



Media Contact:
Keisha Smith
215-351-5201
ksmith@aachamber.org

News Release

AACC Announces Strategic Alliance for Healthy Businesses, Healthy Families and Healthy Communities

Monday, November 12, 2007, 2 pm EST

At its Awards Dinner on Saturday, the African American Chamber of Commerce (AACC) of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware announced that it will join forces with Aetna, United Bank of Philadelphia and the Black Yellow Pages to form a cross-marketing coalition that will serve as a resource to African American-owned businesses in the Greater Philadelphia area.

Award recipients this year included Clearpoint Technologies, recognized as the "Small Business of the Year", and United Bank of Philadelphia, the only African American owned commercial bank headquartered in Philadelphia, for "Excellence in Community Service." Two additional organizations, Echols Electronics and Genesis Optical were recognized as the first two recipients of loans from the Chamber loan pool, which was made possible by a \$100,000 grant from Aetna.

The loan pool is one way that the Chamber and its allies will help small businesses - by gaining access to capital that they may not otherwise be able to attain. Other benefits to Chamber members include discounted insurance brokerage services through United Bank of Philadelphia, as well as discounts on print, internet, and virtual call marketing services from The Black Yellow Pages.

This new alliance will form layered relationships with individuals and businesses focused at helping to create healthy businesses, families and communities. Delilah Winder, chairwoman of the chamber, presented the awards and spoke to the spirit of this collaboration. "This is a huge first step in supporting our mission for the overall improvement of economic conditions within the regional African American Community," said Winder.

In maintaining its mission to advocate strongly for African American businesses, the African American Chamber Of Commerce will take the lead on marketing loan pool capabilities, business resources, education and technical assistance. These services will culminate in establishing a neighborhood resource center for small businesses.

In addition to the \$100,000 grant, Aetna will offer time and resources to companies in the alliance, in addition to promoting alliance business services to Aetna customers and distribution channels.

Boando, LLC, popularly called, "The Black Yellow Pages" will promote the services of the other companies and will become a reference guide promoting local business, cultural, educational, and faith-based initiatives in the Delaware Valley community.

United Bank of Philadelphia will continue to fulfill its mission of helping businesses gain access to capital in addition to offering affordable banking and insurance related brokerage services. The Bank is certified by the U.S. Department of Treasury as a community development financial institution, the only commercial bank headquartered in Philadelphia designated as such. United Bank of Philadelphia provides full service community banking at three financial services centers located in established empowerment zones and emerging markets.

Norm Bond, President of the Philadelphia Chapter of the National Alliance of Market Developers (NAMD) was instrumental in bringing together the AACC and the three businesses. NAMD engages in marketing, sales, promotion, advertising and public relations focused on the delivery of goods and services to the African American and urban consumer markets.