



PHOTO BY SONYA M. TOLER

CONSIDER MANUFACTURING—After his talk, keynote speaker Jeffrey Lipton poses with Greg Spencer, chamber chairman, and President/CEO Doris Carson Williams.

Lipton delivers challenging address at business luncheon

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The African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania did not fail to please at its fifth annual Business Luncheon Meeting.

The Dec. 1 meeting was highlighted by a challenging keynote address from Nova Chemicals Corp. CEO Jeffrey Lipton.

Formerly headquartered in Calgary, Canada, Nova Chemicals relocated to Moon Township five years ago—a move Lipton said was driven by the need to diversify employees and grow the company.

The company produces ethylene, polyethylene, styrene monomer and styrenic polymers, which are used in a wide range of consumer and industrial goods.

The western Pennsylvania region was attractive he said because of its proximity to

the company's customers and its workforce, which is well suited for manufacturing.

"We should be focusing on the chemical industry," Lipton said, "to grow this region's economy, not (information technology) and the bio-sciences."

With its steel-making heritage, Pittsburgh, said Lipton, has a workforce that is "better suited for manufacturing. I believe you should stick with what you're good at."

According to Lipton, the chemical industry employs 6,200 people in the region in companies such as Nova, Bayer Corp., Lanxess, PPG Industries and Calgon Carbon Corp.

Nationally, the industry accounts for 10 percent of all U.S. exports and \$450 billion of the nation's gross domestic product.

By relocating to this region, Nova went from a struggling corporation to an international company that manufactures its products at 18 facilities in the United States, Canada, France,

the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. It also has five technology centers—two in Calgary, and others in Monaca, Pa., Chesapeake, Va., and Breda, Netherlands.

For the third-quarter of this year, Nova Chemicals reported its net income to be \$56 million on revenue of nearly \$1.38 billion, and Lipton said the company has invested \$60 million in the Beaver Valley since relocating and recently entered into a joint partnership with a Japanese company. Out of a Leetsdale plant, the joint partnership manufactures pillows, cushions and dolls under the Mogu brand name.

As has become tradition, Lipton was presented with a gift and a lapel pin worn by chamber members.

In addition to a chamber business card fashioned out of chocolate, guests received a copy of Nancy Wilson's latest CD, "RSVP," which was recorded at the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild.