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Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc. Announces New Distribution Committee Members and Updates On The Use of Funds

NEWTOWN, Conn. (February 1, 2017) — The Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc. (Foundation) announced today its approval of three new Distribution Committee members, an update on the use of Sandy Hook School Support Fund donations, and the next grant cycle for funding.

The Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc. has provided support to 573 individuals since June 2014 when it assumed responsibility for reimbursement for trauma related services. The largest category has been from surviving Sandy Hook School students and their family members, followed by family members of victims. To date the Foundation has spent \$878,109 on trauma related support to individuals. “We want to remind eligible individuals that support is available for any on-going needs related to the trauma and grief from 12/14/12,” said Executive Director Jennifer Barahona. Information about eligibility criteria can be found on the Foundation’s website, www.nshcf.org, under resources & assistance. In 2016 the Foundation averaged more than one new request for support per week from individuals who had never come forward for assistance before. “We know that trauma does not follow a predictable timeline and are glad that we have resources to assist those who continue to struggle,” said Barahona. “We have had some very difficult cases come forward for the first time recently.”

In addition to the support for individuals, the Foundation has provided \$547,000 in grant awards in recent years to organizations working with individuals who have been impacted by 12/14/12 and to strengthen the community as a whole to support one another. The Foundation continues to focus on the development of partnerships with organizations and groups in the community who will be able to support and sustain recovery efforts for the long-term. The hope is that over time, with the right structures in place, the community will be better equipped to support itself. The Foundation solicits proposals from qualified organizations to support this goal twice a year with annual application deadlines of March 15th and September 15th. Grant applications can be obtained by contacting Ms. Barahona at jbarahona@nshcf.org.

The Foundation also announced the election of new officers on its Board of Directors and the appointment of three new Distribution Committee members: Cheyanne Wyatt, Janet Vollmer, and Curtis Urbina.

Ms. Wyatt, mother of Allison Wyatt one of the 26 victims of the 12/14 tragedy, is replacing Cindy Mattioli, who recently completed a two year term, on the Distribution Committee. “The voice of victims at the center of this tragedy continues to be a priority for the Foundation. We know how difficult it is and appreciate all of

Cindy's valuable time and input. The committee looks forward to welcoming Cheyanne to this new role," said Ms. Barahona.

Ms. Vollmer, who joins the Distribution Committee, recently retired from the Newtown Public Schools having been a kindergarten teacher at Sandy Hook School for over 20 years. She will provide input from the perspective of surviving staff members.

Mr. Urbina, parent of a current Sandy Hook School student as well as one who survived on 12/14/12, is also a local coach and involved in a number of community initiatives. He is the third new addition to the Committee.

The three new members will join existing committee members; Dr. Robert Bazuro, Jennifer Clark, Kevin Cragin, Rev. Robert Morris, Anka Roberto, Bob Schmidt, and Police Chief James Viadero.

At its annual meeting on January 27th, the Board of Directors voted to approve the following slate of officers for the Foundation; Ben Spragg (Chair), Anne Ragusa (Vice Chair), Chris McDonnell (Secretary), and Gavin Arneth. Dr. Charles Herrick also remains on the Board of Directors along with ex-officio members Will Rodgers and Isabel Almeida.

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ABOUT THE NEWTOWN-SANDY HOOK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, INC.

The mission of the Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc. is to devote itself to furthering and supporting operations and activities which address the short-term and long-term unmet needs of individuals and the Newtown community arising from the tragic events at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012. For more information, visit www.nshcf.org.