

## **For Immediate Release: June 21, 2011**

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### **Local Business Leaders Invited to Join New Better Business Challenge Year-Long Sustainability Competition Launched at Chamber Today**

*Charlottesville, Virginia* – Local business leaders began signing up today to participate in the first-ever Charlottesville Area Better Business Challenge, a yearlong points-based competition to help businesses better integrate sustainability and efficiency.

At the heart of the challenge is a scorecard structured to help businesses: take stock of their baseline and performance in six key areas (Energy, Transportation, Water, Waste, Purchasing, Innovation and Leadership); set goals for improvements and benchmarks for success; and take credit for those efforts and achievements as they are implemented.

The following 10 businesses announced today they were among the first to sign up to participate in the Better Business Challenge: Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce, The Paramount, C'ville Coffee, The Mudhouse, Downtown Family Health, 2RW Consulting, Blue Ridge Eco Shop, Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Evolve Eco-Friendly Hair Design, and Tandem Friends School.

**The first 25 businesses to sign up will be included in a full-page ad in C-VILLE Weekly in July. All businesses that sign up by August 1 will receive two additional bonus points for their scorecard tallies.** Enrollment closes September 15, and the Challenge will end with an awards ceremony in the spring of 2012.

How to get in the game:

Website: <http://cvillebetterbiz.org> (easy and free online registration)

Email: [info@cvillebetterbiz.org](mailto:info@cvillebetterbiz.org)

Twitter: @CvilleBetterBiz

Facebook: "Charlottesville Better Business Challenge"

Suggestions: Non-business owners have a voice, too! Anyone can suggest their favorite business for the Challenge, and we'll reach out to them.

"The Chamber is delighted to participate in and sponsor the Charlottesville Area Better Business Challenge, and we invite our members to join us," said **Timothy Hulbert, President of the Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce**. "The Challenge presents another opportunity for Chamber businesses to simultaneously

improve their operations, cut costs, gain a competitive advantage, please their customers, go 'green,' and support the community – plus it supports businesses with the tools and resources to truly be sustainable.”

All businesses that participate will be recognized and can obtain “Certified” and “Certified Plus” status by reaching certain point levels. A review team of area leaders will award the top scorers in small, medium and large businesses, as well as Biggest Loser, Kilowatt Crackdown, Top Innovator, Green Champion, and runners up.

“The Challenge is a friendly competition that supports businesses’ efforts to incorporate sustainable practices into their day-to-day operations. At the heart of the Challenge is the Scorecard which shows actions - both big and small - businesses can take to earn points,” said **Teri Kent, Project Manager for the Better Business Challenge and Executive Director of Better World Betty**. “These are smart investments that can yield powerful results for their bottom line and the community. It’s that ‘triple bottom line’ of profits, people and the planet that companies are recognizing. “

Challenge participants will learn innovative ways to incorporate more efficient and sustainable practices, set and achieve goals tailored to their business needs, and gain recognition for these efforts. Every participating business will be empowered with the resources needed to compete, including: an extensive resource list, online benchmarking tools, access to a business mentor pool, case studies, site visits, training sessions, webinars, and avenues for networking and collaboration.

Businesses that participate in the Challenge can take advantage of up to \$25,000 in rebates for energy improvement measures along with complimentary benchmarking support through LEAP’s commercial program.

“The Challenge offers diverse opportunities for businesses to make smarter choices that can streamline operations, make more efficient use of resources, and slash energy and fuel costs,” said **Cynthia Adams, LEAP’s Executive Director**. “This is a win for businesses, a win for their customers and clients, and a win for the community.”

The Better Business Challenge is an initiative led by Better World Betty and LEAP. Key partners include the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, the Chamber of Commerce, Darden Graduate School of Business and the James River Green Building Council.

Sponsors include the UVA Community Credit Union, Dominion Virginia Power, ColonialWebb, van der Linde Recycling, and T&N Printing. Media Partners include 106.1 The Corner and C-VILLE Weekly.

Companies and organizations interested in sponsoring the Better Business Challenge should email [info@cvillebetterbiz.org](mailto:info@cvillebetterbiz.org). Businesses are invited to both participate in and sponsor the Challenge.

“Albemarle County is always anxious to support efforts that improve our business partners’ efficiency and profitability, and improve their productivity. The Better Business Challenge is an exciting opportunity for our local businesses to join forces to realize significant bottom line benefits like reductions in water and energy usage while providing a positive impact on the environment.” – **Lee Catlin, Assistant to the County Executive for Community and Business Partnerships with Albemarle County.**

“Charlottesville is pleased to be a major partner in this friendly challenge for our community businesses. We look forward to helping local businesses celebrate their successes related to cost-savings, efficiency and environmental stewardship. We fully expect this effort will provide unique opportunities for information sharing and will increase the number and type of projects and actions that improve the bottom line and contribute to local environmental improvements.” – **Hollie Lee, Economic Development Specialist with the City of Charlottesville.**

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ATTACHMENT: Photo – Cynthia Adams, LEAP Executive Director  
Teri Kent, Better World Betty Executive Director