

THE CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE CHANGE

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THE CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE CHANGE: 'A YEAR & CHANGE'

Newark Mayor Cory A. Booker and Guests Celebrate the Center's One Year Anniversary

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY (July 22, 2010)— The Center for Collaborative Change (The Center), a non-profit organization serving the Newark community, celebrated its first anniversary at Theater Square Grill in the New Jersey Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, July 21, 2010 at 7:00 p.m, with over 250 guests in attendance. A VIP reception with special guests, Mayor Cory A. Booker, Police Director Garry F. McCarthy, Cissy Houston and other community leaders began at 6:30 p.m. The evening commenced with live performances by Nick Pablo Thang featuring the Honorable Julien Neals (Newark's Corporation Council) and Illmatic Dance Force.

Bringing together the Mayor, key city leaders, and a wide array of community members dedicated to Newark's transformation, the Center's anniversary event is illustrative of a noteworthy fact: Newark is an exciting place to be right now. There are many people who have been working in the city for years to serve its residents and to bring Newark back to its earlier grandeur and abundance, and now there's a new wave of energy bringing resources to the city, much of it galvanized by Mayor Booker and his team. Given the momentum that's been building in Newark, The Center for Collaborative Change, an organization dedicated to creating solutions with and for the community of Newark, has rapidly become relevant.

In just one year, the Center has launched a citywide community needs assessment, synthesizing news media and earlier studies, interviewing civic and community leaders, and conducting in-depth person-to-person surveys with more than 1,000 Newark residents. Some of the results are at www.newarkchange.org. Along the way, The Center caught the attention of, and engaged, with a multi-sector cadre of partners, and as a result, became the lead organization on a major proposal for \$15M from national foundations to develop and implement Newark's Strong Healthy Communities Initiative, a holistic and sustainable approach to improving community wellness and arresting cycles of poverty.

"We saw that there was an opportunity to connect the dots between new and existing resources, and to develop collaborative solutions to the most pressing issues that face Newark, as identified by its stakeholders. These stakeholders include residents, both those who are already engaged and those who are not, as well as community organizations, non-profits, businesses, and government entities. In this way, we ensure that Newark maximizes the benefit of all of its native and novel resources," says Laurel Dumont, Founder and Executive Director of The Center for Collaborative Change.

The Center's research has led to the development of key focus areas that include community-police relations, civic education, government efficiency, education reform, health and wellness, workforce development, and neighborhood stabilization. By engaging community and civic leadership in policy and program development, the Center seeks to accelerate Newark's revitalization while ensuring that the process includes and responds to community priorities.

The first-anniversary benefit, A YEAR & CHANGE, will allow The Center to raise funds needed to support this work and, for all who have contributed over the past year, a chance to celebrate and reflect on all the accomplishments and look forward to exciting work ahead. More information about the Center can be found at www.newarkchange.org.

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*The Center for Collaborative Change is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating positive change that ***FITS*** our community, by Finding, Importing, Tailoring and Supporting collaborative solutions to Newark's most critical challenges. The Center has developed a participatory process for identifying barriers to individual opportunity and community advancement, and for generating innovative solutions integrating local resources and national best practices.*

Sponsors of A Year & Change include: Prudential Financial; Adele & Clifford Alexander; Crawford Street Partners; Lowenstein Sandler; McCarter & English; Sills Cummis & Gross; RBH Group; Joyce Strawser; True Newark; Alpha Management; Arseneault, Whipple, Fassett & Azzarello, LLP; Cuidiu Consulting; Gluck Walrath LLP; Golub & Isabel; Greenberg Healthcare; Jewish Renaissance Medical Center; Legacy Converting; The MCJ Amelior Foundation; Newark Strategy Group; Northwestern Mutual; Nowell Klein Amoroso & Bierman; United Way of Essex & West Hudson; Vitality Communications.