



Media Advisory

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What: First for Kids Award Ceremony

Where: Pond House Café, 1555 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford.

When: November 9th, 5 pm to 7 pm

Connecticut Voices for Children honors advocates on annual “First for Kids” event

Honorees include policy makers, activists, youth voices

WEST HARTFORD – Connecticut Voices for Children will be honoring community leaders, policymakers and advocates for children at its 14th annual “First for Kids” awards ceremony on November 9th. The event will take place at the Pond House in West Hartford, from 5 pm to 7 pm. The awards recognize individuals and organizations that have worked to make a difference in the lives of children in the state of Connecticut.

This year’s honorees are:

- [Priscilla Canny Research Award](#) - **Judith Meyers**, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Children’s Fund of Connecticut and its subsidiary, the Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut., for her leadership to ensure that all children have the opportunity to thrive.
- [Public Service Award](#) - **Myra Jones-Taylor**, former Commissioner of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, for her efforts to coordinate and improve the state’s early childhood system.
- [Statewide Child Advocacy Award](#) - **Sarah Eagan**, Connecticut’s Child Advocate, for her work advancing the right of abused and neglected children and children with disabilities.
- [Youth Voice Award](#) - **Kate Matos and her Fourth-Grade Students at Pine Grove Elementary, 2015-2016**, for their efforts to raise funds for advocacy through kindness and team work.

“Each of us wants our children to have an opportunity to achieve their full potential. Today, at our annual First for Kids celebration, Connecticut Voices for Children is proud to honor four champions who have worked tirelessly to ensure that opportunity is available to all children in our state, regardless of race, ethnicity or family income,” says Ellen Shemitz, Connecticut Voices for Children’s Executive Director. “Children need champions willing to raise their voices to make universal opportunity a public priority. Today’s honorees have led the way.”

“Many children in Connecticut still face considerable challenges to succeed,” says Sharon Langer, Advocacy Director at Connecticut Voices for Children. “Nearly 1 in 3 of our children of color live in poverty, compared to 1 in 20 white children. Our state has one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation based on family income and race. There is a lot of work to be done to close these gaps. We are optimistic that together we can improve the lives of children.”

About Connecticut Voices for Children:

Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based policy think tank based in New Haven, Connecticut. Our Mission is to promote the well-being of all of Connecticut's young people and their families by advocating for strategic public investments and wise public policies. To achieve these objectives, Connecticut Voices for Children produces high quality research and analysis, promotes citizen education, advocates for policy change at the state and local level and works to develop the next generation of leaders.