



*****PRESS RELEASE*****

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Third Annual Ceremony Honors Bridgeport Activists, Partners: *ReEntry Collaborative Is Model for State*

BRIDGEPORT – With Connecticut’s cities continuing to struggle with high unemployment, the mark of a former offender is often used as a reason for employers to avoid qualified workers. Advocates in Bridgeport, having worked together for more than seven years to address these and other challenges faced by people returning home after incarceration, will gather Thursday night to honor those who have made a difference.

The event marks the third annual Awards Ceremony and will take place Thursday at 6 p.m. at Housatonic Community College (HCC). The Collaborative will issue awards for Personal Achievement, Professional of the Year, Outstanding Students, Business Partners of the Year, Community Partners of the Year, and Advocates of the Year.

Speakers will include Mayor Bill Finch, State Rep. Tony Hwang, HCC President Anita Glinicki, Deputy Commissioner Scott Semple of CT Department of Correction and Erika Tindill, Esq., Chairperson of the CT Board of Pardons and Parole.

“It’s all about second chances, in a way that works for everyone,” said Dan Braccio, Co-Chairman of the Collaborative. “When we formed the ReEntry Collaborative seven years ago, people were just waking up to the fact that we need to provide a better road home to the citizens we incarcerate. It’s an honor to celebrate this work.”

“We hear again and again from employers that people who have been incarcerated are their best employees – dedicated, hardworking and willing to learn and work hard,” added Scott K. Wilderman, President/CEO of Career Resources Inc. and a co-chair of the Collaborative. “This group has provided a critical forum for us all to learn from and about each other, and to spread the message to employers and others in the community that former offenders have done their time and deserve a chance.”

Bridgeport Reentry Collaborative was established in May 2007 as a means of bringing together the many local Bridgeport agencies that provide diverse reentry services to men and women returning from incarceration. It now has more than 35 local and state agencies, both public and private, and meets the third Thursday of each month.

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