



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTHCARE FOR THE HOMELESS PROGRAM TO HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICES AND CANDLELIGHT VIGILS FOR NATIONAL HOMELESS PERSONS' MEMORIAL DAY

Events in Middletown, Meriden and New Britain to honor the homeless who died in 2010; Services to feature speeches from community leaders and homeless individuals

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. (December 14, 2010) – In recognition of National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day on December 21, Wherever You Are Healthcare for the Homeless—a program of Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC)—will host memorial services and candlelight vigils in Middletown, Meriden and New Britain. The annual public services on December 21 and 22 are in memory of the areas' homeless residents who died in 2010.

Similar services are conducted in more than 150 communities across the country on the first day of winter—the longest night of the year—to recognize the need for political advocacy and efforts to end homelessness. National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day is co-sponsored by the National Coalition for the Homeless, National Health Care for the Homeless Council and National Consumer Advisory Board.

“Each year, homeless residents in our communities pass away,” said Agi Erickson, program manager for Wherever You Are Healthcare for the Homeless. “Many of these deaths could have been prevented, had these individuals had shelter, food and access to health care. Communities must continue working together and sharing the responsibility to end the preventable tragedy of homelessness.”

The memorial services and candlelight vigils will take place at the following times:

New Britain

December 21 at 1 p.m.; South Church – Erwin Chapel, 90 Main St.
Speakers will include State Sen. Donald DeFronzo; New Britain Mayor Timothy Stewart; South Church Pastor George Harris; Carol Walter of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness; Danna Bergin of the Friendship Center; and Barbara Damon of the Prudence Crandall Center.

Middletown

December 21 at 4 p.m.; Church of the Holy Trinity, 381 Main St.
Speakers will include State Sen. Paul Doyle; Middletown Mayor Sebastian Giuliano; Church of the Holy Trinity Pastor Maggie Minnick; Lydia Brewster and Carol Walters of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness; Ron Krom of Saint Vincent DePaul Place; Kevin Wilhelm of the Middlesex United Way; and two Wherever You Are clients.

Meriden

December 22 at 1 p.m.; Center Congregational Church, 474 Broad St.

Speakers will include State Rep. Chris Donovan; Meriden Mayor Michael Rohde; Rev. James J. Olson of the Center Congregational Church; Carol Walter of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness; Amanda Swan, a CHC medical provider at Shelter Now; Kristen Granatek of the Women & Families Center; and Cheryl Badore of Master's Manna.

The Wherever You Are Healthcare for the Homeless program consists of a special team of nurses, doctors, substance abuse counselors, psychiatric nurses and outreach workers who provide health care for the homeless and near-homeless in clinics at homeless, domestic violence and transitional shelters in New Britain, Meriden, Wallingford and Middletown. The program aims to assess the health needs of every shelter resident, provide prompt treatment, update the individual on necessary preventive care such as immunizations and screenings, then connect him or her with one of CHC's 12 facilities for ongoing primary care.

For more information on the memorial services or program, contact Agi Erickson of the Wherever You Are Healthcare for the Homeless program at (860) 224-3642 ext. 5551 or ericksa@chc1.com.

About Community Health Center, Inc.

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for uninsured and underinsured populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 130,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Currently, CHC delivers service in 173 locations statewide, offering primary care in medical, dental and behavioral health services. For more information, visit chc1.com.

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