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The 200 Club of Mercer County Honors Two Police Officers with Valor Awards

Bill Baroni Delivers Keynote

MERCER COUNTY, June 14 -- On June 8, 2011, the 200 Club of Mercer County welcomed its largest crowd ever to the organization's annual luncheon to honor the dedicated service of the police, fire and safety officials that place their lives in danger every day to protect the citizens of Mercer County. The 200 Club of Mercer County is a local nonprofit organization that provides financial assistance to the families of public safety and rescue personnel who are killed in the line of duty. The annual luncheon is the club's largest fund-raiser and serves as a celebration of the valor, professionalism and unwavering commitment that Mercer County's public safety officials put forth on the job.

Two police officers from Hamilton—Tom White and Nick Avanzato—were presented with the club's highest recognition at the event, the Valor Award, for their heroic actions at the scene of a fire in Hamilton Township this past January. The Valor Award is given to individuals who have committed acts of bravery, beyond the call of duty, and face imminent personal risk.

"Officers White and Avanzato, like so many safety and rescue personnel, put their own lives in danger to protect others," said Greg Blair, president of the 200 Club of Mercer County. "Their courageous action at the tragic fire last January saved lives. They are quiet real-life heroes that embody all that the Valor Award represents."

Hamilton-native and long-time public servant Bill Baroni, who now serves as Deputy Executive Director of the Port Authority of NY & NJ, was the featured speaker at the event. Still deeply connected to his Hamilton-roots, former Senator Baroni traveled down from his New York office to pay tribute to Officers White and Avanzato and share the latest on the rebuilding of the World Trade Center, a project that he is overseeing for the Port Authority. This includes One World Trade Center which will be the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere. Mr. Baroni told the attendees that the new World Trade Center will stand as beacon of hope for the future, honoring the brave men and women who lost their lives nearly 10 years ago. 2,800 men and women are hard at work around the clock at the site to complete the Memorial Plaza by September 11, 2011.

"The 200 Club of Mercer is deeply grateful to Mr. Baroni for taking the time out of his busy schedule to honor Mercer County's dedicated police officers, fire fighters, corrections officers and rescue squad technicians," continued Greg Blair. "His presence at our luncheon exemplifies his unwavering commitment to Mercer County, its citizens and the people that protect them."

About The 200 Club of Mercer County— The 200 Club of Mercer County is one of several hundred associations nationwide dedicated to providing financial assistance to the families of our public safety and rescue personnel who are killed in the line of duty. This includes the police officers

(state, county, and municipal), correction officers, fire fighters, and rescue squad technicians of Mercer County.

Established in 1979, The 200 Club of Mercer County has provided funds to a multitude of families. The club also supports organizations like local chapters of The American Red Cross, Mercer County Fire Academy, NJSP Museum honoring fallen Troopers, NY/NJ Port Authority Police Widows Fund, and more. Becoming a member of the 200 Club of Mercer County will support an honorable cause at a time when the families of these dedicated and brave individuals need it most.

Visit www.mercer200club.org to learn more.