

**LONG ISLAND CENTER FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLICY**

**THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT  
OF  
THE SEASONS AT ELWOOD**

**PREPARED FOR  
BK at HUNTINGTON, LLC**

**PREPARED BY  
DR. MARTIN R. CANTOR, CPA**

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**The Long Island Center for Socio-Economic Policy  
Director, Dr. Martin R. Cantor, CPA  
28 Woodmont Road  
Melville, New York 11747  
Tel: (631) 491-1388  
Fax: (631) 491-6744  
E-Mail: [EcoDev1@aol.com](mailto:EcoDev1@aol.com)  
WEB SITE: WWW.MARTINCANTOR.COM**

The Socio-Economic Impact  
of  
The Seasons at Elwood  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The Seasons at Elwood will bring much needed economic activity to the Elwood community. Created will be 648 construction jobs with a direct payroll of \$35.6 million, 972 secondary jobs with aggregate payroll of \$34 million and nearly \$3.8 million in sales tax revenues. The permanent and recurring direct economic activity from the residents of The Seasons will bring a minimum aggregate household income of over \$27 million to the Elwood community. Also permanent and recurring will be over \$3.8 million of new tax revenues generated from The Seasons comprised of \$1.04 million of sales taxes, \$2.02 million in property taxes for the Elwood School District and \$760,926 in property taxes for the Town of Huntington and other special districts.

As for population growth, the residents of The Seasons can easily be absorbed into the community. First was Elwood's low 2.39 percent population growth between 2000 and 2010, which was nearly 50 percent lower than the percent population growth of Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington. Then there is the modest 2.2 percent growth in Elwood households between 2000 and 2010. Household growth was significantly lower than the percent increase in Suffolk County and Town of Huntington households, with the 3.15 persons per Elwood household remaining unchanged between 2000 and 2010.

The challenge confronting Elwood is not the residents of The Seasons but is the loss of young people in Elwood, which decreased by 28.8 percent between 2000 and 2010 at a rate twice that of Suffolk County and greater than the percent decrease in the Town of Huntington. The result was that the Elwood School District experienced a 59 student or 2.3 percent decrease in enrollments since the 2005-2006 school year.

Also confronting Elwood is its lagging economic growth. Between 2000 and 2011 Elwood's median household income increased by only 7.5 percent, nearly five times lower than the increase in Suffolk County and nearly four times lower than the increase in the Town of Huntington. Similarly, Elwood's 19.3 percent average or mean household income increase between 2000 and 2011 was just over half of Suffolk County's increase and nearly two-thirds the increase in the Town of Huntington. However when adjusted for inflation, Elwood's median and mean household income fared much worse by decreasing at significantly higher percentages than Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington.

Lastly, as compared to 2000, in 2010 there were 4.5 percent fewer Elwood residents over 16 years of age either driving alone or carpooling while commuting to work. This is in comparison to the increase between 2000 and 2010 in those using vehicles to drive to work in Suffolk County and in the Town of Huntington.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Seasons at Elwood is a planned 360 unit community for residents 55 years of age and older. The Seasons at Elwood, located in the Elwood School District in the Town of Huntington will replace the industrial use now occupied by the Oak Tree Dairy Farm.

The Seasons will bring socio-economic improvements to Elwood by converting a property currently used for an industrial purpose – a dairy processing facility – into a residential use which is more compatible with the Elwood community. The Seasons will provide needed housing for Long Islanders over 55 years of age, create nearly 2,000 construction, secondary and permanent jobs generating millions of dollars of sales tax revenues and economic activity. The Seasons will also generate new property tax revenues for the Elwood School District, not increase student enrollment, and will attract new and permanent after tax income to the community.

Research by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) concludes that higher-density housing with fewer families with children, such as The Seasons, puts less demand on school and other public services as compared to low density housing such as single family homes. ULI notes that the compact nature of higher density housing requires less extensive infrastructure to support it such as longer sewer lines and sprawling and more costly water, gas, and electric supply infrastructure. ULI research also noted that higher-density development generates less traffic than low-density development such as single family homes and puts less stress on emergency fire and police services.

The following analysis will show that The Seasons at Elwood will benefit the community, benefit the Elwood School District, not impact traffic flow, and not overburden services such as police and fire.

The data will so that The Seasons at Elwood will in fact add to the socio-economic quality of life of the Elwood community and the Town of Huntington.

## **POPULATION GROWTH: ELWOOD LAGS BEHIND COUNTY AND TOWN**

As illustrated in Table 1, Elwood’s 2.39 percent population growth between 2000 and 2010 lagged behind the 5.21 and 4.08 respective percent population growth of Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington. Further, as a percent of the Suffolk County population, Elwood’s population decreased by 3.9 percent from .77 percent in 2000 to .74 in 2010. When compared to the Town of Huntington, Elwood’s population decreased 1.6 percent from 5.59 percent in 2000 to 5.50 percent in 2010.

The Seasons at Elwood would also reverse the trend of people leaving Elwood and bring new residents to the community. Unwarranted is the concern that new residents of The Seasons would include those already living in the community in single family homes and that the vacated homes would attract younger home buyers. Table 2 illustrates that young homeowners with young families is just what Elwood needs.

**Table 1: Total Population Growth - 2000-2010**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>% Increase</u>	<u>Elwood %</u> <u>2000 2010</u>
Suffolk County	1,419,369	1,493,350	73,981	5.21%	.77% / .74%
Huntington Town	195,289	203,264	7,975	4.08%	5.59% / 5.50%
Elwood	10,916	11,177	261	2.39%	

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Tables 1 and 2; U.S. Census 2010-American FactFinder Table DP-1

## **THE AGING OF ELWOOD: ELWOOD LOSES ITS’ YOUNG PEOPLE**

As in Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington, the Elwood community has aged without a corresponding influx of younger families. Table 2 illustrates that the under 5 population in Elwood has decreased as a percentage of the population between 2000 and 2010, those between 5 and 54 years of age remained unchanged and those over 55 grew. Those under 5 years of age fell by 28.8 percent to 5.2 percent of the Elwood population while those over 55 increased by 12.2 percent to 26.2 percent of the Elwood community.

The 28.8 percent loss of young people in Elwood between 2000 and 2010 was twice the 14.3 percent decrease of those under 5 years of age in all of Suffolk County and greater than the 24.1 percent decrease in the Town of Huntington. Additionally, those over 55 years of age in Elwood grew by 12.2 percent, a rate that was less than half of Suffolk County and the Town of

Huntington. Between 2000 and 2010 those over 55 years of age in Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington grew respectively by 26.5 percent and 24.9 percent.

While the Elwood’s 55 years of age population increased at a slower rate that Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington, Elwood’s future, as does Long Island’s, relies on attracting young families to the community. Countering the exodus of young people from Elwood, The Seasons may make available single family residential housing in the community for young families and their young children if Elwood residents relocate to The Seasons. Should this occur the Elwood School District need not be concerned. As Table 3 illustrates, any young families attracted to the Elwood community will not overburden the school district but would offset the declining enrollment that the school district has experienced since 2005.

**Table 2: Population By Age-2000-2010-The Aging of Suffolk County, Huntington, Elwood**

<u>Age</u>	<u>Suffolk County</u>		<u>HuntingtonTown</u>		<u>Elwood</u>	
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
Total Pop.	1,419,369 (100%)	1,493,350 (100%)	195,289 (100%)	203,264 (100%)	10,916 (100%)	11,177 (100%)
Under 5	100,304 (7.1%)	85,984 (5.8)	14,237 (7.3%)	10,804 (5.3%)	815 (7.5%)	580 (5.2%)
5-54 Yrs	1,018,731 (71.8%)	1,027,357(68.8%)	135,181 (69.2%)	135,181 (66.5%)	7,488(68.6%)	7,665 (68.6%)
Over55	300,334 (21.1%)	380,009 (25.4%)	45,871 (23.5%)	57,279 (28.2%)	2,613(23.9%)	2,932 (26.2%)
Median Age	36.5 Yrs Old	39.8 Yrs (+9.0%)	38.7 Yrs Old	42.5 Yrs (+9.8%)	38.3 Yrs Old	42.0 (9.7%)

Source: U.S. Census-2000 Tables 1 and 2; U.S. Census 2010-American Factfinder Table DP-1.

### **ELWOOD SCHOOLS: DWINDLING ENROLLMENT IN EARLY GRADES**

While the 2011-2012 school year enrollments in the Elwood School district show an increase over the 2000-2001 school year, the enrollment reality is that since the 2005-2006 school year there has been a 59 student or 2.3 percent enrollment decrease. This is reflective of a combination of factors. The first is that the final wave of offspring from the baby boomers and their children are working their way through the Elwood School System with the result being lower enrollments in the Kindergarten and grades 1-6. The other is that as shown in Table 2 there has been a decrease in children under 5 years of age that would enroll in the Elwood School system. The increase in enrollment has been in grades 7-12, the students who are preparing to graduate high school. To maintain its’ teaching staff, parents of young children must be attracted to the Elwood School district for enrollment in the early grades.

Should the housing for seniors over 55 at The Seasons attract residents who already live in the Elwood community their homes would be available for sale to families who have young children that could enroll in the Elwood School district. This can only benefit the school district.

Furthermore, since the residents of The Seasons will not have children attending the Elwood School District, the \$2.1 million in new property taxes generated by The Seasons will result in a net property tax benefit to the school district. In effect those occupying The Seasons will be subsidizing the public education of the children of single family home owners with children attending Elwood schools.

**Table 3: Total Elwood School District Student Enrollment-Decreasing Since 2005**

	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>2005-2006</u>	<u>2009-2010</u>	<u>2011-2012</u>	<u>Change 2005-2012</u>	
Total Enrollment	2,316 (100%)	2,615 (100%)	2,616 (100%)	2,556 (100%)	(59)	(2.3%)
Kindergarten	181 (7.8%)	175 (6.7%)	182 (6.9%)	132 (5.2%)	(43)	(24.6%)
Grades 1-6	1,170 (50.5%)	1,280 (48.9%)	1,166 (44.6%)	1,139 (44.5%)	(141)	(11.0%)
Grades 7-12	965 (41.7%)	1,160 (44.4%)	1,268 (48.5%)	1,285 (50.3%)	125	10.8%

Source: New York State Education Department.

**ELWOOD HOUSEHOLD GROWTH: LAGGING BEHIND THE COUNTY AND TOWN**

As presented in Table 4, there has been a modest 2.2 percent increase in Elwood households from 3,435 in 2000 to 3,512 in 2010. This is significantly lower than the 21.5 percent increase in Suffolk County households and 42 percent lower than the 5.2 percent increase in households in the Town of Huntington. Furthermore the size of Elwood households has not increased between 2000 and 2010, remaining constant at 3.15 persons per household.

**Table 4: Households-Suffolk County, Town of Huntington Town, and Elwood.**

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Suffolk County</u>		<u>Town of Huntington</u>		<u>Elwood</u>	
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
Average Household Size	2.97	2.93	2.92	2.89	3.15	3.15
Total Households	469,299	569,985	65,917	69,311	3,435	3,512
H/H Increase 2000-2010		+21.5%		+5.2%		+2.2%

Source: U.S.Census-2000 Tables 7, 10 and 11; U. S. Census 2010-American Factfinder. Tables DP-1, DP-3 and DP03.

## ELWOOD HOUSEHOLD INCOME: LOSING GROUND TO COUNTY AND TOWN

Table 5 illustrates how the growth of household income in Elwood compared to the household income growth in Suffolk County and in the Town of Huntington. The Elwood median household income increased 7.5 percent between 2000 and 2011 from \$89,424 to \$96,113. This is nearly five times lower than the 33.5 percent increase in the Suffolk County household median income and nearly four times lower than the 27.4 percent increase in Town of Huntington median household income.

**Table 5: Household Income-Suffolk County, Town of Huntington, and Elwood.**

	<u>Suffolk County</u>		<u>Town of Huntington</u>		<u>Elwood</u>	
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2011</u>
Median Hsehold Income	\$65,288	\$87,187	\$82,528	\$105,142	\$89,424	\$96,113
“ Increase 2000-2011		+33.5%		+27.4%		+7.5%
Inflation adjMed H/H Inc	\$65,288	\$64,675	\$82,528	\$77,994	\$89,424	\$71,296
“ Decrease 2000-2011		-.94%		-.5.5%		-20.3%
Mean Hsehold Income	\$78,901	\$107,305	\$104,645	\$137,779	\$97,700	\$116,593
“ Increase 2000-2011		+36.0%		+31.7%		+19.3%
Inflation adjMeanH/H In	\$78,901	\$ 79,599	\$104,645	\$102,204	\$97,700	\$ 86,489
“ Inc/Dec 2000-2011		+.89%		-2.3%		-11.5%

Source: U.S.Census-2000 Tables 7 and 10; U. S. Census Quickfacts. Inflation adjusted median and mean Household Incomes expressed in year 2000 dollars and based on CPI 1982-84=100.

The nominal (not adjusted for inflation) Elwood average or mean household income increased by 19.3 percent between 2000 and 2011 from \$97,700 to \$116,593. This is just over half of the 36 percent increase in the nominal Suffolk County mean household income and 61 percent lower than the 31.7 percent increase in the nominal Town of Huntington mean household income. Clearly the growth of nominal Suffolk County and Town of Huntington household incomes outdistanced the growth in the nominal mean and median household income of Elwood residents.

When adjusted for inflation, the real Elwood mean and median household incomes fared even worse between 2000 and 2011. Adjusting for inflation is presenting the 2011 nominal household income into 2000 dollars by using changes in the Consumer Price Index. This allows for comparison of increases and decreases in median and mean household incomes using the same dollar basis.

The real median and mean household incomes as adjusted for inflation indicate that Elwood fared much worse than Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington. While Elwood’s real inflation adjusted median household income decreased by 20.3 percent between 2000 and 2011,



Suffolk County’s real median household income was basically unchanged decreasing by .94 percent, with Town of Huntington’s real median household income decreasing by 5.5 percent. Similarly, in the change between 2000 and 2011 of the inflation adjusted real mean household income, Elwood households decreased by 11.5 percent, as compared to Suffolk County households which were basically unchanged at a .89 percent increase, while Town of Huntington households reported a 2.3 percent decrease.

As shown in Table 7, much of the economic activity lost between 2000 and 2011 in the Elwood community will be replenished by the new residents of The Seasons. The Urban Land Institute observes “that many financially secure baby boomers who have seen their children leave the nest chose to leave behind the yard maintenance and repairs of a single-family house for a more carefree and convenient lifestyle that multi-family housing provides.” (Urban Land Institute. P 32).

### **CAR USE COMMUTING TO WORK DECREASES IN ELWOOD**

Since traffic is often a concern for any community, Table 6 illustrates the car, truck and van use by Suffolk County, Town of Huntington and Elwood Community residents over 16 years of age who commute to work whether driving alone or carpooling.

Decreasing by 4.5 percent, it is clear is that fewer Elwood residents over 16 years of age used vehicles to commute to work in 2010 than in 2000. This is in comparison to Suffolk County where those using vehicles commuting to work increased by 5.6 percent between 2000 and 2010 while there was virtually no increase in those using vehicles commuting to work in the Town of Huntington.

**Table 6: Commuting to Work-Vehicular Use-Suffolk County, Huntington Town, Elwood**

Commutation-Workers Over 16 Yrs. Car, Truck, Van Use	<u>Suffolk County</u>		<u>Huntington Town</u>		<u>Elwood</u>	
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
Total Workers Commuting	590,445	623,783	78,183	78,180	4,800	4,584
Inc/Dec Commuters 2000-2010		+5.6%		.00%		-4.5%
Workers Over 16-Drive Alone	523,534	564,480	71,453	73,118	4,393	4,238
Inc/Dec Over 16 Alone Workers		+7.8%		+2.3%		-3.5%
Workers Over 16-Carpool	66,911	59,303	6,730	5,062	407	346
Inc/Dec Carpool 16+ Workers		-11.4%		-24.8%		-15.0%

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Tables DP-1 and DP-3; U.S. Census 2000 Table 8; U.S. Census 2010 American Factfinder Table DP03.

Elwood commuters over 16 years of age who drove alone to work decreased by 3.6 percent between 2000 and 2010, as compared to the 7.8 percent increase in Suffolk County residents who drove alone to work and the 2.3 percent increase in the Town of Huntington commuters.

Lastly, commuters over 16 years of age who carpooled decreased by 15 percent in Elwood, 11.4 percent in Suffolk County and 24.8 percent in the Town of Huntington.

Based upon the driving trends between 2000 and 2010 presented in Table 6, it is unlikely that the 360 housing units of The Seasons at Elwood will result in more commutation traffic. Supporting this is the Urban Land Institute which has often concluded that higher-density development generates less traffic per unit than low-density development. “Residents in low-density single-family communities tend to have two or more cars per household in contrast to residents of high-density condominiums who tend to have only one car per household” (Urban Land Institute, p 16).

Additionally, the Institute of Transportation Engineers concluded that on average condominium or apartment residents own fewer cars than single-family homeowners. The result of this is that single family housing, with an average of two cars per household, generates more automobile trips per household than condominium households which average only one car per unit. Consequently single family housing generates more automobile trips per household as well as more automobile trips during peak hours, mornings, afternoons, weekdays, and weekends (Institute, p 268).

### **THE SEASONS BRINGS MUCH NEEDED ECONOMIC ACTIVITY TO ELWOOD**

As presented in Table 7, the 360 units at The Seasons at Elwood will create 648 construction jobs with a direct payroll of \$35.6 million. The primary construction jobs will in turn generate 972 secondary jobs with a total payroll of \$34 million. Also generated by the construction activity will be nearly \$3.8 million in sales tax revenues.

Additionally, the permanent and recurring economic activity generated by the residents of The Seasons will bring to Elwood much needed economic activity lost during the Great Recession. The residents of The Seasons will bring a minimum aggregate household income of nearly \$27 million, generating 303 primary and secondary jobs and their associated \$10.6 million in permanent and recurring payroll. The consumer activity of the permanent residents of The Seasons and new jobs created by them will generate over \$1 million in new sales taxes.

This new economic activity generated by The Seasons reverses the trend shown in Table 5 where between 2000 and 2011 Elwood’s adjusted for inflation median and mean household incomes decreased at significantly higher percentages than Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington resulting in Elwood households faring economically much worse than that of Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington.

**Table 7: Economic Activity From The Seasons at Elwood for the Elwood Community**

	<b>Temporary Economic Activity</b>		<b>Recurring Economic Activity</b>	
	<b>From Construction Activity</b>		<b>From New Residents - The Seasons</b>	
	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
Jobs	648	972	202	101
Direct Payroll	\$35,600,000	\$34,020,000	\$7,060,000	\$3,535,000
Constr. Materials	\$43,200,000	\$21,600,000	-----	-----
Sales Taxes	\$ 1,924,358	\$ 1,836,000	\$ 945,183	\$ 97,654
Household Inc.	-----	-----	\$27,154,800	-----
School Taxes	-----	-----	\$ 2,011,905	-----
Other Prop. Taxes	-----	-----	\$ 760,926	-----

Note: Household income is net of income taxes; Sales taxes computed on Suffolk County rate of 4.25%.

The over \$3.8 million in new permanent and recurring tax revenues generated by the residents of The Seasons include \$1.04 million of sales taxes, property \$2.02 million property taxes for the Elwood School District, and \$ 760,626 new property tax revenues for the Town of Huntington and its taxing special districts.

**CONCLUSION**

The Seasons at Elwood will bring much needed economic activity to the Elwood community, will financially benefit the Elwood School District, will not increase student enrollment and will not increase commuting vehicular traffic. The nearly 2,000 jobs created by the primary construction and secondary jobs as well as the permanent primary and secondary jobs will result in approximately \$80 million of direct and secondary payroll, generate over \$4.8 million in new sales tax revenues, and \$2.02 million in new net property taxes for the Elwood School District.

The Elwood population, which grew at a slower pace than the Town of Huntington and Suffolk County, will be able to absorb the residents of The Seasons which will have fewer persons in their households than the current 3.15 individuals in Elwood households.

As for The Seasons impact on the Elwood School District there will be none, since there will be no children living at The Seasons. The real challenge confronting Elwood is not the residents

of The Seasons but is the loss of young people in Elwood and the declining enrollment in the Elwood School District. The Seasons will be sending an additional \$2.02 million in new school property taxes to the Elwood School District but no children to educate; a net financial gain for the Elwood School District.

The residents at The Seasons will also contribute to reversing the decline between 2000 and 2011 in Elwood's real median and mean household income. When adjusting for inflation, Elwood's median and mean household between 2000 and 2011 fared much worse than Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington by decreasing at significantly higher percentages than Suffolk County and the Town of Huntington. The residents of The Seasons will bring at a minimum an aggregate of nearly \$27 million in new and permanent household income which will generate 303 primary and secondary jobs with a primary and secondary economic impact of 10.6 million.

Lastly, multiple unit housing such as The Seasons have been found to generate fewer cars per household than single family housing. Combine that with the fact that fewer current Elwood residents over 16 years of age are driving to work as compared to 2000, residents of The Seasons will have little impact on commuting traffic in the Elwood community.

Taking all these factors into consideration, The Seasons At Elwood will be have a positive socio-economic impact on the Elwood Community, the Elwood School District and The Town of Huntington.

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**Dr. MARTIN R. CANTOR, CPA**

**Director, Long Island Center for Socio-Economic Policy**  
**28 Woodmont Road, Melville, New York 11747**  
[www.martincantor.com](http://www.martincantor.com)

**Tel: (631) 491-1388 - Fax: (631) 491-6744-E - Mail: EcoDev1@aol.com**

Martin R. Cantor has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting from Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, a Master of Arts Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from Hofstra University focusing on the socio-economic relationships between education, household income, community and workforce development, and a Doctor of Education Degree from Dowling College. He has served as Suffolk County Economic Development Commissioner (New York State's largest suburban county), brought Computer Associates to Suffolk County, and created over 23,000 jobs with an estimated \$1.4 billion annual payroll economic impact. He has served as: Chief Economist-New York State Assembly Subcommittee for the Long Island Economy; Senior Fellow at the White Plains, New York based Institute for Socioeconomic Studies - a public policy think tank concentrating on poverty in America and senior citizen quality of life; Chair and Chief Economist of the Long Island Development Corp; a building trades labor/management arbitrator; a consultant to the Nassau Interim Financial Authority; a faculty member in the Brooklyn College Department of Economics; Executive Director of the Patchogue Village Business Improvement District; and Director of Economic Development and Chief Economist for Sustainable Long Island, and the Long Island Fund for Sustainable Development, providing financial, technical assistance to businesses and not-for-profit organizations His work is included in the *National Tax Rebate-A New America With Less Government*, and has prepared downtown revitalization plans for Long Island and New York City neighborhoods featuring arts districts, economic restructuring, waterfront projects and community organizing. He was the architect of the Nassau County Comptroller's debt restructuring plan for resolving Nassau County's fiscal crisis; has been a Long Island Business Journal columnist; has authored: federal, state and local legislation; economic impact analyses; analysis of Long Island's economic, demographic, employment, tax, and educational bases; a convention center feasibility study; taxpayer cost of acquiring open space; and health care reform; and Director of Dowling College's Long Island Economic and Social Policy Institute; and an Adjunct Associate Professor of Economics

He is a Certified Public Accountant in private practice; Director of the Long Island Center for Socio-Economic Policy, a consulting economist and economic development consultant to public officials, counties, towns, villages, Industrial Development Agencies, and communities; and Chairman of the Suffolk County Judicial Facilities Agency which financed the acquisition of the Cohalan State Court Complex and the construction of the Suffolk County Jail in Yaphank. He provides economic and business commentary on television and radio; was Co-host of Focus 55, a public affairs program on Channel 55, is a columnist for the Long Island Business News, Long Island's largest business weekly, and Networking Newspaper for Women, has appeared in the New York Times, Newsday, and LI Pulse, and has been syndicated nationally by Newsday, Bridge News and Knight-Ridder/Tribune News Service. He is an Honorary Member of Delta Mu Delta - The National Honor Society in Business Administration and has been recognized by the National Association of Counties for innovative uses of Industrial Revenue Bonds, for international trade promotion initiatives, for downtown revitalization policies, and for minority business incubator initiatives. He was invited by Dr. William Julius Wilson of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government to present his paper entitled *Race Neutral Sustainable Economic Development*. He is the author of the recently published *Long Island, The Global Economy and Race: The Aging of America's First Suburb*.