FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Father, daughter ‘duo’ highlight awards at Community House’s Annual Meeting

WEST HAVEN (June 24, 2013) – The West Haven Community honored a father and daughter, a local banquet hall, a professional storyteller and an area college professor at its Annual Meeting held on June 20 at the agency’s Elm Street main campus.

Mickey Livi, an administrator at the Italian-American (IA) Club on Chase Avenue, and his daughter, Annette Knobloch, a medical assistant in New Haven and a board member at the Community House, were among those honored for their contributions and service to the not-for-profit agency now in its 72nd year in West Haven.

Also honored were Ann Shapiro, executive director of the Connecticut Storytelling Center, and Deb Smith, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at Southern Connecticut State University.

Livi was presented his award for his long time special service to the Community House as the event scheduler at the IA Club, as well as his personal generosity. The Community House has had many special events and meetings at the IA Club, including its largest fundraising event each April, A Night at the Races. Livi has always given the Community House every consideration, noted Community House Executive Director Patty Stevens.

In addition to his special plaque of appreciation, Livi also accepted one on behalf of the IA Club, also known as Westwoods Banquet Hall, “whose members provide superlative service to us no matter what the occasion,” Stevens said.

Knobloch, a city native, was cited as the agency’s 2013 Pauline Lang Award winner, which is named in honor of the West Haven Community House’s founder. The Lang Award recipient is selected annually by the president of the Board and is given in acknowledgement of outstanding service to the agency.
Knobloch was honored for her exemplary service on special events, being in charge of the event raffles that have raised thousands of dollars for the agency. She was also cited for her service on the Nominating and Children & Youth board committees.

Board President Richard Bruno noted, “It is not easy being a volunteer, especially in difficult economic times like these.

“It is wonderful thing for a person to volunteer after retirement,” he continued. “It is quite another when individuals make a volunteer commitment while still working,” as Knobloch and other board members do.

“We thank Annette for her dedication and commitment to the mission of the Community House,” Bruno said.

Viola Waldo, Head Start Family Services Manager at the Community House, presented the next award to Shapiro, who was cited for her tremendous ability to convey storytelling as unique among language arts activities.

Waldo said, “According to Ann, the impact of storytelling goes well beyond literacy and language skills. It's a way of making a direct connection with students that can last forever.

“We are very happy to recognize Ann for writing grants to provide storytelling events to families from Head Start and the Family Resource Center. Thank you Ann, for sharing your love of storytelling with us!”

Carol James, the Community House’s School Age Program director, presented the next award to SCSU’s Dr. Smith.

For the past several years, Smith and her students have helped plan and implement the Fall Family event for the agency’s Child Care program clients, James said. This event has taken on a special life of its own for the past three years “due to the efforts of Deb and her very talented university students.”

And those who have attended any of the “Minute to Win It” events held at the IA Club in the Fall know how much fun the children, parents, siblings and staff have there. Not only do the student volunteers organize every activity for the evening, they also act as event hosts, setting up, emceeing and even help clean up after
hundreds of clients and their families enjoy a fun-filled evening of activities and laughs.

“It is so important for our children, their parents and guardians, grandparents and siblings to come together for a night of family fun,” James said, “and we cannot thank Deb enough” for her part in making it all happen.

The Community House’s programs in West Haven include Head Start pre-school, before and after school child care, an enrichment program for at-risk students, and day and residential programs for adults with disabilities.

Award winner and noted storyteller Ann Shapiro.

For more information about this release, please contact Development and Communications Director Chris Carroll at (203) 934-5221, ext. 133.