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## **BERNARDS TOWNSHIP AWARDED WELLNESS CONTEST GRANT**

### ***SOMERSET COUNTY TOWN SELECTED TO RECEIVE VERY FIRST MAYORS WELLNESS CAMPAIGN GRANT TO HOST WEIGHT LOSS CHALLENGE***

Trenton, New Jersey – Bernards Township will receive a wellness grant from the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute’s Mayors Wellness Campaign, according to Emily Littman, Director of the Mayors Wellness Campaign. Funding for the grant was provided by the National Business Coalition on Health.

Bernards Township Mayor Scott Spitzer was pleased to hear his town had been selected as the designated community partner that will hold the year long *Toxic Waistlines Competition*.

“We are so grateful to the National Business Coalition on Health and our partner in this wellness initiative, Bernards Township,” said NJHCQI President and CEO David Knowlton. “Bernards has an extensive reputation of offering their residents recreation and health activities. We couldn’t be happier with the enduring efforts of Mayor Spitzer to encourage healthy and active lifestyles as part of their Mayors Wellness Campaign.”

During the summer of 2009, the first ever *Toxic Waistlines Competition* was held in Morris County. Fourteen municipalities participated with Parsippany coming out on top, with their 125 participants losing an average of 4.16 waistline inches in the 100-day contest. In total, 264 people lost 2.617 pounds and 622.25 inches from their waistlines.

“Our goal in holding this contest again is to encourage people to eat healthier, be more active and to lose those toxic inches around the waistline that experts now say is equally or more important than a person’s total body fat,” said Littman. “Last year’s results were fantastic, and we hope to do just as well in Bernards Township.”

“We also hope to demonstrate that creative alternatives to traditional health and wellness programs can have sustainable and significant results,” added Mayors Wellness Campaign Associate, Catherine Angrisani-Purnell, RN.

### **About the Mayors Wellness Campaign**

The MWC is an initiative of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute in partnership with the New Jersey State League of Municipalities. Through public-private partnerships, the MWC provides structure and resources for healthy community initiatives, with a long-term goal of

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reducing health care and other costs secondary to obesity and inactivity. The MWC supports mayors as champions of community health. By encouraging mayors to play a leadership role in supporting local opportunities for active, healthy lifestyles, the intent of the MWC is to improve health and make New Jersey a national leader in community-based health interventions. Currently, more than half of the New Jersey's 566 municipalities are participating in the campaign and are working aggressively to decrease obesity rates and increase the overall health of their communities.

#### **About the National Business Coalition on Health**

The goal of the National Business Coalition on Health's affiliate organization, Community Coalitions Health Institute is to strengthen existing relationships and catalyze new partnerships between the NBCH member coalitions throughout the U.S. and state and local public health agencies for the purpose of advancing population health strategies at the community level.