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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 4, 2009

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NEWS RELEASE

Connecticut Junior Republic (CJR) MST Program Receives International Recognition

Litchfield, CT – John F. Boyd, Executive Director, recently announced that the Connecticut Junior Republic (CJR) received a *Sustained Excellence* Award for outstanding performance in serving at-risk and troubled youth at the 2009 International Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) Conference in Charleston, South Carolina. The award was presented to CJR’s Waterbury MST team, which is based at the Junior Republic’s Waterbury Community Program, located on Prospect Street. CJR operates additional MST programs in Danbury and Torrington, serving boys, girls, and families in northern Fairfield county and northwest Connecticut, respectively. All MST programs conducted by the Connecticut Junior Republic are funded by the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the State of Connecticut’s Judicial Branch.

According to CSSD Executive Director William H. Carbone, the *Sustained Excellence* Award is given only to teams and therapists that rank in the top one percent among 445 teams in 12 different countries. Mr. Carbone noted that the award is given on an annual basis and is based upon the quality and effectiveness of services provided and the number of youth and families served.

“I applaud the good work of the Connecticut Junior Republic’s Waterbury MST Team, and others within CJR who are associated with the MST contract in Waterbury. Their effort has undoubtedly benefited many families in the Greater Waterbury area, and I appreciate their commitment to quality service delivery and to the children and families they serve,” stated Mr. Carbone.

The award to CJR’s Waterbury MST Team, which is headed by Melanie DeMare, LMFT, supervising social worker, was presented by MST Services (MSTS), an organization that helps communities and organizations implement multi-systemic therapy with adherence to the treatment model to improve the lives of youth with anti-social behavior and their families. Other members of the CJR Waterbury MST Team include Sue LaBranche, MS, CADC, NCC; Wendy Roos, MSW; Jeff Steeves, MSW; and Gira Valentin, BS.

Joe Boggs, Chief Operating Officer for MSTS stated, “The Connecticut Junior Republic’s Waterbury Team has been instrumental in offering MST within their community. The Team’s ability to implement this treatment model with adherence is worthy of recognition and we were honored to present CJR with this award.”

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Multi-Systemic Therapy is based on the belief that parental figures are critical to successful outcomes in treating troubled boys and girls. MST delivers treatment in a youth's natural environment (home, school, and community), and is designed to reduce criminal and antisocial behaviors while empowering the family to develop and use proactive parenting skills. All family members living in the home and anyone within the youth's sphere of influence are encouraged to participate.

CJR's MST therapists are skilled social and family workers who have completed extensive training. For a treatment period of three to five months, MST therapists are available to referred families 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Therapists visit the family home three to five times a week and have ongoing communications with the youth's school. They assist the family in obtaining services in the community and building a social support system. As the family develops links to the school, community resources and social supports, and is able to resolve conflicts independently, MST therapists become less involved. Youth are referred to the Connecticut Junior Republic's MST Teams in the Waterbury, Danbury and Northwestern Connecticut regions by the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Branch.

Founded in 1904 through the bequest of Litchfield resident, Mary Buel, the Connecticut Junior Republic (CJR) has provided residential and community-based care, treatment and education programs for troubled and at-risk young people for more than 100 years. Today, the organization's combined programs serve nearly 1,000 boys and girls from communities throughout Connecticut. CJR operates group homes for boys in East Hartford and Winchester; the Center for Assessment, Respite and Enrichment (CARE), a short term-residential program for girls in Waterbury; and community-based programs serving boys and girls in the Danbury, Torrington/Northwest Connecticut and Greater Waterbury regions. Special, alternative and vocational education programs for boys are conducted on CJR's Litchfield campus.

A private charitable organization, the Connecticut Junior Republic is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA). CJR is supported by contributions from individuals, businesses and organizations, and through fees for services funded by the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Connecticut Judicial Branch, the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS), and by Connecticut's public schools. For further information, please contact Hedy Barton, Director of Development and Public Relations: (860) 567-9423; or by email: hbarton@cjryouth.org.