



MAYOR BOOKER CUTS RIBBON FOR NEW U.S. CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS OF PACIFIC GROUP HOLDINGS, INC.

One of the world's biggest fruit importers known for "Bonita Bananas" will make the "Brick City" its new home

Newark, NJ – July 27, 2011 – Mayor Cory A. Booker, Deputy Mayor and Brick City Development Corporation (BCDC) Chairman Stefan Pryor, President and CEO Carlos A. Aguirre, Berger Organization Owner Miles Berger, Berger Organization Vice-President Brendan Berger and other dignitaries held a ribbon cutting ceremony today for the new U.S. corporate headquarters of Pacific Group Holdings, Inc., which has relocated to Newark. Pacific Group's new headquarters is located in The Military Park Building, at 60 Park Place.

Mayor Booker said, "Thank you to Pacific Group for believing in Newark, and to Miles Berger for helping lead the charge to attract new tenants to our city. Like hundreds of companies, Pacific Group has made use of Newark's world-class seaport to import Bonita Bananas for years. Today, Pacific Group has chosen Newark for its corporate headquarters as well – casting a ringing vote of confidence in our city as a great place to do business. This is Newark's Groundbreaking Year, and new companies like Pacific Group provide added momentum."

Pacific Group Holdings, Inc. relocated their headquarters from Staten Island, NY. The company will lease 5,000 square feet from 60 Park Place, a 250,000 square-foot building owned by the Berger Organization, LLC. Pacific Group is one of the world's biggest fruit importers and is known for its "Bonita Bananas" brand name, which it has been selling for over 60 years. The family-owned business operates a plantation in Ecuador, from which it sources 100 percent of its fruit. The family-owned business operates a plantation in Ecuador, from which it sources 100 percent of its fruit. Weekly banana shipments are discharged in Brooklyn and then the majority of the bananas are barged to Port Newark and sold to customers in New Jersey and north of NYC. An average of five million boxes of Bonita Bananas is sold to New Jersey through Port Newark each year.

"Pacific Group is pleased and honored to have Mayor Booker join us in celebrating the opening of our new offices in Newark. In late 2010, while looking for a new headquarters for our U.S. operations, we were presented with a broad range of options. Newark with its proximity to the marine terminals, rail terminals, highways and airports and its access to the network of fruit distributors in the tri-state area, as well as its business-friendly climate, quickly emerged as a frontrunner. Working closely with the Berger Organization in our search for office space, we became quickly convinced that our new home should be Newark," said Mr. Aguirre, who joined Pacific Group in 1976 as a Financial Advisor and was promoted to be the President and C.E.O of the group in 1997.

"It is not every day that a company of its caliber of excellence comes to our great City. The addition of companies like Pacific Group to our commercial tenant roster will keep the City of Newark a vital and vibrant player in the Northern New Jersey and New York City markets. There is no reason that Newark should not be Northern New Jersey's premiere business location. With its rich history, countless improvements, and noble and wise leadership of our Mayor, Cory Booker, the City is certainly moving in the right direction. We are honored that Pacific Group has chosen Newark at its new business home. We hope that your time in Newark will be long and prosperous," said Vice-President Berger.

The Booker administration has made economic development and the creation of jobs a top priority. These innovative efforts have included the creation of Brick City Development (BCDC), which has become the primary economic development catalyst for Newark, New Jersey, organized to retain, attract and grow businesses, enhance small and minority business capacity, and spur real estate development within the city. BCDC initiates and executes economic development activities to produce and sustain economic growth, generate jobs and create wealth for the citizens of Newark.

Since 2006, the executives of major companies such as Pitney Bowes, Standard Chartered Bank, Audible.com, Mimeo.com, CGC Genetics, Panasonic, Marriott, Manischewitz, and others have chosen Newark as home for new corporate headquarters and major operations centers. They've been joined by entrepreneurs, including dozens of companies that received start-up capital or other assistance from Brick City Development Corporation, such as Dental Kidz, Newark Art Supply, and Advanced Recovery. Economic development has also benefited from the 2007 opening of the Prudential Center, which brought New Jersey Devils hockey, New Jersey Nets basketball, and New York Liberty WNBA basketball to the City's downtown. The City and BCDC have also spurred the development of numerous downtown restaurants and bars, as well as the construction of a new Courtyard by Marriott Hotel adjacent to the arena.

In his State of the City address in March, Mayor Booker cited a surge in construction activity across a wide range of projects and called 2011 Newark's "Groundbreaking Year." Over 25 projects will break ground or be under construction in 2011. These projects will produce over 2 million square feet of new or renovated space and will generate over 2,500 construction jobs and over 2,500 permanent jobs. Individual developments will include Newark's first new downtown hotel in nearly 40 years, and the city's first new corporate tower in nearly 20 years.

For more information on any City of Newark program or policy, 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 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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