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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FIRST COUNTY BANK FOUNDATION GRANTS \$20,000  
TO WESTPORT NONPROFITS**

**STAMFORD, Conn., Sept. 26, 2013** – Four Westport-based nonprofits recently received \$20,000 in grants from the First County Bank Foundation. The Foundation granted \$10,000 to Homes with Hope’s Bacharach Community, which provides emergency shelter for homeless mothers and their children.

“Last year, in Connecticut, more than 14,000 people—including 2,500 children—entered homelessness throughout the course of the year,” said Katherine Harris, vice president of First County Bank Foundation. “As a community, we need to do more to help these families find affordable or supportive housing,” suggested Harris, who is also president and chief operating officer of First County Bank. Bacharach Community, located on Wassell Lane in Westport, with an additional facility on the Post Road, provides emergency shelter for up to six families headed by women.

In addition to Homes with Hope, the Foundation granted \$5,000 to Positive Directions, for its adolescent behavior health treatment program; \$2,500 to Project Return, for its HEAL Program (Health, Empathy, Love, Altruism), providing adolescent girls and young women in crisis a nurturing environment to heal and grow and \$2,500 to United Way of Westport.

Since its inception in 2001, the First County Bank Foundation has awarded over 760 individual grants, worth \$5.8 million.

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The following Westport-based nonprofits received First County Bank Foundation grants:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Cause</b>
Homes with Hope (Interfaith Housing Association)	\$10,000	Bacharach Community emergency shelter for homeless single mothers and their children
Positive Directions	\$5,000	Adolescent treatment program for coping with drug and alcohol abuse and other addictive behaviors, and the associated issues which can be addressed with counseling
Project Return	\$2,500	HEAL, an after school community service program for teen girls
United Way	\$2,500	Grant money is being used for Westport-based programs.

Established in 2001 in honor of the bank's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the First County Bank Foundation was created to distribute funds annually to nonprofit organizations that support community and economic development for children and families. As a mutual bank with no shareholders, First County Bank considers contributions made by the foundation a means of paying dividends back to the local communities it serves.

To be eligible for First County Bank Foundation grants, organizations must have nonprofit tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; be located in Stamford, Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk or Westport; have community support; address community needs; have measurable outcomes; and demonstrate fiscal and administrative responsibility. Special consideration is given to those agencies or programs benefiting low to moderate income populations.

First County Bank, headquartered in Stamford, Conn. for more than 160 years, is an independent mutual community bank with 15 branches in Stamford, Greenwich, Darien, New Canaan, Norwalk and Westport offering deposit products, mortgages, trust and investment services, business banking services and online banking. First County Bank has more than 220 employees and assets in excess of \$1.3 billion. For additional information, please visit <http://www.firstcountybank.com>. Become a fan by clicking "Like" on the bank's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/firstcountybank>. Follow it on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/firstcountybank> or look for First County Bank on LinkedIn at <http://www.linkedin.com/company/920207>.