Chamber is the business voice of New Britain

By CHARLES PAULLIN
STAFF WRITER

NEW BRITAIN — When it comes to owning and running a business in the New Britain area, there are not many things better than being a member of the Greater New Britain Chamber of Commerce.

Located at One Court Street, the membership-based organization has been the business voice for New Britain for over half a century.

“In general terms, the Chamber offers many benefits,” says Timothy Stewart, president of the New Britain Chamber of Commerce.

Those benefits include competitive health insurance programs through the Central Connecticut Benefits Center; free small business counseling and informative seminars and workshops; access to the chamber’s member mailing list, as well as low-cost marketing and advertising programs.

Comprising various non-profit, manufacturing, health care, educational services and small to mid-sized businesses, the organization provides its services to more than 400 businesses in the area and does so with a 27-member board that includes law professionals, educators, accountants and members of the communications and medical industries.

“In conjunction with a strong working relationship with the mayor’s office, the Greater New Britain Chamber of Commerce is able to accomplish various goals regarding the business community and our current and future Chamber members,” Stewart says.

While also providing services to Berlin, the chamber is home to a unique partnership with the City of New Britain’s Municipal Economic Development Agency, which works with the chamber on a focused economic development strategy for the city’s business community.

“The chamber also partners with Capital Workforce Partners, which employs a Future Workforce coordinator to prepare local students to become the city’s workforce in the future,” Stewart says.

One way the chamber aims to prepare students for the workforce of tomorrow is through an Innovation Places Granting Grant, which seeks to support entrepreneurs and leaders developing places that will attract the talent enterprises need.

Most recently, Stewart met with Rick Mullins, director of Central Connecticut State University’s Institute of Technology and Business Development; Robin Sharp, executive director of the YWCA; and others to discuss the findings of a survey and focus group data that will be tied in to a “master plan” for the tri-town area of New Britain, Berlin and Farmington, after being awarded a $40,000 grant.

“We’ve (the group of officials and business owners) all said that we’re going to continue these efforts regardless of if we get the continuation of funding for this grant,” Stewart told The Herald. “So we’ll all stay connected at some point, and there’s a lot of things that we could do without any real additional funding — just communication and breaking down some barriers that have existed for many years.”

The Chamber of Commerce has been the business voice of New Britain for over a century, as the chamber celebrated its centennial on Nov. 14, 2013. Throughout the years it has provided the business community with various mechanisms to increase customer base, cut business costs, network and partake in marketing opportunities.

For more information on the Greater New Britain Chamber of Commerce, visit greaternewbritainchamber.com or call 860-229-1665.

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For more information on the New Britain Chamber of Commerce, please contact the Chamber office at 1 Court St., New Britain, or call (860) 229-1665.