

## **The New London County Connecticut NLAPH Team**

**Core Team Members:** Nadine Fraser, Connecticut Hospital Association; Amy Gagliardi, Community Health Centers, Inc.; Patrick McCormack, Uncas Health District; and Carol Stone, Connecticut Department of Public Health

The Connecticut Department of Public Health was recently awarded a Community Transformation Grant (CTG) by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to establish coalitions and effect policy and systems change within the state's five non-urban counties to improve health and well-being. Our team focused its efforts on applying CTG principles to the topic of maternal and infant health within New London, County. In addition to being a participating county in the CTG, New London County also has a longstanding history of strong collaboration in maternal and child health.

The NLAPH team planned, recruited participants, and convened a countywide coalition of advocates with a particular interest in maternal and infant health. The meeting was conducted on December 17, 2012, and was attended by more than 25 people representing a wide range of sectors. The meeting agenda included discussion of: 1) Cultural diversity in the county; 2) Countywide selected perinatal indicators; 3) A community resource guide developed by two members of the team; and 4) the "Possibility" conversation described in a book by Peter Block called, "Community – The Structure of Belonging."

This coalition may continue its work in New London County and could form a pipeline of communication between the state and county on the topic of maternal and infant health. This process may also be replicated to create similar countywide coalitions across the state on this topic. Finally, the state of Connecticut was recently selected with three other states nationwide to participate in a Learning Network on Improving Birth Outcomes, through the National Governors Association. This opportunity will allow the work of this NLAPH project to be expanded, creating a statewide coalition that works toward policy and systems change to improve poor birth outcomes in Connecticut, especially within minority racial and ethnic communities.