

## **NEWS & RESOURCES**

### **UPS Delivers for Hartford Youth and Wins Governor's Acclaim**

Connecticut Governor John G. Rowland and State Commissioner for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Kristine Ragaglia praised the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Services' School-to-Career

Partnership program at a press conference called at the United Parcel Service facility in Hartford in September.

Joined by Casey Family Services Executive Director Raymond Torres, officials of United Parcel Service (UPS), youth, and representatives of the nonprofit organization Our Piece of the Pie, which administers the program in Hartford, Governor Rowland and Commissioner Ragaglia then toured the facility, where more than 75 Greater Hartford youth have taken part in the program.

In his remarks during the press conference, Governor Rowland said, "This program is a prime example of how successful we can be in creating jobs and opportunities when business, government and skilled professionals from our nonprofits come together to address a common challenge. Now, more than 70 young people have entered this program, which provides a salary and benefits and helps them acquire skills that can lead to a career ladder."

The Hartford School-to-Career program is one of three Casey Family Services' partnerships and one of eight that operate across the nation. Other Casey partnerships are in Portland, Maine, and Providence, Rhode Island. Nationally, programs exist in Oakland and San Diego, California; New York, New York; and San Antonio, Texas.

Governor Rowland said that less than a year ago just four people were working part-time at the Hartford facility. Through aggressive recruitment, training and retention efforts the number of participants has quickly grown. UPS officials noted that a number of their current full-time workers began as part-time entry-level employees. A number of the initial participants in the program have moved on to other employment or returned to school. There are currently 20 young people working at the facility through the program.

"Everybody involved benefits from the School to- Career Partnership," Raymond Torres said. "The mentors in the program provide the encouraging workplace environment that these young people need as they begin their careers. "There's no doubt that this is a win-win program," he added. "Young people who have faced serious challenges in their lives get the encouragement they need to succeed in the workforce, while businesses that employ them have a more effective way of recruiting, training and retaining entry-level employees."

DCF Commissioner Ragaglia said, "This program is a successful collaboration among state agencies, the business and nonprofit sectors and provides real and meaningful employment and career development. The Partnership has opened doors for young people throughout the Hartford community, from the foster care system, the juvenile justice system and others, who needed extra support as they began their careers," she said. "It's an example of how we can, working creatively, make a significant difference for youth preparing for the real world."

Piloted at the UPS facility in Baltimore, Maryland in 1998, the School-to-Career Partnership entered Hartford in the fall of 2001. Since that time more than 70 young people have participated by working at the Hartford UPS site. One young person has been promoted to part-time shift supervisor, and two others are now training new participants. The plan calls for broadening the participation of other employers in the area.