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Community Life

BUSINESS BY
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SECTION B



Fifth annual event to benefit local charities

By **JARED KALTWASSER**
Staff Writer

PISCATAWAY— It all began when Deborah Muse-Carty challenged her daughters to do something positive.

"I just felt that I wanted them to do something service-based," Muse-Carty said. "I wanted them to do something community-based."

And the girls discovered that was their cup of tea.

The Tea Party Charitable Foundation will host its fifth annual Mother-Daughter Charity Tea and Clothing Drive from 2 to 6 p.m. on May 31 at the Embassy Suites, 121 Centennial Ave.

The foundation is one prong of a project started by sisters Nia and Kiara Carty.

Kiara, 20, and a sophomore at the University of Maryland, said the first tea party had a decent turnout of family and friends and took place in an art store. Last year, 125 mothers and daughters attended the event. The sisters are hoping to double that number this year when they open up the party to the entire family. The one-time expansion is in honor of the anniversary. Next year's event will continue in the mother-daughter format.

Proceeds from the event go to local charities, as do clothes attendees are asked to bring. Mothers and daughters are encouraged to bring new or gently used clothes

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MOTHER- DAUGHTER CHARITY TEA AND CLOTHING DRIVE

WHEN: 2 to 6 p.m. May 31

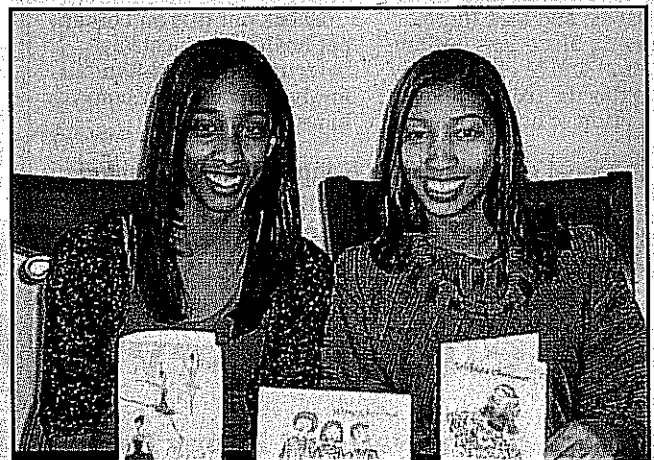
WHERE: Embassy Suite, 121 Centennial Ave., Piscataway

HOW MUCH: \$15 for single tickets; \$130 for a table of eight; free for children 5 and younger

INFORMATION:
www.teapartycards.com

Submitted art

Right, sisters Nia, left, and Kiara Carty will host their annual charitable tea party event. To support the charity, they run a hand-made greeting card company.



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that would fit a girl their age or size. Monetary and clothing donations will go to the Children's Rescue Mission Orphanage in Monrovia, Liberia, and to FISH, Inc., which is based in Dunellen. Money will also be used for a college book scholarship.

"We just wanted to make a difference," said Nia, 15, a freshman at Piscataway High School. "When we see how we can help people, and we see the effect that we've had,

it makes us feel good."

The foundation also will honor three women with "Stepping Out On Faith" awards: Ingrid Alexander of Owner Castle Spa in Plainfield will receive an award for entrepreneurship, Adriana Miller of Piscataway High School will receive an award for athleticism, and Shon Gables, host of the Black Enterprise Business Report, will receive an award for special achievement.

Alongside the sisters' charitable foundation is Tea Party and Things, Inc., an Internet-based greeting card company.

Nia handles the illustration of the cards, Kiara handles the text.

"It gives us a chance to work together on the same level," Kiara said. "We all come together and bounce ideas off each other."

The sisters were recently asked to submit a video about their business to the Tyra Banks Show. It ran throughout February and can now be found on the Tea Party and Things Web site.

Their goal now is to get the cards into retail stores.

"To see our cards in a store, that would be amazing," Nia said.

No matter how successful the card business becomes, the Cartys said their goal has always been to use the business to further their charitable efforts.

Kiara hopes their business and charity send an encouraging message to other youths.

"There's a chance to help people everywhere: in your school, your church, and there's always soup kitchens and things that you can do," she said.

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