



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
TREASURER SHAWN T. WOODEN

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**TREASURER SHAWN WOODEN VISITS COVID-19
VACCINE CLINIC IN WATERBURY AND WORKS TO COMBAT
VACCINE HESITANCY AMONG COMMUNITIES OF COLOR
AND PROMOTE EFFORTS TO CLOSE THE VACCINE EQUITY GAP**

*TREASURER WOODEN APPLAUDS THE CITY OF WATERBURY
AND SAINT MARY'S HOSPITAL FOR THEIR EFFORTS TO
HELP SOCIALLY VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES GET VACCINATED*

Waterbury, CT – Today, April 19, 2021, Connecticut State Treasurer, Shawn T. Wooden toured a COVID-19 vaccine clinic at Waterbury Arts Magnet School to applaud the great work of Saint Mary's Hospital and the City of Waterbury. He continues to use his voice to combat vaccine hesitancy among communities of color, while also urging leaders across the State to consistently work to meet people where they are to help socially vulnerable communities get vaccinated and close the vaccine equity gap.

"The vaccine is safe, effective, and the best tool to protect yourself, your loved ones and your community from this virus," said State Treasurer Shawn Wooden. "Leaders across the state need to continue to do everything within our powers to meet people where they are and help hard-to-reach communities overcome barriers to accessing the vaccine. The Waterbury Arts Magnet School clinic, a joint effort between the City of Waterbury and Saint Mary's Hospital is a great example of key partnerships to help vulnerable communities get vaccinated and help close the vaccine equity gap."

COVID-19 has had a disproportionate and devastating effect on communities of color that has led to higher infection rates, hospitalizations, and mortalities. Last Monday, the State released new data that shows that Connecticut is still not hitting its equity allocation goals and that the vaccine disparity gap is actively widening. In addition, data released by the State in late March shows that white residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine, at close to double the rate of Black and Hispanic residents. Access has been reported as the number one barrier in Connecticut that's preventing people of color from getting vaccinated. The key to making sure people of color are vaccinated is meeting people where they are and bringing the vaccine into their communities.

"To ensure a healthy recovery and a fully operational economy it is imperative that vaccination sites be

widely available,” said State Senator Joan Hartley (D-Waterbury). “I thank the City of Waterbury and Saint Mary’s Hospital for their tremendous effort to increase availability and access to vulnerable communities to receive the COVID vaccine.”

As of April 16th, more than 2.55 million doses of the vaccine have been administered across Connecticut, including over 30,000 in the city of Waterbury.

“Since the first week of February, the city’s Mobile Vaccination Taskforce has been administering vaccinations to those in our community who are most vulnerable, and who face barriers to access,” said Waterbury Mayor Neil M. O’Leary. “We are intensely committed to continuing to work with our state and local partners to ensure that all of our residents have access to the critically important COVID-19 vaccination.”

The Waterbury Arts Magnet School clinic was set up through a joint venture between Saint Mary’s Hospital and the City of Waterbury and continues to bring COVID-19 vaccinations to socially vulnerable communities. This initiative is now available seven days a week and staffed by colleagues from Saint Mary’s Hospital and City of Waterbury employees, including firefighters, EMT’S and school nurses. Waterbury residents who experience internet access barriers are able to make an appointment by calling the City’s 3-1-1 hotline.

“The partnership between Saint Mary’s Hospital and Trinity Health of New England with the City of Waterbury has unified our commitment to be a healing presence in the community, particularly to those who are most vulnerable,” said Dr. Husnain Kermalli Chief Medical Officer of Saint Mary’s Hospital. “This long-standing and excellent relationship ensures that all residents in the Greater Waterbury area have easy access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Our partnership in the operation of the COVID-19 vaccine clinic at the Waterbury Arts Magnet School has served as a beacon to accomplish the goal of protecting the residents from the Covid-19 virus.”

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