



News Release

CONTACTS: Al Lara, Northeast Utilities
(860) 728-4616
laraal@nu.com

Teddie Sleight, Project Opening Doors
860-455-1553
tsleight@eastconn.org

NU Foundation to support continued Advanced Placement success for Conn. students

*Funding "Project Opening Doors" in New Britain,
Waterbury, New London and Windham*

HARTFORD, Connecticut, April 14, 2011 – The Northeast Utilities (NU) Foundation has awarded a three-year, \$175,000 grant to support the continuing success of a statewide program promoting competitiveness and achievement in Advanced Placement courses by Connecticut students and is encouraging other community partners to follow its lead.

Project Opening Doors (POD) has already contributed to greater statewide enrollment and improved exam scores by low-income and minority students in Advanced Placement courses for math, science and English, which supports successful admission and performance in college. However, the program requires additional funding to continue. The NU Foundation's grant will provide support for the program at four high schools in the Connecticut Light and Power Co. and Yankee Gas service territories: New Britain High School, Wilby High School in Waterbury, New London High School and Windham High School.

"In a globally competitive world, it is essential we do all we can to encourage success, especially in math and science, among our young people," said Jeff Butler, a member of the board of the NU Foundation, and the president and chief operating officer of The Connecticut Light & Power Company. "The NU Foundation's funding is an important step in providing Connecticut students with the keys to a successful education and career."

"The Northeast Utilities Foundation is investing in our future at a time when additional education resources are vitally needed by communities such as Windham," said state Senate President Donald E. Williams, Jr. (D-Brooklyn), whose district includes Windham.

"Project Opening Doors presents convincing evidence that a comprehensive program emphasizing professional development for staff, increased instructional time for students and staff and student incentives can produce positive results," said Cam Vautour, President of Project Opening Doors. "The results are particularly encouraging when you look at the results for our minority and female populations. POD appears to be tackling the achievement gap head-on and is succeeding."

Currently 23 high schools across the state participate in Project Opening Doors. In 2009, in only its second year of operation, POD students were responsible for 42 percent of the increase in the state's qualifying scores in math, science and English, even though they accounted for only 9 percent of those who took the exams. Among participating girls and minority students, the results were even more marked, accounting for 59 percent and 61 percent of the increases in qualifying scores, respectively.

The program was launched in 2008 with funding from a six-year grant from the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) to the CBIA (Connecticut Business & Industry Association) Education Foundation. The NU Foundation's grant complements the NMSI grant, which includes reduced funding levels in its later years to encourage local governments and community partners like the NU Foundation to contribute to its support. Similarly, the NU Foundation's grant provides full, first-year funding, and reduced levels in the second and third years to encourage participation by other community partners in the four school districts.

POD is one of six nationwide grants funded by the NMSI to address the problem of America's declining competitiveness globally in the areas of math, science and English. The program's goals are to increase student access to and success in Advanced Placement courses in math, science, and English with a particular emphasis on minority and low income students. Program components include: high quality professional development for staff, increased instructional time for students, additional equipment and related resources and financial incentives for students and staff. For more information on the program, please visit www.projectopeningdoors.org.

The Northeast Utilities Foundation, established by NU in 1998 and supported by Northeast Utilities' operating companies (Connecticut Light & Power Co., Yankee Gas Services Co., Western Massachusetts Electric Co. and Public Service of New Hampshire), has benefited charitable partners in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire with total donations of more than \$12 million. The Foundation's focus areas are education for workforce development, environmental stewardship and economic development. For more information on the Northeast Utilities Foundation, please visit www.northeastutilitiesfoundation.org.