



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Bridget Fox

203-921-7644

bridget.fox@uwwesternct.org

Stamford Cradle to Career Receives \$45,000 in Grants from Fairfield County's Community Foundation

Funds Will Support General Operating Costs and the Bridge to College Program

STAMFORD, Conn. (January 6, 2021) — Stamford Cradle to Career (SC2C) is pleased to announce that it has received two grants from Fairfield County's Community Foundation. The grants will help SC2C achieve its mission to collectively align community resources to ensure equity and excellence in education, for every Stamford child, from cradle to career.

A grant for \$30,000 will support general operating expenses to help SC2C conduct its major initiatives through December of 2021. Those initiatives focus on early childhood development, summer literacy, early grade reading, and transition from high school to college or career. SC2C has also played a leadership role in conducting a series of virtual trainings in partnership with Stamford Stands Against Racism on Community Racial Justice and is partnering with other collective impact initiatives in Connecticut to provide trainings on Restorative Practices for teachers and professionals who work with children and teens. SC2C has continued to support student success throughout the past year, despite the challenges of COVID-19, by offering programs virtually.

A grant for \$15,000 will specifically help to fund the work of SC2C's Bridge to College program during the summer of 2021. Bridge to College makes sure students are the first in their families to attend college actually matriculate in the fall. In a phenomenon called "summer melt," as many as 37% of Stamford graduating seniors who intended to attend Norwalk Community College in the past did not make it, mostly because of the complexities of meeting deadlines, submitting paperwork, and filing for financial aid. This past summer more than 900 recent Stamford high school graduates received text messages about important college enrollment deadlines through Bridge to College. Two counselors provided more intensive one-on-one counseling to over 100 students. The counseling was particularly relevant during the summer of 2020, with many students changing plans in the face of the pandemic.

"We are extremely grateful for these grants from the Fairfield County's Community Foundation," said Bridget Fox, President of Stamford Cradle to Career. "We are working tirelessly with community partners and the Stamford Public Schools to make sure all children and families are receiving the support they need during these unusual and trying times. These funds will help us provide that support."

United Way of Western Connecticut serves as the anchor and backbone support for Stamford Cradle to Career, which has more than 60 community partners.

For more information about Stamford Cradle to Career, contact Bridget Fox, President, at 203-883-0960 or bridget.fox@uwwesternct.org.



Students who participated in Bridge to College in the summer of 2019 are pictured here with counselors and Stamford Cradle to Career staff. During the summer of 2020, counselors met virtually with more than 100 students, helping them complete paperwork and meet deadlines to ensure that they would be ready to attend college in the fall.

##

ABOUT FAIRFIELD COUNTY'S COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Fairfield County's Community Foundation promotes philanthropy as a means to create change in Fairfield County, focusing on innovative and collaborative solutions to critical issues impacting the community. Individuals, families, corporations and organizations can establish charitable funds or contribute to existing funds. The Community Foundation is in compliance with the Council on Foundations' national standards, and has awarded \$180 million in grants to nonprofits in Fairfield County and beyond. For more information, visit www.fccfoundation.org.

ABOUT STAMFORD CRADLE TO CAREER

Stamford Cradle to Career (SC2C) is a collective impact partnership with a solid and committed cross-sector collaboration that is based on the nationally recognized StriveTogether Cradle to Career Framework in creating a community-wide partnership. It is a road map to change and a new way for community stakeholders to work together. The overarching goal of Stamford Cradle to Career is to collectively align community resources to ensure that all youth succeed in education, career, and life because successful children lead to a vibrant and thriving community. The partnership convenes over one hundred volunteers from the community, non-profit agencies, Stamford Public Schools, the City of Stamford, and the business community to create, align, implement, assess, and grow interventions that support the educational success of children and their families. United Way of Western Connecticut is serving as the anchor and backbone entity providing management and fiscal support for the partnership. For more information about the StriveTogether Framework, visit www.strivetgether.org. For more information about SC2C, visit www.stamfordc2c.org.

ABOUT UNITED WAY OF WESTERN CONNECTICUT

United Way of Western Connecticut (UWWC) improves the lives of hard-working, struggling households by mobilizing the resources of local communities to create lasting change. We help residents across Northern Fairfield County, Southern Litchfield County, and the City of Stamford by focusing on the vital building blocks for a good life: Education, Financial Stability, and Health. We are committed to ensuring that every child enters school ready to learn, every family is financially stable, and every community we serve is healthy and strong. We are particularly focused on a population that United Way identifies as **ALICE**® (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) in our communities. A United Way report published in September 2020 revealed that in Connecticut, more than 1 in 4 households has earnings above the Federal Poverty Level, but below a basic cost-of-living threshold. Combined with those who are struggling below poverty level, 38% of all households in the state are experiencing financial hardship. By leveraging the collective power of the community, we are focused on creating an environment where individuals and families are self-sufficient and can achieve financial independence. For more information about United Way of Western Connecticut, please visit: www.uwwesternct.org. Like us on [Facebook](#). Follow us on [Twitter](#). Follow us on [Instagram](#). Watch us on [YouTube](#).