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## **Press Release**

### **EAST CAMDEN HISTORY MURAL DEBUTS ON ADMIRAL WILSON BOULEVARD**

*Mural replaces vandalized walls on Bush Refrigeration Building and will be the longest and most visible mural in Camden City*

**Camden, NJ** - Graffiti has polluted the Bush Refrigeration building on 1700 Admiral Wilson Boulevard for many years. Inspired by suggestions from residents of the East Camden Advisory Board, a new mural was installed that amplifies the historical contributions of East Camden residents and organizations.

The East Camden History Mural is a collage of historical figures and places created by the We Live Artists Collective. The We Live Here Artists Collective are artists who reside in Camden. The mural not only greatly beautifies the drive along Admiral Wilson Boulevard but instills pride by reminding Camdenite's that there is greatness in Camden.

“This East Camden mural and similar forms of public art have unique transformative powers, helping to highlight all the good within our community,” said Camden Mayor Victor G. Carstarphen. “I commend the Camden Community Partnership, Saint Joseph’s Carpenter Society, Bush Refrigeration, We Live Here Artist Collective, and all involved in the creation of this beautiful work of art. It has instantly improved the quality of life at this location and is such a positive representation of the East Camden community. I feel this mural will be a catalyst for additional creativity, development, and economic growth.”

The mural installation was made possible through funding from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs’ Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program. NRTC provides business entities a 100 percent tax credit for funds provided to nonprofit entities carrying out comprehensive revitalization plans. Nonprofit entities must use at least 60% of the tax credit funds for housing and economic development; the remaining funds may be used for supportive services and other activities that promote neighborhood revitalization.

“Congratulations to Saint Joseph’s Carpenter Society on the implementation of the Public Arts Project as part of its My East Camden Neighborhood Plan,” said DCA Assistant Commissioner Janel Winter, who directs the Division of Housing and Community Resources. “This stunning new mural project created by the We Live Here Artists Collective will play a crucial role in the revitalization of this neighborhood, fostering creativity, community pride, and social connection. This is a prime example of how the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program fosters stakeholder partnerships and targeted action plans that work.”

In 2022, Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society (SJCS) applied for and received a grant through the NRTC program to implement the My East Camden Neighborhood Plan. SJCS partnered with Camden Community Partnership (CCP) to execute the Public Arts Project of the My East Camden Neighborhood Plan.

"This mural is truly a piece of art that reflects the wonderful people, places and historical events of the East Camden neighborhood," said Mark McDonough, President of New Jersey American Water and Co-Chair of Camden Community Partnership. "Keeping the city clean and safe creates an environment where we can expand and grow our local economy and generate new business opportunities. This mural is just one of several you can expect to see this year which will help transform Camden's landscape."

"The vibrancy of East Camden comes alive in this mural," said Pilar Hogan Closkey, Executive Director of Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society. "The We Live Here Collective artists captured residents' personal memories that embody, celebrate, and commemorate the rich history of East Camden. This project also showcases the partnerships among residents, businesses, and stakeholders to continue to share our collective history, beautify our neighborhood, and plan for the future."

The We Live Here Artist Collective members Breiner Garcia, Priscilla Rios and Don T. Williams stated, "This mural was ambitious and vibrant. We enjoyed cultivating the rich resilient history of Camden, which helped us express and create with such synergy. Our brushes were meant to paint these walls, to further display our roots. Our community is our purpose, and art is the way we express it. May the colors help us remember who helped Camden Rise."

"Bush Refrigeration is thrilled to partner with City of Camden on this vibrant mural project," said Alex Bush, owner of Bush Refrigeration. "This collaboration not only beautifies the bottom portion of our building, but also celebrates the rich culture and artistic talent within our community, inspiring pride amount residents and visitors alike."

**About Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society:**

Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society is regionally recognized as a leader in Camden's revitalization. Our efforts, both in housing and economic development, have resulted in increased property values within a stable, mixed-income neighborhood. Strategic partnerships have helped us expand educational and employment opportunities, grow Camden's housing market, improve public safety, strengthen commercial activity and raise the aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood. For more information, please visit [www.sjcs Camden.org](http://www.sjcs Camden.org).

**About Camden Community Partnership:**

Camden Community Partnership (CCP) is facilitating the revival of the City of Camden by creating an environment where people choose to live, work, and invest. CCP develops visionary, long-range plans for the redevelopment of Camden's waterfronts and works with private sector, government and community partners to make these plans a reality. For more information, please visit [www.camdencommunitypartnership.com](http://www.camdencommunitypartnership.com) or follow CCP on Facebook and Twitter.

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