



A Report From Senator Pat Browne

Allentown Advocate

September 2005

Dear Neighbor,

The heart of any area's economic development program is helping the businesses we already have and luring new businesses to our community, both industrial and retail. In addition, there is the "human factor," the programs and services available to our residents. Given a choice, why would a company build a new branch in our community or an existing business expand?

I believe these decisions are more than just the result of hard-nosed, economic evaluations of business advantages such as labor costs, location of raw materials, accessibility, etc. Many communities are similar to ours in "economic" terms. I believe that it's the "non-economic" factors such as our rich cultural heritage, our "quality of life" and the high level of available services that set Allentown apart.

In this monthly newsletter, I plan to explore Allentown's many resources that truly make it the "Queen City" and I will focus on the many non-profit organizations that are dedicated to improving every aspect of our lives. I have committed a staff person, Lee dePaula, to be my Urban Liaison. Her job is to gather input from all sectors of our city to ensure that all voices are heard.

We live in a time of extraordinary technological and industrial advances. New opportunities for jobs and investments will be created. Allentown's success in securing its share of these opportunities will depend, in part, on the strength of our partnerships with our many community based organizations.

As your State Senator, I have developed this monthly report as a means to fortify these partnerships. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any comments or suggestions as we work together to improve the overall quality of life in our Queen City.

Sincerely,

Pat Browne

Weed & Seed: Growing a Healthier Community

Not all the development in Allentown is taking place downtown. Behind the scenes in the 1st and 6th Wards, there is a lot going on with the Weed & Seed initiative. Started in 2002, this Department of Justice program involves long-term strategic planning with a mission to "unite the community, promoting an atmosphere of trust and civility where quiet, drug-free streets sustain thriving businesses that encourage community action and revitalization."

To "weed out" crime, local and state police provide a more visible presence in the target neighborhood, which extends from Front to 8th streets and from Tilghman to Hamilton streets. Local Weed & Seed Coordinator, Phyllis Alexander, says having police on foot patrols encourages better relations with law enforcement while also promoting public safety.

The "seeding" is a collaborative and comprehensive approach involving social service providers and community leaders who form the Assistance for Impact Delegation Team or AID Team. The AID Team provides leadership and serves as a resource to residents.

There is also a Target Area Local Leadership (TALL) Team of individuals who live, work or volunteer in the neighborhood. These are the people who know the community best and can share insights about its needs and assets. Residents on the TALL Team are provided with leadership training to enhance their problem-solving and leadership skills.

Both teams work together and with other public and private entities on subcommittees to



Senator Browne discusses the "Weed and Seed" Program with Daniel Bosket, Project Director of Community Action Development Corporation of Allentown.

identify the community's problems and work together to solve them through varied programs.

At Grace Episcopal Church, at 5th and Allen streets, Kensy Dubon provides residents with employment counseling. Her role is to assist and coach individuals in the skills needed to obtain a job.

Deserie Harper of the Adult Literacy Center of the Lehigh Valley works with residents (17-21 years old) in the Youth Education Adult Program (YAEP). YAEP provides GED preparation classes as well as a life skills program for young adults looking for a better quality of life.

To further economic revitalization, Community Action Development Corporation's Dan Bosket works with the small business community, providing information

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Weed & Seed Contact Information and Partner Agencies

For more information on how you can become involved with the Weed & Seed Initiative or one of the partner programs, please see contact information listed below.

Weed & Seed Office

Phyllis Alexander, Coordinator (610) 437-7679 • Olga Negron, TALL Team Coordinator (610) 437-7698

Weed & Seed Partners

- **Adult Literacy Center of LV:** Deserie Harper, Youth Counselor (610) 435-0680
- **Allentown Education Association:** (610) 432-7329
- **Allentown Housing Authority:** Dan Farrell, Director (610) 439-8678
- **Allentown Police Department:** Joseph Blackburn, Chief of Police (610) 437-7777
- **Allentown Redevelopment Authority:** Michael Rosenfeld (610) 437-7733
- **Allentown School District:** (484) 765-4000
- **Allentown YM/YWCA:** Michael Macharsky, Outreach Director (610) 434-9333
- **Alliance for Building Communities:** Fred Banuelos, Executive Director (610) 439-7007
- **Casa Guadalupe:** Louisa Torres, Drug and Alcohol Outreach Specialist (610) 435-9902
- **City of Allentown:** (610) 437-7612
- **Community Action Development Corp.:** Dan Bosket, Project Director (610) 434-5703
- **Grace Episcopal Church:** Kensy Dubon, Employment Counselor (484) 221-8841
- **Housing Association and Development Corp.:** Dave Evans, Executive Director (610) 432-6336
- **Lehigh County:** (610) 782-3001
- **Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network/Alert Partnerships:** Diana Heckman, Executive Director (610) 402-CARE
- **Muhlenberg College:** Dr. Borick, Political Science Dept. (484) 664-3444
- **Neighborhood Housing Services:** Janis Geist, Executive Director (610) 437-4571
- **4 C's Neighborhood Association:** Ernie Atiyeh (610) 434-9432
- **Old Town Neighborhood Association:** email address: otnw@hotmail.com
- **Pennsylvania State Police:** Troop M (610) 861-2026
- **St. Luke's Neighborhood Center:** Kate Scuffle, Executive Director (610) 434-5799
- **Stevens Park Safe Neighborhood Association:** Everett Bickford (610) 433-0357
- **The Salvation Army:** Yolanda Colbert, Community Project Coordinator for Youth (610) 439-5903
- **US Attorney's Office:** (215) 861-8200
- **United Way of the Lehigh Valley:** (610) 758-8010
- **Wards Recreation:** Michael Macharsky (YM/YWCA) (610) 434-9333

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and technical assistance for a more successful business venture.

Understanding the importance of opportunities for youth, Weed and Seed programs offer educational tutoring and recreational activities to nurture talents and foster a sense of community.

Mike Macharsky, Outreach Director for the Allentown YM/YWCA, runs athletic and recreational programs at Alliance Hall at 6th and Chew streets. In addition to providing a gym for activities, this program mentors kids in the interpersonal skills necessary for effective teamwork and positive communication necessary for everyday life.

Eugene McDuffy, Director of Youth In Action Now, aims to make students excited about learning. Located at 2nd and Chew streets, the program offers tutoring with a special emphasis on building self esteem and leadership skills. In these ways, participants in the 1st and 6th Wards are working together to grow a healthier neighborhood through Weed & Seed.

Within the City Lines By Lee dePaula

As Senator Browne's Urban Affairs Liaison, I have the best job in the world. Why? I am a city girl. It's that simple. For me, the energy and excitement of Allentown fills me with inspiration about the promise of tomorrow.

Recently, I attended a ribbon cutting ceremony for two new businesses, Quizinos and the City Line Coffee & Creamery, located at 818 Hamilton Street. Meanwhile a groundbreaking ceremony was just held for Alvin H. Butz, Inc.'s new state-of-the-art headquarters at 9th and Hamilton streets, complete with helipad; and, construction is well underway for the Allentown location of Brew Works.

Every day the employees of these businesses will add to the customer base in our downtown, and the new eateries will bring more people to Hamilton Street. It truly is a ripple effect: jobs beget jobs.

I am also inspired by the city's range of non-profit agencies and organizations. Each month, in Absolutely Allentown, we will feature different programs and services available to the citizens of Allentown. In this issue, we started with those agencies involved with the Weed & Seed initiative, a program founded on the belief that neighborhood residents know what is needed and best for their community.

In the future, we plan to add a calendar of community events taking place throughout the city that are either free or offered at a nominal



cost. Please contact me at (610) 821-8468 with any ideas or suggestions you may have for future newsletters. The way I see it, my job is to listen, learn and respond to residents of Allentown, that means YOU!

**Please contact me at
(610) 821-8468 with any ideas
or suggestions you may have
for future newsletters.**

State Senator

Pat Browne

16th District



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