

Governor Markell Promotes Local Holiday Shopping

“Small Business Saturday” is Nov. 26

Wilmington, Del. (Nov. 16, 2011) – In an effort to encourage holiday shoppers to shop locally, Governor Jack Markell has declared the Saturday after Thanksgiving, Nov. 26, 2011, as “Small Business Saturday” in Delaware. “Small Business Saturday” is a national movement to drive shoppers to patronize small, independently-owned local businesses that create jobs, boost the economy and invigorate neighborhoods across the country.

Governor Markell started the promotion early by stopping at several small businesses in Wilmington today. He was joined by Alan Levin, director of the Delaware Economic Development Office. They visited Babe Styling Studio, Homme: A Gentleman’s Barber, Bain’s Deli, and Dimensions & Co. by Ace, all newly opened this year in the city’s revitalized LOMA District (short for “Lower Market”)

“It’s great to see small business owners excited about their start ups. We want them to be successful and they will be if shoppers patronize them,” said the Governor. “This shopping season, we hope shoppers remember small businesses. These businesses play a vital role in our economy and help define our communities.”

Babe Styling Studio and Homme: A Gentleman’s Barber, at 213 N. Market and 223 N. Market Street respectively are co-owned by Wilmington residents Ebon and Yvonne Flagg. Babe Styling Studio offers a range of organic, multicultural hair services. Homme: A Gentleman’s Barber specializes in haircuts, straight-razor shaves, beard trimming and design, and clipper cuts—all in environment that is designed exclusively for men. Babe Styling Studios came into existence when Ebon Flagg branched off from his family’s salon to start his own business in 2009. Originally, the salon was located at 213 N. Market street and Ebon acquired larger space for the salon at 223 N. Market and created a barbershop out of the old space specializing in high quality men’s haircuts, calling it a “gentleman’s barber” with the intention of attracting professionals and father-and-son haircuts.

“So far, the business is exceeding our expectations and look forward to it continuing to grow,” said Yvonne Flagg. “We’re thrilled about the trendy LOMA area and the diversity of people it’s attracting to Wilmington.”

Bain’s Deli at 225 N. Market Street is a family-owned regional New York-style deli that delivers a healthier and higher-quality alternative to typical fast food, including a selection of fresh deli meats, breads, sides and breakfast sandwiches. Bain’s Deli is operated by General Manager Ken Friedman, who grew up in North Wilmington and spent many weekends dining with his parents at the Jewish Deli’s around town—namely Jack Lundy’s with its Satellite Room and Gamiel’s for delicious corned beef or pastrami sandwiches always served with a Kosher pickle. After returning to this area, Ken believed that a site in the Exciting LOMA District would attract a strong breakfast and lunch crowd.

“This is the perfect location for this kind of business,” said Ken Friedman, General Manager. “The energy in the neighborhood is fantastic.”

Dimensions & Co. by Ace, at 221 N. Market Street, offers a range of men's outerwear and accessories and footwear. "Dimensions offers shoppers the contemporary style and sophistication of a Madison Avenue-style boutique, but at much more reasonable prices," said Danny "Ace" Valentine, Founder and CEO. "Legislators like Governor Markell and our own Mayor, James M. Baker, understand that small businesses are critical to our economy and they're committed to making Delaware the best place to start and grow a business," he said. "Not only was I honored to meet with the Governor today to discuss the path forward for niche' businesses like Dimensions & Co. by Ace, I gained a deeper understanding of the necessity for Wilmington's business community and the State of Delaware to be in lockstep to drive the economy, along with small businesses, toward longevity and success."

Delaware joins many other states and cities across the country in supporting the campaign, which is an initiative of American Express and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Small businesses are critical to the nation's overall economy. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, there were nearly 28 million small businesses in the United States last year. Over the past two decades, they created 65 percent of net new jobs. They serve a greater impact to local communities. There are 18,922 small business employers in Delaware.

"We're proud of our local small businesses that contribute so much to our state's economy and sense of community," said Levin. "That's why we continue to make investments in small businesses."

In July, DEDO announced a new program for small businesses to access capital, thanks to \$13.1 million from the federal State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). The approved plan dedicates \$1 million to the Delaware Access Program, a private-public match program that provides access to bank financing for qualifying Delaware businesses. The plan also dedicates \$12.1 million to the Delaware Strategic Fund to create a new participation program between DEDO, banks and their small business clients. Delaware expects to leverage at least \$10 in new private lending for every \$1 of federal funding, generating more than \$131 million in private investments in the state's small businesses.

Social media will play a central role in helping to raise awareness of the importance of supporting small business and recognizing "Small Business Saturday." American Express launched campaigns on Facebook and Twitter to drive consumers and business owners to the pages where they can participate in many ways. More information can be found at <http://smallbusinessaturday.com>.

About the Delaware Economic Development Office

The Delaware Economic Development Office is an executive state agency responsible for attracting new investors and businesses to the state, promoting the expansion of existing industry, assisting small and minority-owned businesses, promoting and developing tourism and creating new and improved employment opportunities for all citizens of the State. Visit dedo.delaware.gov. Follow DEDO on Facebook or Twitter @DEDOgov.

Contact:

Cathy Rossi, Office of the Governor

Catherine.Rossi@state.de.us

302-577-5224

Nikki Lavoie, DEDO

Nikki.Lavoie@state.de.us

302-233-8692

###