



**JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
HARTFORD**

Women building better communities

**For Immediate Release
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**Junior League of Hartford Family/School Connection Program
Transitioned to Center City Churches**

August 7, 2006, Hartford, Connecticut. The Junior League of Hartford has now transitioned its 2000-2006 signature program, Family/School Connection at Betances Elementary School in Hartford, to Center City Churches. Center City Churches is a coalition of 12 congregations in Hartford and 20 others in the region which runs various programs in the Hartford area, including Peter's Retreat, the Center for Youth, and its MANNA programs and soup kitchen.

Six years ago, the Junior League of Hartford, with its partners Center City Churches and The Children's Trust Fund, launched the Family/School Connection at Betances Elementary School. Its mission is to provide an early intervention, family development program targeting Hartford Elementary School children who are determined to be at risk of abuse and neglect. The program's goal is to strengthen at-risk families, improve school attendance and academic outcomes, build parenting skills, change behaviors, and reduce the incidence of child abuse. Families participating in Family/School Connection attend parent outreach and education events, including job readiness, family health and fiscal independence sessions, and receive home visits and other services focused on building parenting skills.

Center City Churches' Executive Director, Paul Christie, accepted official responsibility for the program on behalf of Center City's organization. "The Junior League of Hartford can be proud of accomplishing all that it set out to do. In 1999, Family/School Connection was the vision of the League's New Project Development Committee. Today, the League should be very proud of creating an innovative and successful new program for the City of Hartford," said Paul Christie. "Without the League's involvement, Family School Connection would not have become the program that it is today," said Monique Turner, Center City Churches Program Director. "I have been so impressed by the dedication and

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service that the JLH has brought to this project. Certainly, Center City's doors remain wide open for any League member who wishes to continue to volunteer in support of this program.”

In addition to staffing Family/School Connection events, the Junior League of Hartford contributed \$81,500 in direct financial support over the past 6 years and gave over \$15,000 in in-kind donations to the program, including books, computers, refrigerators, backpacks and school supplies, arts and crafts supplies, clothing, health/first aid supplies and food. Through the League's grant-writing efforts, Family/School Connection received \$148,500 in grants.

As part of the transition plan, the Junior League of Hartford will have a representative on the Family/School Connection Advisory Board to help ensure the continued success of this important initiative. Family/School Connection is a signature project developed by the Junior League of Hartford in collaboration with other community organizations, nurtured into a permanent program and transitioned to a new organization.

Since 1921, the Junior League of Hartford has been an important community catalyst initiating programs as diverse as the Wadsworth Atheneum docent program, a teen parent program (Friends of the Family, now run through the Village of Families & Children Inc.) and an award-winning immunization program (Take Five) that enabled Hartford and Connecticut to have one of the best inner city immunization records in the country. The Junior League of Hartford's new signature project is a collaboration with FoodShare and Chrysalis Center Inc. aimed at combating hunger in the greater Hartford area.

About the Junior League of Hartford

The Junior League of Hartford is an organization of women committed to making a difference in our community through effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. The Junior League of Hartford serves an essential role in the Hartford community. Each year, League members provide over 100,000 hours of volunteer service to League programs and community organizations. The Junior League emphasizes and supports training for its members who benefit from both structured and hands-on training to work with a diverse group of women and become involved with critical issues and community leaders in Greater Hartford.

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