

# Catalyst Fund Meets a Growing Need for Senior Citizens



*From Left to Right: Marc Levesque, CT Center for Healthy Aging; Jim Williamson, Community Foundation of Greater New Britain; Trish Walden, Central CT Senior Health Services; Sue Smayda, Southington Library and Museum*

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 Catalyst Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain recently awarded 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. Created by the same local firm responsible for ESPN's studio sets, the Mobile Center Kiosk was unveiled early this month at the Southington Library and Museum with the help of Jim Williamson, President of the Community Foundation. "Since its beginning in 2003, the Catalyst Fund has enabled the Foundation to successfully support a wide range of special initiatives, this project being the latest. Helping some of Southington's most treasured citizens remain in their homes and connected to supportive resources improves the quality of life for us all, no matter what age," said Williamson. Susan Smayda, Director of Southington Library and Museum stated "The Central

Connecticut Senior Health Services mobile kiosk will help reach out to seniors with information that is vital to their health and well-being. This project has the potential to improve the quality of life for seniors wherever it travels."

The professionally staffed mobile kiosk will visit grocery stores, health fairs, senior centers and other public sites in the Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington offering critical information and free assessments focusing on maintaining the quality of life for senior citizens.

"The creation of this mobile unit will go a long way to further our mission of enhancing access to services and information to attain the best possible quality of life for seniors and their caregivers in our communities," said Marc Levesque, Senior Resource Care Manager with the Center for Healthy Aging.

Connecticut Center for Healthy Aging, based in Southington, combined the grant from the Catalyst Fund with other funding sources to launch the mobile kiosk, which is available now to serve seniors and their caregivers in Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington. To schedule the kiosk at your organization or Senior Group contact Marc Levesque at the Center for Healthy Aging, 860-276-5293.

Catalyst Fund members selected Central Connecticut Senior Health Services to receive their annual grant after reviewing proposals from area nonprofits which addressed important gaps in services to senior citizens in the Community Foundation's four-town service area of Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington.

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.

The 2010 edition of the Catalyst Fund will begin its meetings this coming May. To learn more about the Catalyst Fund contact Cheryl Farmer at 860-229-6018 ext. 305.