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Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc. Announces New Board Members and 10-year Sunset Plan

Foundation to spend down resources until Sandy Hook Students graduate high school.

NEWTOWN, Conn. (March 4, 2015) — The Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation, Inc. (Foundation) announced today its approval of three new board members, and the ratification of a 10-year sunset plan, which formalizes the spending down of all available funds by December 2025.

The Foundation was formed in 2013 to receive Sandy Hook School Support Fund (SHSS) donations and develop a separate, locally controlled organization responsible for how monies ultimately would be distributed. It has pledged to keep the Sandy Hook School Support Fund viable as a resource to the community until the youngest children from SHES complete high school.

“It has always been the Foundation’s intention to be time-limited,” said Executive Director Jennifer Barahona. “The time line was based on the desire to provide continued support to the community and those most impacted for a period of 10-15 years. The 13 year mark indicated in the sunset plan is in synch with the graduation from high school of the youngest children that were enrolled at Sandy Hook Elementary on December 14, 2012.”

The Foundation will be focused 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. Over time, with the right structures in place, the community will be better equipped to support itself.

“Flexibility is important in order to meet the evolving needs of the community and continual assessment of those needs will be important,” said Anne Ragusa, newly appointed Chair of the Board of the Foundation, local attorney, and Newtown resident. “Since its inception, the Foundation has dedicated itself to prioritizing the short- and long-term unmet needs of those most impacted by the Sandy Hook tragedy, including victims, surviving children, teachers, first responders, as well as the larger Newtown community. Giving ourselves a definitive timeline will guide our decisions and uphold our vision of Newtown being a strong community, where people connect and support one another in their journey toward healing.”

The Foundation also announced the appointment of three new Board members: Christopher McDonnell, Gavin Arneth, and Isabel Almeida.

Christopher McDonnell, father of Grace McDonnell one of the 26 victims of the 12/14 tragedy, is replacing

Monsignor Robert Weiss, pastor of St. Rose of Lima Church, on the Board. Mr. McDonnell has served as the Chair of the Foundation's second Distribution Committee since November 2013.

Mr. McDonnell is the Vice President of Research and Development for Professional Disposables International, an infection prevention technology company. He and his family have been residents of Newtown for the past 23 years. Cindy Mattioli - mother of Sandy Hook student James Mattioli, who also died on 12/14 - will fill the open seat on the Distribution Committee.

Gavin Arneth is replacing Joseph DiCandido, CEO of Nutek and former Legislative Council member, on the Board. Mr. Arneth has also served on the Foundation's second Distribution Committee since November 2013.

Mr. Arneth is a 33-year resident of Sandy Hook who works at People's United Bank as a Senior Vice President in the Private Banking Group. He and his wife Carolyn have two children.

Isabel Almeida, Executive Vice President of Workplace Development and Marketing at United Way of Western Connecticut, is replacing Kimberly Morgan, CEO of United Way of Western Connecticut, as an ex-officio member of the Board.

Ms. Almeida will be one of three nonvoting members joining John F. Trentacosta, President and CEO of Newtown Savings Bank, and Will Rodgers, Newtown Selectman and local attorney. Ms. Almeida is a resident of Sandy Hook.

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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.