A SELECTION OF MEDIA FROM 2018

Community Renewal Team
Changing lives... Creating opportunity!
The Community Renewal Team is the designated Community Action Agency for Middlesex and Hartford Counties and is the largest non-profit provider of human services in Connecticut. The agency’s mission is “Preparing Our Community to Meet Life’s Challenges.” This mission is achieved each day by helping people and families become self-sufficient while making sure basic needs are met. CRT’s programs include Early Care and Education, Meals on Wheels, energy assistance, supportive housing and shelters, and many others, serving people in more than 60 cities and towns throughout Connecticut.

To convey its messages, and promote its programs and services, CRT maintains ongoing relationships with reporters and editors at major newspapers, TV and radio stations around the state. Additionally, to further its reach, the agency actively uses social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube). (pictured above: Bozie Stearns, volunteer with CRT’s McKinney Shelter, was featured in the Hartford Courant’s “Hometown Heroes” in February 2018.)

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Want to speak with CRT about a story or interview?
Jason Black, Strategic Communications Specialist
@ 860-230-4535 or via email: blackj@crtct.org
2018 Media Highlights

In 2018, CRT achieved great successes with local media throughout Connecticut for a wide range of programs and services, including:

- Photo gallery in The Hartford Courant featuring the first fundraiser for CRT’s Women’s Empowerment Center, as well as a half page in Hartford Magazine for the same event.
- Full-page story in Connecticut Magazine about CRT and the McKinney Shelter, featuring program manager Jose Vega.
- Two separate “Hometown Heroes” stories in The Hartford Courant highlighting the good work of long-time volunteers who work with our agency.
- Cover story in the Hartford Business Journal about CRT’s YouthBuild program ran in late summer (shown below).
- CRT featured in the “Stories of Hope” interview on Fox 61.
- Extensive coverage throughout the Greater Hartford area this past summer when the “Big Idaho Potato” truck came to town in support of CRT’s Meals on Wheels program. It was covered by all major media in the Greater Hartford area.
- CRT’s HIV Testing Services and PrEP outreach was featured in a detailed story that was part of a series done by WNPR Radio and The Connecticut Mirror, leading to an interview on WNPR’s “Where We Live” news show.
- CRT’s annual food distribution program with Feed the Children was featured by three of the four local TV networks.
- The 10th Annual Capital Region Gun Buyback event, which is hosted by CRT, was featured heavily in local media before, during and after the event. Stories on local TV and radio aired 66 times during a one-week period about this event.

CRT’s Capital City Youth-Build program was the cover story in the Hartford Business Journal in September 2018. (Photo by Bill Morgan for the HBJ.)
Behavioral Health Services

‘Breaking Bread’ program

We had the opportunity to work closely with (now-former) Hartford Courant columnist Vinny Vella on a few of his final assignments for the paper (he is now working at a paper in Philadelphia). He wrote twice about the work that CRT is doing in one week! One column focused on our project with the Greater Hartford Harm Reduction Coalition to help families that are dealing with opioid addiction in a program known as “Breaking Bread.”

HIV Testing on Valentine’s Day

This story was mentioned on two local TV stations – Fox 61 and WFSB News Channel 3, in advance of the testing event held at CRT’s offices on Market Street in Hartford, to help encourage people to go for testing. BHS completed 47 HIV tests that day!
Behavioral Health Services

CRT’s HIV Testing Services and PrEP outreach

A story about CRT’s HIV testing and PrEP services was aired on WNPR this summer.

Reporter Vanessa de la Torre came out to an event from the BHS team held in Hartford at the end of June to learn more about our work. The audio version of WNPR story aired locally on July 25 during both Morning Edition and All Things Considered. In fact, the story ran four times in Hartford (once as part of the New England News Collaborative show “NEXT”), as well as four times on WBUR in Boston, and once on Vermont Public Radio, too.


In 2018, WNPR was focused on reporting about HIV and AIDS in collaboration with the Connecticut Mirror – the above story was also featured on the Mirror’s website: https://ctmirror.org/2018/07/24/fight-hiv-outreach-workers-take-prep-streets/

As a result of this coverage, we were invited to come on the WNPR morning talk show “Where We Live” (at left CRT’s Jovany Colon along with host Lucy Nalpathanchil) in mid-August to talk more about HIV and AIDS in the Hartford community, and specifically to discuss the work that CRT is doing to confront this epidemic: http://bit.ly/CRTnprWWL

You can hear the PrEP story on CRT’s SoundCloud account: https://soundcloud.com/user-547491855
Behavioral Health Services

CRT’s PrEP Team on Bomba Radio

At the end of May, a member of CRT’s Behavioral Health Services team (Jovany Rolon, in the middle) joined morning host DJ Metrix (pictured at left) on Bomba Radio (Spanish language station at 97.1 FM) to talk about HIV prevention and early intervention services, CRT’s medical case management services, and the availability of PrEP, a once-daily pill for people who do not have HIV to help them stay that way. (Pictured at right: CRT’s PrEP Navigator Tatiana Melendez.)

CRT’s Ryan White Pharmacy program

A press release about CRT’s Pharmacy program for people who are HIV+ was distributed in early August. The story was picked up by multiple outlets locally, including two TV networks—WFSB and Fox 61.

The Public News Service shared online (both written and audio interview):
https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2018-08-07/health-issues/program-helps-people-with-hiv-get-their-meds/a63617-1


The story was also promoted on 100.5 LITE FM’s blog the same week: https://wrch.radio.com/blogs/joandylan/crt-now-offers-pharmacy-program-free-prescriptions-hiv-individuals

Stories can be viewed on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Behavioral Health Services

CRT Wins Three-Year Grant to Combat Opioid Use Disorder

*CRT received a sizable three-year grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) agency to expand access to Medication Assisted Therapy for individuals with opioid use disorder in the greater Hartford area.*

The grant will serve individuals in the Hartford area and will prioritize recently released offenders and individuals with a history of involvement with the criminal justice system. CRT’s Vice President for Clinical Services, Heidi Lubetkin (at right), had the chance to speak with Stan Simpson on Fox 61 about this grant and how it will help address the opioid epidemic in our community. The story was also picked up in the Hartford Business Journal online, and was mentioned as a part of a story about drug addiction and recovery that aired on NBC Connecticut.

The Stan Simpson Show on Fox 61: https://youtu.be/JPOBeWNcvTM


NBC CT story about addiction: https://www.nbconnecticut.com/on-air/as-seen-on/From-Darkness-of-Addiction-to-Hope_Hartford-494602631.html

*Stories can be viewed on CRT’s YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/*

CRT comments on public health issue

In early April, we were contacted by the Hartford Courant about the rising problem of syphilis in the local community. CRT’s Vice President of Clinical Support Services, Heidi Lubetkin, provided commentary for the article, noting: “It’s creeping back, and I think people should be concerned about having safer sex.”

Hartford Secures Grant to Combat Syphilis, On The Rebound In Connecticut And The Country
Community Services

Aid following Hurricane Maria for people relocated to Hartford

A second column by (now-former) Hartford Courant writer Vinny Vella examined the work CRT did in 2018 in partnership with the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church in Hartford to lend a helping hand to Puerto Rican families in need of housing and other assistance following their relocation to the city after the hurricanes this past fall.

CRT provided case management services to families staying at the Franciscan Center while they were seeking permanent housing.

As CRT’s Chris McCluskey noted: “When people have safe, stable places to live, they can address the needs their family may have. And they remain stably housed.”

Read the full column online:

**Downtown Hartford Church Extends Needed Hand To Puerto Rican Families**


(Photo above by Patrick Raycraft for the Hartford Courant.)
Community Services

Aid following Hurricane Maria for people relocated to Hartford, continued …

Two feature stories appeared in the Hartford Courant about CRT client Angel Machiavelo.

Angel Machiavelo came to Hartford following Hurricane Maria, and he found himself in need of housing support. He was interviewed by Matthew Ormseth at the Hartford Courant, and the story mentioned that he was working with CRT on possible help with a security deposit for an apartment.

Following that story, we learned that his employer offered to help him out in a number of ways, including providing fulltime hours and a raise. Angel gave us permission to reach out to the reporter to convey this update, which resulted in a follow-up story in the paper. Both stories mention CRT.


Community Services

Holiday “Toy Store” hosted by CRT

Right before Christmas, CRT’s BHS team and Community Services hosted their annual pop-up "Toy Store" at the Market Street offices in Hartford.

More than 1,000 toys collected from local businesses were distributed in just two days to 400 families that are served by the agency.

The toys were donated by: the Central Connecticut Paralegal Association, JCC of Greater Hartford, the New Britain Department of Social Services, and the Julie Lang Studio of Dance from Manchester – for the latter, this is their 13th year collecting toys for children! The story was picked up by WFSB – News Channel 3.

Stories can be viewed on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Early Care and Education

CRT’s Early Care and Education program had a year full of changes, including a decision by the agency’s Board of Trustees to relinquish its Head Start program at the end of the summer. Details are below.

National Child Abuse Prevention Day

While this did not result in any formal media coverage, we had two local media personalities join us for this annual event as guest readers, including Keith McGilvery from Fox 61 (shown seated below) and Alyssa Taglia from WTNH (ABC). In addition, one of the two Yard Goats mascots came to our Hartford event at 555 Windsor St., and took pictures with all the children.

The social media team from the Yard Goats tweeted about the event, and it was very popular!
Early Care and Education

**ECE Hosts Job Fair for Teachers**

*In late May, the Early Care and Education program hosted a Job Fair to recruit new teachers and other positions for its classrooms.*

This event was featured on both Fox 61 and the local ABC affiliate, News Channel 8. Fox was kind enough to mention the event the day before; and then on the day of the event, they mentioned it four times during their morning broadcast (they tied it in to their regular “Work in CT” feature). ABC mentioned it twice during the day of the event, and shared it on their website.


*Stories can be viewed on CRT’s YouTube channel:* [https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/](https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/)

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**CRT’s Head Start Programs**

*In late August, CRT notified parents, teachers and staff that its Board of Trustees had voted to relinquish its Head Start and Early Head Start programs in both Hartford and Middlesex Counties.*

The news media was notified at the end of the day on Friday, August 24, and there was immediate interest from three of the four local TV stations, but only CBS and NBC covered the news. NBC happened to interview a grandparent whose grandchild was going to be affected by this decision, and as a result, they continued to run with the story all weekend, and into the following week. The first story that NBC posted online stuck very closely to CRT’s press release about this subject, and the same can be said of the coverage from CBS.

The following week, there was one story in the Hartford Business Journal, which did not name CRT in its headline. There was no additional coverage on this subject.


HBJ: [http://www.hartfordbusiness.com/article/20180827/NEWS01/180829930](http://www.hartfordbusiness.com/article/20180827/NEWS01/180829930)
East Hartford Family Shelter

Family Shelter hosts “Diaper Drive” for residents

Sometimes, all you have to do is ask. In the late fall, we heard from the program manager at the East Hartford Family Shelter that several residents with young children were in desperate need of diapers.

An urgent call was put out to area media, and several news outlets (including ABC, CBS and Fox 61) stepped up with repeated coverage of this need, resulting in generous donations from the community.

The story was also featured on local radio, including: Lite 100.5 FM; 96.5 WTIC FM; Talk of Connecticut; and through the nine stations that are a part of iHeart Media’s Community Access network.

Lite FM: https://wrch.radio.com/blogs/joan-dylan/can-you-help-these-babies

iHeart Media: https://theriver1059.iheart.com/content/2018-10-18-crts-east-hartford-family-shelter-has-urgent-need-for-diapers/

The coverage on WFSB resulted in another story about the “100 Day Challenge” in the Greater Hartford area (see page 25 below).
Elderly Nutrition Program

CRT’s Elderly Nutrition Program had multiple news stories throughout the year, promoting both Meals on Wheels, the community cafes, and the work of our volunteers in the community.

Recognition for Meals on Wheels volunteers

In late April, CRT had the opportunity to thank about 100 of its Meals on Wheels volunteers for their many years of service to the agency. More than 20 of our volunteers have been helping us out for the past 10 years or more, and out of that group 10 have been with us for 20 years or more. We even have one volunteer (Shirley Howe, pictured at right) who has been a driver for us for 35 years – this one delivery driver is responsible for delivering more than 29,000 meals during that time! This story was picked up by both CBS and NBC locally, and the story aired twice on both networks – midday and then again during their respective evening news.

NBC coverage: https://youtu.be/zQdSJgTetzA

CBS coverage: http://www.wfsb.com/clip/14299886/meals-on-wheels-volunteers-honored-for-service

Stories available on CRT’s YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/

Elderly Nutrition program on KLOVE Radio

In late May, CRT’s Elderly Nutrition Program was featured in the “Closer Look” community program on the Hartford affiliate of radio station KLOVE (106.9 FM). They focused on both Meals on Wheels for homebound seniors, and our community café lunches open at local senior centers. The interview was nearly a half hour in length, and it aired multiple times during the year as a part of their public affairs programming.

(Pictured left to right: Gladys Rivera, Program Manager of CRT Nutrition department; Peter Kratz, KLOVE Radio; and Garland Tanksley, then Assistant Director of CRT Nutrition.)
Elderly Nutrition Program

Community Cafes for seniors

In late July, CRT hosted a birthday party for Ms. Katie Ruez, a regular attendee at CRT’s community café/lunch held at the Avon Senior Center.

In 2018, Katie marked her 103rd Birthday! We had cake, and cameras. Fox 61 did a shout-out for Katie on the air, and the Hartford Courant wrote a wonderful profile about her that mentioned CRT’s services.

Fox 61 News: https://youtu.be/7mYvvzUsT6Q


Stories available on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Elderly Nutrition Program

Meals on Wheels: The Big Idaho Potato rolls into Hartford

On August 22, CRT hosted the Big Idaho Potato truck – yes, a giant “potato” strapped to the back of a tractor trailer. This giant spud made a special stop in Hartford this summer to help raise awareness and funds for CRT’s Meals on Wheels program.

This event generated a lot of media buzz and attention, both before the event and on the day of the visit. There were four separate stories on Fox 61, and it was also featured on CBS and on NBC’s new daytime program “CT Live”. It was featured on multiple radio stations, in the Hartford News, and Facebook was all over it, too. During the day of the event, all four local TV stations came out to see it and do interviews. Hundreds of people of all ages came out to see it, enjoy food from local food truck vendors, and to learn more about CRT’s programs and services.

Stories available on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Elderly Nutrition Program

17th Annual Meals on Wheels Golf Classic

In mid-September, CRT hosted its 17th Annual Meals on Wheels Golf Classic at Keney Park Golf Course. The event was a huge hit, and we picked up some nice promotional coverage about the tournament the weekend before it took place.

We had in-studio interviews with both Fox 61 and ABC News Channel 8. The latter also did a follow-up story the morning after the event using many of the photos we sent in to them from this year’s tournament.

The golf event was also promoted by iHeart radio through their network of stations via posts on all nine of their station websites, as well as on Lite 100.5 FM via DJ Joan Dylan’s blog: https://wrch.radio.com/blogs/joan-dylan/golf-tourney-fundraiser

Stories available on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/

Funding increase for Meals on Wheels announced in October

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (at left) joined together with leadership from three Connecticut-based Community Action Agencies (including CRT’s Chris McCluskey, far right) at the beginning of October to announce a $10 million increase in federal funding next year for Meals on Wheels, as well as legislative support for other federal programs. WFSB New Channel 3 and the New Haven Register covered the announcement that was made at the Bella Vista Senior Living Complex in New Haven.

DeLauro announces more federal funding for senior nutrition programs

Other funding news:

Two grants awarded to CRT by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving were mentioned in the Hartford Courant in November.
Energy Assistance Program

In an effort to get a jump on applications for the annual Energy Assistance program, CRT offered “early intake” for those that want to make use of this important program.

We spoke with Brad Davis on the Talk of Connecticut to promote this opportunity.

We also recorded interviews for playback on the community access shows hosted by both Renee DiNino on the iHeart Radio network and with DJ Gina J on 96.5 FM, WTIC.

This past fall, WFSB came to us looking to do a story about CRT’s Energy Assistance program for income-eligible residents in Central Connecticut. By mid-October, more than 5,000 residents had already applied for support. WFSB Channel 3 spoke with CRT’s Patricia Monroe Walker (pictured at right), Director of Energy Services, and they shared the story six times in a single day.

Energy Assistance and Weatherization programs featured on Fox 61 and NBC CT

Right before the first serious snow storm of the coming winter season (one week before Thanksgiving!), we sent out quick pitches to local media alerting them to the availability of Energy Assistance services and the Weatherization program from CRT. The pitch was quick and to the point, and it worked.

The story was picked up by multiple local media outlets, including NBC CT, who shared the story three times on air, and Fox 61, who shared the story six times over a 24-hour period. The following week, after the snow had mostly melted, we were also interviewed by Brad Davis on Talk of Connecticut about the availability of these two programs, too.

Stories available on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Feed the Children

CRT partners with Feed the Children, PepsiCo, Frito Lay – “Helping Feed Hartford”

On Tuesday, June 12 at the Xfinity Theatre in Hartford, PepsiCo and Feed the Children once again joined forces with CRT to bring a week’s worth of food and daily essentials to 800 Hartford-area families. Each family received more than 40 pounds of food and other products.

There were three reports on local TV before the event happened, and then three of the four local networks came out to join us during the day – NBC, CBS and Fox 61. (Pictured above Fox 61’s Esther Katro with CRT YouthBuild volunteers.)

Interestingly – and this is a trend to watch – both NBC and Fox reporters did “Facebook Live” reports – broadcasting from their phones to Facebook – that was new for 2018!

NBC CT: https://www.nbconnecticut.com/on-air/as-seen-on/Helping-Feed-Hartford-Event-Underway_Hartford-485260431.html

Reports on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
CRT Generations

Unique program for grandparents with legal custody of their grandchildren

To close out the month of April, CRT’s Generations was described by Fox 61 as a “unique program” here in Hartford where grandparents are raising their grandchildren.

Reports on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/

CRT Generations program featured in Hartford Courant in December

There was really good coverage by Matthew Ormseth in The Hartford Courant on December 3 about grandparents who are raising their grandchildren, as a result of parents issues with drug addiction. CRT’s program manager for Generations, Yolanda Ortiz, was interviewed for this article.

Bypassed generation: Grandparents raising children born to addicted parents
10th Annual Capital Region Gun Buyback

CRT once again served as the host location for the 10th Annual Capital Region Gun Buyback, open to all Connecticut residents. This event is done in partnership with local hospitals, the City of Hartford and the Hartford Police Department.

The event in Hartford resulted in 137 unwanted firearms being turned in that day. (An unrelated Gun Buyback in New Haven the same day netted 125 weapons.)

The media interest in this year’s event was truly outstanding. There was coverage, before the event (resulting from the press conference two days before), throughout the day of the event, and for a few days after, as stories continued to air locally.

The Hartford Courant covered the story twice; and the story aired repeatedly on all local TV news stations, as well as on both WTIC News Talk radio and Connecticut Public Radio (WNPR). The online version of the story on the WTIC website was attributed to the Associated Press, which results in the story being distributed more widely than the Greater Hartford area.

News reports about the Gun Buyback that included CRT:
- 25 X before the event
- 33 X the day of the event
- 10 X following the event

In total, there were (at least) 68 news reports about this event.

Sample of news reports:

Gun buybacks in Hartford, New Haven yield more than 250 weapons: https://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-br-hartford-new-haven-buyback-20181215-3jbgdrptkg5rf2xsz57geutae-story.html

Hartford police to host weekend gun buy-back event:


News reports are on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Hoffman Gift Baskets

*Once again the Hoffman family and the Hoffman Auto Group made a generous donation in December of 200 turkeys and gift baskets to families served by CRT in the Greater Hartford area.*

This annual event has been a tradition for many, many years now, and provides a meaningful way for a local business to give back to people in the community. The event was covered by both Fox 61 and ABC News Channel 8 – the latter was a bit of a surprise, as they do not typically cover local stories out of Hartford.

(The story on Fox 61 also mentioned the “Toy Store” hosted by CRT’s Market Street office—see page 10.)
In April, *Connecticut Magazine* did a feature about CRT in general, with a focus on the work of the McKinney Shelter. It appeared in print and online.

**McKinney Shelter and Community Renewal Team Provide a Beacon of Hope**  

Additionally, Jose Vega, Program Manager for the McKinney Shelter (pictured above), was profiled in June by the Haddam News/Haddam Now website. They ran an extensive interview with Jose, and highlighted his work helping the homeless in Hartford.

*K-LOVE radio interview with McKinney’s Program Manager Jose Vega for their local community outreach program “A Closer Look” aired multiple times during the year.*
CRT’s McKinney Shelter

Longtime volunteer Bozie Stearns featured in local media

In 2018 we had the pleasure to share the amazing work of Bozie Stearns, who served as a volunteer with CRT and the McKinney Shelter for over 20 years, delivering bread and other baked goods on a weekly basis.

He has been doing this since his retirement. He was 85 years old in 2018, and despite his ailing health, he continued to the shelter as often as he could. Sadly, Bozie died last summer – he is deeply missed.

In March of 2018, his work as a volunteer was featured in the Hartford Courant, as a part of their “Hometown Heroes” feature (both print and online).

Hartford Courant story:

This was followed up with a two-minute interview/profile about Bozie on the local ABC affiliate – News Channel 8.

Bozie’s story was also featured online by the photographers from Humans of Hartford – they post to both Facebook and Instagram.

News report on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
CRT’s McKinney Shelter

CRT’s role in the “100 Day Challenge”

While working with WFSB on the Diaper Drive story (see page 13 above) for the East Hartford Family Shelter this fall, we let them know about the work we were doing with other local agencies to find permanent housing for 265 individuals and families by Thanksgiving as a part of the “100 Day Challenge.” CRT's McKinney Shelter for Men and East Hartford Family Shelter were a part of this effort.

WFSB interviewed CRT’s Asst. Director of Veterans and Shelter Services, Steve Bigler (pictured at right above) for the story, which aired four times on Nov. 2, 2018.

News report on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
27th Annual National Arts Program

This annual program was featured in an online gallery by CTNow.com the week before the show officially opened in 2018, and then we were able to arrange interviews with both Fox 61 and WFSB/News Channel 3, giving viewers an overview about the awards ceremony and reception for the program that took place at Capital Community College on Jan. 27.

Additionally, Amanda Raus from Fox 61 served as the Emcee for the ceremony this year, and she mentioned the event on air the following Monday, too.


News report on CRT’s YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
RSVP—and Volunteering with CRT

CRT’s RSVP program featured on NBC’s “CT Live” show

The Monday after Thanksgiving, CRT was featured in a long segment on the new NBC Connecticut program called “CT Live” that airs every weekday.

This show is a lifestyle program, and the hosts came out to CRT’s offices to meet with RSVP program manager Theresa Strong and two of our volunteers. The story itself was a great promotion for CRT and RSVP, and at the end of the segment, they announced a need for Meals on Wheels volunteers on air.

Full story on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Over the summer, there was a feature for the “Hometown Heroes” section of the Hartford Courant about George Brice (above, at right), one of our RSVP volunteers who helps out at a local Foodshare distribution in Hartford. He does this every two weeks, and has done so for the past 12 years!

Brice was also highlighted by the photographers from the Humans of Hartford social media channels.

RSVP READS Program and Medical Transportation Program

The manager of CRT’s RSVP READS program, Theresa Strong, did an interview on the Talk of Connecticut radio show with Brad Davis to promote the need for volunteers during the school year. Later in the year, she went back on Brad’s show to discuss the expansion of the RSVP Medical Transportation Program (MTP), thanks to additional funding that was secured from the towns of Windsor Locks and Suffield. Additionally, Joan Dylan on Lite 100.5 FM highlighted the MTP on her radio station blog, too.

RSVP READS interview is on CRT’s SoundCloud account:
https://soundcloud.com/user-547491855
Summer Food Program for Children

CRT’s annual Summer Food Program providing free breakfast and lunches to children ages 18 and under in cities and towns throughout our region was featured by multiple local media outlets.

The story was picked up by the Fox 61 morning news, as well as Brad Davis for his “Talk of CT” radio show, and we did an interview with Gina J. for her community access program on WTIC 96.5 FM.

A longer feature also aired on CBS, News Channel 3 and was promoted on their website: http://www.wfsb.com/story/38656204/community-renewal-team-provides-free-summer-meals-to-kids

Stories available on CRT’s YouTube and SoundCloud accounts:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
https://soundcloud.com/user-547491855
Summer Youth Employment

This year, CRT’s Summer Youth Employment Program was fortunate to have 190 students participate in the program, thanks to the addition of the East Hartford contingent.

This bump in participation did create a small challenge, however – we needed additional employers to support the program. NBC Connecticut took an interest in this angle, and came out to do a story with us, encouraging local employers to get involved!

We had additional coverage for the Summer Youth Employment Program and their Job Fair – three local networks talked about the Job Fair on the day it was held during their morning broadcasts, and NBC CT came back out to do a follow-up story with us that day. That story is available on their website.

Hartford-Area Businesses Hiring Through CRT Teen Summer Jobs Program

And to close the loop, NBC did a short wrap-up story about the end-of-summer celebration for all of the students involved that aired in late August.

Summer Youth Employment stories on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
CRT’s 9th Annual Tee Off with Women Golf Tournament

During the Travelers Championship Golf Tournament earlier this summer, the team at Fox 61 was kind enough to give us a quick plug for our own summer golf tournament – the Tee Off with Women, which was held in support of our new Women’s Empowerment Center.

Then, the weekend before the Tee Off event, WFSB – News Channel 3 (CBS) interviewed our own Julie Ackerman (on right in photo) to help provide a last-minute push for participants in this annual fundraiser.

Stories on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/

CRT’s Settlement with the Department of Justice (DOJ)

Details about CRT’s settlement agreement with the DOJ was picked up by local media in mid-May. Happily, there were only four news reports about this settlement, and none of them were terrible. As it happened, there was a lot of other more pressing news going on that week, and our story got pushed to the side very quickly.

The story was picked up by the Hartford Business Journal (online only, not in their print edition); on the Fox 61 website (but it was not mentioned on air); in the Hartford Courant (print and online), and in the Journal Inquirer. There was one letter to the editor in the Courant about this matter, but it was written by an individual who seems to write in about every topic imaginable. Overall, while the coverage was tough, it was short lived, and it did not result in any prolonged criticism of the agency, our programs or our personnel.
VITA Tax Preparation Services

In anticipation of the 2018 tax filing season, CRT put out the call for volunteers to help do the tax prep work. The Talk of Connecticut, featuring Brad Davis, had us on the air to promote this effort.

Then, on Tax Day, we had interest from two local TV stations that came to our offices on Market Street to see how CRT serves last-minute tax filers.

Our Director of Community Services, Elizabeth Horton Sheff (at right) describes CRT’s annual Tax Day effort as “controlled chaos,” and it certainly felt that way on Market Street this year! By 10:00 a.m. that day there were already close to 100 people waiting for help to file their taxes, and we had two TV crews come to cover the event, including WTNH (ABC News 8) and Fox 61.

*Stories on CRT’s YouTube channel:*
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/

The weekend before Tax Day, WNPR did a story about the VITA tax preparation service, too. That interview featured CRT’s Jim Pestana (pictured at work below):

**As Tax Day Approaches, Connecticut Residents Take Advantage Of Free Tax Prep Service**
http://wnpr.org/post/tax-day-approaches-connecticut-residents-take-advantage-free-tax-prep-service
CRT’s Weatherization Services

*CRT was awarded the statewide contract for the weatherization program. This is the agency’s first statewide contract, which will help consumers across Connecticut make their homes more energy efficient.*

In January, as news about this program started to become available, CRT was seeking contractors to help work on these projects. As a part of its regular “Work in CT” feature, Fox 61 shared this opportunity with viewers.

WNPR’s story about Weatherization services aired the first week of March on the radio, and was featured on their website. The story was played multiple times over the course of a week, both locally and via another public radio station in New England. Available online:

**When The Heat Escapes Chilly New England Homes, So Does Money**

*Stories on CRT’s YouTube channel:*
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
In anticipation of CRT’s first networking event for the agency’s new Women’s Empowerment Center, we had the chance to go on Fox 61 a week before the event to promote it. Joining us on the air was Cheryl McDonald (at right), co-owner of Bear’s Restaurant Group in Hartford, and our keynote speaker for the evening.

Then at the beginning of May, CRT hosted its first networking event for the Women’s Empowerment Center. This event was covered by The Hartford Courant (they sent a photographer to the event, who posted a gallery of photos on the newspaper’s website), Hartford Business Journal and a half page in the June edition of Hartford Magazine.


Hartford Magazine spread:
CRT’s Capital City YouthBuild

CRT’s job training program for young adults (ages 18—24) garnered good media attention throughout the year, including a cover story in the Hartford Business Journal.

Recruitment efforts for CRT’s Capital City YouthBuild program garnered attention in late April, including coverage on Fox 61 News for their regular “Work in CT” feature, and a lengthy interview with Brad Davis on Talk of CT. The story on Fox 61 aired three times in a single morning. We also recorded an interview with 96.5 TIC FM that aired in May, as well as an interview on Talk of CT with Brad Davis.

In July, our efforts to recruit students to participate in YouthBuild’s CNA program was highlighted on Fox 61 for the “Work in CT” segment – it was mentioned 2X on air during the Morning News programming.

Program manager Cynthia Baisden (at right) was featured in the Hartford Business Journal this summer for their “Newsmakers” column:

CRT’s Baisden works to see young Hartford residents thrive

Stories on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
CRT’s Capital City YouthBuild

CRT’s job training program for young adults (ages 18—24) garnered good media attention throughout the year, including a cover story in the Hartford Business Journal.

During the summer, the Hartford Business Journal ran a special series reporting on “Building Connecticut’s Workforce Pipeline.” CRT had the opportunity to be included in that series through a cover story written by Joe Cooper that featured the work of YouthBuild in Hartford. That story was then also picked up by Connecticut Public Radio, the local NPR affiliate, both on-air and online.

'Untapped' talent engage skills training for better employment
http://www.hartfordbusiness.com/article/20180917/PRINTEDICTION/309139924/

WNPR story: http://www wnpr org/post/untapped-talent-engage-skills-training-better-employment

In the fall, there was a comprehensive report about CRT’s YouthBuild program with “El Show de Analeh” on Univision. https://youtu.be/yZKOnyJoO9Q
Overview coverage about CRT

Throughout the year, CRT was able to secure media coverage for the agency as a whole, highlighting its programs and services helping people in Central Connecticut. Examples are below.

A detailed profile about CRT and our programs/services was published in February 2018 on the website “Local Connecticut”. You can view the feature here: http://bit.ly/CRTlocalCT

CRT was featured in early July in a five-minute segment for the Fox 61 “Stories of Hope” with anchor Ben Goldman. The segment highlighted The Retreat, the Summer Food Program for children, and Early Care and Education programming. It also gave us a chance to plug the Women’s Tee Off event.

CRIS Radio interview with Jason Black about CRT’s programs and services aired on July 9: https://soundcloud.com/user-547491855/crt-featured-on-cris-radio-focal-point-program-with-host-stephen-thal

CRT featured on two “Public Affairs” programs

In November, CRT had the opportunity to share its work on two different “public affairs” programs – both with stations owned by Entercom, which are very popular in this local market. The first was the “Spotlite” interview with host Mary Scanlon on 100.5 Lite FM (this show airs weekly, and runs nearly 30 minutes); and the other was with the program “Face Connecticut” with host Aaron Kupec on WTIC NewsTalk 1080 AM (also nearly 30 minutes, and his show also airs on 96.5 FM and 100.5 FM the same time on Sunday mornings). Interestingly, the Face Connecticut interview resulted in WTIC AM running 10 shorter news stories in the following 24 hours featuring CRT about subjects that included Energy Assistance and Meals on Wheels (they pulled sound bites from the longer interview for these shorter clips).

Spotlite with Mary Scanlon:

Face Connecticut interview:
https://soundcloud.com/user-547491855/crt-featured-on-wtic-newstalk-1080s-face-connecticut-show

Stories available on CRT’s YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/
Overview coverage about CRT

**CRT featured in the Fox 61 “Coffee Cup Salute”**

Every weekday morning, Fox 61 gives a shout-out to a local business in the community with their “Coffee Cup Salute!” We happened to have some really great CRT coffee mugs to share, and they highlighted CRT’s work on the Monday morning after Thanksgiving – a nice prelude to “Giving Tuesday” this year. This segment aired three times that morning!

The agency has also established strong ties to local radio stations and their DJs, who can be counted on to support CRT’s programs and services. All of the stations make an effort to do public affairs programming, which is a good fit for CRT’s work. This has included:

- Multiple interviews for the “Closer Look” radio show on K-LOVE, a national station with a local Hartford affiliate.
- Multiple interviews with Renee DeNino from iHeartMedia for local “Community Access” show.
- Nearly monthly interviews with Brad Davis on “Talk of Connecticut” (WDRC AM) about a broad range of CRT programs throughout the year.
- A deepening relationship with Joan Dylan from Lite 100.5 FM, who regularly highlights the work of CRT. She has unofficially “adopted” CRT as her charity of choice for exposure through her radio show and blog on the radio station’s website.

It is also worth noting that the Hartford News, a weekly paper serving the community, has been running stories provided by CRT on an almost weekly basis. We have a standing agreement with their publisher to send them content, and they share it. For free.

*Story available on CRT’s YouTube channel: [https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/](https://www.youtube.com/user/CommunityRenewalTeam/)*
Overview coverage about CRT

Birdies for Charity with the Travelers Championship

Once again in 2018, CRT was involved in the “Birdies for Charity” fundraiser hosted by the Travelers Championship golf tournament. Through this event, qualified charities receive a 15% bonus for every dollar raised. To help promote CRT’s involvement in the program this year, we were invited to do a short interview on the local iHeartMedia radio stations as a part of their “Community Access” program that is hosted by Renee DiNino (pictured at right above). CRT spokesperson Jason Black (in the middle above) gave the interview; tournament director Nathan Grube pictured at left.

Social Media Outreach

On the social media front, CRT continues to strengthen its presence in all four of the main channels that it uses (nearly every weekday with new content): Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. The number of followers on Facebook increased by nearly 60% since the same time last year (now over 1,700 followers); and our growth on LinkedIn is up over 50% compared to a year ago (now over 2,400 followers). Both Twitter and Instagram continue to grow at a healthy pace.

On Facebook we have made very effective use of occasional paid “promotions” of our content, such as for ECE and YouthBuild recruitment. With a minimal investment it is possible to see tremendous – and highly targeted – results driving awareness and engagement with our programs.

We are also connecting with others who do well on social media, and giving them stories about CRT’s programs and the people we serve, so that they, too, can help to convey our messages. One good example is the page for “Humans of Hartford” (at right) which features portraits of people in the city, and short vignettes about what they do. They featured two CRT stories in 2018.

Keep up with CRT’s programs and services via social media:
- Twitter: https://twitter.com/CRTCT
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/crtct/
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/crt_ct/
- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/255913/

To get in touch with CRT about a story or interview, please contact:
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