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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Danbury Project Homeless Connect will Convene Over 60 Human Services Agencies on One Day to Provide Dozens of Services to Homeless

DANBURY, CT (November 20, 2007) – Danbury Project Homeless Connect, a one-day, community-wide event to deliver services to people who are homeless or in danger of being homeless, will take place on December 5th from 10 am to 3 pm at the Elk’s Lodge grand hall on Main Street.

Over 60 human services agencies from around greater Danbury will participate in the event, offering services such as medical referrals, flu shots, and eye & dental exams. Services will also include counseling on housing, employment, legal issues, education, veteran’s services, benefits, credit, mental health, and much more.

The event is being planned through Danbury’s Continuum of Care Council, a collaborative group made up of key people from the area’s social service agencies. Milena Sangut, Assistant Director of the Greater Danbury Mental Health Authority, is heading up the event. “This is Danbury’s first Project Homeless Connect (PHC) event, and the response from the area’s human services agencies has been tremendous,” said Ms. Sangut. “We’re looking forward to the prospect of having so many of these services in one place for a day. It will go a long way toward showing people who are homeless in our community that we truly care, and that we can help. We’re also hoping that this event will help to raise the awareness about homelessness within the overall community.”

Two of the event’s major sponsors are United Way of Western Connecticut (UWWC) and the Danbury Elk’s. UWWC has contributed a large part of the event’s budget, and the Danbury Elk’s has donated its Grand Hall as the site for the event.

“The overall mission of United Way of Western Connecticut focuses on mobilizing resources to improve lives and our community, so we were eager to lend support to this event” said June Renzulli, CEO of UWWC. “Something like this is beneficial to the community on so many levels – the homeless find the services and support they need all in one place, the community sees how collaborative our service system is, and a constructive action is taken to address the many issues surrounding housing and self-sufficiency.”

This first annual Project Homeless Connect event will also help Danbury achieve a goal set forth by Mayor Mark Boughton’s 10-year plan to end homelessness. The Danbury Housing Partnership, a group appointed by the Mayor to move his plan forward, has voiced strong support of PHC. “An event like this can contribute to the success of our 10-year plan to end homelessness, especially if it happens annually and builds year-to-year,” said Mark Nolan, Co-chair of the Danbury Housing Partnership. “Those experiencing homelessness or in danger of becoming homeless can be moved more quickly toward housing and stability through initiatives such as PHC.”

Project Homeless Connect will take place on December 5th from 10 am to 3 pm at the Elk’s Lodge

Grand Hall, 456 Main Street.

For more information on this event, contact:

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Milena Sangut

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THE UNITED WAY OF WESTERN CONNECTICUT was formed on July 1 with the merger of United Way of Northern Fairfield County, Housatonic/Shepaug United Way, and United Way of Stamford. It will distribute close \$4 million to benefit human service programs and community initiatives within the three regional areas of Northern Fairfield County, Southern Litchfield County, and Stamford. The towns covered within these regions are Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, Kent, New Fairfield, Newtown, New Milford, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Sherman, Stamford, Warren and Washington.

The United Way of Western Connecticut is a leader in mobilizing resources to improve lives and our communities. They bring together community leaders, nonprofit organizations, volunteers and businesses to focus on the most pressing needs in our community and provides the resources – human, technical and financial – to get to the heart of problems.

PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT (PHC) originated in San Francisco in October 2004 and has been identified by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) as "an innovation that mobilizes civic will to end homelessness." According to information at the USICH website, communities replicate this model to move people more quickly toward housing and stability and to help further the goals of their 10-Year Plans to end homelessness.

PHC is now implemented in 106 cities across the United States as well as Canada, Puerto Rico and Australia. Every other month over 1000 community volunteers partner with city government, non-profits and the private sector to provide a one-stop shop of health and human services for homeless San Franciscans. Services include medical, mental health, substance abuse, housing, dental, benefits, legal, free eyeglasses, California ID, food, clothing, wheelchair repair and more. The goal of PHC is to provide easy access to services that support the transition of the City's homeless off the streets and into housing. As of February 2007, 18,486 volunteers have provided services to 18,217 homeless San Franciscans.

THE DANBURY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP is a group of local experts on housing and social issues appointed by Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton to move forward on the city's 10-year plan to end homelessness. Carolyn Sistrunk, Executive Director of the Danbury Housing Authority and Mark Nolan, President of Nolan Enterprises, are Co-chairs of this council.