

For Immediate Release

June 18, 2010

Contact: Cynthia H. Clegg, President & CEO

860-347-0025 Cynthia@MiddlesexCountyCF.org

**Middlesex County Community Foundation in Partnership with the Griffin Family Fund
Joins the Challenge to End Homelessness in Middlesex County**

What do businesses, faith communities, nonprofits and individuals have in common in Middlesex County? Preventing and ending homelessness. May 26, 2010 found some 60 attendees from numerous organizations and communities gathering in the lobby of the Citizens Bank on Main Street, Middletown, for the kickoff of the Homelessness Prevention Challenge to raise \$120,000 over the next three years.

Middlesex County Community Foundation President and CEO Cynthia Clegg joined Patti Anne Vassia, convener of the Coalition's Prevention Committee, at the podium during the kickoff. "The core value of the Community Foundation's mission clearly states improving the quality of life in the County. Tonight, the Community Foundation joins the challenge with a \$10,000 grant to the Homelessness Prevention Fund," Clegg announced to the room. "This grant is made in part by a generous donation from the Griffin Family Fund. Homelessness, or the threat of being homeless, is directly tied to many quality of life issues affecting our communities and our residents; and if we are going to support one another, this must be an issue we address together."

Middlesex County Community Foundation is a proud member of the Middlesex County Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, joining businesses, government leaders, nonprofits and formerly homeless individuals in the county-wide initiative. "The leadership and generous financial support provided by the Middlesex County Community Foundation will make a tremendous difference in our ambitious efforts to prevent and end homelessness by 2017," Kevin Wilhelm, Executive Director of Middlesex United Way and Coalition member, commented.

The Homelessness Prevention Challenge is made possible by a \$60,000 three-year challenge grant from the Promise Foundation that will provide \$1 for every \$2 raised from the community for the Prevention Fund. Joining the Community Foundation with initial donations during the kickoff event were Middlesex Hospital and Citizens Bank. Including donations received as a result of a mail appeal to friends and past contributors, the total funds raised by the end of the evening stood at over \$23,500.

The Prevention Fund makes one-time grants of up to \$2,000 to pay expenses that enable people to retain their homes, including rent payments, car repairs, prescription costs, utility payments, or other costs. "Since its inception in April 2009, the Prevention Fund has already provided over \$28,000 in grants to help keep 41 local households from losing their housing," said Vassia.

In late 2007, a group of community volunteers came together to form the Middlesex County Coalition on Housing and Homelessness for the purpose of implementing the county's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. Since the Coalition began its work, the county has seen a 30% reduction in homelessness among single adults and a 36% reduction in homelessness among families.

To learn more about the Prevention Fund and the Middlesex County Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, contact Ann Faust at 860-346-8695.

The Middlesex County Community Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Middlesex County. Its two-fold mission is: (1) to work with charitably-minded individuals and organizations to build permanent endowments and other charitable funds and (2) to support local nonprofit organizations through effective grant making to address community needs. Since its founding in 1997, the Community Foundation has provided more than \$1.5 million in grants to more than 200 organizations for the arts, cultural and heritage programs, educational activities, environmental improvements, and for health and human services. For more information call 860-347-0025, email info@MiddlesexCountyCF.org or visit the website: www.MiddlesexCountyCF.org.

###

Middlesex County Community Foundation, Inc.

211 South Main Street

Middletown, CT 06457