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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Newark Now's Annual Brighter Holiday Initiative Reaches 5,000 Families With Food, Toys, and Access to Important Social Services

NEWARK, N.J., December 22, 2008 - Newark Now's Brighter Holiday initiative has reached more than 5,000 families in Newark since November, providing them with food, toys, clothing, and free benefits screening and enrollment for important social services. Through Brighter Holiday events, families have easy access to Newark Now's Financial Empowerment Center and Family Success Centers, one-stop centers that offer screening and enrollment for resources like Food Stamps, as well as free tax preparation that can help families obtain the Earned Income Tax Credit. Brighter Holiday launched throughout Newark in November with the distribution of turkeys and benefits screenings for families, and continued throughout December with toy and clothing giveaways and benefits screenings.

"Newarkers trust that Newark Now will help them obtain critically important resources and services. Since the November launch of our annual Brighter Holiday initiative, Newark Now has screened more than 1,500 families for benefits eligibility and enrolled them into services they need. More than 2,500 families received turkeys from Newark Now for Thanksgiving, and more than 3,000 families have received toys and warm clothing for the December holiday season", said Edgar C. Izurieta, President of Newark Now.

For the Brighter Holiday initiative, Newark Now has partnered with dozens of community organizations (including the Ruth Bass Foundation), multiple companies (including the toy companies Zizzle and Lionel Trains), and Mayor Cory A. Booker and his Administration.

About Newark Now

Newark Now was founded in 2002 by Cory Booker to provide Newark residents with skills, tools, and support to transform their neighborhoods. Newark Now helps Newarkers connect to important resources and services, helps government and non-governmental entities improve collaboration and coordination in the delivery of their services, and helps grassroots organizations build their capacity to lead community improvement efforts.

For more information about Newark Now please call 973-733-3460 or visit www.newarknow.org .