

For Immediate Release

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**Local Companies Discuss Benefits of Volunteerism  
at Somerset County United Way Sponsored Event**

Bridgewater, NJ- The Somerset County Business Council, sponsored by Somerset County United Way, began the new year with an open forum at Dolce in Basking Ridge on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Over forty individuals from almost 20 companies and organizations gathered to share best practices and learn the value of corporate volunteerism and employee volunteer programs.

“Membership in the Somerset County Business Volunteer Council provides significant value to local companies of all sizes,” says Lisa Galonardo, AVP of Volunteer Services at Somerset County United Way. “Companies are able to build and strengthen their employee volunteer programs and develop great community relations through the sharing of best practices.”

The open forum included a presentation by Amy Dupuis, Manager of U.S. Philanthropy at sanofi-aventis, who discussed the effective use of volunteer activities during tough times to bolster employee morale and create a team atmosphere. Many other companies were given the opportunity to share some volunteer projects they currently run at their workplace, along with their experiences in executing them with their employees.

In addition, an overview of corporate/business volunteer programs was presented along with the benefits to individual volunteers, companies and the community. A variety of volunteer projects were shared including a project to engage children who participate in “Bring Your Child to Work Day” within the workplace.

Both space and a continental breakfast were donated by Dolce in Basking Ridge in support of promoting volunteerism in the community.

Attendees represented the following companies: HSBC, sanofi-aventis, the Somerset County Bar Association/Foundation, Magyar Bank, AT&T, TD Bank, Dolce Basking Ridge, Akzo Nobel Corporation, Brother International Corporation, Roche Molecular Systems, Somerset Hills Bank, United Health Care, Ortho McNeil Janssen, Mauro, Savo, Camerino and Grant Law Firm, Bridgewater Marriott, Chubb Corporation, Financial Resources Federal Credit Union and the Somerset County Business Partnership.

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Meeting semi-annually, the Business Volunteer Council was created in 2007 to offer businesses of all sizes an opportunity to benchmark and learn from each other, share best practices in corporate volunteering, develop skills to enhance Employee Volunteer Programs, and coordinate volunteer and philanthropic efforts within the community.

For more information or to find out how to become a member of the Somerset County Business Volunteer Council, please contact Lisa Galonardo at 908-253-6503 or via e-mail at [lisa.galonardo@scuw.org](mailto:lisa.galonardo@scuw.org).

An independent nonprofit organization, Somerset County United Way helps people who live and work in Somerset County through its vision that all residents possess a living income that will be attained through achieving financial stability, healthy lifestyles, and life readiness. United Way's mission is to lead a caring community to create solutions that transform people's lives. To learn more about how you can get involved, contact Somerset County United Way at (908) 725 – 6640 or visit [www.scuw.org](http://www.scuw.org).

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