

MEDIA RELEASE

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Middletown Teens Address Lawmakers at Capitol for Youth Employment Day *Donika Freeman and Ta' Kyra Green from Middletown High School Praised Their Experiences*



HARTFORD—Two teens from Middletown High School gave speeches at the Connecticut Youth Employment Day session Feb. 26 in the Old Judiciary Room at the State Capitol in a show of support for the program that provided valuable work experience and help with applying to college.

More than 30 organizations with youth were on hand from across the state, all vying for the ear of legislators to push for protections of funding for youth employment programs. Gov. Malloy provided keynote remarks before mayors and state representatives addressed the crowd of approximately 125.

Donika Freeman and Ta' Kyra Greene, both 17, gave heart-warming remarks about the benefits of youth employment experiences in preparing them for the adult workforce. They received job placements through Community Renewal Team's Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program (SYLEP) and are currently enrolled in the Middlesex Youth Career Development Services Program (MYCDS).

"The Summer Youth program that allowed me to receive work experience at the Middlesex Chamber helped me in ways words can't even explain," Greene told the crowd. "And knowing that I have a chance to get into college because of the life skills and tutoring I've received will make my mother proud."

"CRT's program helped me work on life skills, such as finding a job and choosing a career," Freeman said. "My job placement at Futures, Inc., worked out so well that I was offered a part-time job with when the program was over."

CAPTION: (From left to right) Donika Freeman of Middletown High School; Jeffrey Pugliese of the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce; John Brancato, Chief Financial Officer of the Workforce Alliance; Bill Villano, Executive Director of the Workforce Alliance; Ta' Kyra Greene of Middletown High School and Julia Sapia-Bryant, Program Coordinator for CRT's Middlesex Youth Career Development Services Program.

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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 become self-sufficient 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. Come and see the NEW www.crtct.org.