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**NON-PROFIT NEWS START-UP CONNECTICUT MIRROR AIMS TO INFORM AND EMPOWER CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS**

*-Independent news organization to revive watchdog role across the state-*

**HARTFORD, Conn., January 14, 2010** - The Connecticut News Project Inc. (CNP) an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization created to reinvigorate coverage of Connecticut's state government, public policy and politics, is giving Connecticut residents a new source for news and information. CNP has established *The Connecticut Mirror*, an online news source that will enable readers to become better informed about state government and public policy.

*The Connecticut Mirror*, set to launch on January 25, will focus on state government, politics, education, healthcare and social services initially. Reporting will be done by a team of experienced journalists and made available on its website, [www.ctmirror.org](http://www.ctmirror.org), and through other channels including email, mobile texts, social media and traditional media partners. *The Connecticut Mirror* will report, analyze, explain and investigate the activities of state government, provide on-line access to important public documents, and provide a platform for statewide public discourse — reasserting the “watchdog” role of the media.

“No matter who you are, what you do or where you live in Connecticut, the actions of state government matter to you. They can affect the health, safety, education and economic future of you, your family and your community. Our job is to tell you what’s happening and what it means to you,” said Michael Regan, editor of the *Connecticut Mirror*, and former *Hartford Courant* editor. “Newspapers and other traditional media outlets have been victimized by years of decline in advertising and circulation revenues, causing them to have to significantly reduce coverage in all areas. We hope to supplement and re-energize that coverage”

According to James A. Cutie, chief operating officer of the Connecticut News Project, the *Connecticut Mirror* plans to make its content ubiquitous across the state. “Our goal is to reach all of Connecticut’s 1.4 million households,” said Cutie. “We can’t do this by ourselves. We’ll seek the help of distribution partners, other media outlets, community groups, libraries, foundations, schools, colleges and businesses.”

*The Connecticut Mirror* has an experienced news staff, headed by Regan, who supervised coverage of topics including politics, education, health care, the courts and the City of Hartford at *The Hartford Courant* for more than 30 years, The state Capitol bureau chief is Mark Pazniokas, the former state politics writer for *The Hartford Courant* and a former contributing writer for *The New York Times*. The education reporter is Bob Frahm who covered education for newspapers in Wisconsin and Connecticut for 36 years before retiring from *The Hartford Courant* as chief education writer. Jacqueline Rabe, a former reporter and on-line editor for the *Washington Post*’s Southern Maryland Newspapers group, will also cover the Capitol.

As Chief Operating Officer, Cutie has primary responsibility for assuring the long-term sustainability of the Project and identifying other potential partners and opportunities for growth. He has 35 years of general management, marketing, entrepreneurial and fundraising experience in traditional and online media, including 17 years at *The New York Times*, where he started the original online division.

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The Foundations supporting the effort include Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, as part of its Knight Community Information Challenge, Melville Charitable Trust, San Francisco Foundation, Seedlings Foundation, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund.

"We are very grateful for the generous support of our founding foundations, certainly for their financial support, but also for the validation they lend and the ongoing value-added that comes from their intimate knowledge of Connecticut's communities," said Cutie.

The Connecticut News Project's board of directors share a commitment to public service through their work in various non-profit and educational organizations, according to board Co-President Shelley Geballe, co-founder of Connecticut Voices for Children and a lecturer at Yale's Law School and School of Public Health.

"The directors share a belief that vigorous coverage of government and public policy is essential to the common good," said Geballe. "It is that belief that has led us to volunteer our time and expertise to launching the Connecticut News Project."

Board Co-President William Cibes Jr., Chancellor Emeritus of the Connecticut State University System and former OPM Secretary said, "If our republic is to work as the framers envisioned, voters must know more about public policy alternatives. The Connecticut Mirror aims to provide the information and analysis that enables citizens to cast an informed ballot for their representatives."

Other Board members include Marcia Chambers, former *New York Times* reporter and Research Scholar in Law and Visiting Journalist in Residence at Yale Law School; Jeannette DeJesus, Executive Director of the Hispanic Health Council; and Robert Hohler, Executive Director of the Melville Charitable Trust.

For editorial inquiries, please contact Michael Regan at 860-218-6380 or email [mregan@ctmirror.org](mailto:mregan@ctmirror.org). For inquiries about partnerships and sponsorships, please contact Jim Cutie at 860-218-6380 or email [jcutie@ctmirror.org](mailto:jcutie@ctmirror.org).

**About Connecticut News Project:**

The Connecticut News Project Inc. is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit news organization created to reinvigorate coverage of Connecticut's state government, public policy and politics. Our primary goal is to ensure that the people of the state are better informed about their government and its activities, so they can more effectively participate in the development of public policy and hold officials accountable for understanding and addressing the state's needs. We will achieve this goal through original and reliable reporting presented on our website, [www.ctmirror.org](http://www.ctmirror.org) and distributed through various other platforms and technologies. We will analyze, explain and investigate the activities of state government, reasserting the "watchdog" role of the media. CNP also intends to encourage and facilitate discussion and debate on public policy matters; to create an archive of documents and data about state government; and to help train a new generation of journalists.

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