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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust receives 15-thousand dollars in grant from Fairfield County Community Foundation

Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust (BNT) Executive Director, Elizabeth Torres announced recently that the non-profit received a grant totaling \$15,000 from the Fairfield County Community Foundation to support its comprehensive homeownership counseling program. "At BNT we understand that buying your first home can seem like a daunting task, but it doesn't have to be. Homeownership is the key to building individual wealth, security and stability. We are thrilled that the foundation will support our program to help families and ensure success in homeownership for the long term," states Elizabeth Torres.

The \$15,000 grant for its home-ownership counseling program will pay for staff that help first-time home buyers achieve home ownership. BNT provides group education and one on one homeownership counseling tailored to meet each client's needs. The program covers all aspects of home buying program including the advantages and disadvantages of purchasing a home, determining affordability, the mortgage and the closing process. Since 2002, BNT has helped almost 400 households achieve homeownership and provided counseling to more 1000 participants. In 2011, BNT served more than 400 clients, of which 59 clients achieved homeownership and closed on a total of \$8,708,473.00 in mortgages with an additional 60 clients that are under contract to purchase or pre-approved for a total of \$7,929,069. In addition there are 54 "mortgage ready" clients.

The mission of Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust (BNT) is to strengthen communities by embracing a comprehensive revitalization approach through advocacy, education, investment, and technical support. To meet this challenge BNT develops affordable housing, creates healthy homes with a focus on lead remediation, and provides comprehensive homeownership counseling. BNT has been busy working in Bridgeport for nearly twenty-five years and understands firsthand the needs of the city and the importance of collaboration to create neighborhoods of choice where families want to live, work and invest. For more information, visit www.bntweb.org.

The Fairfield County Community Foundation promotes the growth of community and regional philanthropy to improve the quality of life throughout Fairfield County. Individuals, families, corporations and organizations can establish charitable funds and contribute to existing funds. The Foundation also provides philanthropic advisory services, and develops and leads initiatives to tackle critical community issues. It is in compliance with the Council on Foundations' national standards for community foundations. The Foundation has awarded over \$135 million in grants to nonprofits in Fairfield County and beyond. For more information, visit www.fccfoundation.org.