

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Congressman Joe Courtney today announced that UConn secured a \$290,226 Talent Search grant from the U.S. Department of Education to help Windham and New Haven students finish high school and pursue a college education. UConn will use the funding to continue servicing 650 middle and high school students in Windham and New Haven. The Talent Search Program is designed to identify students with potential for success in higher education, and to encourage them to complete high school and undertake a program of postsecondary education.

"One of the best ways to help Windham overcome its present challenges is to help promising young students complete middle school and high school," **said Congressman Courtney**. "This program is exactly aimed at raising graduation rates, which are the best measurement of educational progress. A high school diploma is absolutely essential for success in our global economy, and Talent Search and UConn are pushing these smart young people even beyond that goal. Connecticut has a long standing tradition of providing a world class education at all levels, and securing this competitive funding in such a tough environment is a testament to that tradition."

Talent Search projects provide an array of services which includes tutoring, career exploration, aptitude assessments, counseling, mentoring programs, workshops, information on postsecondary institutions, and education or counseling services designed to improve the financial and economic literacy of students.

"We are thrilled by today's announcement because the competition was so tough," **said Dr. Maria D. Martinez, assistant vice provost at UConn's Institute for Student Success**. "Windham and New Haven are two of the neediest communities. This grant allows us to continue providing critical support services that will improve academic performance and increase postsecondary enrollment for students in the Talent Search program. We are very excited about making a difference in the lives of students with a program that has worked since 1994."