



Backbone Support Provided By:



Executive Director: Allison Logan

February 18, 2021

Allison Logan & Shyheim Snead
Bridgeport Prospers - United Way of Coastal Fairfield County
855 Main Street, 10th Floor
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604-4915

Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Support for H.B. No. 6439 - Reinstatement of Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Funds in Governor's Proposed Budget for Conservation & Development Agencies

Honorable Chair Senator Hartley and Chair Rep. Gibson, and Committee Members:

We applaud the Governor for restoring \$100,000 to the Department of Labor budget in support of CT's four 'cradle-to-career' initiatives.

This important funding allows teams of community and resident leaders in Bridgeport, Waterbury, Stamford, and Norwalk to advance strategies that support student and family success and economic mobility, especially for our low-income and communities of color. State resources also help us to attract additional public and private investment in our communities.

Here in Bridgeport, we lead Bridgeport Prospers, one of the four statewide cradle-to-career (C2C) initiatives. Backbone support for this effort is provided by the United Way of Coastal Fairfield County. Since 2012, we have deployed several cross-sector initiatives focused on expanding access and advancing equity for children and families. In the prenatal to three space, we've set out to tackle the audacious goal that all babies in Bridgeport will be healthy and reach developmental milestones by age three. Our birth to three community action team operates an innovative, science-informed baby "bundle", a comprehensive slate of whole-family supports and practices aimed to reduce maternal and family stress and increase bonding and attachment with their children. Additionally, we convene a STEM Ecosystem, a collaborative of local school district, business, and higher education partners working to expand pipelines to STEM education and careers for Bridgeport youth. Lastly, we developed a Community Messengers program, focused on honing the power and resilience of advocates, residents, and parents to ensure local policies and programs reflect the needs of our diverse community.

Taken together, we are mobilizing a citywide movement of community leaders driving toward meaningful results and systems change for Bridgeport families. The reinstatement of this funding will enable us and our respective C2C communities in building our infrastructure, creating a community-driven policy agenda, and replicating best practices that are poised to redesign systems in health, education, workforce, and economic development.

We're thankful to have legislators who also understand the importance of the funding, especially as we build a COVID-19 recovery that works for all in our state.

Sincerely,

Allison Logan (handwritten signature)

Allison Logan
Executive Director, Bridgeport Prospers

Shyheim Snead (handwritten signature)

Shyheim Snead
Manager, Strategy & Operations, Bridgeport Prospers