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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Greater Akron Chamber is Pleased to Announce the
2009 Local Elected Officials Recognition Award Honorees

The vitality of the Greater Akron Region is dependent on the vision and collaboration of our local officials. Each year, the Greater Akron Chamber recognizes local elected officials from Medina, Portage and Summit Counties for their commitment to economic development and community improvement. The Chamber is pleased to announce the 2009 Local Elected Officials Recognition Award honorees – they are: Lafayette Township Trustee **Lynda Bowers** from Medina County, nominated by Medina County Commissioner Patricia Geissman and Bethany Dentler, Executive Director, Medina County Economic Development Corporation; Mayor **John Fender** of City of Kent from Portage County, nominated by State Representative Kathleen Chandler; and State Representative **Brian G. Williams** from Summit County nominated by John LaGuardia, Vice President of Public Affairs and Development at The University of Akron.

Lafayette Township Trustee, Lynda Bowers, is presently serving her 12th year as Township Trustee and was recently re-elected to another term. A member of the Medina County Planning Commission for 14 years, Trustee Bowers has been a local leader in both community advancement and sustainable economic development within Medina County. She is assisting in the redevelopment of Chippewa Lake that will invest over \$50 million in the region, create 360 new jobs and add \$3.9 million to the annual state and local tax base. Trustee Bowers was also instrumental in the \$10.6 million dollar development of Innovation Park and The University of Akron's Medina County University Center in her community. The University Center opened in 2008 and now serves over 350 students throughout the region. In addition to her public service, she has contributed to the community as a founding member of Leadership Medina County and a 12-year board member and past president of the HANDS Foundation.

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Serving Medina, Portage & Summit Counties

State Representative Brian G. Williams is proudly serving his third term (6th year) in the Ohio State Legislature. His passion in advocating for quality education has enhanced educational programs within our community to create our workforce today and of the future. He has supported state resources within recent difficult budget deliberations to fund higher education which was instrumental in implementing Polymer Science programs in K-12, and The University of Akron's Medina County University Center. Currently, Representative Williams serves as Chair of the House Education Committee, sits on the State Government Health Access and Affordability and Environment and Brownfield Development Committees. Prior to his service in the Ohio State Legislature, he served for more than 35 years as a superintendent, teacher, coach, principal and administrator in Akron Public Schools.

Mayor John Fender of the City of Kent has provided sound leadership to Portage County serving for over 12 years and will be retiring at the end of this year. Mayor Fender has worked tirelessly with the City Council, City Manager and his staff and the Kent Chamber of Commerce in the development of ACORN Alley, a retail street of shops that not only increases commerce, but also greatly enhances the historic character of downtown Kent. In addition, Mr. Fender has been working collaboratively with the Council, Manager and his staff, the state government, Kent State University and the Portage Area Transportation Authority (PARTA) to redevelop a blighted area of downtown Kent. The new development will create an esplanade connecting the University's main campus with the downtown and support a commercial development which includes an inter-modal transportation site, a hotel and other commercial establishments.

The above honorees will be recognized at the sixth annual Local Elected Officials Recognition Award Luncheon on **Friday, December 11, 2009**, at 11:30 a.m. at Fairlawn Country Club. Please call the Greater Akron Chamber at (330) 376-5550 or visit www.greaterakronchamber.org for more information and to register to attend.

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*The mission of the Greater Akron Chamber is to drive economic development
and prosperity for the people of Greater Akron Region.*