

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release

### **City Celebrates Opening of Opportunity High School**

#### ***A Partnership Between Hartford Public Schools and Our Piece of the Pie***

(Monday, Nov. 2, 2009) Hartford Public Schools and Our Piece of the Pie® today celebrated the grand opening of Opportunity High School, the first school specifically designed to help students who are in danger of dropping out of high school earn a diploma.

The school, which began classes this semester, is tailored for over-aged, under-credited students who want an accelerated and rigorous program that will help them attain the credits needed to graduate within two to 2 ½ years. Currently, 90 students are enrolled.

The Grand Opening Celebration was held at 10:00 a.m. in the school at 875 Asylum Avenue. Among the local officials and business leaders on hand were Superintendent Steven J. Adamowski, Mayor Eddie A. Perez, and OPP President/CEO Bob Rath.

“Opportunity High School fits neatly into the district’s reform strategy for closing the achievement gap,” Dr. Adamowski said. “We expect that the school will play a major role in increasing our graduation rate and lowering our dropout numbers.”

Opportunity High School is a partnership between the school system and OPP, combining the intensity of the school system’s curriculum with the agency’s proven youth development strategy.

Along with classroom instruction in accordance with state and school system standards, each student is assigned a Youth Development Specialist from OPP who serves as a coach and mentor as the student works toward graduation and plans for the future.

“This historic partnership between OPP and Hartford Public Schools is giving hope to so many of the city’s youth,” said Bob Rath OPP President/CEO. “They are being reengaged and now can look to the future with optimism.”

OPP, a nationally recognized and fully accredited youth development agency focused on assisting Hartford youth, ages 14 to 24, become successful and financially independent adults. The organization helps young people overcome challenges and adversity to maximize their potential and lead productive lives.

All of the students at OHS are members of OPP’s Pathway’s to Success program which matches each youth with a caring adult who helps them set a concrete plan for the future.

“This school is exactly what it’s called,” said Joshua Serrano a 17-year-old student at Opportunity High School. “It’s the perfect opportunity for those of us who have not been accepted to other high schools. It’s our first chance at success.”

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