CAPE MAY COUNTY CHAMBER

Newsletter || November 2026

President's Message



As we enter November and approach the holiday season, I want to take a moment to reflect on the tremendous work being accomplished by your Chamber and the partnerships that continue to strengthen Cape May County's business community.

October was an exceptionally busy and productive month. Our 82nd Annual Meeting and Installation of Officers was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the businesses, organizations, and individuals whose leadership and commitment make Cape May County such a special place to live, work, and do business. Congratulations once again to our award recipients, and a sincere thank you to our outgoing and incoming Board members for their willingness to serve.

Our recent South Shore Summit, held in collaboration with the Greater Atlantic City Chamber, brought important attention to the potential economic consequences of casino expansion in North Jersey and New York, along with proposals for a major convention center in the Meadowlands. These developments could have significant implications for the tourism, hospitality, and convention industries throughout Atlantic and Cape May Counties. It is essential that South Jersey's business community has a strong and unified voice in these discussions.

Looking ahead, we are delighted to welcome Evan Weiss of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority as our keynote speaker at our November 19th Membership Meeting. This will be an excellent opportunity to learn more about economic development initiatives, investment opportunities, and programs that can support businesses throughout our region.

As we move beyond another election season, the Chamber looks forward to continuing its productive relationships with our elected officials at every level of government. Our mission remains steadfast and nonpartisan: to advocate for a healthy business climate and ensure that Cape May County's interests are heard and represented.

On behalf of the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce, I wish you and your families a wonderful and peaceful Thanksgiving.

Together, we are not simply supporting business - we are building a stronger, more resilient, and more prosperous Cape May County.

Warmest Regards,

Barbara Stafford Jones,
President/CEO

UPCOMING EVENTS

11/13: New Member Reception - Chamber Office

11/13: Funding the Future of Cape May County Education Foundation Event - Union League Whitebrier

11/16: Evening Networking Mixer - Surf Dog Bar & Grill

11/19: Membership Meeting - Avalon Yacht Club

11/20: NJ Employee Leave Law Seminar w/ Fisher Phillips - Chamber Office

12/1: Mingle Bells Networking Mixer - Harry's Cape May

12/17: Holiday Luncheon - The Lobster House

Click here to see all Chamber events.

Chamber & Legislative Updates

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce proudly recognized its 2026 Annual Excellence Award winners during its 82nd Annual Meeting and Installation Dinner, held October 21 at the Wildwoods Convention Center. The awards celebrate the outstanding individuals, businesses, and organizations whose leadership, service, and commitment continue to strengthen Cape May County's business community and enhance the quality of life throughout the region. This year's honorees represent a diverse range of industries and areas of service, reflecting the dedication, innovation, and community spirit that make Cape May County a special place to live, work, and do business. **Read more.**

Cape May County Chamber President & CEO Barbara Stafford Jones was honored as one of Scouting America Garden State Council's Cape May County Distinguished Citizens of the Year at its Oct. 27 celebration, alongside Assemblyman Antwan McClellan and Assemblyman Erik Simonsen. The recognition celebrated their leadership, dedication, and contributions to strengthening Cape May County and the greater South Jersey community. The event also supported Scouting America Garden State Council, which serves more than 4,500 youth annually throughout southern New Jersey through mentorship, leadership development, and opportunities for personal growth.

Advertising is underway for the 2027 Jersey Cape Vacation Guide, providing businesses with an opportunity to reach thousands of visitors planning their next Jersey Cape getaway. As a trusted resource for vacationers, the guide offers valuable exposure to potential customers researching local accommodations, restaurants, attractions, shopping, and services. Advertising is an effective way to increase visibility, promote your business, and

connect with visitors before they arrive. With the 2027 tourism season approaching, now is the time to secure your placement. **The deadline to reserve advertising space is quickly approaching on Nov. 30. Read more.**

The Cape May County Chamber Education Foundation's Food for Thought: Funding the Future of Cape May County will be taking place on Nov. 13 at Union League Whitebrier in Avalon. It will be an evening of networking, philanthropy, and meaningful connections between the Cape May County Chamber and Union League communities. Hosted by Education Foundation President Michael J. Donohue, Esq. and Union League Board Director and Treasurer Michael J. Maher, this special event will bring together business and community leaders to strengthen partnerships, exchange ideas, and support a shared commitment to Cape May County's future. Proceeds will benefit the Cape May County Chamber Education Foundation, supporting its educational initiatives and opportunities for our community. **Learn more and sign up.**

The Chamber will welcome New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) CEO Evan Weiss as the featured speaker for the Nov. 19 Membership Meeting at Avalon Yacht Club. The discussion will focus on the NJEDA's economic development priorities and how state resources and initiatives can better serve Cape May County's business community. The event is proudly sponsored by Rutala & Associates and Cape Assist. **Learn more and sign up.**

The Chamber, in partnership with Fisher Phillips, will host an informative seminar, "NJ's Employee Leave Law Overhaul: Is Your Business Prepared?" on Nov. 20, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the Chamber office. Recent changes to New Jersey's leave laws have expanded employer responsibilities and introduced new job protections, potentially impacting businesses of all sizes. Presented by Leanne Lane Coyle of Fisher Phillips, the program will cover what has changed, how the new requirements affect employers, areas of legal uncertainty, and practical steps businesses can take to remain compliant while minimizing workplace disruptions. CLE, SHRM and HRCI credits will be offered. **Learn more and sign up.**

Sponsorship opportunities for 2027 with the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce are now available. Businesses and organizations can partner with the Chamber through a variety of events, including signature programs such as the Annual Dinner, Women in Business Conference, Business at the Beach Expo, and the Annual Golf Tournament, as well as through mixers, seminars, and monthly membership meetings. Sponsorships are also offered for Education Foundation events and programs. These opportunities provide valuable visibility while directly supporting the Chamber's mission and ongoing programs that strengthen the local business community. **Learn more.**

The Chamber is collecting new diapers to support families facing diaper needs. According to the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, many low-income parents must choose between diapers and food, as diapers aren't covered by programs like SNAP or WIC. The Chamber office is serving as a drop-off location for anyone wishing to contribute. **Learn more.**

The Chamber is monitoring New Jersey legislation **A5722**, which would designate hotels as recognized places of public access and require them to maintain opioid antidotes and harm reduction supplies on-site. The bill would also require staff training on the administration of

opioid antidotes. Hotels would have the option to enter into agreements with registered harm reduction service providers to meet these requirements. The Chamber is following the legislation to understand its potential impact on the hospitality industry and hotel operators throughout Cape May County.

The Borough of Woodbine has been selected as the only community in Cape May County included in New Jersey's latest submission for federal Opportunity Zone designation. The Sherrill Administration announced that the state submitted 130 census tracts, the maximum allowed, for consideration, with the goal of attracting investment in housing, local businesses and community revitalization. The statewide selection process, led by the Department of Community Affairs, New Jersey Economic Development Authority and Department of State, included eligible communities across all 20 counties. Woodbine's inclusion presents a potential opportunity to encourage future investment and support continued growth in the borough. **Read more.**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) is accepting applications for the Main Street Acquisition Support Grant, which provides eligible small businesses with reimbursement of commercial property closing costs up to $50,000. Businesses must have completed a property purchase after October 1, 2024, using financing through an eligible conventional lender, and apply within one year of closing. The property must remain occupied by the business for at least five years, with repayment provisions applying if occupancy requirements are not met. This grant offers valuable financial relief to small businesses investing in commercial property and can help free up funds for renovations, improvements, and other operating expenses. **Read more.**

Permits.NJ.gov is a new online resource launched by the State of New Jersey to improve transparency and provide greater visibility into the state's permitting process. The New Jersey Permitting Dashboard allows residents, businesses, developers, and other interested parties to track the progress of selected projects as they move through state agency reviews. Currently in its pilot phase, the public dashboard follows 10 projects involving the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Transportation (DOT), and Department of Community Affairs (DCA). For businesses considering expansions, renovations, new construction, or commercial development, permitting timelines can have a significant impact on project costs and schedules. This initiative is part of a broader state effort to streamline permitting, reduce delays, and make the approval process more predictable. **Read more.**

The South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA) offers regional transportation services through its SJ Connects program, which is designed to improve access to employment, education, healthcare, and other important destinations throughout South Jersey. For Cape May County, one of the most relevant services is the Vineland to Cape May Court House Shuttle, a fare-free transportation option that connects Cumberland and Cape May counties. The stops include the Woodbine Branch of the Cape May County Library, Atlantic Cape Community College Court House Campus, AtlantiCare Health Hub and Cooper Norcross Hospital Cape Regional, providing residents with additional transportation options for commuting, accessing services, and reaching employment opportunities. **Learn more.**

Small Business Saturday, taking place on Nov. 28, is an opportunity to recognize and support the independent businesses that help make our communities thrive. As the holiday shopping season begins, the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce encourages residents and visitors to shop local, dine locally, and support small businesses throughout Cape May

County. Make a difference this holiday season by choosing to shop small on November 28 and throughout the year.

In celebration of Giving Tuesday on Dec. 1, the Cape May County Chamber Education Foundation invites the community to support its efforts to strengthen educational opportunities and workforce development throughout Cape May County. Contributions directly support scholarships for graduating high school seniors, adult education students at Cape May Tech, dual and concurrent credit students, and the Leadership Cape May County program. Every donation makes a difference in helping local students and professionals build skills, pursue opportunities, and contribute to the future of our community. All contributions go directly to the Education Foundation, a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and are acknowledged for tax purposes. **Learn more.**

New Jersey's statewide minimum wage will increase by $0.56 to $16.48 per hour for most employees, effective January 1, 2027. **Learn more.**



County & Member Updates

On Oct. 27, Cape May County proudly marked the completion of Phase Two beautification improvements at the Gerald M. Thornton Veterans Cemetery. These upgrades honor those who served and keep this sacred ground beautiful, peaceful, and dignified. Highlights include 1,200 plantings (285 trees), 4,500 square yards of sod, new landscape berms, 15 flagpoles, 34 granite markers and wayfinding signs, a refreshed Prayer Garden, plus major improvements to fencing, lighting, sidewalks, paving, and irrigation. **Read more.**

Cape May County is accepting more than $116,000 in state funding to support Operation Helping Hand through August 2027. This program, run through the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office, helps connect people struggling with substance use to treatment and recovery services. Locally, it supports outreach efforts like the Hope One mobile unit, which brings recovery resources, Narcan, and support directly into communities across the county. The funding comes from the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety and requires no local match. **Read more.**

The Cape May County Board of Commissioners has accepted an $84,050 grant from the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety to support the ARRIVE Together Critical Incident Model. This program pairs the Prosecutor's Office with Jewish Family Services so mental health professionals can respond alongside law enforcement in high-risk crisis situations (such as barricaded individuals). The goal is safer outcomes, better de-escalation and connecting people to the care they need. **Read more.**

The Cape May County Zoo recently welcomed several new additions to its animal family. Two snow leopards, Asha, a one-year-old female from Great Plains Zoo, and Valens, a seven-year-old male from Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, have joined the zoo. The zoo also welcomed Westley, a young male red kangaroo. These new arrivals bring exciting

opportunities for visitors to learn more about these incredible species while enjoying all the zoo has to offer. **Read more.**

Cape May County Technical High School is excited to announce a historic opportunity for students. Starting in the Fall of 2027, New Jersey will launch its first-ever Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (CGJROTC) program. This program will be open to all incoming students in grades 9 through 12, offering exceptional opportunities for leadership development, teamwork, civic responsibility, and exploration of maritime careers and service. Applications are now open. To learn more, encourage those interested to attend an informational session scheduled on November 10th or December 10th at 5:00pm at Cape May County Technical High School. **Learn more.**

Triad Associates announced that they have helped secure $3,016,182 in Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for eight municipalities throughout New Jersey. Local municipalities include the Borough of Woodbine, the City of North Wildwood and the City of Wildwood. The Small Cities CDBG program provides critical funding to eligible municipalities and counties for projects that strengthen communities and address important local needs, including housing rehabilitation, public infrastructure, public facility improvements, community revitalization, and economic development. **Read more.**

BluePath Funding offers small businesses, independent contractors, self-employed individuals and side hustlers access to micro-funding options of up to $15,000, with up to $20,000 available for repeat customers. The program is designed to provide quick access to working capital, with funding decisions based on business income rather than credit score. Learn more.

Sandbar Joe’s in Stone Harbor is offering a unique waterfront experience for holiday celebrations aboard The Sandbar Social. Perfect for office parties, client gatherings, or celebrations with friends, private two-hour cruises accommodate groups of up to 45 guests and include a premium open bar with a dedicated bartender, light refreshments, music, and optional catering. Guests can also enjoy winter igloos and onboard heating upon request, creating a festive and memorable setting for the holiday season. Holiday dates are limited, and early reservations are encouraged. **Learn more.**

The American Red Cross is seeking Cape May-area families interested in serving as hosts for Operation Fireside. The program provides recruits from the Coast Guard Training Center in Cape May with a welcoming place to spend Thanksgiving and/or Christmas Day. For more than 40 years, families and local organizations throughout Cape May County have opened their homes to Coast Guard recruits, continuing a cherished community tradition. **Read more.**

Burke Motor Group is inviting the community to help select a deserving Southern New Jersey charitable organization to support through its community giving initiative. For every vehicle purchased, Burke Motor Group will make a donation to a local charitable organization chosen by the public. Community members are encouraged to nominate their favorite nonprofit by emailing francey.burke@burkemotorgroup.com by Nov. 14, 2026.

The Cape May County Quit Center at Cape Assist is dedicated to helping individuals on their journey to a healthier, tobacco-free life. Offering free, personalized support, the Quit Center provides evidence-based counseling, nicotine replacement therapy, and resources tailored to meet the unique needs of each participant. Whether you're looking to quit smoking, vaping, or using other tobacco products, our trained professionals are here to guide and support you every step of the way. The Quit Center also offers specialized programs for youth, adults, and military families to address the specific challenges faced by each group. **Learn more.**

Cape May County Veterans Connection

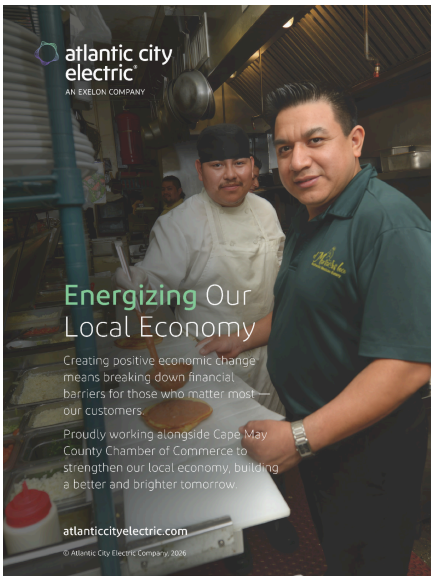
Veterans Day is Wednesday, November 11, 2026

- The Cape May County Board of County Commissioners invites the public to the County Veterans Day Ceremony on Wednesday, November 11 at 1:00 PM at the Gerald M. Thornton Cape May County Veterans Cemetery.

National Veterans Small Business Week is November 9-13, 2026.

- The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will recognize and celebrate veteran-owned businesses during National Veterans Small Business Week, highlighting the contributions of veteran entrepreneurs and their impact on the economy. This year's theme, *"Honoring Veteran-Owned, American Made,"* focuses on supporting veteran business owners through resources, training, funding opportunities, government contracting, and business development assistance. Veterans, service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and military spouses can explore programs such as Boots to Business and Veterans Business Outreach Centers to access guidance and support for starting or growing a business.

- Throughout the month of November, Atlantic Cape Community College will commemorate the bravery, courage and dedication of our country's military veterans with numerous free and open-to-the-public events at each of the College's campuses to recognize National Veterans and Military Families Month. **Learn more.**





Chamber Event Highlights



82nd Annual Meeting & Installation Dinner - October 21

The Chamber extends its heartfelt gratitude to everyone who attended the 82nd Annual Meeting and Installation Dinner at the Wildwoods Convention Center on October 21, 2026. *The dinner was presented by Rosenello & Bashaw*.

The Chamber warmly embraces our new Board of Directors and Executive Committee members and extends hearty congratulations to all those who emerged as winners of the Annual Excellence Awards. The Chamber would also like to recognize our incredible sponsors for their support of the event. ***Please click here for the full list.***

We extend our special gratitude to Cape May County Commissioner Vice Director Andrew Bulakowski for overseeing the installation of our new 2026-27 officers, Cape May County bizHub's Christopher Stenger for leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance, Assemblyman Erik Simonsen for singing the National Anthem, Cape May County Commissioner Bobby Barr for the wonderful invocation, the U.S. Coast Guard for the presentation of colors, Britton's Bakery for the dessert tables and Shaun Reilly Photography for capturing the event through photos.

We also send our sincere appreciation to Congressman Jefferson Van Drew, Senator Michael Testa, Assemblyman Erik Simonsen, Assemblyman Antwan McClellan, and the Cape May County Board of County Commissioners for attending the dinner and presenting proclamations in recognition of this year's award recipients.

Again, the Chamber Staff and Annual Dinner Committee are humbled by the overwhelming positive feedback from the event. We look forward to seeing you at future events and continuing to strengthen our business community together!

Our next meeting is Thursday, November 19, 2026 at Avalon Yacht Club, featuring New Jersey Economic Development Authority CEO Evan Weiss. Sign up here.





Glow Golf Scramble - October 2



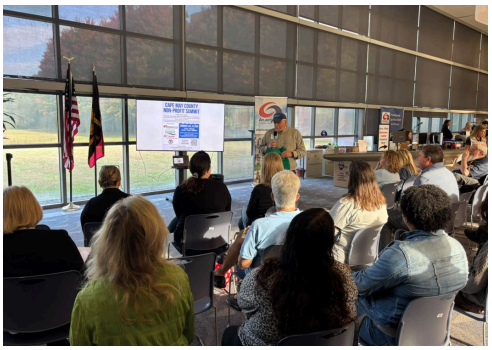
The Chamber hosted its second Glow Golf Scramble at Big Little 9, where participants enjoyed a fun evening of glowing golf balls, perfect fall weather, great company, and an engagement! Special thanks to Big Little 9 for hosting and to Ludlam Brewery and Obscura Brewery for their generous donations.

Gospel Brunch - October 11

The Education Foundation's Gospel Brunch was an uplifting afternoon of music and community, featuring the Eddie Morgan Trio and the Moore sisters. Despite the weather, attendees came together to enjoy the performance and support the Foundation's educational programs and scholarships. The Foundation extends its sincere thanks to sponsors Assemblymen Erik Simonsen and Antwan McClellan, Commissioners Bulakowski and Barr, Leader Printers, Anzelone Electric, Whalen's Auto, and the entire Inn of Cape May team for helping make the event possible.



Non-Profit Summit - October 15



The Chamber hosted its Fall Cape May County Nonprofit Summit in partnership with Atlantic Cape Community College, Cooper Norcross Health Care, and the Cape May County Women's Commission. The event brought together local nonprofit organizations for a morning of connection, collaboration, and community building, strengthening relationships and fostering opportunities for continued partnership throughout Cape May County.

South Shore Summit - October 28





The Cape May County Chamber and the Greater Atlantic City Chamber partnered to host the second South Shore Summit at Stockton University in Atlantic City, bringing together business leaders, elected officials, and regional stakeholders to discuss the economic future of South Jersey.

Presentations by Max Slusher of the Atlantic County Economic Alliance and

Louis Belasco of the Greater Wildwoods Tourism Improvement & Development Authority explored the potential impacts of expanded gaming in North Jersey and a proposed Meadowlands convention center on the region's tourism and business industries.

A panel moderated by Brian Tyrell of Stockton University's Lloyd D. Levenson Institute for Gaming, Hospitality and Tourism featured Senator Michael L. Testa, Jr.; Assemblyman Donald A. Guardian; Assemblywoman Maureen Rowan; Gary Musich of Visit Atlantic City; George Goldhoff of Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City and the Casino Association of New Jersey; Diane Wieland of the Cape May County Department of Tourism; and Will Hanson of the Cape May County Planning Department. The discussion emphasized protecting South Jersey's tourism industry, strengthening regional collaboration, and keeping the state competitive for businesses and jobs.

The Chambers thank the presenters, panelists, moderator, and sponsors - AtlantiCare, Atlantic City Electric, Comcast, Prime Marketing, and Stockton University - for supporting this important conversation about the region's future.





Chamber Member of the Month:
Paul's Pest Control

Paul's Pest Control has been a member of the Cape May County Chamber since 2006 and has been serving the community since 1999. Built on years of experience, ongoing technician training, and a commitment to staying current with the latest technology and industry regulations, the company provides residential and commercial pest control services. Its highly skilled technicians specialize in identifying and resolving pest problems, offering services for a variety of pests, including termites, ants, rodents, fleas, and ticks, as well as real estate inspections and bird exclusion. With a longstanding commitment to customer service, fair and ethical business practices, and guaranteed results, Paul's Pest Control works to protect homes and businesses from unwanted pests.

Learn more at www.paulspestcontrol.net.

Out on the Town with Our Members

Haven Marina Resorts recently welcomed guests to an open house at **Scotch Bonnet Marina**, one of its newest lodging properties, where Chamber staff had the opportunity to tour the accommodations and experience this exciting addition to Cape May County. Located along the Boulevard on the approach to Stone Harbor, Scotch Bonnet features five waterfront units offering a unique coastal getaway for travelers seeking something special at the shore.



Chamber staff toured both a one-bedroom and a two-bedroom unit, each showcasing modern design with tasteful nautical touches. Every unit features a private deck off the living area, as well as a rooftop deck ideal for relaxing, sunbathing, and entertaining while enjoying the waterfront surroundings. The property offers a beautiful blend of comfort, style, and coastal charm in a convenient location between Cape May Court House and Stone Harbor.

Scotch Bonnet is expected to welcome its first guests in Spring 2027, adding another distinctive lodging option to Cape May County's hospitality offerings. The Chamber appreciates Haven Marina Resorts for hosting a wonderful open house and looks forward to seeing this new property welcome “travelers, not tourists” to the Jersey Cape!

Scotch Bonnet Marina is located at 925 Stone Harbor Boulevard in Middle Township. To learn more, please visit www.scotchbonnetmarina.com.



Chamber staff recently attended the **Citizens/Veterans Advisory Committee (CVAC)** 9th Annual Awards Luncheon, an opportunity to recognize the individuals and organizations making a meaningful difference in the lives of veterans throughout Cape May County. The luncheon brought together veterans, community organizations, and supporters to highlight the needs of local veterans and their families while recognizing the importance of connecting them with essential resources and services.

CVAC’s mission is to promote awareness of veterans’ needs and identify appropriate resources and referrals that support those needs and enhance the lives of veterans. Throughout the program, personal testimonials from veterans illustrated the positive impact of CVAC’s work and the importance of continued community support.

The luncheon also recognized this year’s CVAC Valor Award recipients for their outstanding contributions, including individuals honored as Volunteer of the Year, Citizen of the Year, and Veteran of the Year, as well as a local business and organization recognized for their support of veterans.

The Chamber appreciates the opportunity to learn more about CVAC’s ongoing efforts and recognizes the dedication of its volunteers, community partners, and supporters who work to ensure local veterans receive the assistance and recognition they deserve.

To learn about CVAC, please visit www.cvaccapemay.com.

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Are You Getting the Most Out of Your Chamber Membership?

Now is the perfect time to make sure you're taking advantage of everything your Cape May County Chamber of Commerce membership has to offer. With more than 965 members and growing, there are countless opportunities to get involved.

Promote Your Business
Share your events, news, job openings, and special offers through the Chamber website and member portal.

Keep Your Profile Current
Make sure your business listing includes updated contact information, hours, services, photos, and links.

Build Your Network
Attend Chamber membership meetings, networking mixers, educational programs, and signature events held throughout Cape May County.

Get Involved
Join one of our Action Committees and help shape initiatives that support the local business community while expanding your professional network.

Celebrate Your Success
Planning a grand opening, anniversary, renovation, or expansion? Let us help you celebrate with a Chamber Ribbon Cutting.

Increase Your Exposure
Take advantage of sponsorships, advertising opportunities in the Jersey Cape Vacation Guide, and dedicated email blasts to showcase your business to our members and visitors alike.

Use Chamber Resources
Need a meeting space? Members have access to our newly renovated conference room, complete with modern video conferencing technology and seating for up to 20 guests.





CAPE MAY COUNTY CHAMBER

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