

**East Providence Area Chamber of Commerce - Testimonials from Members (2011)**

I would like to recommend Print-MD's Liz Goodheart as an excellent source for all of your print cartridge and toner cartridge needs. Liz provides tremendous customer service, is very knowledgeable about your print needs and Liz goes above and beyond to serve her customers. I purchased a laser printer and needed a good price on replacement cartridges. Liz stopped by, evaluated my needs and sent a quote below most of the big box stores. Above and beyond that, she facilitated the disposal of the old cartridges.

If you want to save money and experience outstanding customer service, please pick up the phone and call Liz at Print-MD, you will be happy you did!

As a new East Providence Area Chamber member, I try using local businesses and Chamber members as a way to boost the local economy. I recently joined the East Providence Area Chamber because Liz asked me to become a member.

**Dennis Labossiere**  
**Cozy Caterers, the Chamber's newest member!**

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I would recommend Gilmore's Flower Shop to any person that wants exceptional customer service, fresh, long-lasting flowers and expert advice on flowers.

I have an elderly aunt that I do not visit as much as I should. I feel guilty when she isn't feeling well...so I send her flowers. I started using Gilmore's Flower Shop after I met the owner, Allan Gilmore, at a Chamber event last year. He was a pleasure to speak with and was very knowledgeable about flowers and plants in general.

To be honest, I rarely see the flowers that I send; but I KNOW they are beautiful. How do I know this? Because my aunt will call me up and rave about how wonderful they are and how long the last arrangement lasted.

I truly believe in the mission statement of the East Providence Area Chamber: to promote and support local businesses by working with each other. So, if you need flowers for any reason, a wedding, a get well arrangement to be delivered, or a holiday party ~ think of Gilmore's Flower Shop. I know I'm glad I did!

**Liz Goodheart**  
**Print-MD**

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Recently, my office building had an emergency situation regarding our main drain line. We needed the assistance of a roofer service and I immediately thought of Wood's Roofer Service.

Coincidentally, I met Eva Wood the day before at a Chamber Business During Hours and had her business card with me. I quickly called her. Amazingly, their response time was less than 30 minutes. They quickly resolved the issue with little disruption to the 25 businesses in my building. Plus, we received a chamber Member2Member Discount from them.

I would highly recommend Wood's Roofer Service because of their timeliness, efficiency and low cost.

**Bob Durfee**  
**Delisi Property Management**

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Membership in the East Providence Area Chamber has been very positive for me personally as well as my business. I've met so many interesting people and some down-to-earth new friends. Serving on the event committee for Summer in the City 2011 was great fun and rewarding.

I would have never found Buca di Beppo, one of my favorite places! Or DiParma Italian Table where I sneak out to lunch when I need a break. The Chamber's annual meeting last year at the Eleven Forty Nine East Restaurant showed me still another wonderful place to dine. I am from the south county area and now I drive up to Seekonk and East Providence to have dinner on weekends. Who would have guessed? A Rhode Islander who will drive more than twenty minutes to have dinner!

I am a part of a network where I'm never alone when I need products or services.

Oh and one more thing, I have found new customers. Gotta love that! All my little mermaids and cat boats are coming in from Nantucket Sound to find homes in East Providence!

**Trish Samson**  
**Claire Murray**

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I would recommend John Birs at Capital City Financial for any of your mortgage or refinancing needs. John truly lives and breathes for the best possible rates for his clients. All the while, never making you feel pressured or overwhelmed with the process.

I know this because my husband and I recently re-financed our mortgage with John. I also can honestly say that John is very passionate about his business and this passion is carried over into his professionalism. Capital City Financial is the place to go hands down!

**Liz Goodheart, New Business Development**  
**Print-MD**  
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I have known Phil Tirrell from Weichert, Realtors-Tirrell Realty on a professional level since 2005 through the East Providence Chamber of Commerce. Phil is a dynamic networker and I was able to get to know him better through Chamber events.

About eighteen months ago my wife Susan and I decided to sit down with Phil and discuss the prospect of selling our home. Phil didn't sugar coat anything about the housing market and we decided to wait another year to see where it would go. It also gave us some time to prepare our home for showing.

In May of 2011 we sat down again with Phil and discussed listing the house. We worked further with Louanne Jennings from his office. Within two weeks we were under contract with our buyer. Louanne was extremely supportive through the process and facilitated a smooth transaction.

During this process Louanne worked with us to find a house that we would make our new home. Susan and I both own our own businesses and have two young children making scheduling time to view houses difficult. Louanne worked with our schedule and was able to make all of the arrangements to view every house we were interested in. After viewing thirty plus houses we found our perfect new home. Phil and Louanne helped negotiate with the seller and facilitate a smooth closing shortly thereafter. I would certainly recommend Phil and his team to potential buyers and sellers. He possesses experience, professionalism, and a good sense of humor. It was a pleasure working with Phil and Louanne.

**Marc Frechette**  
**Minuteman Press of Seekonk**  
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Universal Gold, Inc. has been a member of the East Providence Area Chamber for a few years. In late August, I received a call from Melissa Zerek at Aspen Aerogel since Laura McNamara had recommended Universal Gold when Aspen Aerogel was looking for a cleaning company for their newly expanded building.

I called one of our customers who is a contract cleaner and they contacted Melissa and are now doing the cleaning for her building. When following up with Melissa I told her we have all the janitorial and industrial supplies she may need for her facility. We were selling Aspen a few spill control products in the past but couldn't seem to open any new doors in other areas- until the East Providence Area Chamber stepped in. Aspen Aerogel is now a good customer of Universal Gold, Inc.

It is difficult at times with our busy schedules to attend some of the Chamber functions but here is a great example of how Laura and the East Providence Area Chamber works to connect all members.

Thank you East Providence Area Chamber and thank you Laura!!!

**Donna Ouellette, VP Sales and Operations**  
**Universal Gold, Inc.**  
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Our membership in the East Providence Chamber has benefited the Community & Teachers Federal Credit Union in many ways –it has helped our financial institution to an increase in our Commercial Loans and our Business Checking Accounts. We also receive great publicity by helping to sponsor events like Touch A Truck.

We're very proud to members of the Chamber!

**Lori Hyder, Executive Vice President**  
**Community & Teachers Federal Credit Union**  
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I have been a member of the East Providence Chamber for several years and I have found it helpful in keeping me informed on both current, local and state issues that effect both my business and personal life.

A most recent example was the proposed tax hike on small businesses that would affect everybody in Rhode Island. We proved as a group we can make a difference at the State House. The other big benefit to me has been the business relationships I have developed over the years with some great people. I look to the future for even more opportunities as a Chamber member.

**Phil Tirrell, broker/owner**  
**Weichert Realtors, Tirrell Realty**  
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I recently took part in a seminar on Social Media given by Shamrock Financial Corporation. The presenter was Shalimar Albanese. Her knowledge of the different types of social media was in-depth and her presentation style was easy to follow and understand. I have been in the computer industry for over 40 years, but I am afraid I was behind the times with my knowledge of social media and how it might help my business move forward. The seminars given by the chamber are informative and I think one of the underutilized aspects of your membership. There is another seminar given by Shalimar in June and I urge everyone to attend.

**Dean Malatesta**  
**Print-MD**  
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Our membership in the East Providence Chamber has benefited Webster Bank in many ways - everything from networking events that have led to real business 'wins' to the great publicity we've received from sponsoring events like Touch A Truck.

We're very proud to call ourselves Chamber members!

**Deborah Pedreira, vice president, Barrington branch manager**  
**Webster Bank**  
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My company only joined the East Providence Area Chamber a few weeks ago. However, I've recently met with Liz Goodheart and attended her Project AIDS charity event in April. Just from my meeting her, we've received a call for our drain service.

I have attended two Chamber events so far, and both were fun and informational. It was great to meet new people and having the opportunity to get our business information out to more prospective clients. I really enjoyed the tour of the Citadel broadcasting facility last month. I've recently met with Rochelle Richard at Citadel and signed on for radio and internet advertising! We are so excited about being on 93.3 fairly soon! If it wasn't for the EP Chamber meeting, I'm not sure I would have pursued radio advertising.

From the chamber members that I have met so far, I have begun to give out their names and numbers to family and friends for cell phones, a mortgage rep, insurance and tax preparation, to name a few.

The events are fun and informational, without being "formal." Everyone is really friendly, outgoing and that helps put me at ease. I'm not used to public speaking, but have found that it was much easier than anticipated due to the format and "feel" of these events.

**Eva Wood, owner**  
**Wood's Rooter Service**  
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I have been a member of the East Providence Chamber of Commerce since Navigant Credit Union opened its 8th branch on Newport Avenue in East Providence 3 years ago. I started out by serving on the membership committee and have since been appointed to the Board of Directors. In both instances I was enthusiastically welcomed into the fold. The membership committee fits well with my business as I can promote the Chamber in conjunction with making business calls. I also enjoy being part of the decision making for an organization that provides so much value to its members.

Because my business is all about networking, I feel I benefit most from participating in the Business During Hours and participating (as well as hosting) the Business After Hours. Although these two events both revolve around 'making connections and promoting your business', they are both very different in structure. Business During Hours, being a usually smaller group, gives you more time to 'get to know' the other participants, while Business After Hours is a great way to 'showcase your own business' as well as network on a larger scale. I have personally gained business as well as received referrals from folks I connected with at these events.

Come to a meeting or function and see for yourself. This is an organization that always makes time for fun while getting the job done.

**Kathy Marabello, Assistant Vice President/Branch Manager**  
**Navigant Credit Union**  
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My membership in the East Providence Area Chamber has proven invaluable to my PR and marketing business. Laura is a great networker who is skilled at introducing and referring business people to each other, and helped me see the benefit of serving on the Board of Directors and volunteering at events over the past 11 years. I always believed that you get out of your Chamber membership what you put in. If you don't have the funds available to sponsor an event or function, you can give of your time and attendance which is equally important and much appreciated. As a result of my participation, Newberry Public Relations & Marketing has experienced increased awareness and visibility, made lots of local business connections, secured qualified vendor resources such as printers and advertising specialty companies, and landed several new clients.

In holding various Board roles, I've developed greater leadership skills which have enabled me to run my operations with more confidence and poise. Many of the connections I've made have turned into friendships as well, which is a very pleasant way to do business! Whenever something is needed for my business or for a client, I make it a point to consider Chamber members first. I never hesitate to recommend membership in the Chamber because its members and leaders are welcoming, supportive and committed to keeping Greater East Providence a vibrant business community.

**Elisabeth N. Galligan, APR, President**  
**Newberry Public Relations & Marketing, Inc.**  
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The Blue Horse Tack Shoppe has been a member of the East Providence Chamber of Commerce for quite a few years.

We are happy to be given the chance to rave about the support and networking that can be done through this wonderful chamber.

We are a VERY specialized shop that carries all the needs of all equestrians, young and old.

We enjoy the wonderful, fun events that the Chamber puts on every year. This gives the members an opportunity to get to know each other and form true friendships.

We renew our membership every year, not only because I work for John Birs, Chair of the Membership Committee, but the opportunity to keep updated with all the changing laws and how they impact small business in Rhode Island and knowing that our Chamber has our backs and will fight the best they can for any of the injustices at the State House.

**Rosemarie and Donna Ross, ENJOY THE RIDE!!!!**  
**Blue Horse Tack Shoppe**

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Last year, an automobile came thru the window of my business. It destroyed the entire store as well as seriously injuring me. It took two months for the store to be whole again and a lot longer for my injuries to heal. During that time my employees rallied around me and the business. Without their support I would have lost the business. I also received support from my fellow Chamber members. Their concern was deeply appreciated. It is not always about referrals and conducting business. Sometimes its about personal relationships.

**Dean Malatesta, Print-MD**

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Aspen Aerogels Inc. began "round the clock" manufacturing operations in late 2007. One year earlier, I contacted Laura McNamara to join the East Providence Chamber of Commerce when the plant was still under construction. Laura graciously toured our small group of "out of towners" around the city and thoroughly made us feel at home. Since that time the EPACC has become a wonderful information resource for our operation. Aspen Aerogels always looks to utilize the local businesses and services of fellow Chamber members first and believes that being a good Corporate neighbor is fundamental to long term success. We were honored to receive the EPACC's Business of the Year award in 2008 and are proud to announce that the Phase 2 expansion is near completion, which will double the manufacturing capacity of the facility.

On a more personal level, I have met and come to know many wonderful, professional colleagues through our Chamber membership. I am privileged to be serving a second term on the EPACC Board of Directors and look forward to continuing to build both our business and our community relationship to world class standards.

**Greg Watka, Plant Leader, East Providence**  
**Aspen Aerogels, Inc**

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On the top of the list of my business priorities is to be a part of the community that I work in. It is a tremendous benefit and value to my business to know how I can best service the community.

Without being a member of the East Providence Area Chamber of Commerce, I would not have been able to network with the most enthusiastic business professionals I have ever met. My staff has been able to enjoy and benefit from the Chamber's events as well. The family events at a PawSox game and lobster bake picnic were a couple of our favorites last year. Also, the added exposure Capital City Financial has on the EPACC website has enhanced our name brand recognition.

At Capital City Financial, we are proud to be a contributing member.

**Johnathon Birs, president, Capital City Financial Corporation and Chairperson, EPACC Membership Committee**

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Wood's Heating has been involved with the Chamber for over 30 years and as Sales Manager, I have been involved for over 20 years. My involvement with the Chamber has been most rewarding. It has allowed me that opportunity to be involved in the community. Moreover, the Chamber gives back to the community in many ways.

One example of this is the annual Touch-a-Truck event. The Touch-a-Truck event allows youngsters to play on all kinds of trucks including a fire truck, milk truck, concrete truck, oil truck, police vehicles and many others. It's a great feeling to see the children having such a great time (and some parents too.)

I find that Chamber members aren't just great at what they do but they are also great because of what they do. Chambers members are perhaps some of the most accomplished businesses in the community. That's because they're not afraid to put in the time & effort it takes to be successful.

Lastly, the Chamber is a fantastic way to network. I have met people through the chamber that have become good friends. Many fellow Chamber members have become Wood's customers, too. And, when I'm looking for a company to do business with, I always look to a Chamber member first.

**Arthur Dwyer**  
**Wood's Heating Service**

As we begin our fourth year of chamber membership, I want to thank the East Providence Area Chamber for all of your support and assistance and to let you know what a great resource the Chamber has been for the Town Planner! Every business can benefit from a chamber membership in many ways, especially those that are new in the community.

I have found the Business After & During Hours monthly networking events to be especially helpful when promoting my company. These events provide a casual & friendly atmosphere to make contacts and develop business relationships with other professionals who prefer doing business with fellow members. In fact, many of our new clients have come directly from the contacts I've made at these events. I also appreciate the continuous communication from the chamber that keeps me informed of local and statewide economic and business issues.

I look forward to continuing our partnership with the chamber again this year.

**Brenda J. Celletti, Owner/Publisher**  
**Ocean State Town Planner**

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My business has been in East Providence for over 75 years, but since I became active in our chamber I have found real enjoyment in the daily routine of business. The chamber members are great and I enjoy the meetings and activities the chamber has. From Laura to Arthur, John, Christine, Brenda, and Betty, it's nice to have the many friendships because of being a chamber member.

**Allan Gilmore**  
**Gilmore's Flower Shop**

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My sales have increased through my participation with the East Providence Area Chamber. By attending several business after hours events over the past year, I have been able to work with several members and help them with their networking needs through ticket packages or hospitality suites rentals at our Stadium. I have also made some good friends in the process. Membership has made dollars and \$ense for myself and the organization!!

**Cookie Rojas, general sales manager**  
**Pawtucket Red Sox**