

MEDIA RELEASE

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Sustainable Jersey™ Announces Four Winners of First-Ever New Jersey Sustainability Champion Awards

Awards Presentation on November 17 at NJ League of Municipalities Conference

Trenton, NJ (October 20, 2009) – Sustainable Jersey representatives announced today four winners of the first-annual Sustainability Champion awards that recognize New Jersey municipalities that have made the most progress in the Sustainable Jersey program. Award winners are the top scoring towns among the 47 municipalities in the first group to submit applications to become “Sustainable Jersey Certified.” The full list of certified municipalities will be released later this month, and applicants will be recognized at an awards luncheon on Tuesday, November 17.

“The Sustainability Champion awards have brought to the forefront the amazing achievements and extraordinary commitment of four towns and their sustainability programs. The winners represent our best,” said William Dressel, Jr., Executive Director of the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

The Sustainability Champion award recognizes municipalities that have scored the most points in the Sustainable Jersey certification program in three population categories: small (0-5,000), medium (5,000-50,000) and large (50,000+). The 2009 Sustainability Champion award winners are:

- Large: **Woodbridge Township** (Middlesex County)
- Medium: A tie between **Ocean City** (Cape May County) and the **City of Summit** (Union County)
- Small: **Woodbine Borough** (Cape May County).

Randall Solomon, Executive Director of the New Jersey Sustainable State Institute and Sustainable Jersey program partner applauded each of the winners. “These awards recognize the top towns that have made the most progress across the 43 action categories of the Sustainable Jersey program. They have excelled in areas such as improving energy efficiency and health and wellness, smart land use and transportation, reducing waste, sustaining local economies, protecting natural resources, and addressing diversity and equity, just to name a few.” Sustainable Jersey program partner Donna Drewes, of the Municipal LandUse Center at The College of New Jersey, congratulated the winning towns. “Our winners represent the pioneers that are making extraordinary contributions toward the long-term goal of a sustainable New Jersey and world.”

New Jersey is the first state in the nation to have a comprehensive sustainability program for communities that links certification with strong state and private financial incentives, and a fully resourced program of technical support and training. “The response to the Sustainable Jersey program has exceeded our expectations--currently over 240 municipalities, in all 21 counties, have registered with Sustainable Jersey and declared their intent to become certified,” said Fred Profeta, Maplewood’s Deputy Mayor for the Environment and Chair of the New Jersey Mayors Committee for a Green Future.

The award winning towns will be recognized at the first annual Sustainable Jersey awards luncheon on Tuesday, November 17 at the New Jersey League of Municipalities conference. Admission is open to the public, but the \$35 tickets are going fast.

MEET THE WINNERS

Woodbridge Township won the Sustainability Champion award in the large municipality category (population of 50,000 and up). The Township was certified with a record high of 490 Sustainable Jersey points that is well above the minimum of 100 action points that certified municipalities have to submit documentation to show that they have achieved the required actions. Woodbridge Township, through the Greenable Woodbridge Program, has implemented many sustainable initiatives, including a \$7 million project to install energy-producing solar panels on municipal buildings, the creation of a ‘green’ business recognition program, integrating energy-saving, fuel efficient hybrid vehicles into the municipal fleet, the designation of Woodbridge as a Mayor’s Wellness community, and the planned development of a state-of-the-art enviro-technology incubator and industrial park, among many other initiatives.

“Woodbridge Township is pleased to accept the Sustainability Champion Award and will continue to set the pace as a statewide leader in green environmental and sustainable initiatives,” said Woodbridge Township Mayor John E. McCormac. “It is important that government lead the way in sustainable efforts. If we are to provide our children with a secure future, we must start now to better manage the ways we use energy and other natural resources at work and home - the Sustainable Jersey program is the vehicle by which our Township will move into the future as a sustainable and environmentally-conscious community.”

Ocean City won the Sustainability Champion award in the medium municipality category (population of 5,000 to 50,000). Ocean City was certified with 330 Sustainable Jersey points, the same amount of points as the City of Summit resulting in a tie for the medium municipality award category. Ocean City has earned the tagline of America’s Greenest Family Resort by creating a community based effort to reduce carbon emissions. Solar panels are installed on five city buildings; the City’s fleet consists of many biodiesel and hybrid vehicles; a new trolley system is now in place and many other efforts are underway. The Green Team has promoted environmental stewardship in the classroom, to visitors on the famed Boardwalk, at the annual Earth Day Celebration and other community activities.

Mayor Sal Perillo stated, “Ocean City is very pleased to be among the leading sustainable communities in New Jersey. I applaud those in leadership who had the vision to establish the Sustainable Jersey program. Ocean City has an amazing team of staff and volunteers who truly care for the environment and for our community – they are the reason that we are so successful.”

The **City of Summit** won the Sustainability Champion award in the medium municipality category (population of 5,000-50,000). Summit was certified with 330 Sustainable Jersey points. One of the highlights of the submission is Summit’s climate action plan, *Action Plan for a Sustainable Summit*, one of the City’s most comprehensive bodies of work related to the environment. It was prepared by the Mayor’s Sustainable Community Task Force and lists “Priority Action Steps” that were designated for their potential to reduce carbon dioxide emission, cost to implement, and community support based on the community survey. Student volunteer interns were a key part in mapping the City’s carbon footprint, a huge undertaking that provides critical information for future municipal environmental planning and savings analysis. Summit’s Sustainable Jersey submission was a tremendous group effort that involved hundreds of individuals from all over the City – staff, elected officials and volunteers – and who represented a broad cross-section of the community, from the youngest citizens in the primary school system to college-age residents and adults in Summit.

“The City of Summit is honored to be the co-recipient of the Sustainability Champion Award from Sustainable Jersey. Summit is very pleased to have been a part of this exciting, first-of-its-kind program. This herculean effort is a result of thousands of staff, resident and intern volunteer hours and I am extraordinarily grateful for their commitment to the project. Summit’s sustainable practices are a vital part of our history, culture and current operating procedures and we are proud to be recognized as a “green” community,” said City of Summit Mayor Jordan Glatt.

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Woodbine Borough has won a Sustainability Champion award in the small municipality category (population of less than 5,000). Woodbine's Rural Sustainability Plan is a bold step forward toward envisioning what sustainability means for rural Pinelands communities. Woodbine's long standing work on community forestry, trails and bikeways gave the community a good foundation for their certification application.

"We are honored to receive this distinguished award for our work in becoming a sustainable municipality," said Woodbine's Mayor William Pikolycky. "We know this is just the beginning. Our Rural Sustainability Plan and Sustainable Jersey certification will be the basis for new economic opportunity, green jobs, and an expanding eco-industrial park. Woodbine provides an exceptional opportunity for "green businesses" to locate in a Pinelands Growth Community with full access to public sewer and water, public transportation, rail, airport, and other environmentally compatible services. This recognition is just the first step toward achieving our long-range goals for a cleaner, more prosperous and sustainable environment."

About Sustainable Jersey

Sustainable Jersey is a certification program for municipalities in New Jersey that want to go green, control costs and save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term. The innovative new program is an initiative of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities' Mayors Committee for a Green Future, the Municipal Land Use Center at the College of New Jersey, the New Jersey Sustainable State Institute at Rutgers University, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the Rutgers Center for Green Building, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, and a coalition of New Jersey non-profits, state agencies, and experts in the field. To learn more about the Sustainable Jersey certification visit www.sustainablejersey.com.

Sustainable Jersey Awards Luncheon at the New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference

Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009, 12 Noon – 1:30 PM

Location: Sheraton Hotel, Crown Ball Room, 2nd Floor, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Registration: 94th Annual New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference and Sustainable Jersey Luncheon Registration Info: www.njslom.org > Annual Conference > 94th Annual Conference

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