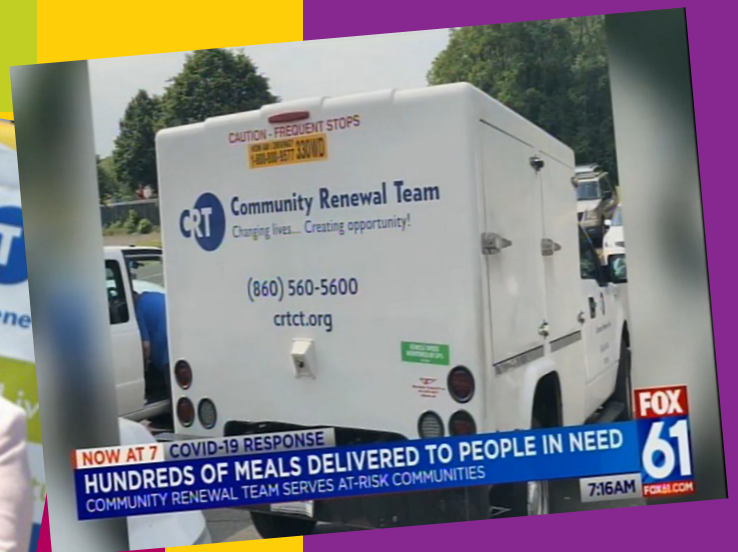




# IN THE NEWS

## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS 2021





The Community Renewal Team, Inc. (CRT) is the designated community action agency for both Hartford and Middlesex Counties. Our mission is “Preparing our Community to Meet Life’s Challenges.” We are dedicated to helping people take steps toward healthy and economically stable futures. CRT partners with local elected officials, providers, funders, businesses and the community to address challenges like hunger, homelessness, unemployment and poverty. Together, we increase access to education, affordable housing, mental health services and much more for thousands of individuals and families throughout Central Connecticut each and every year. CRT’s programs include Early Care and Education, Meals on Wheels, energy assistance, basic needs, supportive housing/shelters, Behavioral Health Services and many others.

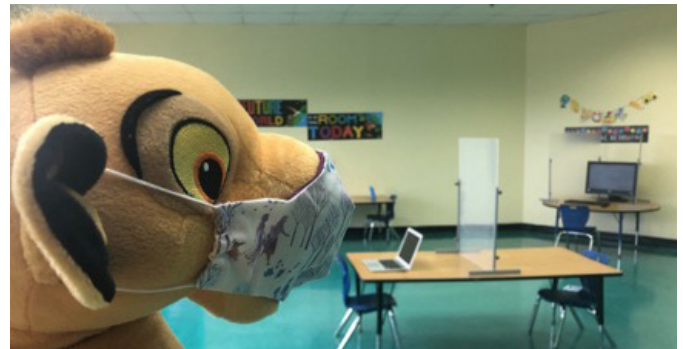
To inform the community about the agency and promote its programs and services, CRT maintains ongoing relationships with the media – major newspapers, TV and radio stations. Additionally, to further its reach, CRT actively uses social media on a regular basis (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube).

In 2021, CRT and its programs continued obtaining media coverage in Hartford and CT News outlets. This publication highlights some of the stories that were featured in the local media.

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## **CRT is hosting new “Remote Learning Hub” with City of Hartford and Hartford Public Schools**

At the beginning of the year it was announced that CRT, along with several other nonprofit agencies in Hartford, would be offering new “Remote Learning Hubs” (or, as we like to call them, “Caring Classrooms”) for children in grades K – 3 at Hartford Public Schools who need a place to do their school work when parents or caregivers are working. The program is designed for families that selected in-person learning for their children and may be adversely affected by COVID-19-related facility closures.



CRT was contacted by multiple media outlets about this new program, including Fox 61, NBC Connecticut (two stories in two weeks and one on their website), Telemundo, The Hartford Courant (this was the first of three stories in the Courant that included CRT over a period of three days – Jan. 15-17, 2021 – two were about the COVID-19 vaccine clinic, details below) and more. We also did a 25-minute interview on the “Beat of CT” on Hot 93.7 FM focused on this new opportunity.

It should also be noted that the interview on Fox 61 also gave us a chance to share details about CRT’s partnership with Liberty Bank for the Community Asset Building Initiative (CABI) to help people achieve the dream of home ownership.

**Fox 61:** [https://youtu.be/nE8M9YD\\_cRo](https://youtu.be/nE8M9YD_cRo)

**NBC CT:** <https://youtu.be/G2d2y5aeoXw>

**NBC CT website:** <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/program-will-provide-free-childcare-at-hartford-learning-hubs/2403798/>

**Telemundo:** <https://www.telemundonuevainglaterra.com/noticias/local/distrito-escolar-crea-espacio-de-aprendizaje-para-estudiantes-en-hartford/2093408/>

**Hartford Courant:** Child-care hubs opening around Hartford as resource for poor, working families

struggling with remote, hybrid learning

<https://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-news-hartford-remote-learning-hubs-20210114-mwkbdfn2nacvfimo337w2hjxi-story.html>

**Hot 93.7 FM “Beat of CT” interview:** <https://www.radio.com/hot937/news/local/beat-of-ct-episode-36-jason-black-from-crt>

## **CRT partners with Liberty Bank to offer new “Community Asset Building Initiative” (CABI)**

The CABI program, an educational and savings program designed to help people in Central Connecticut realize the dream of home ownership, was highlighted on Fox 61, and it was part of an extended interview on the “Talk of Connecticut” on WDRC AM with host Gary Byron (shown below) at the beginning of January. We also used this radio interview to talk about the Energy Assistance Program, and living at CRT’s assisted-living facility, The Retreat. The station shared this interview as part of a broadcast using Facebook Live.

The Hartford News also shared CRT’s full press release about the CABI program in their Jan. 14, 2021 edition.

**Talk of CT:** [https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1853187124852362&ref=watch\\_permalink](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1853187124852362&ref=watch_permalink)



**Hartford News (Jan. 14, 2021):** <https://hartfordpublicationscom.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/hn0114finalx.pdf?fbclid=IwAR06WjNRxGTn4tLX-TxYfx4Mt3MdMeDGFN6diTcgNx5pwOtZlOplYVCMvhc>

## **First dose of COVID-19 vaccine administered at The Retreat Assisted-Living Facility in Hartford**

The first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine was administered to both senior residents and staff at The Retreat assisted-living facility on January 15, 2021. There was media interest from NBC Connecticut, The Hartford Courant and Hartford News.

The Courant sent staff photographer Mark Mirko who took pictures for several hours that morning (it was a pleasure to watch him work). Photos from the clinic were featured on the front page of the printed paper on Saturday and Sunday that weekend; and then Mirko’s photography from the clinic was used by the Courant in connection with at least six different COVID-related stories, and each time the photo caption would clearly note that the picture was taken at CRT’s assisted-living facility, The Retreat.

The clinic was on the front page of the Hartford News, and also featured on their Facebook page the day of the vaccine clinic.

**CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT**  
Positivity rate, hospitalizations dip slightly, but amid a winter surge, there are mixed signals on whether the state’s gains will continue



After receiving her vaccination Friday, 96-year-old Genevieve Lenczyk, left, receives a balloon from Heidi Lubetkin, vice president of clinical services at The Retreat in Hartford. Lubetkin is hopeful the vaccinations will allow residents to socialize again. **MARK MIRKO PHOTOS/HARTFORD-COURANT**

# LOOKING FOR POSITIVE SIGNS



The clinic for the second dose will be held on Friday, Feb. 5 and media will be invited again.

**NBC CT:** <https://youtu.be/Yk2hdlkbGus>

**Hartford News (Jan. 21, 2021):** <https://hartfordpublicationscom.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/hn0121finalrevx.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3K0gLLsZhJb6D7qkGzXtGfxiiHd0-msuhddF4fLfyb97VKuHCF5qry4U8>

**Hartford News Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/HartfordNewsSouthsideMedia/posts/428916101873749>

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## New Custom Delivery Truck for CRT's Meals on Wheels Program Rolls Out in Hartford

After losing one of the trucks in our fleet of custom delivery vehicles last year due to an accident, CRT was proud to show its brand new Meals on Wheels truck, complete with red bow, for the first time in mid-January. This vehicle and custom chassis that holds hot, nutritious meals for homebound seniors was purchased with the support of donations from the local community. On the day that we “launched” the truck officially, we had coverage on ALL four local TV networks, and the story aired 13 times between those four stations over 24 hours. The linked example is from Fox 61, who spent the morning with us on the day of the rollout (the reporters are pictured right).

**Fox 61:** <https://youtu.be/OQSG1JYZItE>



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## Keeping homeless safe during “Severe Cold Weather Protocol” in Connecticut

Right before the last weekend in January, Governor Lamont issued the “Severe Cold Weather Protocol” for the state of Connecticut, and in doing so that triggers activity to help protect the homeless in our state, including the opening of area warming centers, and other emergency services. CRT was asked to provide information about how people can solicit those services during these emergency conditions. Inquiries came in from both WTIC News Radio 1080 AM and from WTNH News 8. The story on WTIC 1080 aired 12 times the day it was recorded; and the next day the story on News 8 was the lead story at noon and aired again during their 5:00 pm newscast. For both stories, we encouraged people to call 2-1-1 for support in their area – whether for themselves or for people in need in their community.

*It should be noted that WTIC 1080 has a listener reach of more than 167,000 people in its broadcast area.*

**WTNH News 8:** [https://youtu.be/roMNY\\_-dgCs](https://youtu.be/roMNY_-dgCs)

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## CRT Says: Find Out if Your Family is Eligible for CT Energy Assistance Program

Coupled with the cold weather protocol stories above, we used the timing of the cold weather – and pending snow storm at the beginning of February – to remind those journalists about the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program, and how their listeners/viewers can sign up for this valuable service.

In the case of both WTIC News Radio 1080 and WTNH News 8, the reporters were happy to record some additional information (sound bites) for possible use on air, and in both instances this paid off. The lesson here being: it can't hurt to ask. The story aired four times on WTNH and twice on their sister station My TV 9 over the last weekend of January; and by the time of preparing this monthly report (at

least) five times on WTIC 1080 radio on Monday, Feb. 1.

**WTNH News 8:** <https://youtu.be/5NAGRDTsJus>

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## **CRT Encourages Families to Find Out if they are Eligible for CT Energy Assistance Program**

This winter has been a cold one, and we continue to see good interest from local media about helping to share the availability of the CT Energy Assistance Program. Both ABC affiliate WTNH News 8 and NBC Connecticut did stories about a week apart at the beginning of the month to remind consumers about this valuable service – especially during the coldest time of the year. The story on WTNH News 8 (and their sister station My TV 9) ran multiple times on Friday and Saturday. The service was also shared in a story on WTIC 1080 AM News radio at the beginning of the month (2X in one day).



When the story aired on NBC Connecticut, it ran six times over a period of 24 hours, and is also a more detailed story on their website.

**WTNH News 8:** <https://youtu.be/5NAGRDTsJus>

**NBC CT:** <https://youtu.be/UUOoBnldfGI>

**NBC CT website:** <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/winter-heating-assistance-warming-center-availability-in-ct/2417988/>

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## **VITA Goes “Virtual” this Year During COVID-19 Pandemic**

This year, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program has gone “virtual” to help tax payers file their Federal and State income taxes correctly, and securely. But, due to restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the program is mostly being done without the same level of face-to-face interaction of previous years. Specifically, consumers are being asked to first pick up an “intake packet” at one of CRT’s offices in Hartford or Middletown, and then return it to a secure drop-box. From there a member of CRT’s staff or a trained volunteer will complete the return and at that point, the tax filer will be invited to come back to the office to review and sign the documents before filing electronically.



This program has garnered a lot of media attention, including radio and TV. Radio interviews were done with “Beat of CT” on Hot 93.7 FM (nearly 30 minute show), on 96.5 TIC FM<sup>1</sup> with DJ Gina J., and LITE 100.5 FM DJ Joan Dylan shared a 2.5 minute “Good News Coffee Talk” during her midday show all about the VITA service and how consumers can use the program this year.

TV interviews about CRT’s VITA services ran on Fox 61 and on WFSB News Channel 3 (CBS).

**Fox 61:** <https://youtu.be/dAnv6W8qw7U>

**WFSB News 3:** <https://youtu.be/3ohldTonzw4>

**LITE 100.5 FM “Good News Coffee Talk”:** <https://soundcloud.com/user-547491855/good-news-coffee-talk-with-joan-dylan-on-lite-1005-fm-free-tax-prep-with-crt-and-vita>

## The Hartford Courant Comes Back to ‘Learning Hub’ in Ritter Center in Hartford

Following up on the initial reporting about the new “Learning Hubs” for Hartford-based school children (grades K – 3) who need a place to do remote learning while parents are out of the home, the *Hartford Courant* sent photographer Kassi Jackson back to CRT’s “Learning Hub” located in the Ritter Center at the Windsor St. offices in Hartford to get pictures of children during their busy school day. She also spoke with the mother of one of the children enrolled in the program. A large, beautiful color photo and caption under the heading “Serious Studies” was printed in the paper on the front page of the Connecticut section at the end of February. (See picture on right.)

**A PDF** showing the photo and caption as it appeared on the full page of the paper that day is available here:

<https://pages.pagesuite.com/c/e/ce18107a-c323-4e1a-91eb-cffa2533a565/orig.pdf>



### SERIOUS STUDIES

Ariel Chaney, 7, does her classwork Thursday at the learning hub at Community Renewal Team in Hartford. Jessica Knowlin, Ariel's mother, said the learning hub has been a great help in ensuring her daughter's academic success. "Ariel" loves it," Knowlin said. "Even though it's [a small number of students], she loves it. ... She completes her work, she goes through all of her classes, I'm very happy about that." CRT serves about five students but has the capacity to serve more with its eight available classroom spaces. **KASSI JACKSON/HARTFORD COURANT**

## Deadline to Apply for CT Energy Assistance Program Extended to June 15

We received great news in March that the deadline to apply for the CT Energy Assistance Program was extended until mid-June of this year. We shared this update with local media, and it was featured by The Hartford News, on the “Beat of CT” show on Hot 93.7 FM; on WTNH’s website; and on NBC CT during a live interview for one of their midday broadcasts.

**NBC CT:** <https://www.crtct.org/you-can-still-apply-for-ct-energy-assistance-program-deadline-extended-to-june-15/>

**WTNH:** CT Energy Assistance Program extended to mid-June

<https://www.wtnh.com/news/consumer/ct-energy-assistance-program-extended-to-mid-june/>



## “The Joy of Jenga” at The Retreat is front page news in The Hartford Courant

March 10, 2021 marked one year since mitigation plans went into effect at The Retreat Assisted-Living facility in Hartford to protect both residents and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Now that 100% of all eligible residents and staff at The Retreat are fully vaccinated from COVID-19, it has been decided that incremental changes can be made to the daily routine at the facility, including the opportunity for small group gatherings among the residents for things like games in the common rooms. We invited photographer Mark Mirko from *The Courant* to come back to The Retreat to see the fun for himself. His work was featured on the front page of the paper that weekend<sup>1</sup> – as you can see below, he caught a perfect moment!

**Shareable link:** <https://www.crtct.org/the-joy-of-jenga-together-at-the-retreat-assisted-living/>



### THE JOY OF JENGA

The Retreat, an assisted-living community in Hartford, enacted social-distancing protocols one year ago. Jason Black, communications director at Community Renewal Team, describes the building as “bubble-wrapped.” Residents and staff began receiving vaccines in January and now, according to Black, all are vaccinated. Last week, the facility reopened its internet cafe. The cafe, says Yolanda Rivera, left, The Retreat’s activity coordinator, has opened for residents to congregate in small groups to play games such as Jenga and Chinese Checkers. “It’s where we laugh, and laugh a lot,” said Betty Carrillo, The Retreat’s neighborhood activity assistant.

<sup>1</sup>This marks the third time this year that CRT has been on the front page of the Courant!

## Seven-Year-Old Superhero in Training Donates PPE to CRT’s East Hartford Family Shelter

In late March we were contacted by a family from Weston, Connecticut about donating PPE to CRT. I happened to receive this email inquiry and immediately said “Yes, please!” As it turns out, the donation was coming from the hard work of a seven-year-old boy named Oscar (at right) who has taken it upon himself to help raise funds that can be used to buy things like masks, hand sanitizer, etc. for those that need these precious supplies. Last summer he started a nonprofit called “Superheroes Are Found Everywhere” or “SAFE” for short. After learning the goods were coming from a young boy, we thought it made sense to direct his act of kindness to our East Hartford Family Shelter. Oscar and his family sent over \$600 worth of PPE products to us!

This story was picked up by Fox 61, NBC Connecticut, and the *Hartford Courant*.

To learn more about Oscar’s work, please visit his website: <https://www.safect.org/>

**Link to NBC CT story:** <https://www.crtct.org/crt-thanks-seven-year-old-superhero-for-his-act-of-kindness/>

**Hartford Courant:** <https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-ct-superheroes-ppe-20210325-3jehtqhovbdziqhqeyz6cbeha-story.html>





## Celebrating CRT's Continuing Partnership with Travelers – One Year Anniversary

As you may recall, CRT has benefited from a tremendous partnership with Travelers during this past year of the Coronavirus pandemic. Every weekday, Travelers – in conjunction with its in-house food service vendor – has donated 130 hot lunches to CRT that are distributed to people in several of our programs in Hartford, including the East Hartford Family Shelter, Veterans Crossing, (previously) CRT Generations, and The Retreat. Over the course of this past year, Travelers has donated more than 32,000 meals to CRT! And, this partnership will continue until the end of June 2021.

This story has been picked up by multiple media outlets in Hartford, including News Channel 3 and Fox 61 (aired twice during Easter weekend). An interview with NBC CT is in the works; and a radio interview with Renee DiNino from The River 105.9 FM/Community Access for iHeart Radio is planned for early April, too.

This act of kindness also generated very positive social media exposure – in particular on LinkedIn. Details in the social media section below.



**Link to Fox 61 story:** <https://www.crtct.org/over-past-year-of-pandemic-travelers-donates-more-than-32000-hot-meals-to-crt-clients/>

## CRT's Vaccination Policy in the News

As you know, CRT has implemented a policy to require all employees to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Local media learned of this unique policy position – it has been suggested that CRT may be the first, and possibly only employer in the state to require vaccination – and there has been a steady stream of interest in this story since the news first broke.

To date, there have been stories from: WFSB News Channel 3 (they were first to pick up this story and ran it as the lead story during their 11 pm news on March 24, and then multiple times the next morning); Fox 61; The *Hartford Courant* (in the context of a deeper story about vaccinations and what happens next in Connecticut); and on Patch.com (that story generated nearly 200 comments in the first 24 hours of publication). New interview requests on April 5 came in from Fox 61 (this would be a second story) and WTNH News 8.

### **Hartford Courant:**

COVID-19 'vaccine passports' may eventually be needed to get into stadiums, concerts and other venues. The concept hasn't come to Connecticut, but here's how it could play out

<https://www.courant.com/coronavirus/hc-news-coronavirus-connecticut-mandatory-vaccinations-20210401-lha54dzvp5adniat7w4gjkixxe-story.html>

**Patch.com:** <https://patch.com/connecticut/hartford/ct-employer-mandating-employees-get-coronavirus-vaccine>

## Follow-Up about CRT's Outreach during 2020 U.S. Census

This past summer – and into the fall – CRT ran a very robust media campaign – both paid advertising and earned media/interviews to encourage greater participation in the 2020 U.S. Census. We focused on Hartford, where self-reporting in the Census was very low compared to comparable cities nationwide. As a result of these efforts – in partnership with other local charities, the City of Hartford, and the office of

Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, the statewide count in the 2020 U.S. Census was outstanding – achieving nearly complete participation.

CRT's outreach included producing multiple video PSAs about why it is important to participate in the Census. We secured a deal with the local station Fox 61 to play the videos on their station and their sister station CW20 a total of 90 times this past summer!

**CRT 2020 U.S. Census PSA sample:** <https://youtu.be/mW2A9wV1ARg>

We ran an extensive radio advertising campaign with ads heard on WZMX (Hot 93.7 FM), WRCH Lite 100.5 FM, and on WKSS (KISS) 95.7 FM.

In an innovative approach, CRT also arranged for radio ads on Bomba 97.5 FM (Spanish station) to be done as a part of a group purchase with four other CT-based Community Action Agencies, including: TVCCA, New Opportunities, Inc., HRA of New Britain, and Alliance for Community Empowerment. This group buy gave us a lot of leverage and ensured valuable exposure for this campaign to a key audience all summer.

We were able to arrange multiple radio interviews (each five to 10 minutes long – or more if part of a public affairs show) throughout the summer on nearly every major radio station in Connecticut to help share the urgency of why people needed to complete the 2020 U.S. Census.

In August, CRT secured two TV interviews about the Census – with Fox 61 and NBC CT and their local partner Telemundo. The same month, the CT Post covered two of CRT's "Ice Cream and Census" events, noting that we coordinated activity in both Hartford and Middletown.

In September we had multiple occasions with local media to share details about completing the 2020 U.S. Census. This included new TV and radio interviews, as well as an extension of our paid media campaign on Bomba.

At the end of September (9/30), when it was anticipated that would be the last day of Census collection, CRT hosted a press conference with Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz and other guests. Multiple media came to this event and it was reported by Telemundo (in Spanish). In October, CRT secured final interviews on NBC CT and the local WNPR affiliate (Connecticut Public Radio) about the new Census deadline.

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## **CRT Agency Video: Helping People in Central CT Build Lives of Stability, Dignity, and Sustainability for Over 55 Years**

With a strong history of serving the needs of individuals and families throughout Central Connecticut, coupled with a commitment to helping as many people as possible achieve their personal goals now and in the future, the Community Renewal Team – or CRT – is like a one-stop shop for community-driven programs and services.

As the designated Community Action Agency for both Hartford and Middlesex County, CRT's dedicated staff work hard each and every day to help people in need.

For more than 55 years, we have worked to create long-term solutions that do more than simply help people stay afloat. We help people build lives of stability, dignity, and sustainability.

We hope you will join us in our vital work that is truly changing lives, and creating opportunities for the people we are proud to serve.

CRT is grateful to the support of CAFCA and the Connecticut Department of Social Services for helping us to make this video about CRT and our programs and services.

Additionally, our deepest thanks to Joan Dylan for providing the narration for this video (see attached).

<https://www.crtct.org/crt-helping-people-in-central-connecticut-build-lives-of-stability-dignity-and-sustainability-for-over-55-years/>

## CRT Offers Tips for Personal Financial Recovery in Post-COVID World

The past year of the #COVID19 pandemic has left many people wondering how they will regain control of their personal finances and savings after a year of difficulty and loss. CRT spoke with Len Besthoff from NBC Connecticut about how people can retake control of their personal finances and plan for the future in a post-COVID world.

**Web link:** <https://www.crtct.org/crt-offers-tips-for-personal-financial-recovery-in-post-covid-world/>

**And on NBC CT website:** <https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/investigations/financial-setback-1-in-10-say-they-may-never-recover-in-new-survey/2460489/>



## CRT's 30th Annual National Arts Program Show Featured on NBC CT

CRT's 30th Annual National Arts Program show is online this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In mid-April, we shared details about this year's show with Shannon Miller from NBC Connecticut.

**Web link:** <https://www.crtct.org/more-than-100-artists-submit-their-work-to-crts-30th-annual-national-arts-program-show-on-nbc-ct/>

*Featured image: "Blue" by Caleb Brackett; Professional; Painting (oils, acrylics) – 2021.*



## CRT's RSVP Volunteer Medical Transportation Program in the News

Transportation can be a challenge for seniors, but thanks to CRT's Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and specifically its Volunteer Medical Transportation (VMT) Program, seniors and veterans can get free rides from their home to medical appointments and back again. And now, this service can offer rides to appointments for COVID-19 vaccines, too.

We were able to secure two different TV interviews about this valuable





program - on WFSB News 3 and on WTNH News 8. The stories highlighted both how seniors can sign-up for the service, and how to become volunteer drivers.

**WFSB:** <https://www.crtct.org/crts-retired-senior-volunteer-program-provides-free-roundtrip-rides-to-seniors-for-medical-appointments/>

**WTNH:** <https://www.crtct.org/crts-rsvp-volunteer-medical-transportation-program-offers-free-roundtrip-rides-to-medical-appointments-for-seniors-and-veterans/>

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## **U.S. Rep. John Larson Hosts Press Conference with Access Health CT at CRT Facility**

On Monday, April 26, U.S. Congressman John Larson hosted a press conference at CRT's assisted-living facility in Hartford, The Retreat, to announce subsidies made possible by the American Rescue Plan to lower premiums for Connecticut households enrolled in Access Health CT Plans.

Access Health CT opened a special enrollment period May 1 for anyone who wants to purchase health insurance. CRT has a Navigator to help people sign up with Access Health CT.

The press event was featured both on NBC Connecticut and in CT News Junkie. While the stories did not mention CRT directly, our facility provided the perfect backdrop for the media. Larson's team loved having the built-in audience of seniors who live at The Retreat – it gave the event a “town hall” feel that the Congressman has not been able to do for the better part of a year now!



**Web link:** <https://www.crtct.org/rep-john-larson-highlights-lower-costs-for-connecticut-families-who-purchase-health-insurance-through-access-health-ct/>

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## **YouthBuild Program highlighted on “Beat of CT” on Hot 93.7 FM**

CRT was featured on “The Beat of CT” radio show on Hot 93.7 FM on Easter Sunday morning, where we had the opportunity to discuss our YouthBuild recruiting efforts, and the Energy Assistance Program.

**Beat of CT:** <https://www.audacy.com/hot937/news/local/the-beat-of-ct-episode-46-jason-black-from-the-community>

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## **CRT Mentioned in Context of Local Business Owners Who Give Back to Community**

The sisters who own BouNom bakery in Avon, CT have done more than simply open a small business during the pandemic. They regularly give back to the community and take public stands on issues that are important to them. CRT is mentioned within the story that ran in the Hartford Courant last month about this dynamic duo. As it happens, the bakery is donating 100 boxes for Mother's Day to three CRT programs this year!

### ***The Hartford Courant:***

Sisters behind BouNom bakery in Avon fighting racism and giving back to the community

<https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-avon-french-bakery-anti-asian-hate->

[20210404-fgvpwykkmzaypedaeqihsswkqe-story.html](https://www.crtct.org/20210404-fgvpwykkmzaypedaeqihsswkqe-story.html)

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## CRT Services featured on Family Radio (WCTF 1170AM)

We did a two-part interview with Family Radio for their weekend program “Community Bridge” (a public affairs style program) that can be heard on WCTF 1170AM in Vernon/Hartford. We recorded two interviews in a row – first a generic one about CRT and a few of our programs/services; and then a second one about a success story and how people can get involved/donate to the agency. These interviews aired in April, and then in June. Each interview will run EVERY Saturday during those two months – and each interview will air 3X per day on those given Saturdays, so each one will air 12 times in total. The host gave out our web address repeatedly during the interviews for people to get more information, etc.

**Family Radio interview:** <https://soundcloud.com/family-stations-public-af/wctf-1170-am-vernon-ct-community-renewal-team>

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## Travelers Partnership with CRT Continues to Receive Attention

CRT’s year-long partnership with Travelers was featured in both the April 2021 edition of the National CAP newsletter and in the most recent edition of the CAFCA newsletter, too.

### Community Renewal Team Serves More Than 32,000 Meals Through Partnership with Hartford-Based Insurance Company

Over the past year, a Hartford-based insurance company, Travelers, has been providing 130 meals every weekday to [Community Renewal Team](#), the Community Action Agency of Hartford, CT. This incredibly successful partnership will continue through June 2021.

[Click here](#) for more.



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## CRT’s Vaccine Policy Continues to Make Headlines

The news about CRT’s vaccine policy continued to receive attention during the month of April, in some cases within the context of other reporting such as offering “incentives” to get the vaccine. The story ran on WTNH News 8 four times over a 24-hour period and was repeated five times on their sister station My TV 9. The same day another report aired on Fox 61 – four times in total over 24 hours.

In late April, a story ran in CT News Junkie about vaccine policy and CRT is included.

**CT News Junkie:** Yes, Employers Can Require COVID Vaccination

<https://ctnewsjunkie.com/2021/04/28/yes-employers-can-require-covid-vaccination/>

## CRT Joins Online Roundtable with Lt. Governor and Treasurer about Financial Literacy

On April 29, Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz and CT Treasurer Shawn Wooden hosted an online roundtable discussion about financial literacy and tips to truly empower your financial future. They were joined by CT Banking Commissioner Jorge Perez, and CRT's Director of Community Services, Elizabeth Horton Sheff, who oversees the agency's annual Financial Literacy Institute.



This event was arranged via Zoom and broadcast on Facebook Live.

**You can watch a replay on CRT's website:**

<https://www.crtct.org/understanding-financial-literacy-to-empower-your-financial-future-a-roundtable-discussion/>

## CRT Hosts its First “Congregate Friendly Feud” Game

Based on the popular TV show “Family Feud,” CRT hosted its first “Congregate Friendly Feud” on May 5, 2021, with a team of five from the Enfield Senior Center (Mark Twain) competing against a team from South Windsor. It was a close contest, but in the end Enfield prevailed, beating South Windsor by just 70 points! All the seniors involved had a wonderful time, and Scot Haney (pictured at right) from WFSB News 3 was an incredible host – everyone loved having him with us! WFSB shared the event with their viewers that evening.



This first event was a spirited competition, and CRT looks forward to hosting more of these games for seniors in our communities in the coming months. The next game is planned for late June.

**On CRT's website:**

<https://www.crtct.org/crt-hosts-first-congregate-friendly-feud-for-seniors-wfsbs-scot-haney-is-guest-host/>



## Leaders from Connecticut's Congressional Delegation come to CRT's Headquarters in Hartford

On Thursday, May 6, 2021, CRT welcomed both Senator Chris Murphy and Senator Richard Blumenthal (shown with CRT's CEO Lena Rodriguez), as well as U.S. Representative John Larson and Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin to CRT's headquarters in Hartford to discuss the importance of passing the ambitious American Families Plan proposed by President Joe Biden.

The work that CRT does every day is exactly what the American Families Plan is designed to accomplish: helping individuals AND families access resources that will help end the cycle of poverty.



## CRT's Community Resource Fair is like One-Stop Shopping for Local Needs

Like a one-stop shop for all the things people might need to help with their recovery in a post-pandemic world, CRT hosted a free Community Resource Fair in Hartford on May 27.

In addition to CRT's programs and services that were on hand for the event, people could get help with rental assistance from UniteCT; sign up for health insurance with Access Health CT; get free food from The Salvation Army; and get their COVID-19 vaccine during a clinic with the Community Health Center, Inc. And, there was free ice cream, too.



WFSB News 3 sent a reporter to CRT's main offices in Hartford early that morning to preview the event and shared it five times during their morning show; and WTNH News 8 also previewed the event that day – once on their channel, and twice on their sister station My TV 9. Additionally, Kara Sundlun from WFSB News 3 shared the story again during their noon broadcast<sup>1</sup>.

The Sunday morning before the event, Hot 93.7 FM featured the Fair in the "Beat of CT" show.

**WFSB event preview:** <https://www.crtct.org/crts-free-community-resource-fair-is-thurs-may-27-in-hartford-on-wfsb-news-3/>

**WFSB midday report:**  
<https://youtu.be/Zf1Bzv-c8T8>

Additionally, Congressman John B. Larson (center) and the CT Department of Housing Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno (at right) joined CRT and our CEO Lena Rodriguez at the Community Resource Fair in Hartford.



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WFSB - Noon broadcast: Local Market Viewership: 65,320; Local Publicity Value: \$3,054.24 per 30 seconds; Segment length: 1 minute; Ad Equivalency Value: \$6,108.48.

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## **CRT’s Plans to Purchase and Convert Hotel for Use as Men’s Shelter, in the Hartford Courant**

In early May we were contacted by a reporter from the *Hartford Courant* about CRT’s plans to buy a local hotel and convert it into housing for the homeless. Details about the proposed sale of the hotel to CRT came up during a meeting at Hartford’s City Council, and the reporter inquired the next day. CRT’s CEO Lena Rodriguez was interviewed for the story. Once the purchase is completed, the converted hotel space will replace CRT’s McKinney Shelter in Hartford. Much to my surprise, there was not any subsequent media interest in this story.

***Hartford Courant: Plan to convert Hartford hotel into emergency shelter opens up old city firehouse to redevelopment***

<https://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-news-hartford-mckinney-shelter-20210507-3oxitbd5hrdcpfjbu2r3vwway-story.html>

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## **CRT’s Vaccine Policy Continues to Make Headlines**

On May 11, Connecticut Public Radio’s (WNPR) talk show “Where We Live” was devoted to the topic of employers in the state and vaccine policy. Daniel Schwartz, a partner at Shipman and Goodwin, LLP was the main guest during the show. He practices employment law for both large and small companies, and he noted that employers can require employees to get the COVID-19 vaccine. CRT was mentioned multiple times within the context of this program, although we were not asked to be a guest on the show. The program aired twice that day.

**“Where We Live” on CT Public Radio:** <https://www.wnpr.org/post/path-back-normal-majority-connecticut-residents-get-covid-vaccine>

## CRT's Early Care and Education Program featured on K-Love's 'Closer Look' in Hartford

Peter Kaye, host for K-LOVE Radio (106.9 FM) in Hartford recently spoke with CRT's Dr. Leslie Giordano, Director of Early Care and Education. They talked about the importance of early childhood education, and how it helps young children get ready to learn and succeed when entering kindergarten and beyond.

**Give a listen to this "Closer Look" interview.** <https://www.klove.com/news/closer-look/hot-topx/local-closer-look-early-care-and-education-program-hartford-ct-2082>

*Note: This interview originally aired on June 20, 2021, and was replayed multiple times that summer.*



## New Mural to Honor Legacy of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Other Women Leaders in Hartford

CRT is creating a massive public mural on the side of its multi-service center in Hartford (330 Market St.) to honor the life-long commitment to women's rights and social justice of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG), along with other remarkable women leaders. During the first week of work on the mural, the story was picked up by NBC Connecticut, CT en Vivo via Fox 61 (in Spanish) and in the Hartford News weekly paper. We also did a "Something Good in Connecticut" radio interview during the morning show on WRCH Lite 100.5 FM with host Mike Stacy.

**NBC CT:** <https://www.crtct.org/painting-massive-mural-to-honor-the-legacy-of-rbg-begins-at-crt-hartford-office-on-nbc-ct/>

**CT en Vivo "61 Segundos de Noticias":** <https://www.facebook.com/crtct/posts/4428918820505885>



Pictured above: Artist Micaela Levesque at work on the RBG mural.



## Meals on Wheels Services During Heatwave in August – Six Stories on Fox 61 in One Morning

Fox 61 contacted CRT in mid-August to learn more about how the agency helps to look after homebound seniors during the heatwave. A new reporter at the station, Julia LeBlanc (pictured above), came to CRT's main offices on Windsor St. in Hartford on August 12 for the morning and filed six separate reports highlighting Meals on Wheels, the Golf Classic fundraiser, and also the opportunity to work for CRT as one of our delivery drivers. They also posted a story to their website. Links to a few of those clips are below. (Some of the media value is noted in the footnotes<sup>1</sup>.)



CRT Ensures Homebound Seniors are Safe During Heatwave with Meals on Wheels, on Fox 61.

<https://www.crtct.org/crt-ensures-homebound-seniors-are-safe-during-heatwave-with-meals-on-wheels-on-fox-61/>

You Can Help Support Homebound Seniors with CRT's 20th Annual Meals on Wheels Golf Classic, on Fox 61

<https://www.crtct.org/you-can-help-support-homebound-seniors-with-crts-20th-annual-meals-on-wheels-golf-classic-on-fox-61/>

<sup>1</sup>CRT Meals on Wheels - August 12, 2021 on Fox 61 – six stories in one morning:

7:00 am: Local Market Viewership: 27,761; Local Publicity Value: \$897.26 per 30 seconds; Segment length: 3 minutes, 36 seconds; Ad Equivalency Value: \$6,280.82.

8:00 am - overview about MOW Golf Classic: Local Market Viewership: 44,298; Local Publicity Value: \$1,786.79 per 30 seconds; Segment length: 3 minutes, 33 seconds; Ad Equivalency Value: \$12,507.53.

10:00 am - need for Meals on Wheels drivers: Local Market Viewership: 34,151; Local Publicity Value: \$1,764.92 per 30 seconds; Segment length: 2 minutes, 6 seconds; Ad Equivalency Value: \$7,059.68.

## Not Even A Heatwave Can Stop CRT's Meals on Wheels Team – Exclusive on Fox 61

At the end of June, as the state was experiencing its first official heatwave of the summer, CRT was contacted by Fox 61 to find out what we do to help ensure vulnerable individuals, such as homebound seniors, are protected during severe weather conditions. We offered to show them exactly what we do with our Meals on Wheels program, which includes wellness checks for seniors by our drivers and volunteers. CRT's Transportation Manager Wade Lay was their guide for this story – and they also had the chance to speak with a few CRT clients who had great things to say about the program! The report aired 6X in 24 hours on Fox 61, and one more time on their sister station CW 20.



**Fox 61 on CRT's website:** <https://www.crtct.org/even-during-a-heat-wave-crts-meals-on-wheels-ensures-seniors-are-not-forgotten/>

## CRT's 20th Annual Meals on Wheels Golf Classic – Pre-Event Promotion:

In addition to the plug for the event that we secured with Fox 61 on August 12 we were able to record an interview with Renee DiNino (at right), host at The River 105.9 FM for her “Community Access” show, which first aired on August 22, 2021 in support of this event. The interview is also available online (link below) – and was played on all nine local iHeart Radio stations.

It should also be noted that Renee helped to record a 30-second PSA for the event that is airing for one month on all nine local iHeart stations; and she will be the guest Emcee at the event on Sept. 13, 2021.



## iHeart Radio “Community Access” interview with Renee DiNino:

<https://theriver1059.iheart.com/featured/renee/content/2021-07-29-the-20th-annual-crt-meals-on-wheels-golf-classic/>

## Summer Youth Employment Program featured in *Hartford Courant* Twice in One Weekend

The Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program was in the *Hartford Courant* twice over the weekend of August 14 – 15, 2021 – Saturday was the front page of the CT section; and Sunday on the front page of the paper! Both stories show the incredible work done by our students this summer to raise awareness about the COVID-19 vaccine, and about Unite CT.

Also, **this is the 4th time this year that CRT has been on the Front Page of the Courant!**

## CRT's Summer Youth Employment Program Run Civic Engagement Campaign to Boost Interest in COVID-19 Vaccine

More than 80 students enrolled in CRT's Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program took part in a civic engagement project this summer to educate fellow students and people in Hartford about getting the COVID-19 vaccine. They created 370 handmade lawn signs that have been distributed throughout the city to encourage people to get vaccinated.

Other signs were created to let people know about the availability of rental assistance through Unite CT.

According to an article in the *Hartford Courant* this past weekend, “The signs are now spread across the city, including areas around Stonington Street, Market Street, Main street, and the Blue Hills neighborhood.”

CRT Program Manager Cynthia Baisden said the ongoing increase in COVID-19 cases inspired the vaccination campaign.

“The COVID vaccination is something that I truly feel very passionate [about] that our youth need to be vaccinated, especially now that Connecticut has become a hot spot,” Baisden said.



Read the full article in the Hartford Courant online: <https://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-news-hartford-youth-vaccine-campaign-20210813-fzp7prgnijeencemex2maurpje-story.html>



## **CRT Summer Youth Employment Program Intern Shares Experience Promoting Need for COVID Vaccine Among Fellow Teens**

Rhaili-Em Lowe was one of more than 85 young adults who spent time this summer as an intern working with CRT’s Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program. This summer, the students dedicated their time to helping to educate others in the community – especially their peers – about the need for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Her efforts were featured on the front page of the Hartford Courant this past weekend.

As she told the paper: “I’ve been a remote learner for one-and-a-half years. I’m trying not to have it happen again,” said Lowe, a rising junior at the Connecticut IB Academy in East Hartford.

Lowe and the other young adults in the program worked to promote COVID-19 vaccine awareness through projects like creating hundreds of yard signs distributed citywide. They also hosted a Zoom panel discussion about vaccine hesitancy among teenagers and misinformation spread through social media.

As she went on to say: “We all miss each other,” she said of her friends. “I want to experience my junior year in some type of normalcy.”

Read the complete article in the Hartford Courant online. <https://www.courant.com/coronavirus/hc-news-coronavirus-teen-vaccination-rates-20210815-g357eo3hjbafgiagjfbwccym6e-story.html>

## **Financial Literacy Institute Promoted on Multiple Local Radio Stations – final push on NBC CT**

On the final day to sign-up for the 2021 Financial Literacy Institute, we had a last-minute inquiry from NBC Connecticut wanting to do an interview about the class for adult learners. Of course, we said yes. The interview aired that evening – over three minutes long<sup>2</sup> – and it generated a healthy spike in traffic to CRT’s website that day. Additionally, the class ended up with more than 95 applicants for this fall! The story was also available on the NBC CT website.



**NBC CT:** Deadline for Program Aiming to Teach Basic Financial Skills to CT People is Tonight

<https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/deadline-for-program-aiming-to-teach-basic-financial-skills-to-ct-people-is-tonight/2557814/>



**Details on CRT website:** <https://bit.ly/2XfZUf5>

<sup>2</sup>Fin Lit Institute on NBC CT - Aug. 9, 2021 - 7:00 pm: Local Market Viewership: 42,040; Local Publicity Value: \$2,042.83 per 30 seconds; Segment length: 3 minutes, 9 seconds; Ad Equivalency Value: \$12,931.

Additionally, there was a Repeat of “Where We Live” on WNPR/CT Public Radio about Financial Literacy, which included a call-in from CRT’s Elizabeth Horton Sheff. This show first aired back in May 2021, and then was shared a second time on July 26 (the programs airs twice in one day).

**WNPR/CT Public:** <https://www.ctpublic.org/show/where-we-live/2021-07-26/financial-literacy-for-kids-and-beyond>

Also, we had radio interviews with Gina J. from 96.5 TIC FM; and with Hot 93.7 FM for the “Beat of CT” public affairs show. The latter also gave us a chance to promote several other CRT programs, including rental assistance with Unite CT; mortgage assistance program; Meals on Wheels Golf Classic; and hiring opportunities at the agency.

Finally, we had an on-air shout-out from Joan Dylan at WRCH 100.5 LITE FM on July 29 during her midday show to talk up the Institute.

## CRT helping people with recovery from opioid addiction, on Fox 61

It was reported in late July that \$300 million will be making its way to Connecticut to help fight the opioid epidemic locally. Fox 61’s Keith McGilvery spoke with CRT’s Medical Director, Dr. Sharon Hasbani, to understand the importance of this funding for recovery services across the state.

The story repeated that evening during their newscast<sup>3</sup>.

Dr. Hasbani also spoke about CRT’s Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program and holistic services to help people who are dealing with recovery from opioid addiction. As she noted:

“Help is available, without judgment.”



<https://www.crtct.org/crt-helping-people-with-recovery-from-opioid-addiction-on-fox-61/>

## CRT’s Annual Summer Food Service Program Featured Widely in Local News

This year, it is fair to say that outreach for the Summer Food Service Program which provides free meals to kids 18 and under while school is out of session truly crushed it. The story was picked up by multiple news sources, including all four area TV networks, and Telemundo. WFSB News 3 shared the story twice; WTNH News 8 and their sister station My TV 9 ran the story four times combined. Fox 61 shared the story four times during two separate reports; and NBC Connecticut ran the story five times.

The *Hartford News* shared the story in both English and Spanish in their June 24 edition (see screenshot).



<sup>3</sup>Local Market Viewership: 26,451; Local Publicity Value: \$1,347.33 per 30 seconds; Segment length: 2 minutes, 47 seconds; Ad Equivalency Value: \$7,410.31.

CT en Vivo shared the news in Spanish as a part of their programming/partnership with Fox 61 called “61 Segundos de Noticias” (61 seconds of news) – they also posted the details on their website and Facebook page.

This program was also shared multiple times on WTIC News Radio (1080 AM), and by local DJ’s Joan Dylan on WRCH 100.5 Lite FM, and Gina J on 96.5 TIC FM. It was also included in the most recent CAFCA newsletter.

**NBC CT coverage on CRT website:**

<https://www.crtct.org/crts-free-summer-food-for-kids-18-and-under-kicks-off-this-week-in-hartford-and-neighbor-towns/>

**Online coverage from CT en Vivo:**

<https://www.genteconsalud.com/2021/06/22/crt-entregara-comidas-para-ninos-este-verano-cada-dia-de-la-semana-en-15-ubicaciones-alrededor-de-connecticut/>

## CRT Free Summer Meals Through August

To help combat childhood hunger during the summer months when school is out of session, the Community Renewal Team (CRT) is participating in the federally funded Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) once again this summer.

weekday, unless otherwise noted. Times vary by site. Please confer with individual pick-up locations about any closures this summer, such as due to holidays. For families participating in the Summer Food

LOCATIONS .....	TIMES.....	DATES
CRT Generations, 35 Clark St. ....	Lunch: 12 -1 PM.....	7/6/21 - 8/13/21
CRUET 1443 Albany Avenue .....	Breakfast: 8-8:30 AM; Lunch: 12 – 12:30 PM .....	7/6/21 - 8/5/21
Hartford City Mission, 2194 Main St .....	Breakfast: 9-10 AM; Lunch: 12-1 PM.....	7/12/21 - 8/20/21
YMCA, 444 Albany Ave.....	Breakfast: 8 – 9 AM; Lunch: 11:30 -1:00 PM.....	6/21/21 – 8/27/21
YWCA*, 135 Broad St .....	Breakfast: 8:30 – 9:30 AM; Lunch: 12-1 PM.....	7/12/21 – 8/27/21

\* YWCA program requires registration to attend.

CRT will deliver hundreds of meals for children each weekday to the 15 locations in Greater Hartford, including five in Hartford. In total, CRT will deliver more than 35,000 meals for kids this summer.

Under the SFSP, nutritious meals (including breakfast and/or lunch, and even supper), will be provided free of charge to children 18 years of age and under at 15 locations in Hartford, East Hartford, Enfield, Glastonbury, and Wolcott.

Note: All locations below provide services every

Program: Please consider wearing a mask or face covering when picking up meals. Check with individual locations for any social-distancing protocols that may be required.

Individuals and families interested in receiving more information about the Summer Food Service Program should contact CRT, 555 Windsor Street, Hartford, CT 06120 or call 860-560-5600. Information is also available on CRT’s website: <https://www.crtct.org/programs/children/summer-food/>

## CRT Offers Mortgage Assistance Program to Homeowners Affected by COVID-19

In late June, CRT began to share details about an incredible program to help local homeowners that may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that may be eligible for up to \$8,000 in mortgage payment assistance through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Cares Act Emergency Resource Fund. These relief payments represent a combination of two months short-term mortgage payment assistance; and up to two months for mortgage arrearages, for a total of four months’ worth of possible mortgage payments for qualified individuals.



This story was picked up right away by the *Hartford Courant*, as well as two of the four local TV networks in June: WTNH News 8 (and their sister station My TV 9) 2x on each station; and on WFSB News 3 – 3X.

The first weekend in July the story aired on Fox 61 (6X in 48 hours; and once on their sister station CW 20); and it also received support from CT en Vivo (in Spanish) – once again as a result of their partnership with Fox 61. More details in next month’s report.

**WFSB News 3 on CRT website:** <https://www.crtct.org/crt-can-help-homeowners-impacted-by-covid-19-apply-for-up-to-8000-in-mortgage-payment-assistance/>

**Hartford Courant:** CRT offering help for Hartford area homeowners struggling with mortgage payments <https://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-news-community-renewal-team-mortgage-assistance-grants-20210625-6sesl2f725ge5px5higei46mfe-story.html>



### CRT featured in “Jobs for CT” on WFSB News 3

Sometimes, all you need to do is ask ...

At the end of July, in their feature segment “Jobs for CT,” news anchor Mark Zinni from WFSB News Channel 3 highlighted CRT’s need for a Budget Specialist in the Finance Department at the main office in Hartford<sup>4</sup>.

**CRT news blog:** <https://www.crtct.org/crt-seeks-budget-specialist-featured-on-wfsb-news-3-jobs-for-ct/>

<sup>4</sup>WFSB News 3 - “Jobs for CT” report: Local Market Viewership: 56,523; Local Publicity Value: \$1,858.68 per 30 seconds; Segment Length: ~30 seconds; Ad Equivalency Value: \$1,858.68.

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# STATE NEWS

WWW.COURANT.COM

## CRT offering mortgage help for struggling homeowners

By Christopher Arnott  
Hartford Courant

Low-income homeowners who’ve been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic can get help with mortgage payments, thanks to the Community Renewal Team, the Hartford-based community action agency.

CRT is offering grants that can cover four months of payments of as much as \$2,000 per month, and can be used for two months of current payments and up to two months of payments that are in arrears. With grants of as much as \$8,000, CRT thinks it can cover most short-term mortgage assistance for potential applicants.

CRT’s Communications Director Jason Black said, “The requirements are tight but fair.” To be eligible, applicants must earn less than twice the federal poverty level (which would be, for example, \$53,000 for a four-person household); have incurred the mortgage expenses after April 1, 2020; live in CRT’s “core catchment area” of Hartford County and Middlesex County; and have been “impacted



The Community Renewal Team is offering mortgage assistance to low-income homeowners struggling as a result of the pandemic. COURTESY

by COVID-19.” That final requirement can include having to care for an infected family member or losing one’s job due to downsizing during the crisis.

If an application is successful, the payments go directly to the mortgage lender, not to the applicant. “It guarantees that the money goes to the right place,” Black said. According to a CRT statement, “these funds are meant to be used

as the payer of last resort in the event there are no other agency and/or community resources available, or due to the immediate nature of the emergency.”

Financing for the program comes from a Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) as part of the Cares Act Emergency Resource Fund. The CSBG designation means that not just U.S.-born citizens but also immigrants

may be eligible if they meet eligibility requirements.

The program is new for CRT, but the agency already has a foreclosure prevention housing counselor on staff, Herman Gibson, who will administer the program and directly help eligible homeowners with the application process. “The best for the applicants to do is to call or come to CRT directly,” Black said. “While they are there, we can let them know about other support that is available to them.”

The program was started with “a soft announcement” about a month ago, Black said, “but that was before we realized that \$8,000 figure. While it’s hard to know in advance, I’d be surprised if we don’t see hundreds of applicants for this. I just wish we could have done it sooner.”

Those interested in applying for the CRT’s mortgage payment assistance grants should call Gibson at 860-761-2381 or email him at [gibsonh@crtct.org](mailto:gibsonh@crtct.org).

Christopher Arnott can be reached at [arnott@courant.com](mailto:arnott@courant.com).



## CRT's Early Care and Education Program on K-LOVE Radio for Third Time

CRT's Director of Early Care and Education, Dr. Leslie Giordano, was featured on K-LOVE (106.9 FM) and their public affairs show "A Closer Look" that airs on Sunday nights. The interview has aired three times this summer!

**Link to interview:** <https://www.crtct.org/crts-early-care-and-education-program-featured-on-k-loves-closer-look-in-hartford/>

## CRT Promoted with Birdies for Charity interview

CRT's Ilana Bernstein was interviewed by Renee DiNino from The River 105.9 FM/iHeart Radio's Community Access show for the annual "Birdies for Charity" fundraising effort that is tied to the Travelers Championship. **That interview ran in June:** <https://theriver1059.iheart.com/featured/renee/content/2021-06-08-birdies-for-charity-community-renewal-team/>

## Lt. Governor Bysiewicz, CRT President Lena Rodriguez Honor Legacy of the Late Ruth Bader Ginsburg

The LT Governor's office reached out to CRT wanting to do a press conference showcasing the mural. On 10/7/21 the Lt. Governor Bysiewicz, Hartford Connecticut Renewal Team (CRT) President Lena Rodriguez, and other local officials honored the legacy of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG) and other remarkable women leaders by raising awareness for the public mural at the [Women's Empowerment Center](#) in downtown Hartford.

Several media outlets attended the press conference including Channel 8 who sent a TV report to broadcast from the site – other stations include Fox61 and Channel30. Two Latino news outlets also attended EnVivo and Identidad.



## Hartford Courant Article:

*Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz speaks Thursday at the unveiling of Micaela Levesque's mural of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and four other female leaders. When Bysiewicz was growing up, her mother, law professor Shirley Bysiewicz, was a colleague of Ginsburg.*

## Legacy on display

Mural of female leaders graces women's support center in Hartford

By Rebecca Lurye | Hartford Courant



HARTFORD — A fierce-looking Ruth Bader Ginsburg looks out from a new mural on a women’s support center in Hartford, an empty book in her hands with a fountain pen poised over its blank pages. It’s just one of dozens of details and symbols in the two-story Market Street mural, but it’s the only one that forces the viewer’s gaze inward.

Artist Micaela Levesque, of East Hartford, wants people who see the work — especially children — to wonder and learn about the powerful legacies of Ginsburg, the Supreme Court justice and feminist icon who died last September, and four other women leaders who flank her on the wall. Then, Levesque wants them to imagine grabbing the pen and writing in their own story.

“(Young people) have the opportunity to take control of their life any way that they like and basically create their own legacy, whatever it may be,” Levesque said on Thursday morning outside the Community Renewal Team’s Women’s Empowerment Center, where she painted the mural. “I wanted to just open the book and be like, ‘OK, your turn.’ ”

Levesque’s mural was commissioned by CRT, a Hartford-based nonprofit that works to reduce hunger, homelessness, unemployment and poverty in the region, with funding from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

CRT renamed its Market Street center for Ginsburg after her death to honor her lifelong fight for gender equality and civil rights.

Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz, who attended the mural unveiling, recalled her own doubts growing up about the heights that women could reach. Her mother, Shirley Bysiewicz, was the first woman tenured professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law and would host social gatherings for other women in the field, all of whom were working as professors rather than lawyers or judges.

One of their regular guests was Ginsburg, who clerked for a few years after graduating from Columbia Law School before becoming a professor.

Shirley Bysiewicz told her daughter that Ginsburg would serve on the Supreme Court one day.

“My response to that was, ‘Mom, that’s impossible, she’s been in our backyard for picnics. There’s no way she’s gonna be on the Supreme Court,’ ” Susan Bysiewicz said Thursday. “But always listen to your mom, because she is always right.”

The Women’s Empowerment Center has served more than 300 adults and children in Hartford and Middlesex counties since opening in 2019. Its programs include intensive case management, behavioral health services, professional development and leadership training, and support groups.

Lena Rodriguez, the president of CRT, said the women coming to the center are working through challenging circumstances, like divorce, single motherhood, career changes and recovery from substance abuse.

The new mural offers them inspiration, and role models who look like them, Rodriguez said.

Along with Ginsburg, Levesque painted portraits of former First Lady Michelle Obama, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, former Connecticut Gov. Ella Grasso and Vice President Kamala Harris.

Obama is painted holding an orange, a symbol of her



promotion of childhood nutrition and fitness standards.

A lemon branch will soon be added, with a coquí frog — an unofficial national symbol of Puerto Rico — perched near Sotomayor, the first Hispanic justice to serve on the country’s highest court. She was born in the Bronx to Puerto Rican parents.

And Harris, whose first name means “lotus,” holds one of the pink flowers in her hand to highlight her heritage, as the daughter of an Indian mother and Jamaican father.

Mountain laurel, the state flower of Connecticut, will flow along the bottom of the mural from Sotomayor to Grasso, the first woman to be elected governor of a U.S. state without having been a former governor’s spouse or widow.

Levesque plans to finish the mural in the next week.

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## Mural Time Lapse Video

CRT’s Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg Women’s Empowerment Center recently got a newly painted mural on the side of its 330 Market Street building.

Watch this incredible time-lapse video of the creation of the mural by Micaela Levesque.

The mural will serve as a beacon for women, young and old, in the community, increase awareness of the Women’s

Empowerment Center, and support our collective vision for a future that will help all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, income level, or social status achieve their potential.



**CRT’s news blog:** <https://www.crtct.org/time-lapse-of-the-mural/>

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z-npd2qwYVY>



## Giving Tuesday Toy Drive

Fox 61 aired coverage of CRT's toy drive on Tuesday, November 29th, Giving Tuesday, with the Hartford Fire Department and CRT's efforts to ensure each child has a toy or present during the holiday season.

CRT's Director of Community Services, Elizabeth Horton Sheff, shared the needs among families receiving services from CRT because they are having trouble making ends meet this year.



**CRT's news blog:** <https://www.crtct.org/ms-horton-sheff-with-fox61-at-the-giving-tuesday-toy-drive/>



## News Room

Welcome to the CRT News Room—a media dashboard where you can find the latest news, publications, and videos about CRT programs and events. CRT helps tens of thousands of Central Connecticut families and individuals each year. This impact leads to rich stories and original source material for all forms of media.

We encourage media outlets to connect with us. We offer access to a wealth of knowledge and experience in the delivery of award-winning human services. You can reach us by phone, email and via social media. Click the sections below for media resources and ways to connect with us. You can also contact us via email at: [communications@crtct.org](mailto:communications@crtct.org)

**Visit the News Room online:** <https://www.crtct.org/newsroom/>



# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## BASIC NEEDS

Resource Centers  
 Food and Clothing Assistance  
 SSBG Case Management  
 SNAP Outreach  
 CSBG CARES Assistance



## EDUCATION AND YOUTH

School Readiness  
 Infant / Toddler Day Care  
 Child Nutrition  
 Summer Food



## EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Capital City YouthBuild  
 Middlesex Youth Development  
 Summer Youth Employment



## SENIOR SERVICES

Meals on Wheels  
 The Retreat Assisted Living Facility  
 Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)  
 Senior Affordable Housing  
 Senior Community Cafes



## ENERGY AND WEATHERIZATION

Energy Assistance  
 Weatherization Services  
 HES-IE  
 Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program



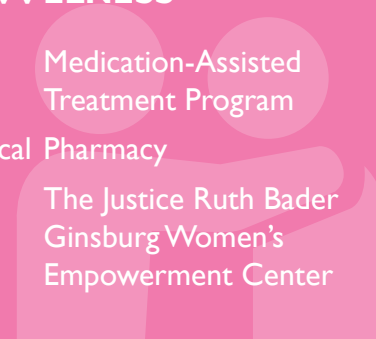
## VETERANS

Supportive Services for Veteran Families  
 Veterans Crossing  
 Targeted Case Management Services for Veterans



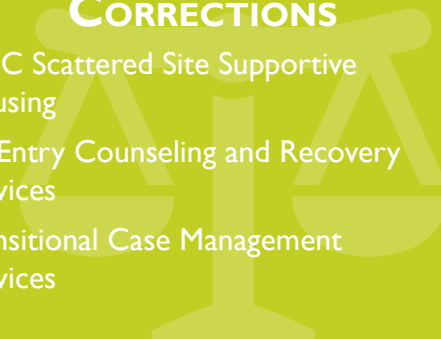
## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Asian Family Services	Hartford Community Responders	Medication-Assisted Treatment Program
Behavioral Health Services	HIV Counseling & Medical Case Management	The Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg Women's Empowerment Center
Fatherhood Initiative	Homeless Outreach	
Community Resource Coordinator (CRC)	Health Navigator	



## COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

DOC Scattered Site Supportive Housing  
 Re-Entry Counseling and Recovery Services  
 Transitional Case Management Services



## MONEY MANAGEMENT

Community Asset Building Initiative  
 VITA Tax Filing  
 Financial Literacy



## HOUSING AND SHELTERS

Affordable Housing	East Hartford Family Shelter	Permanent Supportive Housing
Community Housing Engagement and Support Services (CHESS)	Generations: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren	McKinney Men's Shelter
Community Housing Employment Enrichment Services	Housing Counseling	Rapid Rehousing
		UniteCT



Find CRT on your favorite social media channels.

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