

Catalyst Grant Will Fund Mobile Kiosk for Seniors



(November 23, 2009) Lack of access to critical services is one of the biggest challenges facing the region's growing older adult population and their adult caregivers. In response to this challenge, the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain's Catalyst Fund members will give a \$10,000 grant to Central Connecticut Senior Health Services for a mobile kiosk designed to reach seniors who are isolated or otherwise unaware of services available to them, and their families.

The Connecticut Center for Healthy Aging, based in Southington, plans to combine the grant with funding from other sources to launch a new mobile kiosk, which will enable the Center to serve seniors and those caring for them in Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

Marc Levesque, Senior Resource Care Manager with the Center, recently told Catalyst members that the professionally-staffed van will visit grocery stores, food pantries, senior centers and other public sites in the four towns offering critical information and free assessments. "Our staff will ask questions such as 'How are things going at home?' in order to establish relationships that will open doors for people in times of need," he explained.

Catalyst Fund members selected Central Connecticut Senior Health Services to receive their annual grant after reviewing proposals from three area nonprofits to meet a need in the Community Foundation's four-town service area of Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington. Other applicants for the Catalyst grant were Catholic Charities, which proposed to use the award to expand their community outreach support group to seniors in the Hispanic population who do not speak English, and Connecticut Community Care, Inc., which sought the funding to expand their capacity to offer comprehensive in-home assessments and access to resources designed to help people remain at home as long as possible.

"Our Catalyst Fund members looked at three very worthy causes as contenders for this year's grant and learned so much about the challenges facing this population during the process," said Cori Humes, chair of the Catalyst Fund Steering Committee. The Catalyst Fund, created in 2003 with the support of the Robert C. Vance Foundation, is a grass roots community service initiative that provides a means by which citizens from all walks of life can participate in the philanthropic process. For a modest annual investment of \$250, Catalyst Fund members annually select a charitable focus, convene educational sessions to learn about their issue and, at the end of each year, choose a nonprofit recipient specializing in the issue of choice to receive a grant.