News from
SALEM COUNTY
Office of Public Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 30, 2007

DIVERSITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS ANNOUNCED

(SALEM, NJ)--Freeholder Director Lee Ware today announced that the Board of Chosen Freeholders have appointed the members of the first County Diversity Advisory Council at their regular meeting on October 17, 2007. The standing committee members are: Deputy County Administrator Robin Weinstein (Chair), County Labor Counsel David Puma, Salem County Office for the Disabled Director Debra Behnke. The following employees were appointed for one year terms: Maria Blocksom (Facilities Management) and Capt. Ann Polk (County Correctional Facility. Additionally, the following members of the public were appointed for one year terms: Rev. Dr. Edward Dorn and Hon. Lydia Thompson.

"The Diversity Advisory Council has the very important task of assisting the County in promoting and celebrating diversity in the workplace," said Director Ware. "The Human Resources Department will be working closely with the Council to develop the first-ever County Diversity Initiative, which will be designed to achieve our goal of ensuring that the County of Salem continues to lead the efforts of embracing diversity on all fronts."

Robin Weinstein is the Deputy County Administrator for the County of Salem and in this capacity serves as the Director of Human Resources. Robin is also the interim Pastor at Bethany Presbyterian Church in Bridgeton. He is a graduate of Eastern University with Bachelors of Arts in Justice, Law and Society and Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary with a Masters of Theological Studies in Faith and Public Policy.

Debra Behnke grew up on in Lower Alloways Creek and is and active member of the Hancock's Bridge United Methodist Church. Debra is currently the Director for the Salem County Office for the Disabled and is serving on the Salem County Advisory Council for the Office for the Disabled.

David J. Puma is the president and managing shareholder of Telsey & Puma, P.A., a law firm headquartered in Salem City. He has practiced law in Salem County for over 20 years and is active in many organizations. He currently serves as the County's labor counsel.

Maria Blockson joined is employed by the County of Salem's Facilities Management Department. Mara has a background in teaching pre-school children and teaching

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Spanish to all ages. Maria resides in Alloway with her husband Tim and there children.

Capt. Ann Polk has been employed with the Salem County Correctional Facility since 1978 and is a resident of Quinton Township. She graduated from Salem High School and attended Atlantic Community College majoring in Psychology. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. She is an active member at Mt. Pisgah AME Church where she serves on the Steward Board, the Offical Board, and the Prayer Brand. She is also a member of the Correctional Security Network, the NAACP, NOBLE, and the Salem County Superior Correctional Officers Association.

Rev. Dr. Edward Dorn, Th.D, is the Pastor of Second Baptist Church located in Pedricktown, where he has served for 25 years. He received his Doctor of Ministry and Doctor of Theology Degrees in 1989. Rev. Dr. Dorn is also a Commissioner on the Delaware River Bay Authority.

Hon. Lydia Thompson is a Councilwoman in the City of Salem and serving her third year, where she serves as Chairperson of the Neighborhood Initiative Committee and the Clean Community Coordinator. She is a retired school teacher and graduated from Jersey City State College with a Bachelors of Arts in Kindgergarten/ Primary Education. She is an active member in Mount Hope United Methodist Church, Board of Directors for Salem City Free Library, Salem Women's Community Choir, Salem County Retired Education Association, and the National Education Association.

The Diversity Advisory Council can be reached by calling Aimee Cooper, Assistant Personnel Technician, at (856) 935-7510 ext. 8202 or emailing acooper@salemcountynj.gov. The first meeting of the Council will be in December.

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