

NEWS

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LENDING A HAND: COLLEGE STUDENTS HELP PRESCHOOLERS LEARN THANKS TO FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP

NEW BRITAIN, CT — Thanks to a collaboration of four local philanthropic organizations, low-income preschool children at HRA of New Britain's Head Start programs are getting a better chance to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. That's because they are now taking part in the Jumpstart early literacy program, funded by \$42,500 in grants from Liberty Bank Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, the Farmington Bank Community Foundation, and The Fund for Greater Hartford.



Enjoying some learning time with two New Britain children are (left to right): Jim Williamson, president, Community Foundation of Greater New Britain; CCSU senior Joanne Aldave of East Hartford; Chris Traczyk, executive director, Farmington Bank Community Foundation; Betty Sugarman Weintraub, associate director for grantmaking and community initiatives, Liberty Bank Foundation; CCSU freshman Nicole Milo of Plainville; and Kate Miller, executive director, The Fund for Greater Hartford.

Jumpstart helps preschool children develop the vital early language, literacy, and social-emotional skills they will need to succeed, not only in kindergarten, but in life. “Without early intervention, young children living in poverty will start kindergarten as much as 60% behind their more affluent peers,” explained Kerri Osborne, executive director of Jumpstart Tri-State. “If they haven’t caught up to the point where they are reading at grade level by grade 3, they are four times less likely to graduate from high school by age 19.”

Jumpstart has recruited and trained 36 students from Central Connecticut State University to deliver its results-based, evidence-driven early literacy curriculum. Corps members, as the college students are called, undergo 40 hours of training in early childhood education to teach the Jumpstart session twice weekly at a Head Start preschool. During the 2013-14 school year, students will deliver the Jumpstart curriculum to 90 children in two New Britain preschools.

“We first partnered with Jumpstart to bring the program to Windham,” said Betty Sugerman Weintraub, associate director of the Liberty Bank Foundation. “When we saw how successful the model was, we sponsored two informational sessions to encourage other funders interested in early education to support Jumpstart. We’re delighted that our friends at the Community Foundation for Greater New Britain, The Fund for Greater Hartford, and Farmington Bank Community Foundation agree that Jumpstart is a great investment for young children in New Britain.”

“The Jumpstart program dovetails perfectly with New Britain’s Campaign for Grade Level Reading,” said Jim Williamson, president and CEO of the Community Foundation for Greater New Britain. “We know that low-income children often start kindergarten behind their peers, and many never catch up. Jumpstart addresses that achievement gap before children begin kindergarten, putting them on a level playing field with students from more affluent families.”



CCSU freshman Nicole Milo of Plainville enjoys story time with one of the children at the HRA of New Britain Head Start program.

“Jumpstart has a proven track record in successfully engaging children and ensuring they are ready for school,” said Christine Traczyk, executive director of the Farmington Bank Community Foundation. “Farmington Bank Community Foundation’s support of Jumpstart is a commitment to our next generation of youth. We understand how critical school readiness is to successful high school graduation and collaborative funding can create the systemic change that individual funding may not be able to.”

“With only 28% of New Britain’s children reading at or above proficiency level by grade 3, there’s clearly a need for a program like Jumpstart here,” said Kate Miller, executive director of The Fund for Greater Hartford. “I also think that bringing college students into the preschool classroom offers the younger children some terrific role models—and maybe starts them thinking about becoming college students themselves one day.”

Jumpstart is a national early education organization working toward the day every child in America enters kindergarten prepared to succeed. Jumpstart delivers a research-based and cost-effective program by training college students and community volunteers to serve preschool-age children in low-income neighborhoods. Through a proven curriculum, these children develop the language and literacy skills they need to be ready for school, setting them on a path for lifelong success. Jumpstart is a proud member of the AmeriCorps national service network. This school year, under the auspices of

Jumpstart Tri-State, 816 college students from fifteen university partners will work with over 2,000 preschool children in New York City, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Learn more at www.jstart.org.

The Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc. is a multi-service non-profit organization dedicated to increasing economic self-sufficiency among individuals and families residing in greater New Britain. HRA's mission is to improve the quality of life by helping people achieve economic and social potential; responding to the causes and conditions of poverty; and building stronger individuals, families and communities in the greater New Britain area.

Since its inception in 1997, the Liberty Bank Foundation has awarded almost \$8 million in grants to nonprofit organizations within Liberty Bank's market area. The foundation seeks to improve the quality of life for people of low or moderate income by investing in three areas: education to promote economic success for children and families; affordable housing; and nonprofit capacity building. Along with its grantmaking, the foundation strives to foster the convening and collaboration of nonprofits, funders, business, and government to address community issues.

Established in 1941, the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain connects donors who care with causes that matter in Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington. Since 2006, the Foundation has invested more than \$1.3 million in helping local children prepare for success through its signature First Years First early childhood development initiative. For more information, visit www.cfgnb.org.

The Farmington Bank Community Foundation is the charitable arm of First Connecticut Bancorp. Inc., the holding company of Farmington Bank. The Farmington Bank Community Foundation's mission is to improve the economic viability and well-being of residents and their communities in the central Connecticut area by providing charitable support to 501(c)(3) community organizations. The Foundation's areas of focus are Economic Empowerment, Community Investment and Health and Wellness. In addition, Farmington Bank employees provide human capital by donating hundreds of hours of volunteer work to programs and organizations that impact the quality of life of the residents in the towns Farmington Bank serves. For more information about the Farmington Bank Community Foundation, visit www.farmingtonbankct.com.

The Fund for Greater Hartford began in 1950 as The Hartford Courant Foundation. Thirty years later, following the purchase of the Hartford Courant by the Times Mirror Corporation, it transitioned from a corporate foundation to a private, independent foundation. In 2010, on the occasion of the Foundation's thirtieth anniversary, the Board decided that as a private, independent foundation, it was important to convey that independence clearly to the community. The decision was made to move to an independent office space and to change the name of the Foundation to The Fund for Greater Hartford. Today, The Fund focuses on grant making in the areas of arts, education, community development, and health and social services, with an emphasis on meeting the needs of children.

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