

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Jason Natelle, Communications Specialist
(860) 560-5636 or cell: (860) 719-1370

CRT Celebrates 50 Years and Raises \$50,000 for Veterans Landing

Keynote Speaker Mark K. Shriver Delights Crowd, Speaks of Father's Community Action Legacy

HARTFORD—In a fitting tribute to May being National Community Action Month and Community Renewal Team's 50th anniversary this year, CRT celebrated with a gala themed "50 Years of Changing Lives" at the Hartford Marriott on May 15. The event raised more than \$50,000 for the future Veterans Landing residence, an assisted living facility being built on the Newington Veterans Affairs Campus. The \$28 million dollar project will feature 103 units for veterans and their spouses.

The gala was aided by co-chairs Eric Coleman, Connecticut State Senator; Elsa Nunez, president of Eastern Connecticut State University; and Mark Maselli, President/ CEO of Community Health Center in Middletown.

Keynote speaker Mark Kennedy Shriver, Senior Vice President for Strategic Initiatives at Save the Children, delivered encouraging words to CRT staff, partners and sponsors about the legacy of community action. Shriver is the son of Sargent Shriver, the statesman from the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and widely credited as being the "architect" of President Johnson's 'War on Poverty.'

"CRT's commitment to local communities is awe inspiring to me, because helping people get the tools they need to succeed in life shows how good we can be as a society," Shriver told the crowd of 300 guests. "The idea of utilizing local resources and citizens to better their lives that my father helped develop at the federal level in the 1960s is as important today as ever before, and CRT's legacy is a testament to that."

He recently published a memoir about his father, Sargent Shriver, who headed the Office of Economic Opportunity and oversaw the start-up of many key War on Poverty programs – including Community Action. Mark Shriver will bring two perspectives to his remarks: In addition to studying the early years of the War on Poverty, he has spent the last ten years developing early childhood, literacy and health programs for children in some of the most impoverished areas of the United States.

(Photos)

CRT Mark Shriver and others: Mark K. Shriver (left) was the keynote speaker at CRT's 50th anniversary gala; CRT President and CEO Lena Rodriguez (middle); and CRT partner and funder Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's president Linda J. Kelly (right) enjoyed the evening that helped raise funds for the Veterans Landing residence coming to the VA Campus in Newington. The event raised \$50,000 for the project.

CRT President and Chairman: CRT President and CEO Lena Rodriguez, left, along with CRT Chairman of the Board of Trustees, right, blow out 50 candles set in the custom cake brought to the Community Renewal Team's 50th anniversary gala held at the Hartford Marriott on May 15. The event dubbed "50 Years of Changing Lives" helped raise \$50,000 for Veterans Landing, an assisted living residence coming to the VA Campus in Newington.

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In its 50th anniversary year, Community Renewal Team, Inc. 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. The mission is achieved each day by helping people and families change their lives and create their own opportunities in becoming self-reliant while making sure basic needs are met. CRT's programs include Head Start, Meals on Wheels, energy assistance, supportive housing and shelters, and many others, serving people in more than 60 cities and towns in both our core catchment area and throughout Connecticut. Visit the NEW www.crtct.org. CRT invites the community to celebrate 50 years of changing lives at the Hartford Marriott Downtown on May 15, 2013. Details on sponsorships and tickets available on the CRT website.