

MARLENE Z. ASSELTA



Marlene Z. Asselta is President of the Southern New Jersey Development Council (SNJDC), a non-profit organization founded in 1951 that promotes responsible economic development in South Jersey. In 1985 when Asselta accepted the position, her goals were clear – promote business growth in the region and increase membership. Under her leadership, the SNJDC has grown to more than 350 member organizations and more than 700 members reaching from South Jersey to Central and Northern New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and beyond.

Asselta continues to build on the Council's foundation by focusing on the member organizations. Each member that joins the SNJDC is provided with four core resources: education, information, access and impact that combine to build a strong membership base. A registered lobbyist, Asselta represents the needs and issues of each individual organization, making membership an economic way for an organization to have their own personal advocate in both Trenton, NJ and Washington, DC.

In her endeavors for a better, progressive and global South Jersey, Asselta continues to forge ahead to ensure that South Jersey is recognized as a vital asset to the economic health of the Garden State. In February, the Southern New Jersey Development Council unveiled the Southern New Jersey Regional Outlook – a collaborative effort of the economic development directors from all eight southern counties. Presented to legislators, it acts as the roadmap to the economic future of our region.

A Vineland native, Asselta knew early on that her career path would lead her to public service. Starting out as the administrative aide to the mayor of Vineland, and then as Director of Volunteer Services for Newcomb Hospital, Asselta worked to further the growth of her hometown. By 1984, Asselta was working as the Director of Government Affairs for Cumberland County, expanding her involvement to include the entire South Jersey region.

Combining her career with civic responsibility, Asselta has made volunteerism part of being a good corporate citizen. She has presided over the Deborah F. Sager Memorial Fund, served as vice president of Planning and Development of the Atlantic City International Equestrian Festival and was appointed chair of the Gloucester County Library Commission. During her tenure as the Chairwoman of the GCLC, she oversaw the design and erection of the new library headquarters in Mullica Hill, New Jersey. Other volunteer associations have included New Jersey Future; the South Jersey Freeholders Association; the NJ Industrial Developers Association; the Burlington/Cumberland County Women's Conference Steering Committee; the Rowan University – Friends of the Arts Board; the Delaware River Port Authority Economic Advisory Committee; and Leadership NJ, class of '89.

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In 1990 Asselta and her husband, Tennis Professional Sean Sloane, founded the South Jersey Open, a United States Tennis Association sanctioned amateur tournament still operating today. Also created through the SJ Open is the SJ Tennis Council, which provides tennis lessons to children from the southern New Jersey region and also elects into the SJ Tennis Hall of Fame worthy tennis coaches and professionals from throughout the region.

As a member of Calvary Hill Church and school board member of its adjoining school (Ambassador Christian Academy), Asselta led a fund raising effort to bring the school into a positive financial operating status. Further, working with the leadership of Calvary Hill Church, Asselta was instrumental in assisting with the municipal and county regulations heretofore preventing the new addition to the school and a separate facility for the congregation's youth programs.

In addition to the SNJDC, Asselta is a **Founding Member and Chairwoman of the Glassboro Economic Development Corporation (GEDC)**. Through Asselta's leadership and working together with local, State and Federal government officials, the GEDC has been the recipient of over \$2 million in grants for economic development, business attraction and retention, façade improvements and transportation projects.

More recently, Asselta was named to the Board of the Wm. J. Hughes Public Policy Center housed at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey and to the Advisory Board at the University of Medicine & Dentistry in Stratford, NJ.

She has won numerous awards including the New Jersey State Jaycee's Outstanding Young Woman of the Year Award; the Vineland Children's Residential Center's Citizens Award, and The Press of Atlantic City's Women of Distinction Award, NJ BIZ's magazine's 50 most influential women in New Jersey, the 2008 Girl Scout Award for "Women of Distinction" and the "Policy Makers in the Garden State" award presented by the Executive Women of New Jersey. The Southern New Jersey Development Council and Asselta have received numerous citations and proclamations by the State of New Jersey General Assembly, Senate and Governor's Office for their continued commitment to economic development in the region.

She has two children, Jane Asselta and James Asselta and grandson, James W. She is married to Sean Sloane, tennis and squash coach at Haverford College, Haverford, Pa.

Asselta's philosophy of uniting community and corporate leadership continues to foster new partnerships that build a better South Jersey, and inevitably, a better State.