

Fair Trade Teaneck Steering Committee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Teaneck Declared Fair Trade Town by Nat'l Fair Trade Organization

Chamber of Commerce Provides Key Support



TEANECK, NJ (October 21, 2010) – The Township of Teaneck became the 21st municipality in the United States to earn the coveted distinction of “Fair Trade Town” after receiving the support of the Teaneck Chamber of Commerce. Teaneck joins San Francisco (CA), Amherst (MA), Burlington (VT), and Madison (WI) among the early adopters of the Fair Trade ethos. Other Fair Trade Towns in New Jersey include Highland Park, Montclair, and Red Bank.

The designation of “Fair Trade Town” is bestowed by Fair Trade Towns USA, a national movement uniting community activists from across the country who are dedicated to the principles of Fair Trade. In order to become a “Fair Trade Town” a specific number of businesses and community organizations, depending upon a municipality’s population, must agree to sell or make available at least two products certified by Fair Trade USA or products sold by Fair Trade Federation members.

The “Fair Trade” certification is an innovative, market-based system that guarantees fair labor conditions, diminution or elimination of child slave labor practices, a healthy and safe work environment, direct access to international markets, sustainable farming practices, economic independence, and higher living standards for producers and farmers in the developing world.

Common Fair Trade products include coffee, tea, chocolate, fresh fruits, rice and flowers, as well as clothing and handicrafts. “Fair Trade products are sometimes a little more expensive,” said Tim Blunk, proprietor of Tiger Lily Flowers on Cedar Lane, “But the quality is almost always superior.” “Fair Trade products are not just good they are good business,” said Bruce Prince, proprietor of Teaneck General Store on Cedar Lane.

The effort to have Teaneck declared a Fair Trade Town reached its first milestone when the Township of Teaneck Council endorsed the concept at their May 4, 2010 meeting, endorsing “the voluntary practice of selling and serving certified Fair Trade goods in our community and by encouraging its departments and agencies to promote an awareness of the Fair Trade campaign and the opportunities for supporting Fair Trade locally.”

Subsequently, the Fair Trade Teaneck Steering Committee began to sign up the required number of organizations and businesses. When the Teaneck Chamber of Commerce became the sixteenth business or organization to pledge its support, the Township had the magic number it needed to apply for recognition. "We are proud to have put the Fair Trade Teaneck movement over the top," said Larry Bauer, President of the Chamber.

Other participating businesses and organizations include: Dunkin Donuts of Cedar Lane, Dunkin Donuts of Teaneck Road, Encke Flowers and Gifts, Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU), Follett Bookstore at FDU, Gourmet Dining at FDU, Grace Lutheran Church, Holy Name Medical Center, Presbyterian Church of Teaneck, Puffin Foundation, Stop & Shop, St. Anastasia's RC Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Military Families Speak Out, Teaneck General Store, and Tiger Lily Flowers.

The Fair Trade Teaneck Steering Committee is preparing for a post-declaration campaign to raise awareness of the importance of the Fair Trade movement for producers, consumers, and merchants. "As consumers become more aware of how their choices directly affect the living and working conditions of people around the world, the more producers and retailers will need to comply with ethical standards. People will increasingly expect products to be Fair Trade certified and will wonder why when they are not," said Jason Scorza, Fair Trade Teaneck Steering Committee Member and Professor of Philosophy and Political Science at Fairleigh Dickinson University.

The Fair Trade Teaneck Steering Committee also seeks to sign up additional businesses and non-profit organizations. "Businesses and organizations can still participate by completing a participation form and by selling or providing at least two Fair Trade products, either Fair Trade Certified or sold by Fair Trade Federation members, to their customers or members," said Dennis Klein, Committee Chairperson. "Committee members are eager to meet with organizations to discuss the importance of taking a stand on Fair Trade," said Klein. "We are also willing to help merchants identify sources of Fair Trade products to offer in their stores and restaurants."

For more information about Fair Trade Teaneck, visit them at <http://fairtradeteaneck.org>

For more information about Fair Trade USA, visit <http://www.fairtradeusa.org/>

For more information about the Fair Trade Federation, visit <http://www.fairtradefederation.org>

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