

Strasburg Pa. 17579

## Chamber Business Scholarship Essay

I believe the biggest problem that is facing many businesses in Southern Lancaster County is how to stay competitive and continue to grow while still maintaining the agricultural heritage that so many businesses in the area were founded upon. For so many businesses, tourism is a big part of their income, and one of the biggest attractions for tourists is our county's rich heritage. Therefore, to maintain the tourism every year, businesses must maintain many of the old ways and traditions of doing things. On the other hand, there are obviously advances in all industries that provide more efficient and effective ways of doing things. Most businesses that invest in these advances are going to have the ability to provide more of the product or service that they offer, so it seems like a logical investment. What is different about Southern Lancaster County is what was mentioned before; the importance of maintaining our heritage. There is a fine line between the two extremes. Living in Strasburg, I see evidence of this compromise at the Strasburg Creamery. The Creamery used to sell cent candy when I was younger. When I would go into the store I would always hear the older folks get so excited when they saw the old cent candy that was just like when they were kids. This was an example of how the Creamery's maintained its rich history and still stayed competitive. A few years ago, the Strasburg Creamery went under new management, and stopped selling cent candy. As a kid I was pretty upset at the time, but I now understand the reasoning behind the decision. Clearly, cent candy is meant to give the Creamery a certain atmosphere and relate to the heritage of our area, and is not exactly meant to bring in tons of profit. The new owner decided that he was willing to sacrifice that aspect of the Creamery in order to increase profits. If you go into the Creamery today, you will see that the owner did replace the cent candy with other historically relevant additions. This shows how business must deal with this fine line and must make tough decisions.

I believe the solution for each business is going to vary, depending on how much of your business is involved with our area's heritage. I would say the area that all businesses can fully invest in advancements without fear of losing their agricultural heritage is in marketing. Our county is in a prime location, with many large cities within relatively close distance. The opportunities to market one's business in our area are everywhere. I believe that businesses need to increase profits as best as possible through marketing, while trying their best to keep their heritage existent. And the way to market a business today are almost endless. A business can use television, radio, billboards, newspapers, business cards, social media, local announcement boards, contests, testimonials, and many other possibilities to promote their product or service. Simply put, I truly believe that marketing is the best way to increase profit without sacrificing the rich heritage that is so essential to so many local businesses.