



## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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### **Bristol Early Childhood Alliance Recognized as 2017 Harvard Ash Center Bright Idea in Government**

(January 18, 2017) – The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, recognized today the Bristol Early Childhood Alliance (BECA) as part of the 2017 Bright Ideas in Government initiative. BECA is part of a cohort that includes programs from all levels of government — school districts, county, city, state, federal agencies, and tribal nations, as well as public-private partnerships — that represent the next horizon in government work to improve services, solve problems, and work on behalf of citizens.

The Bristol Early Childhood Alliance (BECA) is a network of preschool providers and community agencies that works together to help children get a healthy start in life. BECA enables members of the Bristol, CT School Readiness Council to access community resources in creative ways that support at-risk children and their families. Supported for the past 12 years by a Discovery Grant from the Graustein Memorial Fund, BECA leadership has piloted innovative programs such as maternal depression screening that are now standard practice at WIC offices throughout the state of Connecticut. More information about BECA can be found at [www.makingbristolbetter.com](http://www.makingbristolbetter.com).

“These programs demonstrate that there are no prerequisites for doing the good work of governing,” said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at the Ash Center. “Small towns and massive cities, huge federal agencies and local school districts, large budgets or no budgets at all — what makes government work best is the drive to do better, and this group proves that drive can be found anywhere.” This is the fifth cohort recognized through the Bright Ideas program, an initiative of the broader Innovations in American Government Awards program. For consideration as a Bright Idea, programs must currently be in operation or in the process of launching, have sufficient operational resources, and must be administered by one or more governmental entities; nonprofit, private sector, and union initiatives are eligible if operating in partnership with a governmental organization. Bright Ideas are showcased on the Ash Center’s Government Innovators Network, an online platform for practitioners and policymakers to share innovative public policy solutions.

Please visit the Government Innovators Network at <http://innovations.harvard.edu> for the full list of Bright Ideas programs, and for more information regarding the Innovations in American Government Awards. For more information, contact: Daniel Harsha, Associate Director for Communications, Ash Center (617) 495-4347

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***About the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation***

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. For more information, visit [www.ash.harvard.edu](http://www.ash.harvard.edu).

***About the Bristol Development Authority.*** *The Bristol Development Authority (BDA) works to improve the physical, economic, and social environment of the Bristol community by serving as the primary governmental organization dedicated to promoting commercial development, to preserving and improving the City's housing stock, and to securing and administering the resources required to carry out these goals. The BDA is overseen by an appointed nine-member Board of Commissioners which governs economic and community development policies for the City. For more information, log onto [www.bristolallheart.com](http://www.bristolallheart.com) or by email to [bda@bristolct.gov](mailto:bda@bristolct.gov).*