



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Allegheny County Celebrates Small Business Saturday, Allegheny Together**

**PITTSBURGH** – County Executive Rich Fitzgerald has proclaimed Saturday, November 25, as “Small Business Saturday” in Allegheny County. The Saturday after Thanksgiving is nationally recognized as Small Business Saturday, and is dedicated to supporting small businesses across the country.

The Pittsburgh region ranks first among US metro areas with the most entrepreneurship activity, and ranked second in 2015, as determined by the Kaufman Main Street Entrepreneurship Index 2016. Pittsburgh also had the highest established small business density, by far the highest number in the index which refers to businesses that are at least five years old with 1-49 employees. The Pittsburgh Metropolitan Area ranked 74<sup>th</sup> out of 106 by the American City Business Journals, which looks at the vitality of small business sectors across America.

“We recognize that small businesses are the lifeblood of our community, and this designation is just one small way to recognize their impact,” said Fitzgerald. “We have nearly 58,000 small businesses in the metropolitan area, accounting for 32.4% of private-sector jobs and over one million employees.”

Allegheny County has 46, individual, traditional walkable business districts. In recognition of those opportunities, Allegheny Together was founded in 2007 to provide downtown-based communities with services aimed towards the sustainable revitalization of their business districts. To date, 12 Allegheny County communities have participated in the program and four new communities will become part of the program in 2016-17. Participating communities enroll for a five-year period and work with Economic Development and program consultants. During that five-year time period, communities create and implement business district plans and projects to create stable, attractive and vibrant business districts.

“The Allegheny Together program recognizes that community involvement is essential to the strength and vitality of any business district initiative,” said Bob Hurley, Director of Allegheny County Economic Development. “Public support and collaborative district planning encourages private investment in areas that have experienced disinvestment. We are lucky in that the entrepreneurs and small business owners in our region don’t wait around for change; rather, they are willing to do the heavy lifting themselves, and through our program, we are able to support them and together pave the way for those who follow.”

To date, nearly \$6.9 million has been invested by Economic Development in the twelve municipalities which have or are participating in Allegheny Together. Additional in-kind and leveraged investments from partners have also been provided. A total of 1,419 businesses have been supported through the program, with 493 new small businesses locating in those business districts since 2010.

Eight municipalities have graduated from the Allegheny Together program: Bellevue, Bridgeville, Coraopolis, Elizabeth Borough, Stowe, Swissvale, Tarentum and Verona. Four municipalities –

Aspinwall, Carnegie, Dormont and Homestead – are currently enrolled and another four will enter the program for the 2016-2017 program year.

The full-text of the County Executive’s proclamation follows:

**WHEREAS**, the Saturday after Thanksgiving has become known as “Small Business Saturday” and is a time for shoppers to support the small businesses that make up our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, this year, Small Business Saturday will be celebrated on November 26, 2016; these locally-owned businesses create jobs and build our economy; throughout the year and during this designated day, we encourage residents to celebrate and support these shops; and

**WHEREAS**, last year, approximately 95 million consumers who were aware of Small Business Saturday went out to shop at independent merchants and restaurateurs nationally; and

**WHEREAS**, locally-owned small businesses promote competition, keep money in our local economy, provide product diversity, and support entrepreneurship; these shops are filled with distinctive character and many carry one-of-a-kind products; and

**WHEREAS**, Allegheny County is proud to support small businesses and their owners across our community; we are thankful for the services and products they provide to our residents, and encourage shoppers to visit these unique and specialized stores on Small Business Saturday.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that I, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, by virtue of the authority vested in me, do hereby proclaim Saturday, November 26, 2016 as “Small Business Saturday” in Allegheny County.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the County of Allegheny to be affixed this 26<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2016.

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