



## **Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc.**

180 Clinton Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
www.hranbct.org

PHONE: (860) 225-8601  
FAX: (860) 225-4843

**Rocco R. Tricarico**  
Executive Director

**Dr. Catherine R. Baratta**  
Board President

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**Media Contact: Caren Dickman 860/348-2261 cdickman@hranbct.org**

### **HRA CUTS RIBBON ON NEW INFANT/TODDLER CLASSROOM**

The Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc. (HRA) is excited about opening its new licensed classroom for 8 infants and toddlers at 35 Oak Street in New Britain and will hold the ribbon cutting ceremony there at 9:30 am on Wednesday October 30, 2019.

HRA's new Infant/Toddler classroom complements the 2 existing Head Start classrooms for 3-4 year olds at Oak St. According to Amy Griswold, Director of Early Childhood Education, "Together, these 3 licensed classrooms will provide the community with a comprehensive high quality continuum of early childhood education. Children will be better prepared for kindergarten and parents will be better able to keep their jobs, knowing their children are safe."

The new classroom filled quickly and already has a waiting list of 50 with calls coming in daily, though not everyone on the list will be eligible.

Existing licensed child care slots for low-income infants and toddlers in New Britain falls woefully short of the growing demand for them, especially in the poorest neighborhoods. The most recent U.S. Census data ranks New Britain with the 5<sup>th</sup> highest poverty rate in CT. Poverty among children under 5 years is an alarming 35.1%. Infants and toddlers comprise 4,105 of this total.

Before HRA's classroom opened there were only 387 licensed slots for either center-based or home-based infant/toddler care in the city with none of them located in the Oak Street neighborhood. HRA serves 165 of these 387 slots at its main facility at 180 Clinton St.

Rocco Tricarico, HRA's Executive Director, is delighted to see this happen. "We've wanted an infant/toddler classroom at Oak Street for a long time but needed the funding to make it happen. We are grateful to both CHEFA and the United Way for making this classroom possible."

Funding from the CT Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) supported the brick and mortar classroom renovations to meet state licensing regulations. Funding from the United Way of Central and Northeastern CT supports children and teacher operations for the classroom.



CHEFA is a quasi-governmental agency created to help CT-based non-profit organizations raise the funds needed to meet the goals of improving the health and education of the citizens of this state. United Way's focus on youth success helps make sure children are ready for school, stay on track and graduate on time prepared for college or career.