



West Haven Community House

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Community Connections Program Holds Open House for WHPD

West Haven, CT (October 25, 2017) – Law enforcement officers put their life on the line every day for their communities. The West Haven Police Department’s mission is “to provide professional, knowledgeable, and thorough law enforcement services to ensure the safety and well being of all people, with constant awareness of the diverse needs of the individuals and community”.



In an effort to develop a connection between local police personnel and individuals with intellectual disabilities, West Haven Police officers and staff were invited to visit Community Connections, a program of the West Haven Community House.

The Community Connections program is designed to provide community integration, skill building and personal support to adults with intellectual disabilities. Between their Campbell Ave facility and another location on Boston Post Road, more than 55 individuals participate in the 30-hour-a-week day program. The program also provides services to an additional 34 adults in an individualized day program, as well as 22 clients in residential sites in West Haven. “We were happy to have members of the police department see our program in action, and to show our appreciation for all that they do”, said Marie Watson, Director of Community Connections. “The goal was not only to bring awareness about our program, but also to give our clients the opportunity to begin to build a relationship with the officers.” Program Manager, Keri McLaughlin, gave the police personnel a tour of the facility where they had the opportunity to speak with some of the clients in the program.

The event, which took place on October 25th, was coordinated by police officer and Community House board of directors’ member, Audrey Jefferson. “I thought the event went well and was very effective. I received a lot of great feedback from the officers who attended,” said Jefferson. “Police officers are very interested and caring about the people in their community. We are always eager to participate and to learn about the people we serve **in our community**”, she continued. Police department attendees included Detective Sergeant Brian Reilly, Sergeant Debra D’Amato, School Resource Officers, Kim DeMayo and Kim Simone, Officer’s Audrey Jefferson, Ryan Matakaetis and Rheanna Behuniak, as well as Wanda Jofre, clinical social worker from CT Mental Health.

“We look forward to collaborating with WHPD again in the near future,” said Watson. Upon leaving, they all received a “goody bag” filled with items that the clients made, including homemade dog biscuits for the K-9 units.