



Discovery2010

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PRESS RELEASE

CT Early Childhood Alliance, Graustein Memorial Fund to Host Federal Official for “Healthy, Safe and Ready to Learn!”

Community leaders, child care providers and teachers, legislators, school superintendents, child advocates, parents and philanthropic leaders will converge on Central Connecticut State University’s Alumni Hall on July 19 to hear from Dr. Joan Lombardi, Deputy Assistant Secretary & Interdepartmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Dr. Lombardi is a recognized leader on children’s issues, domestic and international, who currently oversees Head Start and the federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) programs and works closely with the U.S. Department of Education to connect child care and preschool programs with the K-12 system. She is also the author of “Time to Care: Redesigning Child Care to Promote Education, Support and Build Communities,” and co-editor of “A Beacon of Hope: The Promise of Early Head Start for America’s Youngest Children.”

The event will include a presentation by Dr. Lombardi, where she will give an overview of early childhood development initiatives at the federal level and the importance of community planning.

After Dr. Lombardi’s presentation, there will be a moderated panel discussion exploring how local planning and capacity building work in Connecticut can be supported, amplified and integrated into federal initiatives around early learning strategies. Panelists will include Richard Sussman, Director, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Brighter Futures Initiative; Georgia Goldburn, Executive Director of Hope Child Care Center in New Haven; Marlo Greponne, Director of Planning and Program, Human Resources Agency of New Britain; Rep. John Geragosian (D-New Britain) and Congressman Christopher Murphy (CT-5). (Murphy’s participation is dependent upon the legislative voting schedule in D.C.)

The event also affords the chance to interact with policymakers and celebrate and showcase community planning successes by New Britain, New Haven and Torrington's Discovery Communities. In a commitment to plan for future successes of CT's children, 23 communities across the state have completed community blueprints for early childhood, while 19 more communities have committed to organizing blueprints of their own.

"We are anticipating a great turnout on July 19 to hear Dr. Lombardi speak and to support the efforts made by the state's Discovery communities," said Merrill Gay, Executive Director of the New Britain Early Childhood Collaborative and a co-chair for the CT Early Childhood Alliance.

"This is an opportunity to celebrate the work of the Discovery communities who are creating early childhood blueprints to guide local decisions about how to prepare all children for future success," said David Nee, Executive Director of the Graustein Memorial Fund. "Our goal is to work with our state and federal officials and to continue to stress the importance the early years have on the life of every child and on our state as a whole."

The event is open to the public and begins at 5 p.m. with light refreshments at Central Connecticut State University's Alumni Hall, Student Center. The program itself runs from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. To RSVP, please contact the CT Early Childhood Alliance at 860-819-3647 or email alliance.ceca@gmail.com. Child care is also available for those who need it. Visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MDFYHLJ> to sign up for care.