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PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHES FUND TO HELP PARENTS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT



HARTFORD, CT—Today, with Governor Dannel Malloy, state legislators, and representatives of leading businesses and philanthropic organizations on hand, a public/private partnership launched the WorkPath Fund: an initiative aimed at helping Connecticut parents succeed in a still-difficult job market.

Operating through the state's seventeen CT Works Career Centers, the WorkPath Fund will distribute small, one-time grants to help parents with dependent children defray expenses that pose barriers to employment. These could include the costs of uniforms, transportation, child care, licensing fees,

and other expenses.

WorkPath was developed by a partnership that includes the Liberty Bank Foundation, the Connecticut Commission on Children, the Workforce Alliance, the five Connecticut Workforce Investment Boards, Cronin and Company, and United Way 211 InfoLine.

As of January 31, the WorkPath Fund had raised \$105,500 from the following philanthropic donors:

American Savings Foundation

Bank of America

Community Foundation of Greater New Haven

Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

James H. Napier Foundation

Liberty Bank Foundation

Travelers

Middlesex United Way

People's United Community Foundation

United Way of Greater New Haven

Valley Community Foundation

The WorkPath Fund grew out of a provision in Public Act 10-133, An Act Concerning Children in the Recession. This ground-breaking legislation stemmed from public hearings held across Connecticut by the Speaker's Task Force on Children in the Recession, co-chaired by State Representative Diana Urban, former Representative Karen Jarmoc, and State Senator Terry Gerratana. The Task Force, along with businesses like Liberty Bank, immediately recognized that parents seeking employment in tough times often face a cruel paradox: that they need money in order to make money.



Governor Dannel Malloy (r) joined Liberty Bank President and CEO Chandler Howard at the official launch of the WorkPath Fund at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford..

“Imagine you’re a parent who’s been unemployed for a long time, and you finally have a chance to get a job—but then you find you have to pay for uniforms, or a license, or another job-related expense, and you just can’t afford it,” said Chandler J. Howard, president and CEO of Liberty Bank and the Liberty Bank Foundation. “WorkPath is designed to remove that barrier and enable eligible parents to work and support their families.”

Elaine Zimmerman, executive director of the Connecticut Commission on Children, noted that Connecticut was among the first states to look from the family’s point of view in trying to improve employment. The Task Force in particulate, she said, “helped the state focus our efforts on family hunger, lost housing, youth and adult unemployment. It also helped us see how we needed to become rapidly more customer-friendly to the family in such high-stress times. The WorkPath Fund is a part of that package—and one that we learned was paramount for so many families to make ends meet.”

Since its inception in 1997, the Liberty Bank Foundation has awarded over \$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.

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