LOCAL TALK NEWS

Dear Editor,

Towns and states across the country are all making tough budget decisions these days. The City of Newark and the Township of Irvington are no exception.

I’m thankful to Irvington Mayor Wayne Smith, Newark Councilman Carlos Gonzalez and a number of other representatives from both communities for participating in the Summer Institute for Community Leadership, held this week in Trenton. They joined their peers in local government and representatives from non-profits across the state to find workable solutions to turn problem properties around and make them a part of thriving communities.

Abandoned and vacant properties have had an adverse effect on Newark and Irvington physically and economically. We're working to turn vacant spaces in both municipalities into homes for hard-working, low-income families. Both communities have been extremely supportive of our goals but we appreciate this opportunity to network with those across the state with common interests and creative ideas to support community development.

As executive director of Habitat for Humanity Newark, I am proud to be part of helping to improve neighborhoods in Essex County. Newark and Irvington are great places to live and work and we look forward to making them even better.

Sincerely,

David R. Zurheide
Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity Newark
298 South Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103-2436