Mercerville, NJ – Linda M. Czipo, executive director of The Center for Non-Profits, New Jersey’s umbrella organization for the charitable community, has been named a Nonprofit Organization Advocate of the Year by the Nonprofit Development Center of Southern New Jersey in partnership with SNJ Business People.

The award will be presented on March 2, 2016 at a reception in Deptford, NJ. Also being recognized as Nonprofit Organization Advocate of the Year is Diana Cooper, president and CEO of Community Planning & Advocacy Council (CPAC). The award ceremony will feature several other categories including Chairman, Trustee, Community Partners of the Year, and more.

“I am honored to receive this award and proud to be in such tremendous company,” commented Czipo. “The importance and beauty of advocacy is that it’s not something you do alone, and at the Center, we have an incredible team of staff, board, members, non-profit allies, funders and supporters who make this work possible. We’re also extremely grateful for our longstanding partnership with the Nonprofit Development Center of Southern New Jersey in providing important programs for non-profits throughout the year. Together we’re championing and protecting the non-profit community as an indispensable part of the social and economic well-being of New Jersey and its residents.”

Czipo’s non-profit experience spans over 25 years, and includes expertise in public policy, compliance and management issues. She writes and speaks frequently to the media, non-profit, philanthropic and business leaders, and government officials regarding the size, strength, economic and social contributions of New Jersey’s non-profit sector and current and emerging trends facing the non-profit community; and has successfully mobilized broad-based coalitions of non-profits around numerous advocacy issues.

Among the recent advocacy activities spearheaded by the Center under Czipo’s leadership:

**Property Taxes**
- The Center has educated policy makers, the media, non-profits and the public regarding the contributions non-profits make in communities and implications of challenges to non-profit property tax exemptions on the ability of non-profits to provide essential services.
- Joined by several other organizations and represented by pro bono counsel, the Center filed two amicus briefs in support of Princeton University in a property tax suit that could make non-profits of all sizes vulnerable to arbitrary challenges by third parties that would divert scarce resources from their charitable missions.
• The Center has connected non-profits to specific guidance to help them reduce their vulnerability to property tax challenges.

**Contracting and Red Tape** – The Center, on behalf of a cohort of non-profit organizations, has presented comprehensive recommendations to the Red Tape Review Commission covering contract reforms, the need to fully cover the costs of non-profit services, the importance of new federal guidelines for government grants, and much more. The most recent recommendations were submitted to the Commission September 2015; the Center has continued to follow up on its recommendations and has held online briefings and in-person workshops to educate New Jersey non-profit on these issues.

**IRS Withdraws Onerous Gift Substantiation Proposal** – Working with the National Council of Nonprofits, the Center for Non-Profits rallied support from hundreds of New Jersey non-profits to defeat Internal Revenue Service proposed regulations that would have called for the collection and reporting by charities of donors’ Social Security numbers.

**New Jersey Non-Profits 2015: Trends and Outlook** – The Center annually surveys our state’s non-profits regarding trends, challenges, and achievements; and the impact of the economy and other developments on their ability to fulfill their missions. The results are shared with policy makers, the media, funders, non-profits and other stakeholders. The Center’s 16th annual survey was published in March 2015; the 2016 report will be issued in late February or early March.

Czipo is a current public policy committee member and former board treasurer of the National Council of Nonprofits; and also serves on the New Jersey Commission on National and Community Service; the advisory board of the Center for Excellence in Leadership, Governance and Philanthropy at Fairleigh Dickinson University; and the Leadership and Policy Committee of the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers. She holds a degree in Political Science from Rutgers University and resides with her family in Hillsborough, NJ.

The Center for Non-Profits, founded in 1982, is a charitable umbrella organization serving New Jersey's non-profit community. The Center exists to build the power of New Jersey's non-profit community to improve the quality of life for the people of our state. Center programs include advocacy, public education, management and compliance assistance, publications, workshops, and member services. For more information, visit the Center's website, www.njnonprofits.org, or call (732) 227-0800.

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