and partner in promoting and educating our small business community concerning sustainable green practices.

— Brenda Hopper, CEO/State Director, NJSBDC network



Sustainability: Great Growth Opportunity for Small Businesses

By Ihor Dlaboha, *Guest Columnist*

All businesses – large and small – should take steps to become sustainable because it makes smart business sense.

By becoming sustainable, large companies will impact the quality of life on a global scale, while small businesses, even neighborhood ones, will have a similar impact on the equally important local level.

However, sustainability does not merely pertain to the environment or climate change. Sustainability is based on 17 principles as outlined in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and each one has an effect on a specific facet of our lives. They were adopted by the 195 UN member-states in September 2015 to transform our world for the better. (See pg. 11.)

Choosing a favorite goal out of 17 is all you need to do to embark on the road to sustainability.

In New Jersey, companies can begin by participating in the **New Jersey Small Business Registry**, <http://registry.njsbdc.com/>, a cost-free consultative service of the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers (NJSBDC), <https://njsbdc.com/>, in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, <http://www.nj.gov/dep/>.

Businesses that incorporate some or all of the SDGs into their companies' business plans and pro-

mote their participation will reap the benefit of greater revenue. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development anticipates that the sustainability windfall could be as high as \$12 trillion a year in the course of the next 12 years. A slice of that would surely satisfy business owners.

The goals hold great possibilities for all businesses and have the potential to unleash innovation, economic growth and development at an unprecedented scale. The opportunities could generate up to 380 million new jobs by 2030.

Integrating sustainability into business plans ultimately will help companies reduce waste, lower expenses, save money, increase sales and grow their businesses.

For cutting-edge businesses with savvy leaders that strategically and tactically comprehend the advantages of dynamic sustainable thought leadership, this pro-civilization orientation offers a wide range of outreach opportunities. Small local businesses, restaurants and hospitality, retailers, hospitals and healthcare, manufacturers and others should get on board soon to reap the benefits.

Opportunities include: new markets, enhanced reputation, staying ahead of the curve, and obtaining a license to operate in many countries. As well as more sales at your doorstep.

Business as usual will not contribute to sustainable development.

A new business concept and plan with as much buy-in as possible is required for success. This is beyond the reach of any one company. Realizing the goals means collaboration among a critical mass of companies at the local, industry, national and global levels.

While the broad concept of sustainability and environmental friendliness isn't new, the 17 SDGs are a recent development so there isn't a large body of best practices but rather there are many emerging beneficial trends. As a result you may understand how your company can reduce waste and protect the environment in your local park but you still can't get your arms around contributing to such goals as poverty eradication – **Goal 1**.

Fortunately, the SDGs provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to think outside of the box. Individually, you can focus on low-energy light bulbs, composting, and reducing air conditioning usage. Additionally, if you're selling toilet cleaners, paper or supplies, your consumers have toilets but many people around the world don't. The World Health Organization and UNICEF report that 1 in 3 people worldwide doesn't have proper toilets. That's about 2.4 billion people or roughly one-third of the world's population.

Maybe you can do something about that – **Goal 6** Clean Water and Sanitation; not alone, but in partnership with other businesses in your town or industry. That way



you will also be fulfilling **Goal 17** Partnerships for the Goals.

Stated differently, the broad scope of sustainable development isn't only about the ecological awareness. Yes, it is about improving the planet's ecology and living conditions for future generations. But it is also about boosting your company's outreach because there is a demanding consumer at your doorstep.

One of today's largest consumer segments – your big customer – is unabashedly pro-sustainability. The millennials. This vocal and affluent group of 14-35 year olds is taking active and passive actions to achieve the SDGs. Millennials feel a strong,

personal connection to their ideals and preferred brands, and their wallets reinforce their preferences and word of mouth spreads the news – both positive and negative about your sustainability. If you support sustainability, they and their friends will become your loyal customers.

"If you look at the millennials, they are the first generation now who are willing consciously to spend more for better quality, for sustainability, for traceability. I think there is a change," observed Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, chairman of Nestlé. "I think that if you're looking at the success stories in the food industry lately you will see that those successes are normally

in products which have a relatively high price and it's basically a (success) coming from the new generation. So I would say from this respect there is a change."

But beware of the opposite. If you and your trading partners reject building the sustainable principles into your business plans, then millennials may not pay attention to your goods and services.

Millennials use numerous contemporary media outlets, such as Twitter, and they have no reservations about revealing to the world that one or another company is polluting local streets and streams, damaging rain forests or refusing to live up to sustainable principles.

Their unambiguous message will be “don’t buy from XYZ Inc.”

Here are some steps that you, an entrepreneur and business owner, can incorporate into your business activities:

Individual-level

Stay informed about the SDGs and make them your business. Keep up with the sustainable development agenda to ensure that your company is well placed to capitalize on opportunities and pre-empt disruptive risks.

Spread the word

Engage your network of peers, owners of other small businesses in your town, your trading partners, on this agenda to create a tipping point for business engagement.

Company-level

Develop a thorough understanding of how your company’s local and global business activities translate into economic, environmental and social impacts in the context of the SDGs.

Set goals

Plot a course towards enhancing positive and mitigating negative SDG impacts.

Develop business solutions

Apply an SDG lens at the strategic level to harness your organization’s potential to engineer business solutions that make your company successful and sustainable.

Communicate – Reach out

Regular, transparent communication about your SDG performance is essential. Tell your community, newspapers, radio, TV, elected officials, businesses, vendors and consumers about your plans and achievements.

Sector-level networking

Collaborate with peers, competitors, trading partners, business clubs, and other stakeholders to

Small and medium-sized firms must understand that sustainability isn’t a trend or a fad, and, as such, needs to be a significant part of their business plans and operations. When you consider that the majority of US consumers are willing to pay more for products from socially responsible companies, and almost every SME has distributors or suppliers whose businesses are affected by the way SMEs do business, it’s easy to see how vital and critically important environmental sustainability is to any SME’s longevity and success.

**Ed Kurocka, NJSBDC
Sustainability Program Manager**

frame the SDGs in the context of your industry sector. Building a network of likeminded companies builds a strong sustainable community.

Roadmaps

Set a collective vision for your industry and collaborate on realizing sector transformation.

Issue calls to action

Call for all companies in the sector to align, collaborate and report on their progress.

Policy-level Advocate

Openly advocate for the introduction of key policy and finance enablers that will help to achieve a tipping point.

Engage with the global goals and embrace them as part of your identity and strategic vision. With such a hot issue, it’s not smart to be a sustainability follower, waiting for others to show the way. It’s better to be a thought leader and take advantage of the opportunities.

Regardless if you’re a Fortune 500 corporation or a local small business, your participation in the Sustainable Development Goals can help our planet, humanity, your marketplace, your town and your bottom line.

Taking a global view, Barron’s recently published its list of 100 sustainable companies. No. 9 on the list is Clorox, yes, the bleach manufacturer. Hard to believe?

According to the business publication, CEO Benno Dorer travels to his office via public transit, buys sustainable products, including his company’s Brita water filters, separates his trash diligently, and teaches his kids to do the same.

Barron’s noted that for a company best known for a toxic product, Clorox has become one of America’s greenest companies, publishing goals on greenhouse gas emissions and energy use, phasing out controversial substances, and adding lines of natural products like Burt’s Bees.

“As a CEO, I don’t think I can be credible without walking the walk,” Dorer says. “At the end of the day, the company’s commitment to sustainability starts with the CEO.”

What is important about Dorer’s observation is that he, as CEO, has set the tone for the company’s sustainable evolution. He created a sustainable corporate culture that trickles down throughout its structure, to its branches, offices and employees, and conceivably to local communities.

While these examples present the 50,000-foot view, smaller businesses can also jump on the sustainability bandwagon. Spread the word to your customers, vendor partners, media, local officials, schools and other stakeholders.



Small Business Success Stories

By Ihor Dlaboha

You may be aware of the tagline from the popular TV series “The Naked City”: “There are 8 million stories ...” That may be a slight exaggeration for this but, in fact, there are countless examples of how small businesses can use sustainable principles to save money, grow their revenues and save the planet. In New Jersey, businesses can become members of the **Sustainable Registry** through the NJSBDC without cost and take advantage of its abundant expertise on sustainability and running a successful company. Highlights of companies that are benefiting from participation in the registry follow.

Consolidated Packaging – Working with Employees

Changing old habits and processes is never an easy task. However, when **Consolidated Packaging Group** of Ridgefield Park, NJ, decided to escalate its transition to sustainability, management decided to work with its employees by focusing on training and transparency.

According to Gary R. Kaufman, executive vice president, “Changing culture among employees is never an easy task, but by training and being completely transparent as to what we are trying to do and why, eventually, everyone bought in.”

The result has been beneficial for everyone.

“Yes, at first they were skeptical, but the proof is in the pudding, and facts are irrefutable. Most people resist change, however, change that is good is hard to resist,” he said.

Kaufman described the company as an environmentally conscious firm that joined the NJSBDC **Sustainable Registry** in 2017 and its logo is prominently featured on the company’s website.

“We have always looked for ways to reduce our carbon footprint and make our workplace and community safer, greener and better to reside in,” Kaufman pointed out.

One of the benefits that attracted the company



Loading dock at Consolidated Packaging.

to join the **Sustainable Registry** was to be a part of a group of likeminded business people that can share best practices, pool resources and experiences and serve as an example for others in the manufacturing community.

For some 50 years, Consolidated Packaging Group, which received the NJSBDC’s Sustainable Business Award in 2017, has been regarded as one of the country’s leading manufacturers of flexible packaging. From its modest beginnings with two six color stack presses and four Sheldahl bagging machines, CPG has grown into a full-service flexible packaging company and is one of the largest manufacturers of Inno-lok pre-zippered film. It operates a SQF Level 2 Certified 117,000-sq.-ft. facility that is rated as AIB Superior and houses new 10-color HD wide-web printing presses. NJSBDC advisors that have visited the facility said they were impressed at the modern layout, cutting edge equipment, and unique manufacturing processes.

The company has customers in diverse food industries as well as lawn and garden, household chemicals, pet foods, and medical packaging, and employs 125 people.

The company’s first agenda item was to look at its waste stream as well as the cost savings that would materialize by changing manufacturing processes to reduce, reuse and recycle.

“This new manufacturing business plan has enabled us to streamline our operation, reduce our overhead, increase our efficiencies and make a posi-

tive impact/statement,” Kaufman said.

And new efficiencies were achieved not only for itself but also for its customers.

“Many of our customers have sustainability goals, and we were able to assist them in achieving them. Costs have been reduced and our bottom line has increased. Moreover, many large corporations have sustainable standards that must be met in order to be considered for any opportunity. This has opened and kept open many doors for us,” he elaborated.

Kaufman estimates that Consolidated Packaging experiences savings of \$350,000 per year.

The company shared its sustainability plan with business associated and after initial skepticism, they realized the benefits because, as Kaufman pointed out “the proof is in the pudding and the facts are irrefutable.”

“Most people resist change, however, change that is good is hard to resist,” he said.

Due to its sustainability transition, Kaufman said the company made available a recyclable stand-up pouch that generated a lot of interest. He wasn’t able to put a firm number of new business gained, but noted it’s increasing monthly.

Kaufman is absolutely sold on the **Sustainability Registry** noting specifically “You are not only helping your business, but you are helping to keep the world environmentally safe.”

Seeds of Hope – Urban Farming on Streets of Atlantic City

For farmers – traditional or urban ones – their craft is synonymous with sustainability. Basically, it means taking from the land without damaging it.

Pastor Alexander Clarence Smith of the Community Harvesters Church in Atlantic City has operated the **Seeds of Hope Community Development** program as a not-for-profit for about five years. His mission has been to promote the benefits of urban agriculture to improve the quality of life for local residents and to be a center of learning.

Smith said he took a master gardening class at Rutgers University that inspired the project. The church owns a food pantry across the street from the lot and decided to turn it into a garden and green house. Today he maintains gardens in two lots measuring 17X67 ft. and 25X90 ft.



Seeds of Hope in Atlantic City helps adults and youth learn about the benefits of sustainable urban farming.

Smith became interested in the **Sustainable Registry** at the end of 2017, when he met officials and business people associated with the NJSBDC. He said opportunities for exposure, networking and sharing best practices have made the experience worthwhile.

“I even received calls from interested people who saw my organization listed in the registry. As a result, we are in the process of applying for funding for expansion because of this exposure,” he said.

The garden uses box containers and hydroponics to grow an array of vegetables. The latest addition to the lot will be an aquaponics garden funded by a grant from AtlantiCare.

Smith observed that his project is a great way for children who live in a city and urban environment to learn about the importance of urban agriculture. Seeds of Hope grows potatoes, cucumbers, peppers, sage, rosemary, basil, squash and other produce.

In the summer months we offer an urban agriculture youth program that teaches youth and adults about aquaponic agriculture, rainwater harvesting and composting. This learning experience may also present future entrepreneurial opportunities for today’s youth.

“We want people to catch on and know they can come to the garden. We don’t sell what we grow, but people can leave a donation when they come. Or else they can just take it,” Smith said.

Smith noted that he and his organization try to

stay on top of the latest developments about sustainability and farming.

“Through the **Sustainable Registry** we hope to obtain as much education as we can about sustainability so we can stay relevant,” he explained. “Since we’re new to the program, sharing best practices and learning from others is my goal.”

Smith said the registry’s requirements weren’t difficult to implement because his mission and vision have always been about sustainability and he did his homework to fulfill the conditions.

He is interested in the savings potential of sustainability but as of right now, his greatest reward would be to expand into a year-round farm. Exposure will certainly enhance awareness about Seeds of Hope and along with it the possibility of sponsorships.

“That will give us an edge in growing our urban farm and helping our community even more,” Smith indicated.

Adams Rental – Sustainable Solutions to Party Rentals

No small business is beyond the scope of adopting sustainability principles. All it takes is willingness and creativity.

Representatives of the NJSBDC **Sustainable Registry** reached out to **Adams Rental**, an event rental company in Hamilton, NJ, convinced its participation would be a good fit.

“They met with us and broadened our horizons about sustainability and the **Sustainable Registry**,” recalled Alithea Devine, vice president. The company joined in April 2018.

The business has evolved beyond its original mission since its acquisition in 1988. Devine said today it provides equipment for all types of events such as backyard parties and wedding tents. It also offers “how-to” advice and expertise. Consequently its tagline has morphed from “Thanks for inviting us to your party” to “Excellence in event execution.”

Devine believes Adams Rental has always been sustainably focused because reuse is central to its business and it reuses everything.

“And that’s what we’re all about. The reuse of product,” she said. “We believe that implementing sustainable practices is good for business.”

After joining the **Sustainable Registry**, Devine

said the company began aggressively incorporating sustainable practices that protect the environment and save it money.

“One issue that we identified was lighting. We converted all of the overhead light fixtures in the warehouse to high-efficiency devices. That has saved us 50,000 kWh per year. From an environmental perspective, that’s a major improvement,” she emphasized.

Another area that needed attention, considering its dependence on reuse, are the metal hangers on which the company hangs its table linens. Devine pointed out that customers had merely discarded the hangers after use into landfills with non-decomposing waste.

In order to raise awareness about this deleterious practice, she said the company created a sticker for the hangers that reads: “Adams Goes Green. Please Return Linen Hangers.”

“A majority of customers do return them in pristine condition. This decreased the landfill waste and the cost of purchasing hangers by 80%,” she elaborated.

Since becoming a member of the registry, Adams Rental distributed a special media announcement and has promoted its affiliation by posting the logo



With recycle reminders, Adams Rental persuaded its customers to recycle metal hangers.

on its website. As another benefit, it has entered into discussion with an environmental association about becoming its exclusive vendor.

Devine said the company is also mindful of the business-building attributes of sustainability and the millennials' interest in buying from companies that are green.

"At our strategic planning meetings, we regularly discuss millennials' purchasing habits right down to how they source and search for sustainable businesses," she said. "We need to be able to identify millennials and reach out to them. They are always part of our planning because they are our future spending power."

With so much success in hand, Devine said she absolutely encourages other small businesses to become part of the registry.

"We encourage everyone to consider the environment, the impact of their activities and to reduce their environmental footprint because we all share this planet. It's all we've got," she affirmed.

Viridian Environmental Field Services – One of the Newest

A relative newcomer to the **Sustainable Registry**, having joined in July 2018, **Viridian Environmental Field Services** of Upper Montclair, NJ, has been on the frontline of safeguarding the environment. Consequently, joining the **Sustainable Registry** was a clear choice.

"We do environmental consulting so we've cleaned up and seen the wasteful side firsthand. I wanted to find out more about the program and how to make our services greener. Making things more sustainable and resilient is the right thing to do now for us and for future generations," observed Flint Kinkade, CHMM, a principal with the company.

Viridian serves as sales rep for some products that are 100% recycled, and it offers what Kinkade described as an amazing step towards a more resilient and sustainable future at no additional cost to the user.

Implementing the five principles of the registry was somewhat difficult at first, Kinkade said, but in time, thanks to education and awareness the problems were overcome.

Kinkade anticipates that the greatest visible, measurable result of joining the registry will be

building more resilient structures by using 100% recycled products and reducing building materials' costs. He expects significant savings over other comparable systems as well as extra benefits.

Kinkade said the blessings of sustainability based on resilient buildings will be fewer floods through water storage, fewer building damages, and faster turn-around after a catastrophic event.

As it is getting its feet wet in this process, Kinkade said the company is just really starting to realize all the advantages it can provide to the marketplace.

Becoming part of a sustainability bandwagon like **Sustainable Registry** should be a non-controversial choice for businesses. After all, he observed, "It's the right thing to do for anyone who wants to live here on earth."



Classic Auto Body – On the Road to Sustainability

Classic Auto Body, a state-of-the-art auto collision repair shop located in Paterson, NJ, has embarked on a unique sustainability journey that is destined to revolutionize its industry.

The business was started by Mario Tommolillo 24 years ago, and today, according to his daughter, Adriana, office manager, the company is in the forefront of where the auto industry is going – certification in several car lines which ultimately contributes to a sustainable business.

"The auto industry is rapidly changing and the new concept is to become certified in several car lines," Adriana Tommolillo explained.

The certification process allows the customer to visit an auto manufacturers' or dealers' website to be directed to a local auto body shop that can repair the car. Information about OEM parts is also provided.

Tommolillo pointed out that this hands-free pro-



cess will ultimately reduce search effort and time as well as the customer's carbon footprint.

This process, introduced by Classic Auto Body two years ago, was a major step on the road to sustainability.

In addition, the company replaced old fluorescent lighting with efficient LED lighting that resulted in a 50% decrease in energy costs. Side benefits were that LED lights illuminated the work area better and the government provided incentives for transferring to an efficient system.

Classic Auto Body also introduced 10 years ago water-based products ahead of a government mandated transition.

"This was more eco-friendly. We use it throughout the shop not just in paints. We also use a waterless system to wash cars," Tommolillo said.

She is convinced that sustainability has two benefits: it helps the community and the planet, adding that she does spread the word about sustainability up and down the street. Working with the NJSBDC and its local director Kate Muldoon, Classic Auto applied for a loan to invest in the business, upgrade its equipment and improve its level of sustainability. The firm is a past NJSBDC Success Award Winner.

It is promoting its sustainability by redesigning its website with the **Sustainable Registry** logo as well as its own recreated moniker. It's also telling the world about its direction with face-to-face encounters and tours of its facility.

As for marketing, Tommolillo said her company recognizes the value of targeting millennials with its sustainable track.

"Millennials are specific. They have reshaped the market and they want to make sure that they get their money's worth. That's a huge clientele that we need to pursue via sustainability. Our redesigned website is leading that campaign," she said.

Sustainability – From Home to Business

Following in the footsteps of many proactive entrepreneurs and business owners, Stephanie Anderson, proprietor of the **Hamilton Washery** in Hamilton, NJ, found it easy and natural to adopt her domestic sustainable practices to her new business.

Anderson's sustainable concepts begin with what can be described as the warm and fuzzy (see above). She incorporated friendly goals that she would like to see in businesses with which she works. Consequently, her business' mojo is "The Laundromat that Cares!"

She offers her patrons free Wi-Fi, snacks and sodas, coffee, children's play area, free parking and a library.

"I've always recycled at home so when I started the business seven years ago I tried to do the same. In my business, recycling is big with all of the plastic containers that are used. I just wanted to conserve energy and water," Anderson noted.

She indicated that she and her staff are diligent about recycling and energy efficiency. She installed energy-saving LED lighting and US-made laundry machines.

Anderson sought help from the NJSBDC for a business loan in 2011 to launch Hamilton Washery and was later introduced to the **Sustainable Registry**. "Joining was an obvious step," she said, pointing out that the staff was accommodating and eager to provide advice and assistance.

"The Sustainable Registry requirements made sense and fulfilling them was an easy, piecemeal process. You have a network to learn from," she added. "As a result, I know that I'm saving money."

Being a sustainable business and belonging to the registry offers a range of benefits to the business, the neighborhood and environment.

She promotes her registry membership on the

website, in conversations with customers and the acceptance letter that is proudly displayed in her office.

“I belong to a couple of local organizations and I make it a point to tell them about sustainability, the NJSBDC and the **Sustainable Registry**,” Anderson said. “It has been a positive development with helpful networking and learning experiences.”

Creating a Sustainable Culture from Top Down

The **Atlantic Health System of Morristown, NJ**, has been sustainable for a few years but there was something missing from its campaign, observed Carolyn Brown-Dancy, director, Environmental Health & Safety, and corporate lead on sustainability.

According to Brown-Dancy, the healthcare facility wanted more than buzzwords. It sought to be responsible for the environment just like it is responsible for its patients. She said the facility has always looked at what it does in the environment and has taken steps to avoid the depletion of national resources in order to maintain balance.

“For example, we make sure that pharmaceutical waste doesn’t leak into the water system. We do not allow mercury thermometers. We are mercury free at all of our hospital locations,” she said.

Atlantic Health System, an integrated health care delivery system with a workforce of 16,000, joined the **Sustainable Registry** in March of this year. The system is comprised of more than 400 sites of care, including six hospitals: Morristown Medical Center, Overlook Medical Center, Newton Medical Center, Chilton Medical Center, Hackettstown Medical Center and Goryeb Children’s Hospital.

The **Sustainable Registry** offered the healthcare network all of the resources it needed to create a culture of sustainability and corporate responsibility that permeated its structure.

“It was a gold mine for us. They have all of the tools to measure recycling and waste,” she continued.

“We were becoming a sustainable company by fulfilling our commitments such as energy reduction, waste minimization and water conservation; but we must also promote ourselves as a sustainable company.”

Brown-Dancy pointed out that Atlantic Health System has been nationally recognized for the

efforts of Overlook Medical Center as one of the top 25 Hospitals in the country for Environmental Excellence; but that wasn’t the only goal. “It was also the right thing to do,” she added.

As a result, Atlantic Health System created a template of sustainable standards of operation for a medical office facility.

Corporate and site-based management, which have been supporters of sustainable initiatives, wanted all hospitals in its network to be sustainable. With the support of leadership throughout the system, its commitment to sustainability is stronger. The AHS Sustainability Committee members have led successful campaigns for Earth Day, recycling education and waste reduction programs.

“There is a culture of sustainability at the Atlantic Health System from the corner office to the house-keeping staff,” she said. “We’ve created a standard operating procedure for hospitals on what to do to attract other hospitals to sustainability. We’re encouraging others to join the movement.”



Carolyn Brown-Dancy



Staffers at Atlantic Health System eagerly participate in annual Earth Day observances.

Brenda's Letter



Partnerships Are Key To Sustainable Growth

Sustainability is quickly encompassing all segments of our communities, especially small businesses, and it would be wise for all to get on board. There are proven business growth advantages.

Sustainability can only be realized with a strong commitment to partnership and cooperation. The business community today is more interconnected than ever before and improving access to technology and knowledge is an important way to share sustainable ideas.

Putting job creation at the heart of economic development and economic policy plans, will not only enhance decent work opportunities but also spur more robust and inclusive growth, while reducing poverty. Decent work opportunities are good for business and society, and sustainability presents partnership opportunities for businesses throughout the community.

What can you, a small business entrepreneur, do to keep the conversation of sustainability going? The potential is limitless!

Be Informed: Stay informed about sustainability and make it your business. Keep up with the sustainable development agenda to ensure that your firm is well placed to capitalize on opportunities and pre-empt disruptive risks.

Engage: Engage your network of peers, owners of other businesses in your town, your trading partners, on this agenda to create a tipping point for business engagement.

Develop: Develop a thorough understanding of how your company's local and global business activities translate into economic, environmental and social impacts in the context of sustainability.

Share: Share your developments. Regular and transparent communication about your sustainable performance and progress is essential. Tell your community, newspapers, radio, TV, elected officials, businesses, vendors and consumers about your plans and achievements.

Collaborate: Collaborate with peers, competitors, trading partners, business clubs, and other stakeholders to frame sustainability in the context of your industry sector. Building a community of likeminded companies builds a strong sustainable community.

Be Visionary: Set a joint vision for your industry and collaborate on projects to realize sector transformation.

Advocate: Openly advocate for the introduction of key policy and finance enablers that will help to achieve a tipping point.

NJSBDC has long valued the significant collaborative relationship with other state agencies in promoting and educating our small business community about sustainable green practices. So engage with sustainability and make the principles as part of your identity and strategic vision. ***Join the Movement & Go Money Green!***



Brenda B. Hopper is the Chief Executive Officer and State Director of America's Small Business Development Centers — New Jersey Network.



For Businesses, Sustainability Is more than Ecology

For many people, sustainability evokes visions of environmental advocacy.

However, for proactive business owners and entrepreneurs, sustainability is fast becoming the leading force in building their bottom lines and improving financial performance.

“Sustainability is going to improve your financial performance and that’s what people don’t understand. People think it’s a trade-off: Am I gonna be a nice, good citizen and treat the environment well or am I gonna maximize profits? And the truth is you will perform better financially by doing things like having a great sustainability program, by having women on your board and in your senior management and by treating your employees well and ensuring that they’re owners of the company. Those things translate into better financial performance,” Prof. Jeffrey Hollender of New York University’s Stern School of Business observed recently in an interview with *Business Insider*.

Hollender believes sustainability is a “systematic approach” to thinking about a company’s total impact on the planet as well as society.

“And we often are overly focused on the environmental dimension and it’s critical that we think about how people are treated, people that work at the company, people in the supply chain, and issues like employee ownership are as

much a part of sustainability as lowering CO2 emissions,” he opined.

Hollender is the co-founder and former CEO of the sustainable consumer product company Seventh Generation and professor of corporate sustainability at NYU Stern. A prolific author on the topic of sustainable business, he is also the co-CEO of Sustain Natural which he runs with his daughter.

For Hollender and businesspeople like him, the application of the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals is central to the concept’s success on Main Street.

He unequivocally states that sustainability is good for humanity. However, it’s better for business.

“So if you treat your employees well, if you allow them to be owners of the company, they’re more loyal, they’re more productive, there’s less turnover, and Harvard has done a study that actually shows that this translates all the way down to earnings per share in

companies that are sustainable that treat their employees better,” he elaborated.

According to Hollender, thousands of companies have effectively undergone a transition to becoming a sustainable business. He said organizations such as the American Sustainable Business Council, with hundreds of thousands of members, is in the forefront of influencing public policy about sustainability.

Turning to academia, Hollender said his first lecture for future business leaders deals with values and what is required to be a real responsible, sustainable leader.

“Well I start with this whole question of values because I think if you’re going to be a responsible, sustainable business leader, you really need to be clear about what your values are and what means the most to you and what you’re going to use to steer the direction of your business,” he observed.

Millennials and baby boomers alike are demanding more eco-friendly products and services. Small businesses can no longer afford not to be sustainable. Our partnership with the NJ Small Business Development Centers has helped us to engage with small businesses in New Jersey to advance sustainable business practices throughout the state.

**Helaine Barr, Research Scientist,
NJDEP Office of Sustainability**

Sustainable News Bytes

Municipal practice worthy of emulation

New York City became the first city in the world to report to the United Nations on its progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), according to CityLaw.com.

The move is part of a larger trend of American cities pursuing environmental progress amid inaction from the federal government, and of New York, in particular, taking an ambitious course on climate policy. The city pledged in 2014 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050.

The voluntary review describes the city's progress toward the five SDGs the UN prioritized this year: clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; and protecting land.

The Mayor's Office for International Affairs wrote the report (https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/international/downloads/pdf/NYC_VLR_2018_FINAL.pdf), in partnership with the offices of Operations and Climate Policy and Programs, and in consultation with relevant city agencies. The report describes several initiatives to protect the metropolis from the effects of climate change and reduce the city's contributions to climate change. One is a \$1.5 billion program started in 2015 through the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to construct sewers and reduce flooding in particularly vulnerable areas in the borough of Queens.

Knights in defense of their environmental realm

Corporate Knights, a Canada-based financial information company and magazine whose focus is how business and societal and ecological benefits can go hand in hand, has released the 14th edition of the world's most sustainable companies. (<http://www.corporateknights.com/reports/2018-global-100/>)

In compiling its report, Corporate Knights looked to publicly-disclosed data—financial filings, sustainability reports, etc.—from some 6,000 financially healthy companies across the globe, in all industries, with a minimum annual revenue of \$1 billion. Key factors Corporate Knight included in its analysis included energy use, carbon, waste and clean air production. Also taken into account were innovation expenditures, taxes paid, the diversity of leadership, leadership compensation, suppliers the companies work with, pension fund health, safety ratings, employee turnover and the link between sustainability targets and senior executive pay.

Topping the list this year was Dassault Systemes, a French firm that designs engineering software that assists organizations in waste reduction. According to Corporate Knights, the company bested all others in the sustainability ranking by having strong female representation on its board and having a small gap between the pay of its CEO and its average workers.

Among the results of its analysis, Corporate Knights discovered that companies on its list of 100

most sustainable had three times as many female top executives than the average multinational firms generating over \$1 billion.

Beneficial report for your management team

Many small and medium-size companies are under the impression that sustainability is only relevant to large companies. The belief is that they are higher profile and attract more media attention, and thus are particularly concerned about protecting and enhancing their reputations. Big businesses also are often better-resourced and more able to invest in corporate social responsibility (CSR).

However, an article in Business News Daily shows that CSR is important and effective for businesses of all sizes. Small and medium enterprises account for 99% of all businesses, making them responsible for most employment creation and private sector gross domestic product (GDP) in the U.S. economy.

A partner project between the United Nations and SuperGreen Solutions, a local business partner for driving revenue and lowering costs through green initiatives, has pointed out the value of SME sustainability implementation and seeks to help small businesses get on board.

"We believe the next frontier of sustainability will not be found in looking at large corporations, but individual SMEs and, as such, we should approach the problem through a SME's eyes," the pro-

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ject's objective states.

Earlier, a business could expect to spend a considerable amount of time and money trying to become more environmentally responsible, only to receive a minimal return on investment (ROI).

However, today, business sustainability has grown into something more. It is the management and coordination of financial, environmental and social demands to ensure responsible, ethical and ongoing success, according to SuperGreen Solutions' website.

Sustainable business practices allow small and medium enterprises to reduce cost, improve productivity and eventually become market leaders. SuperGreen Solutions found that businesses that followed these practices experienced 20% higher sales and margins, 55% higher employee morale and 50% less employee turnover.

The common approach to evaluating business performances has been the three Ps, according to David Goodman, president of SuperGreen Solutions: profit, people and planet. Goodman now adds a fourth: promotion.

"If you don't talk about it, you don't benefit from market acknowledgement and you are not playing it forward and being a market leader for positive change," Goodman said.

Municipal engagement in sustainability

Secaucus' environmental director/recycling coordinator was a featured speaker last month at the 2018 Sustainability Summit held at The College of New Jersey, reported The Jersey Journal.

Amanda Nesheiwat participated in a sustainability session titled

"Need Help? Strategies & Resources to Support Local Sustainability Initiatives." It was one of a dozen sessions that included "Whole Community Approaches to Sustainable Energy" and "Plastic Pollution Solution" as well as "Pathways to Protecting Community Water Resources" and "Makin' Green by Going Green."

"Secaucus is committed to sustainability," she noted. "Our mayor and council are concerned about climate change and its lasting impacts."

Secaucus is looking for ways to

reduce carbon emissions and introduce more renewable energy, Nesheiwat said, noting that its Environmental Department has named 2018 the Year of Climate Change.

"One of our initiatives includes increasing electric vehicle infrastructure for residents with EVs" and increasing the number of hybrid and electric cars in the municipal fleet, Nesheiwat said.

The summit was hosted by Sustainable Jersey, which provides tools, training and financial incentives to communities as they pursue sustainability.

Message from the Chief Operating Officer And Associate State Director

By **Deborah K. Smarth**

A special thanks to members of the Legislature, Governor and Lt. Governor, and their key staffs, for enhancing resources for the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers network and the thousands of small business owners and entrepreneurs our business experts assist in all 21 counties.

Over the years, the New Jersey Legislature has been a true advocate for the important small business advisory services and technical assistance NJSBDC provides to the small business sector.

With the Legislature's unwavering support from gubernatorial administration to administration, the NJSBDC network continues to make its services penetrate into communities across New Jersey.

Serving small business owners and entrepreneurs with varying revenue ranges and from diverse industry sectors has contributed greatly to the state's economy. Our small business clients' success stories throughout New Jersey are the true rewards for our expert's efforts and small business assistance in the field.

Expanding and growing businesses, new business starts, and job creation and retention are the hallmarks of our NJSBC mission. Our network experts' assistance to business clients and our clients' perseverance have resulted in strong benefits for state economic development.

Thanks again for your continued support. We look forward to strong partnerships and collaborations to advance the cause of small

business and entrepreneurship in New Jersey.
Sincerely,

Deb Smarth

Deborah K. Smarth is Chief Operating Officer and Associate State Director of the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers Network





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