

NEIGHBORHOOD

Alonya Virtual Vintage

Shopping in the Neighborhood

INSTEAD OF HEADING TO THE MILLS AT JERSEY Gardens for all your holiday shopping this season, why not stay close to home and give twice—to your loved ones as well as your community.

Newark's Community Economic Development Corporation's Community Storefront Program (CSP) is a retail incubator that helps local entrepreneurs grow their businesses. The program, created in 2015, helps business owners turn their retail concepts into fully developed brick-and-mortar marketplaces.

The initiative has resulted in the Newark Shoppes—flea market-style shopping areas that are flourishing in four of the five wards. Here are just a few of the retail businesses and business owners you'll find growing and thriving in your back yard.

THE SOUTH SECTION Alonya Virtual Vintage

Thrift and consignment store
790 Clinton Avenue, Newark, NJ 07108 | (201) 289-8143

Hours: Fri: 3pm-7pm, Sat: 12pm-7pm, Sun: 11am-5pm

f @alonyavirtualvintage | **i** @alonyavirtualvintage

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THAT PERFECT VINTAGE COAT, COME on over to Alonya Virtual Vintage. Alonya Holley has loved thrift

and consignment shopping since she was a young girl and opened her business about three years ago. She started out online before deciding to take her business to the next level and joining the CSP.

"Going from Instagram into a storefront location was the biggest challenge. Now, instead of just shipping items, I'm able to offer customers more options."

Holley carries a wide array of vintage outerwear, skirts, tops and accessories, as well as items inscribed with sayings such as "Modesty is Dope" and "Be inspired, but don't bite."

A native Newarker and entrepreneur at heart (she also runs her own event planning business), Holley plans to expand her business and move into her own space in the near future. But she loves the Newark Shoppes and would support them even if she wasn't part of them.

Alonya Virtual Vintage



"It's nice to see that there's development going on outside of downtown. There are a lot of mom-and-pop stores that aren't in the downtown area, but they're out there. And they're needed to help keep the city going, too."

THE WEST SECTION KayKay Jewels

Jewelry and accessories boutique
989 S. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ 07106 | (973) 671-4305
Hours: Tue-Sat: 9am-6pm, Fri: 9am-7pm
f @kaykajewel | **ig** @kaykajewels
Website: kaykajewels.com

YOU CAN FIND CLASSIC, VINTAGE, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC pieces at KayKay Jewels, a jewelry and accessories boutique owned and operated by Karen Baldwin. If you know someone who loves statement pieces like arm cuffs, bibs (necklaces) and nose rings, you'll be in the right place.

A 10-year veteran of the retail industry, Baldwin used to operate Kay Kay Jewels as a mobile business. "I was operating in the North Ward when a friend told me about the [CSP] program," she shares. "The storefront opportunity, for me, was like finding a gold mine."

Now operating out of the Newark Shoppes in the West Ward, Baldwin's target customer has changed but her business has grown. "Moving widened my customer base and has given me stability. There were disadvantages to being mobile. Since being here, I haven't lost one earring!"

THE CENTER OF TOWN Honey Bunnys Baskets

Customized gift baskets for all occasions
744 Broad Street, Newark, NJ 07102 | (973) 752-7000
Hours: Mon-Sat: 10am-7pm
f @honeybunnybaskets | **ig** @honeybunnysbaskets

IF YOU'RE STUCK WHEN IT COMES TO GIFT IDEAS, TRY A personalized gift basket. That's Shirley Smith's specialty at Honey Bunnys Baskets in the Newark Shoppes in the Central Ward.

"I worked at AAA for 22 years while also making my baskets. But I got tired of trying to do both jobs, so I quit AAA and started taking business classes. That's ultimately how I ended up participating in the CSP retail incubator."



Honey Bunnys Baskets



KayKay Jewels

After three years of working from home, Smith, a mother of four, felt she was ready for a storefront.

"It's kind of hard to sell online because I could only photograph baskets I had made for someone else. It was hard for people to imagine what I could do for them," she explains. "Now, I'm face to face. My clients come and see the items in person. I think that when you make things, it's much more personal. Nobody gets the same basket."



Tati's Unique Boutique

THE NORTH SECTION Tati's Unique Boutique

Accessories boutique
216-218 Bloomfield Avenue, Newark, NJ 07104 | (973) 868-1012
Hours: Tue-Fri: 3pm-6pm, Sat: 11am-6pm
ig @carmen_vega_amos

TATI'S UNIQUE BOUTIQUE IS WHERE YOU'LL FIND ACCESSORIES for everyone—from jewelry to fragrances and body products to hats, gloves and scarves. "It doesn't matter what nationality you are, what size you are, if you're a man or a woman, an adult or a child. My business is for everyone," says owner Carmen Vega-Ramos.

When the CSP helped Vega-Ramos set up her shop, she felt right at home. "I live in the North Ward, so I know the community. I had been running my business out of my house for a couple of years and my customers followed me to the storefront," she explains. "But I'm hoping that new customers will seek us out."

That shouldn't be too difficult as the Newark Shoppes in the North Ward are on Bloomfield Avenue, one of the busiest streets in the community with a steady stream of foot, bus and car traffic.

Although she can see herself moving to a larger space soon, she understands how important the CSP is for Newark. "I'm praying to God that it helps move Newark forward. I would love to see that." **en**

—Candace Nicholson