



Fairfield County
Community Foundation

October 24, 2011

**Multi-Year Gift from Fairfield County Community Foundation
Doubles Connecticut Food Bank Kids' BackPack Program in Bridgeport**
Program provides healthy weekend meals for students at risk of hunger

East Haven, CT – Connecticut Food Bank is the recipient of a multi-year gift from Fairfield County Community Foundation that will double the number of children in Bridgeport who participate in its vitally important Kids' BackPack Program. Through the Foundation's initial gift of \$124,000, more than 900 Bridgeport school children will receive nutritious food during weekends when other resources, including free/reduced price school meals, are not available to them.

"Well-nourished children tend to have fewer illnesses and better school achievement than those who are chronically hungry," said Nancy L. Carrington, President and Chief Executive Officer of Connecticut Food Bank. "We are extremely grateful to the Fairfield County Community Foundation's long-term support of the Kids' BackPack Program in Bridgeport. It is such an important component of child nutrition for those who participate."

"The Foundation and our donors support many programs to address the achievement gap in our schools, including training future principals and funding effective after-school and summer programs," said Juanita T. James, president and CEO of the Fairfield County Community Foundation. "But if students can't focus in the classroom because they are hungry, these programs cannot succeed. The Kids' Backpack program is a solution that gets to the heart of a critical issue in our community."

The Kids' BackPack Program plans to serve 109 schools in 18 Connecticut towns in the 2011-2012 school year. Seventy schools in the Fairfield County area participate; including 28 from Bridgeport. A typical bag of food includes two each of packages of milk, 100 percent fruit juice, two whole grain cereals, two high-nutrition entrees and two low-fat, low sugar snacks.

In Connecticut, nearly one in five children is food insecure, meaning they do not know where their next meal is coming from. In Connecticut Food Bank's service area, 53 percent of the food insecure population does not qualify for food stamps or other government programs, so they often must rely on other sources such as Connecticut Food Bank and others to help feed themselves and their families.

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Connecticut Food Bank serves approximately 600 local emergency food assistance programs in six of Connecticut's eight counties: *Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham*. **Connecticut Food Bank** distributes more than 31 tons of food every business day.

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The Fairfield County Community Foundation promotes the growth of community and regional philanthropy to improve the quality of life throughout Fairfield County. Individuals, families, corporations and organizations can establish charitable funds or contribute to existing funds. The Foundation also provides philanthropic advisory services, and develops and leads initiatives to tackle critical community issues. It is in compliance with the Council on Foundations' national standards for community foundations. The Foundation has awarded \$123 million in grants to nonprofits in Fairfield County and beyond. For more information, visit www.fccfoundation.org.

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