

## **State of Connecticut**

**African-American Affairs Commission**

**State Capitol**

**210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509**

**Hartford, CT 06106**

**860-240-8555**

February 18, 2010

Good afternoon Members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Glenn Cassis and I am the Executive Director of the African-American Affairs Commission. Although this is the smallest of all the commissions the AAAC knows that its presence is imperative to the improvement to the quality of life for all citizens in Connecticut. As you are aware the AAAC had an alarming reduction of its budget. Two of the four permanent staff were let go. The remaining staff accepted significant salary reductions. Despite this I come before you to request that you sustain the Commission's budget of \$212,236 for FY 2011. Since my comments are limited to ten minutes I will provide you with a snapshot of this Commission for roughly the past six months and moving forward.

There is no doubt that the layoff of two of the four staff positions in October 2009 has affected how we carry out our mandate as stated in CGS Section 2-121. Despite the significant gains made nationally by African-Americans, the troubled economy has widened racial disparities in Connecticut. Recognizing the many issues confronting the African-American community the active presence of the Commission is vital to the success of this State.

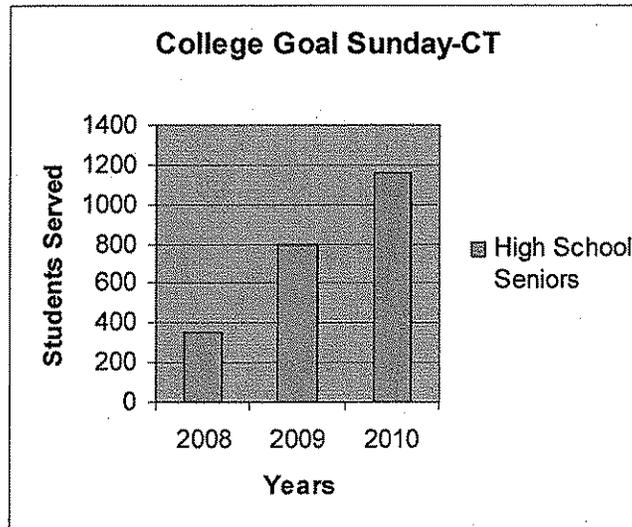
### **The African-American Affairs Commission**

Established in 1997 by Public Act 97-11 Section 24 by the General Assembly and approved by the Governor, the African-American Affairs Commission provides voice to policy and legislation that impact on the African-American community in Connecticut. Equally as important the Commission partners with community organizations, businesses and non-profits to insure that public policies serve to help eliminate the disparities between a large percentage of the African-American community and the rest of the State.

When the budget was reduced in the fall, our priorities had to be adjusted. The Commission remained steadfastly committed to improving the lives of African-Americans in pivotal areas of education, economic development and self sufficiency, health and political well-being. The Commission has become the convener, collaborator and has taken the lead in what has provided voice and action for African-Americans. We have demonstrated progress in addressing the elimination of the achievement gap in education, taken steps to establish innovative ideas to bring economic development to an international platform, pressed for solutions on issues of health disparities and championed having the underserved counted and visible.

### **Education**

The Commission has joined state, regional and national efforts to help eliminate the achievement gap. Since 2007 we have been instrumental in contributing ideas, resources, leadership and recently securing funding from outside Connecticut for statewide projects. With direct collaboration by the AAAC and a three year \$150,000 grant from the Lumina Foundation, College Goal Sunday (CGS-CT) came to Connecticut. CGS offers first generation and underserved high school seniors and their families with one of most important steps to going to college – access to financial aid. The Commission has coordinated the site locations around Connecticut where high school seniors are afforded the services of financial aid professionals with completing the Free Application For Federal Student Aid form (FAFSA). As you are aware, completion of the FAFSA form is often the barrier that prevents first generation students who need financial aid from attending college. Since 2008 CGS-CT has grown from 6 sites serving 350 students to 13 sites serving 1,163 students on Sunday, January 31 of this year. We know that these students successfully completed one of the most important steps to closing the achievement gap and going to college. High school counselors do not have the expertise to serve the volume of students that we have reached over the years. The table below shows the growth of this program. Without the leadership of the AAAC and collaboration of partners, these students and students in the years to come would not have the benefits of this free service. The website [www.collegegoalsundayct.org](http://www.collegegoalsundayct.org) offers additional information on the scope of this project.



Having students succeed in higher education requires preparation and access. The Commission has taken the lead to champion the national program KnowHowToGO (KH2GO). Since the initial kickoff of KH2GO-CT in 2008, tens of thousands of student and hundreds of school teachers and counselors have used the website [www.knowhow2goct.org](http://www.knowhow2goct.org) to gain valuable information on the four steps needed to go to college. This fall the Commission wrote and submitted a grant proposal to the Lumina Foundation for Education and was awarded a three year \$140,000 grant for state-wide re-granting. The network that has been established supports the Lumina goal of increasing the number of American adults with college degrees from the current 40% to 60% by 2025. America is falling behind when compared to other industrial nations. In order to increase the percentage we are focusing on the first generation and the traditionally underserved populations. Only 15% of African-Americans over the age of 25 have a 4 year degree. We developed and issued an RFP for non-profits organizations, community based organizations and higher educational institutions to submit proposals that addressed this goal. Fifty proposals were submitted targeting middle school to college students for projects that improved access and success for earning a college degree. On December 23, 2009, seven re-grants were awarded for a total of \$32,375. An estimated 440 middle school through college students will be directly impacted by these 7 grant awards (see the appendix). An RFP will be issued for the second round in early March. The last year of re-granting, will be late 2011.

What we quickly learned from the first round of re-granting was that there were many outstanding organizations in Connecticut that understand the importance of education for all students. In fact most viewed access to a good education as a matter of civil rights. We found that most of the 43 organizations that were not funded have ideas worthy of support. Wanting to help sustain the momentum, the Commission submitted a grant request to the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) to promote the expansion and development of the local college access and success network in Connecticut. In January 2010 we were awarded a grant for \$19,000 to further develop and maintain a statewide network. Planning is underway to host a symposium of key stakeholders who will further develop the network that will address financial sustainability and develop policy that will improve access and success in college for first generation students. This effort will contribute to the elimination of the achievement gap not only in Connecticut but between Connecticut and the other industrial countries.

The Commission continues to be actively involved with the State Department of Education and school reform. We participated in the Ad-Hoc Committee and signed on with SDE in the Race To The Top proposal. When approved and funded, Connecticut will have an estimated \$175 million dollars to help raise educational standards and eliminate the achievement gap. The Commission is also a cosponsor in the Campaign LEARN initiative. We have participated in the Town Hall meetings around the state and are in support of the 10 point plan proposed by the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus.

### **Economic Development**

As a result of legislation that was supported by the AAAC – Senate Bill 880 Special Act No. 09-14 – An Act Concerning Trade With Africa, the Commission has convened group of citizens (business, CBO's and academia) to address establishing trade between Connecticut and the countries of Africa. The Commission has supported the group by networking and identifying resources that will connect the dots needed for entrepreneurs to engage in international trade. Connecticut has the industries and manufacturing that many African nations need. Trade with African countries would help boost the state's economy. The Commission brokered meetings with the newly formed US-African Development Organization (USADO) and the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and the US Department of Commerce. In the coming months this organization will become incorporated and apply for its tax exempt status. In the meantime we will continue to help this organization grow. A meeting with a business delegation from Nigeria is being

planned for early March. The early draft of the organization's business plan is included in the appendix of this testimony.

The Commission is not an employment service but when circumstances prevail we foster opportunities. Working with the US Census 2010 to help disseminate accurate information about the upcoming Census, the Commission was asked to help in the agency's hiring process. In order to be employed by the Census one has to score well on a 25 question exam. The AAAC contacted churches in African-American communities to offer them the opportunity to be exam sites for the Census. The Census later informed the Commission that the pass rate was below their expectations. The Commission helped secure individuals who assisted perspective test takers with exam preparation. According to officials at the Census it is imperative that workers hired come from the communities that they are familiar with and that residents are familiar with them. The hiring process is still active but hundreds have taken the exam through the effort of the Commission.

### **Health**

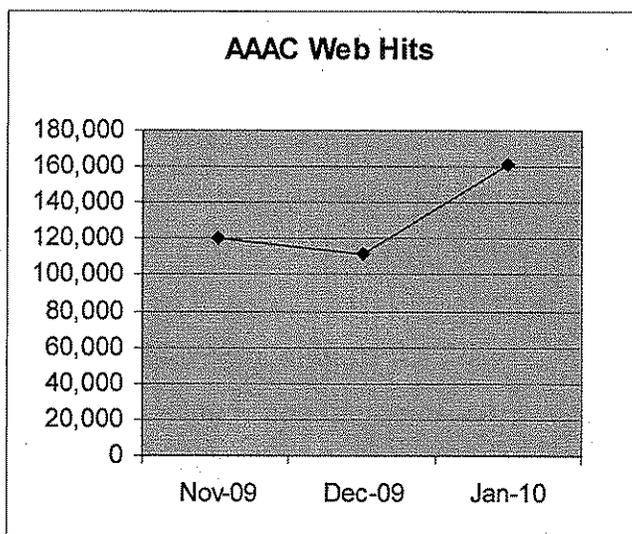
Health disparities in the African-American community continue to be an important issue. The Commission currently serves on the Commission on Health Equity, Central Area Health Education Council's Health Equity Collaborative and the Health Equity Leadership Council (CT Health Foundation and the Conference of Churches – Hartford). The Commission was asked to be a part of these organizations due to our ability to provide voice on the issues. The Commission has strong partnerships with the American Heart Association, Donate Life Connecticut, the National Kidney Foundation, the Health Education Lead Poisoning, Cancer Task Force (Hartford Hospital), the Red Cross, the Southern Regional Sickle Cell Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Diabetes Association, the Lupus Foundation of Connecticut and others. Each rely on the assistance of the Commission to help disseminate information and assist with screening opportunities statewide in the African-American communities. The Commission continues to support a universal health care plan that ensures that the underserved populations have access to affordable quality health care.

### **Political Well Being**

The African-American Affairs Commission is the only agency in state government that is dedicated specifically to addressing the concerns of the African-American community. We serve as the bridge that fosters and encourages the flow of information to and from the Capitol to the communities. We support efforts that offer citizens access to legislators and state agencies. Regularly we receive

requests from citizens on issues they believe involve discrimination, prejudice and racism We respond to inquiries regarding services available to begin minority businesses. The AAAC help ex-offenders secure employment and direct them to programs that combat recidivism. We partner with the Connecticut Pardon Team by informing ex-offenders of their services. The Commission is a member of the Commission on Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System. Annually the Commission provides access to non-profit agencies and CBO's to become visible to Legislators and the public during the month of February. We understand the importance of the 2010 Census and have provided officials with opportunities to reach deep into the communities that desperately need to be counted. Currently we are working with Casey Family Services in planning a forum on foster care and adoption in the African-American community (scheduled for April 2010). Recently the Commission provided the Red Cross the opportunity to offer a blood drive to reach the African-American community in an effort to increase donor participation. Through these partnerships and outreach the African-American voice is heard by policy makers.

The Commission no longer has dedicated staff to publicize and market itself. Instead we depend on our website to reach the public with our message. For the past three months the AAAC website has averaged 131,133 hits.



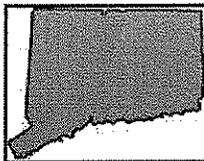
### Summary

There is no doubt that the road ahead will be challenging for the AAAC. Utilizing funds from sources outside the state to fill gaps in our budget has been frustrating. Funds raised are significantly reduced by the state making fundraising extremely difficult. Fortunately the staff and Commissioners understand that without the AAAC improvements in education, health, economic

development and political well being for African-Americans would not take place. The Commission has made these priorities the centerpiece of our RBA and we are working towards turning the curve. Thank you for providing this time to address you. We will continue to afford the African-American community and all other citizens with a great investment.

## Appendix

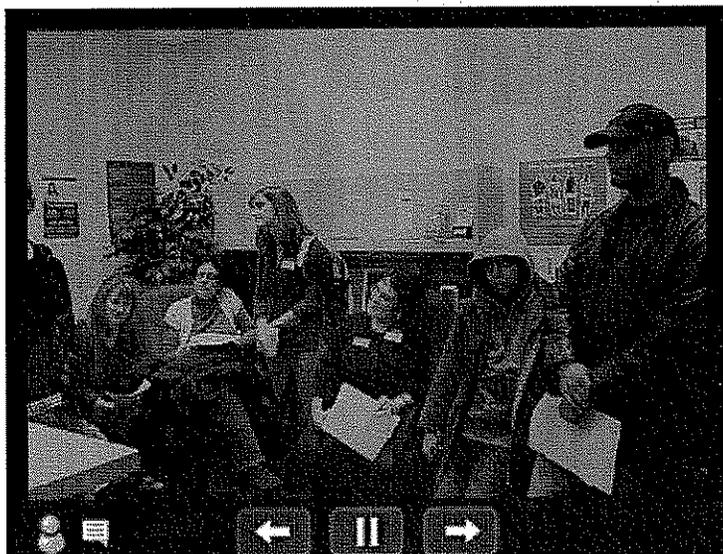
Listen to the CGS song



### College Goal Sunday Connecticut

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COLLEGE GOAL SUNDAY<sup>SM</sup>



Photos from the 2009 event  
[Click here](#) for a list of the 2009 winners

### Participants at the event will have a chance to win a scholarship!

January 31, 2010 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at thirteen (13) sites throughout the state. The snow date is Sunday, February 14, 2010 for all sites, except for NFA, which is Monday, February 1 from 5:00 until 9:00 PM.

At College Goal Sunday, students and parents can talk to experts and get in-depth help filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

In addition to receiving assistance in filling out the FAFSA, participants will receive general information regarding state and federal financial aid programs.

Visit us on [facebook](#).

[Listen to the CGS song by True](#)

**YOU CAN'T DO IT ALONE, NEITHER CAN WE. JOIN US!**

[Home](#)

# KnowHow2GOConnecticut

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**FRESHMEN**

**SOPHOMORES**

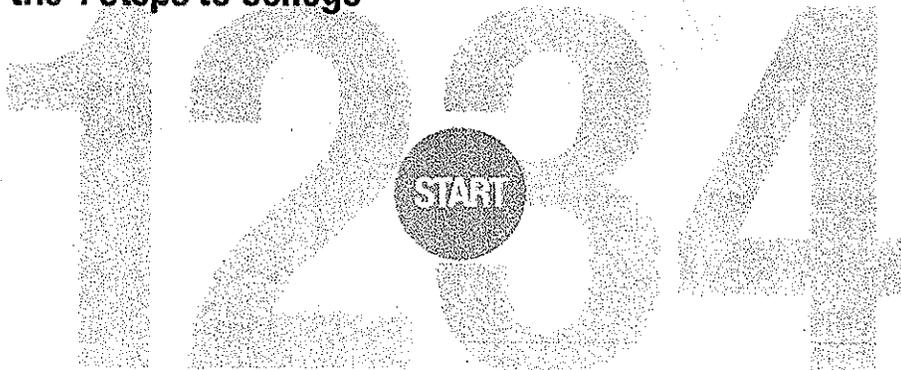
**JUNIORS**

**SENIORS**

**MENTORS**

MENTORES EN ESPAÑOL

## the 4 steps to college



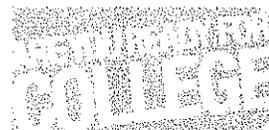
### You've Got to Know How!

**You have big plans. Big dreams.**

You know college is where to start. But a dream is not enough. College doesn't just happen; you have to work to make it a reality.

You know *why* to go to college; we're here to tell you *how*. There are specific steps you need to take and this site can help you along the way. Remember, it's never too early -- or too late -- to start on the road to college.

Got questions? [Ask an Advisor!](#)



Take the quiz to find out what you know about going to college!



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## Press Release

**February 8, 2010**

### **Grant Funds Awarded to Programs to Improve College Readiness**

### **Statewide Activities Will Assist Students, Support College Access and Success**

**The Know How To Go – Connecticut Network announces \$32,375 in awards to college access and success programs**

**Hartford, CT:** The Know How To Go – Connecticut Network will present seven grant awards to community-based organizations and colleges in support of their efforts to encourage students to pursue a college education. The presentations will take place at the Boys and Girls Clubs Hartford (170 Sigourney St., Hartford 06105) on Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at 3:30 PM.

The funds, awarded by Connecticut's KnowHow2GO initiative, are part of a three-year \$140,000 grant from Lumina Foundation for Education to promote college access and success. The purpose of the KnowHow2GO grants is to strengthen the quality of student assistance and outreach efforts to students and families in the middle school grades through college. The organizations receiving the grants submitted proposals seeking funds to continue existing programs or develop additional initiatives.

Selected in a competitive process, the seven programs receiving awards are:

- **Education Connection**, Litchfield, \$5,000
- **The Boys and Girls Clubs**, Hartford \$5,000
- **Eastern Connecticut State University**, Windham, \$5,000
- **Wesleyan University - Public School Collaborative**, Middletown \$5,000

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*more*

- **University of Bridgeport**, Bridgeport \$5,000
- **Manchester Community College**, Manchester \$4,875
- **North End Action Team**, Middletown \$2,500

Among those expected to attend the ceremonies are representatives of the seven organizations who successfully sought funding, as well as state education officials including Deputy Education Commissioner George Coleman, Assistant Chancellor for Connecticut Community Colleges, Mary Ann Cox , and Commissioner of the Department of Higher Education, Michael Meotti .

Lumina has established a goal of increasing the percentage of American adults with college degrees from 40% to 60% by the year 2025. Under terms of the Lumina grant, the funds are being distributed in Connecticut to organizations that have submitted program plans to:

- Provide direct services to middle-level and high school students, including academic support, career exploration and other supports;
- Provide professional development for program staff, volunteers and/or parents; or
- Provide technical assistance for organizational development to increase the quality, professionalism and sustainability of college access programs

The KnowHow2GO Connecticut Network accepted applications from organizations in November 2009, which was followed by a selection process in accordance with grant program guidelines.

Applications for funding identified goals and expected outcomes, detailed the number of students and others served, and will report on progress as well as the project's impact.

A second round of grant funds will be awarded for the fiscal year beginning on July 1. Applications will be accepted beginning in March 2010.

The KnowHow2GO Connecticut Network executive board includes Ann Gaulin of the State Department of Education, Arthur Poole of the Department of Higher Education,

Glenn Cassis of the African-American Affairs Commission, Hyacinth Douglas-Bailey of the Greater Hartford YMCA, Donna Thompson of the Connecticut Association of Educational Opportunity Programs, Bernard Kavaler of the Connecticut State University System, Gloria Ragosta of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges and David Johnson of Casey Family Services. The funds will be administered by the New England Educational Opportunity Association, under terms of the grant.

For more information contact Glenn Cassis, Executive Director of the African-American Affairs Commission at 860-240-8555 or 860-240-0258. Email [glenn.cassis@cqa.ct.gov](mailto:glenn.cassis@cqa.ct.gov)

EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY - *STEP/CAP program*

The **Summer Transition at Eastern Program/Contract Admissions Program (STEP/CAP)** is now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year at Eastern Connecticut State University. The program serves students who are academically under-prepared for college work and from groups traditionally under-represented on college campuses: Racial and ethnic minorities, students from low-income families, and children of parents who did not attend college.

As the cost of higher education increases, STEP/CAP students face a recurring obstacle in the rising cost of text books and course materials, especially those designed for mathematics and science classes. This year, nearly half of the 65 incoming STEP/CAP freshmen began classes without having the money to purchase all of their books.

To help offset these rising costs and assist students in preparing themselves for mathematics and science classes, the STEP/CAP program sought a \$5,000 grant from KnowHow2GO and the African American Affairs Commission to create a lending library of math and science texts as well as needed software and calculators. Through the Academic Services Center, ECSU proposes to purchase these materials and make them available to low-income STEP/CAP freshmen and sophomores. Students eligible to borrow books will be required to work with a peer tutor and a professional mentor who will monitor progress throughout the semester. By providing students free access to textbooks, calculators, and other support services, this initiative expects to have a direct impact on students' grades in math and science requirements for graduation.

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE – *BROTHER TO BROTHER program*

The purpose of the grant awarded to Manchester Community College (MCC) is to support economically disadvantaged and/or first-generation students to gain access to and succeed -- academically, socially and financially -- in post secondary education. In the effort to meet the goals of the grant, MCC proposed an expansion of the **Brother to Brother** program.

Brother to Brother was created in the fall of 2008 to help improve academic achievement, increase student retention and graduation rates of African American and Latino males. Through Brother to Brother, minority male students are paired with male faculty and staff to form a mentoring relationship. Brother to Brother also hosts a variety of educational and social workshops. The planned expansion strategy of Brother to Brother for the KnowHow2GoConnecticut grant is to add two Peer Mentors to the program who will assist 15 students each with linking to appropriate resources that improve academic success, as well as help them to integrate them into college life at MCC. Furthermore, Brother to Brother will connect and support KnowHow2GoConnecticut by developing a continuation of KnowHow2GoConnecticut's four steps through an additional four steps for students once they have been accepted into and enter college. The additional four steps are:

1. Pick the right classes and major for you.
2. Study, Study, Study!
3. Ask for help (when needed).
4. Get a mentor.

Through the expansion of Brother to Brother and promotion of the KnowHow2Stay steps, our intended outcome is to support students, help them gain access and succeed—academically, socially and financially.

#### **NORTH END ACTION TEAM – *College Bound Mentoring Program***

NEAT is a 501©(3) grassroots community organization that was begun, in 1997, by resident and stakeholder activists responding to both specific and chronic negative conditions within the low-income North End section of Middletown, Connecticut. The mission of NEAT is to develop participation, indigenous leadership, and a capacity to convene process and develop solutions to neighborhood issues with the goal of creating physical revitalization and indigenous social capital, including creating a better chance for success for our rising adults.

NEAT is starting a new initiative, the **College Bound Mentoring Program** to help North End youth successfully enter college. Youth of the low-income North End of Middletown are less likely, statistically, than other students in Middletown to go to college or attend any institution of higher education. Academic support and college preparation programs offered for Middletown youth, though successful programs are often inaccessible due to economic constraints and lack of reliable transportation.

At the core of College Bound is a mentoring program which will pair competent adults with North End high school students as mentees. The mentors' primary responsibility will be assisting the students in the organization and management of the college process. Mentors will meet or check-in with mentees on a weekly basis.

Most importantly, however, mentors will be a consistent role model and resource for students, guiding them (with support) through high school to meet the benchmarks to prepare them for college. College Bound will also partner with "Let's Get Ready" and the Wesleyan University "Upward Bound" program to provide SAT preparation courses that are free to students and conducted in the North End.

#### **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF HARTFORD - *Be Great, Graduate!* program**

The **Be Great, Graduate!** Program at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford consists of two main components: 1) implementing targeted research-based Boys & Girls Clubs of America programs to address personal, academic, social and family-related obstacles to high-school graduation; and 2) providing Club members with a close and constant mentoring and support program in order to help them succeed in high school, college and beyond. As part of the Be Great, Graduate program, the following three programs will be implemented with the teen members ages 13-18:

- Goals for Graduation introduces members to academic goal setting by linking their future aspirations with concrete actions today. The program's recognition strategy is

designed to give members constant, intentional encouragement as their successes are acknowledged and reinforced at every step of their journey. The program uses one-on-one, small-group and large-group activities to support academic goal setting, learning and success in school. Members practice initial goal setting on achievable goals with the leadership, guidance and encouragement of the Club's staff. In goal-setting sessions, members set more challenging goals. Through this incremental goal-setting approach, members create an action plan with daily and weekly goals leading to short- and long-term academic gains.

- CareerLaunch is Boys & Girls Clubs of America's premier career development program providing a range of services to help Club members develop the skills essential for workforce success. This includes not only getting and keeping a job, but also finding a career that fits each member's interests and talents.
- Money Matters: Make It Count helps teens gain useful knowledge and skills on various aspects of financial literacy, including managing a checking account, budgeting, saving, investing, entrepreneurship and paying for college.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford works each day at their ten sites across the Hartford community, to achieve its mission: *To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens.* Boys & Girls Clubs strive to instill in our members a sense of usefulness, a sense of competence, a sense of influence and a sense of belonging, through our Youth Development Strategy. The ultimate goal is to enable and empower the children we serve to believe in themselves and their abilities. By enhancing members' self-esteem, improving academic attitude and aptitude, and fostering leadership and character skills, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford helps develop young adults who are prepared to live self-sufficiently and positively impact their families and communities.

#### UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT – *Biology Peer Tutoring Program*

More than 50 percent of the country's current science and engineering workforce is approaching retirement. To remain competitive and secure in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the United States must double the number of citizens with bachelor's degree in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by 2015. To achieve this goal, we must increase the number of students from low-income and minority backgrounds majoring in STEM disciplines (*Tapping America's Potential: The Education for Innovation Initiative, 2005*).

As a university renowned for its STEM degree programs, the University of Bridgeport (UB) is committed to helping to meet this goal. Although many low-income, minority and first-generation college students aspire to careers in STEM fields, they frequently come from academically and economically disadvantaged high schools and are unprepared for undergraduate coursework in the sciences. They lack the science background and study skills necessary to be successful in Biology 101 and Biology 102, gateway courses for baccalaureate degrees in the sciences and health professions, another area in which there is an identified need for a more diverse workforce. To help these students achieve their academic goals, UB

implemented Biology 100, a course designed to expose students with limited science backgrounds to the major conceptual frameworks in Biology and to teach them appropriate learning and study skills. With funding provided by a KnowHow2GO Connecticut Post Secondary Access and Success Grant, UB will expand this academic support by implementing a Biology peer tutoring program.

UB will recruit and train low-income and first-generation college students who have successfully completed Biology 100 and Biology 101 to serve as peer tutors for students enrolled in Biology 100. Under faculty supervision, the peer tutors will work one-on-one with Biology 100 students from similar backgrounds who are at risk of failing or withdrawing from the course. At the end of the semester, the peer tutors will receive certification that will enable them to work as tutors for pay. The original peer tutors will be invited to continue in the Biology peer tutoring program as tutoring mentors and additional tutors. Students who successfully completed Biology 100 through their work with a peer tutor will be invited to serve as peer tutors for students enrolled in Biology 100 for the next semester.

As the program continues, the pool of peer tutors, the number of Biology majors that complete their degree programs, and the number of students that successfully transitioning from Biology 100 to more advanced science courses will grow exponentially each semester. The goals of the program are to develop a strong pool of peer tutors to help first-year students through the challenges of the initial year in a collegiate science; increase the number of students who pass Biology 100 with a grade of C or higher; increase the retention rate of students in Biology; and retain the peer tutors as STEM majors.

#### WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY – *Pathways to Your Future*

It's widely accepted these days that students will need more than a high school diploma to obtain employment that will enable them to prosper and support themselves and their future families. But for students in low-income families where no one has gone to college, higher education can seem more like a dream than a reality.

Middletown's **Pathways to Your Future** program—a collaboration of the Middletown Public Schools, Middlesex Community College, Wesleyan University, and the Liberty Bank Foundation—is designed to help those students set their sights on the future while they are in middle school. Under the guidance of certified teachers, students will explore their career interests and then map out an educational course and action plan to achieve their goals. Students from Middlesex Community College, Wesleyan University, and Middletown High School will serve as mentors and positive role models to the middle school students. Participants in the program will visit the community college and the university to learn about the programs there—and more important, to begin to feel comfortable and at home in a college environment. Field trips to destinations like the Connecticut Science Center will encourage students to consider a broad variety of career interests and opportunities. Guest speakers from different businesses will offer additional perspectives. The students' parents will

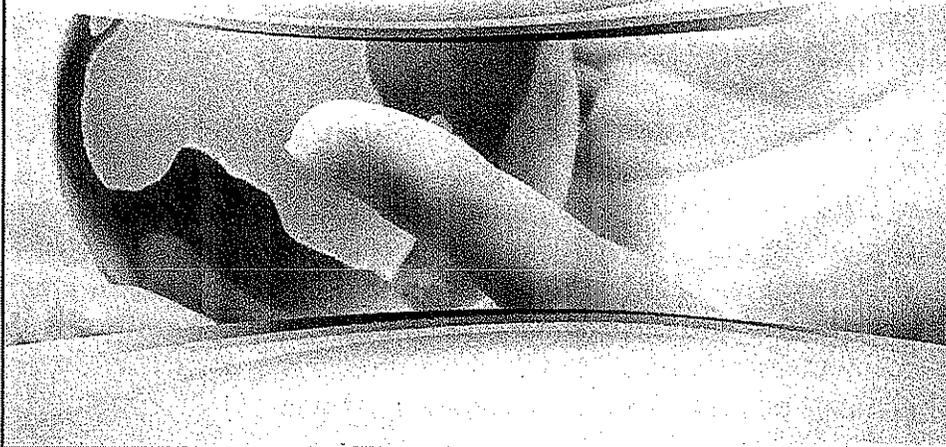
participate in workshops to familiarize them with the process of applying for college and obtaining financial aid.

The Pathways program was launched on February 1, 2010, involving 150 students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade in both of Middletown's middle schools. It will meet after school one day a week for ten weeks. Each grade level has its own curriculum, and students will continue in the program year after year as they advance in grade. Plans are being made to extend Pathways into high school as the eighth graders advance; the expectation is that students will continue to participate in the program right up until graduation. The ultimate goal is for students to graduate from high school ready to move forward to the higher education options that will lead them to their chosen careers.



Connecticut American/African Economic Development  
Trade Organization (CAEDTO)

Promoting and Sustaining Economic Growth  
between Africa and America



**Senate Bill No. 880**  
**Special Act No. 09-14**



- **AN ACT CONCERNING TRADE WITH AFRICA.**
- Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:
- Section 1 (*Effective October 1, 2009*) (a) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall conduct a three-year study of programs initiated, conducted and coordinated by the Department of Economic and Community Development that promote and assist Connecticut businesses with international trade with African countries with whom the United States has diplomatic relations. In each of the three years of such study, the commissioner shall focus on four different countries in Africa.
- (b) On or before July 1, 2010, July 1, 2011, and July 1, 2012, the commissioner shall, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce on the results of each phase of such three-year study undertaken pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. Each report shall include statistics on the progress of the department and a description of the implementation of such programs.
- Approved July 8, 2009.



❖ **Mission:** To find, promote, and sustain import-export and other economic opportunities between the countries of Africa and Connecticut, the Eastern Trade Council and, as our ability permits, wider circles throughout the United States, by providing expert information and advice.

- Identify economic opportunities in CT and in African Countries
- Engage communications between organization on both continents
- Develop structures to promote rapid and comprehensive dialogs between stakeholders across all markets
- Provide knowledge bases to facilitate expanding international trade between these continents. Continuously develop programs to educate consumers, producers and stakeholders on the benefits of Africa – American trade

*Educate, Promote, Collaborate, Engage, Stimulate*

## ❖ Progression

- 
- Develop a comprehensive economic opportunity analysis of both countries using currently available African and American resources
  - Engage academic and industry professionals to identify market opportunities
  - Institute a global presence via the Internet to disseminate information on the benefits of developing trade relations with Africa
  - Target consumer and producer channels on both continents to promote cross Atlantic business opportunities
  - Identify mechanisms, structures and channels to promote trade (legal, transportation, import/export, distribution)
  - Solicit Federal and State Agencies, NGO's and other organizations for grants, support and assistance in promoting our initiatives

*Educate, Promote, Collaborate, Engage, Stimulate*

## ❖ Partnerships

- CAEDTO is seeking to achieve its initiatives through collaboration and partnerships with numerous and diverse entities
- We realize there are an enormous number of potential markets which have the capability to spur growth for Connecticut businesses through collaborative efforts initiated by our organization
- To foster this unrealized potential and to maximize our interests, we shall concentrate our efforts on building partnerships and relationships with organizations whose charters, mission and/or foundations focus on stimulating economic activities on both continents
- Bringing together the elements necessary to facilitate our objectives can only be achieved through cooperative relationships with Federal and State Agencies, Local Communities and those organizations who would benefit from shared economic trade between Africa and the United States

*Education From Africa Collaborates, Engages, Stimulates*

## ❖ From Here to There

- Develop an extensive database identifying opportunities, markets, products, services, interests and demands within Connecticut and those within targeted African Countries
- Enlist the expertise of industry professionals, on both continents, to support our mission
- Engage trade groups, committees, government and academic institutions
- Promote open dialog via internet sites, dedicated to establishing and sustaining trade
- Design, develop and implement software tools and services to convey supply and demand opportunities for stakeholders and interested parties within the countries involved
- Investigate funding and support opportunities available from Government, Non-Government Organizations (NGO's), public and private businesses and individual contributors from both continents

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**Accounting and Finance Research (IFAR)**  
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