



**For Immediate Release**

**MAYOR BOOKER AND BRICK CITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION CUT THE RIBBON ON DENTAL KIDZ, A NEW PEDIATRIC DENISTRY IN DOWNTOWN NEWARK**

***Local husband and wife team open 8,000 square foot state-of-the-art pediatric dentistry and orthodontic practice; \$710,000 project financed by the Grow Newark Fund***

Newark, NJ – October 13, 2009 – Mayor Cory A. Booker was joined today by Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Stefan Pryor, Brick City Development Corporation Executive Vice President Darryl Godfrey, Grow America Fund President Pat Thomson, and Christopher and Dr. Lezli Harvell, Newark residents and BCDC Grow Newark Fund Recipients, to commemorate the opening of Dental Kidz, a new pediatric dentistry and orthodontic practice at 24 Commerce Street, in the City of Newark’s downtown district.

Dental Kidz, the new small local minority-owned business enterprise, provides oral health to children up to 12 years old. The newly constructed 8,000 square foot facility includes digital x-rays to minimize radiation, age appropriate entertainment and décor, and intra-oral cameras so children and parents can readily visualize the oral cavity. Services to clients include diagnostic exams, preventive care, restorative treatment and the only pediatric sedation center in Essex County. The company also services special needs children with a consistent referral base from Children’s Specialized Hospital in Mountainside, New Jersey. Owners and first time entrepreneurs Christopher and Dr. Lezli Harvell opened the downtown office in August 2009, after ten months in a temporary location in one of the Newark Preschool Council’s Head Start locations.

“Creating greater access to affordable, quality healthcare has been a priority of my administration and today, thanks to our partnership with Brick City Development Corporation and the Grow America Fund, we are making this possible. Dental Kidz, which is owned and operated by Newark residents Dr. Lezli Harvell and her husband Christopher, is a shining example of how small businesses powered by BCDC’s loan fund are providing much-needed services and jobs for Newark residents. Every day, we are building a stronger, safer and prouder City,” said Mayor Booker.

The 11th-floor dental office is designed to create a pleasant atmosphere for kids, offering views of Manhattan, Wi-fi access, flat-screen TVs in waiting areas and all treatment rooms, digital X-rays to minimize radiation, intra-oral cameras so that children and parents can readily visualize oral cavities, and exclusive utilization of mercury-free, esthetic tooth-colored fillings. The practice has seven employees, two of them Newark residents.

“It was three years ago that Mayor Booker introduced the goal of establishing a small business loan fund. Today, Dental Kidz is yet another realization of the Mayor’s aspiration. Newark is a city on the rise and we are pleased that, through this BCDC loan program, Newark residents like Dr. Lezli and Christopher Harvell are able to fulfill their dream of opening a pediatric dentistry practice for families in our city,” said Deputy Mayor Pryor.

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The Harvells are the second recipients of the Brick City Development Corporation's Grow Newark Fund; a \$6 million SBA-guaranteed loan fund for small, local, minority and women-owned Newark businesses. Total project costs for the development of Dental Kidz were \$710,000 for which the entrepreneurs received a \$640,000 loan. The Grow Newark Fund, supported by the National Development Council's Grow America Fund, was created in September 2007 to further the city's goal to generate jobs and create wealth for citizens of Newark.

"We were encouraged to lend to Dental Kidz, not only by the promise of bringing much-needed medical services to a neighborhood of need, but also by the talented team of Dr. Harvell and her husband, Chris, who invested their time, talent, verve and vision - as well as their own funds - to make their dream a reality," said Pat Thomson, Grow America Fund President. The financing of Dental Kidz was the first time the National Development Council's Grow America Fund used a new financing program offered through the Merrill Lynch CDC, combining financing from the Small Business Administration and the New Markets Tax Credit Program of the CDFI Fund of the US Department of Treasury.

Dental Kidz actively commits to local public health and education. The practice is the dental home to the Newark Preschool Council and The Leaguers Inc., which combined are the largest headstart programs in New Jersey. The company has also partnered with Colgate Palmolive to bring a "Smile Van" to local churches and in front of local retailers and hosts an online site to blog on dental related health topics for kids.

After receiving her dental education at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Dr. Lezli Harvell completed her advanced training in Pediatric Dentistry at Lebanon Hospital Center and returned to Newark to develop Dental Kidz with her husband Christopher, a former investment banker in the Real Estate Finance Group at Credit Suisse. The couple was featured in September Issue of Cookie Magazine and Dr. Harvell is the youngest member of the NJ Pediatric Oral Health Coalition. For more information about Dental Kidz, visit [www.dentalkidz.com](http://www.dentalkidz.com)

"I think this is a good thing for Newark and for residents, especially for low income families," said Kristopher Little, a Newark parent, whose children are patients at the facility. "When we walked in their office for the first time, our income was very low, and they accepted us. We now have more income, but we won't forget the kindness and friendliness when we first entered Dental Kidz. They take care of our three kids and they do excellent work."

Anyone with questions about any City of Newark programs or policies should contact the Non-Emergency Call Center at (973) 733-4311.

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### **About the City of Newark, New Jersey**

Newark, commonly referred to as Brick City, is the third oldest city in the United States and the largest in New Jersey, with a population of more than 280,000 people. Newark sits on one of the nation's largest

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transportation super-structures including an international airport, major rail connections, major highway intersections and the busiest seaport on the east coast.

With a new Administration as of July 2006, Newark continues to see signs of a strong revival. In population, it is one of the fastest growing cities in the northeast. Its six major colleges and universities are further expanding their presence. The production of affordable housing has doubled, businesses are returning and crime is going down. There is still much work to be done but Newark is on its way to achieving its mission: to set a national standard for urban transformation.

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