

March 12, 2007

EDITORS: The following information is for immediate release. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Grigalonis, Chief Operating Officer of the Chester County Economic Development Council, at 610 458-5700.

Chester County Economic Development Council
hosts international business event
on emerging export markets in West Africa
Event takes place Friday, April 10, 2007

EXTON _ The Chester County Economic Development Council is hosting an international business event dealing with emerging export markets in West Africa.

“The international business community is thriving in Chester County,” said Gary Smith, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Economic Development Council. “This is an excellent opportunity for business leaders to learn about markets in West Africa.”

The event will be presented by **Becky Erkul, International Economist**, Office of Africa, Market Access & Compliance, United States Department of Commerce; **Joan Edwards, Manager** Insurance Business Development, Overseas Private Investment Corporation; **Scott Conrad, Assistant Vice President** International Trade Finance, M&T Bank; **Bob Elsas, Senior International Credit Officer** United States Small Business Administration; and *Janet Kolokithas, International Trade Representative, Department of Community & Economic Development, Pennsylvania's Center for Trade Development.*

United States exports have **grown more than 50 percent within the last five years in the region.** Experts in the public and private sector will speak on leading industries, project developments, trade finance, and proven growth strategies in West Africa. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will discuss opportunities to participate in a West Africa trade mission featuring stops in Dakar, Senegal and Accra, Ghana on November 5-9, 2007.

The Central and West Africa sectors that hold the most promise for United States exporters are:

- Oil and gas extraction and refining equipment industries
- Mining
- Agro-industrial machinery and chemical
- Food processing equipment and technology
- Telecommunications
- Generic pharmaceutical products
- Reconditioned industrial equipment
- Cosmetics
- Used clothing

The event takes place on Friday, April 10, 2007, at the Chester County Economic Development Council, 737 Constitution Drive, Exton, starting at 8:00 a.m. The cost is \$15 for members of the Economic Development Council or the World Trade Center of Philadelphia and \$25 for non-members. To register, please contact Courtney O'Donnell at codonnell@cceconomicdevelopment.com.

The Chester County Economic Development Council is a private, non-profit economic development organization that has been nurturing economic growth in Chester County and the surrounding region for more than 40 years. The Council's portfolio of business growth services includes: low-interest financing, small business lending, workforce training, retention and expansion, customized international business assistance, land and building site selection, brownfields consultation and remediation, urban redevelopment, and agricultural economic development. The Council also offers state-of-the art conference and training facilities at its brand new facility in Eagleview. For more information, see www.cceconomicdevelopment.com.