

Grant Stories Project

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Funding impact stories written for The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven from November 2014 through July 2015. The 23 stories on nonprofit grant recipients included research, interviews, and image sourcing under tight deadlines. <http://www.cfgh.org/StrengtheningNonprofits/GrantStories.aspx>

Nourishing Bodies and Spirits in New Haven

<https://www.cfgh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/292/Nourishing-Bodies-and-Spirits-in-New-Haven.aspx>

Although the faces may change from day-to-day, the outcome is always the same. Everyone who visits the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (DESK) leaves with ample nourishment to help them get through the night.

For 27 years, DESK has been serving the homeless and working poor of the Greater New Haven community – men, women and children, of all races and all ages. Last year the organization served over 138,000 evening meals, provided over 66,094 pantry food bags and offered 24,600 bag lunches. These numbers exceeded past years and continue to climb.

The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven recently awarded DESK with a \$50,000 multi-year grant to continue their important work at combating [hunger in New Haven](#). Linda Carbone, Executive Director of DESK, knows all too well the complexity of the need.



When asked what makes her organization a success, she humbly concluded that DESK's longstanding history and continuity have had the greatest impact on the community. Those assisted by Carbone and her small staff, feel a bit differently about exactly what makes DESK so special.

Joe, a middle-aged man who found himself homeless after being incarcerated shared that, "There are people here that care about us – all of us. This is one of the places that I know I can sit down, and I can relax a bit, and no one tells me to move on. They feed us a good meal."

Ralph, a senior citizen who relies on DESK during times of financial uncertainty, agrees that it is a welcoming environment. "They are very clean here, very kind, very courteous and it is a pleasure to come here and it is a pleasure to talk to these people."

Josie, a mother struggling to support her young daughter says, “Linda and Meaghan make it feel like my own dining room. If they weren’t here, I wouldn’t be able to give my daughter a meal.” Josie also uses the weekly pantry, which helps ensure that her daughter does not go hungry during the day.

DESK staff and volunteers are particularly sensitive to the needs of the children they serve. Wanting them to feel comfortable and special, they provide a “toy chest” filled with coloring books and small toys.

Understanding, too, that pets are valued members of many families, DESK also provides a pet food pantry. The free pet food, which is donated by businesses and individuals, offers pet owners greater peace of mind. Without the assistance, many would have to leave the pets they love at local animal shelters.

These extra caring touches are important to Carbone, who says, “DESK has become a part of my heart. I love the guests, the volunteers and the staff. I love the mission of DESK and love being a part of it.”

Many of the volunteers who assist the organization, an astounding 400 individuals per month, share her sentiments. “I always know when I come to DESK I am going to be surrounded by many people; people that want to do something to better this world. They want to give a piece of themselves and they want to serve the community,” explains Ursula, a dedicated volunteer.

Although the volunteers and staff are always happy to see familiar faces, their greatest satisfaction comes when individuals or families stop visiting. “I have seen individuals who were on the street and found themselves getting an apartment, and when I don’t see them any longer, I presume things are going well,” reflects Carbone.

The presumption is a good one given how helpful a warm hot meal, delivered with loving kindness, is in nourishing the body and the spirit.

To volunteer or offer support, please visit the [Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen](#) giveGreater.org® profile.

Did you know?

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that in 2012 (the most current data available), 10.6 million individuals were classified as “working poor.” This represents the number of people who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force, yet still earned less than the poverty level.

Source: “[A Profile of the Working Poor, 2012](#)” (PDF), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Providing Shelter from the Storms of Abuse

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/300/Providing-Shelter-from-the-Storms-of-Abuse.aspx>



The Alpha Chi Omega Sorority at Quinnipiac University presented a check for \$23,850 to The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services in June of 2015. The sorority has been providing support for domestic violence victims for over 23 years.

The impact of domestic abuse is all too-well known at the Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services (UCDVS). In 2014, the center assisted 6,232 women and children through a variety of domestic violence support services including a 24-hour crisis hotline, weekly support groups, legal advocacy and an emergency safe house.

UCDVS is one of the core programs offered by BHcare, a state-licensed nonprofit that provides individuals and families with hope, dignity and respect as they battle mental illness, domestic violence and substance abuse. A product of mergers and partnerships between several area behavioral health providers, BHcare's history encompasses over 30 years of service to the Lower Naugatuck Valley, Greater New Haven and Shoreline communities. Combined services touched more than 12,000 lives in 2014.

In 2009, BHcare extended the safety net available to domestic abuse survivors by taking on the operations of Domestic Violence Services of Greater New Haven. This enabled UCDVS to provide services via sites in Ansonia and North Haven. All services are confidential, offered free of charge and available in 170 different languages, making it easier for people to seek assistance for a problem that is often shrouded in secrecy and shame.

“Victims of domestic abuse tend to be paralyzed by fear. They feel as though there is no way out, and that they are somehow responsible for their situation,” explains Roberta Cook, President and CEO of BHcare. “As soon as a woman makes contact with us, we put her in touch with a certified domestic violence counselor who can provide the emotional support that is so crucial for her recovery.”

In addition, emergency shelter is available when a woman or her children are in immediate danger; separate arrangements can be made for sheltering male victims of domestic violence. UCDVS staff also help women navigate the complicated legal and criminal system, ensuring that violent offenders are appropriately prosecuted so that they are unable to hurt others. The center’s work in the community is focused on bringing light to the problem of domestic abuse, while offering resources and solutions.

A survivor who received services from UCDVS had this to say about the nonprofit's support. “With [their] help--- along with myself--- I am a stronger woman, I am a more confident woman, and most importantly, a free woman. I am free of fear, free of violence, free of insults and degradation, because I now know, that I deserve it.”

The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven has supported the work of BHcare for decades through multiple funds. The Anne Hope Bennett Fund is one fund that has granted funds for general operating support to maintain behavioral health, prevention and domestic violence services.

To learn more about the UCDVS and other community support services, please visit the [BHcare giveGreater.org® profile](https://www.giveGreater.org/profile).

Did You Know?

In a 2010 survey, the CDC determined that, “One in 3 women (32.9%) has experienced physical violence by an intimate partner.”

Source: “[The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report](#)”, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Helping Older People Remain Independent

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/301/Helping-Older-People-Remain-Independent-in-Greater-New-Haven.aspx>

Imagine what it must feel like to be unable to run basic errands or visit friends or family on your own. How difficult it must be to know that your health depends on seeing your doctor, yet you are unable to get to medical appointments. How upsetting it is to have your home and the independence you cherish threatened by the consequences of aging.

Fortunately, aging adults in Greater New Haven are assisted in maintaining their vitality, joy and independence through the support of Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers (IVCG). The nonprofit has been serving elders in the region for over 30 years. By educating and uniting individuals from religious and civic groups, the small nonprofit has established a core of volunteers who assist adults over age 60 through friendly visits and transportation services. Their efforts amount to approximately 500 hours of free services delivered to residents every month.



Volunteers with IVCG prepare Thanksgiving meals for delivery to elderly residents.

This past Thanksgiving, through a partnership with the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (among other area organizations), IVCG delivered 829 traditional holiday meals to area elders. The project utilized the assistance of 400 volunteers all working together to ensure that older individuals throughout the community experienced love and connection during the holiday.

Although this annual event magnifies the organization's impact, its true value is in the day-to-day services provided. Services that affect both the individuals who are directly touched, as well as the family members of those individuals, who struggle to meet their aging loved ones' needs.

"Your agency single-handedly gave my mother a reason to keep living when all the obstacles became too much," wrote Marilyn in a letter to IVCG on behalf of her mother, Ester. Marilyn noted that Ester was initially reluctant to have a volunteer visit her New Haven home. But after meeting her volunteer match, Gary, a deep bond formed. Over six years Gary visited Ester regularly, and as

Marilyn shared, Gary became Ester's "last and greatest friend." He was her "angel" who brought her joy in her final years.

Another individual who benefited from IVCG services thanked the organization for assistance in obtaining medical treatment:

"I'm thankful beyond my ability to express. I don't know what would have happened if IVCG had not jumped in to get it done against all obstacles. Your mission is a blessing in ways you can't imagine until you have experienced the uncertainty and insecurity of chronic illness. I should be back in action in a week or so and I have you to thank for that gift."

In addition to the compassionate aid provided by IVCG, their services result in valuable cost savings for the community.

"An hour or two of volunteer time can deflect a costly move to a health care facility, a move which is ultimately paid for by taxpayers," explained Kate Walton, Executive Director of IVCG.

IVCG is supported through the generosity of individual donations as well as grants from funders like The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven. Grants from The Community Foundation have been awarded from funds including the Partnership for Aging and Ophelia funds.

For more on how you can assist IVCG by volunteering or making a charitable contribution, please visit the [Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers giveGreater.org® profile](#).

Did You Know?

The Connecticut Legislative Commission on Aging reports that the number of residents age 65 and older is expected to grow by 57% between 2010 and 2040.

Source: "[Living in an Aging Connecticut](#)," Connecticut Legislative Commission on Aging.

Much-Needed Support for Mental Health

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/291/Much-Needed-Support-for-Mental-Health.aspx>

Few topics are as difficult to talk about as mental health. That reality leads many members of our community to struggle with depression, anxiety, addiction and more – all in silence. A Milford-based nonprofit has been battling the fear and confusion around mental health since 1957. Their efforts need our attention.

Bridges...A Community Support System, Inc. provides comprehensive mental health and addictions services to individuals of all ages. Their work focuses on residents living in Milford, Orange and West Haven. However, their reach extends well beyond. Through training services, media outreach and fundraising activities, the organization raises vital awareness for mental and behavioral health issues throughout Connecticut.

In July 2015, Bridges is holding a Mental Health First Aid Training. To date, the organization has provided 6,735 individuals with this important tool. Participants in the program earn continuing education credits while learning how to handle mental health emergencies such as panic attacks, suicide attempts, drug overdoses and more. Teachers, health professionals and first-responders are particularly good candidates for the training, but all are welcome as this knowledge is essential in supporting the health and safety of the community.

At the heart of every Bridges program is a focus on person-centered support. This individualized approach encompasses a wide range of services including 24-hour mental crisis support, tobacco cessation programs, vocational training, psychiatric services and more.

“When individuals come to us in need of help we take a wraparound approach,” explains Director of Fund Development & Communications, Marcy Hotchkiss. “We are not just focused on their immediate health concern or challenge; we are dedicated to empowering them so that they can meet their goals and live productive, fulfilling lives.”

The supportive, confidential counselors and staff at Bridges are very protective of their clients. This is a crucial component of making people feel comfortable and safe. However, it means that sharing the organization’s numerous success stories is a challenge. One such success, a young man in his 20’s, is happy to share his personal story and experience with the organization, as the support he received truly changed his life.

Omar connected with Bridges at the urging of his aunt, who felt his behavior had become reckless and worrisome. Having recently returned to Connecticut from Syria (his family left the US when he was 3), he was adjusting to a new culture while working at the family business. He longed to be “more American.” He wanted to improve his English and earn his GED in order to gain a more fulfilling job. Like many young adults, Omar wanted to establish his independence, finding his own place instead of living with an aunt and uncle. In the midst of these challenges, his beloved sister passed away from cancer, leaving him grief-stricken and overwhelmed with depression.



Omar. Photo courtesy of Bridges, A Community Support System.

Omar’s Bridges Clinician, Grace Thomas, introduced him to Jen Downing, the organization’s Vocational Counselor. Using a team approach, the three individuals worked together to assist Omar in getting healthier while working toward his goals.

Omar continued to work and take classes. Through perseverance, he secured a better job, one he really wanted with a national package delivery company that offers room for growth. He is now able to afford an apartment, and he is nearing the completion of an English as a Second Language course. When that is finished, he plans to take the test to earn his GED.

Grateful for the care he received at Bridges, Omar shares, “Everyone’s great, I had the best treatment and was treated like a king. I feel like I’m home here.” He has not only achieved many of his goals, creating a more fulfilling, enjoyable life for himself, but he has re-envisioned his future. Omar now dreams of going to college.

“I have no doubt that he will be successful, as he has already come so far! He is a true success already,” said Hotchkiss.

Recently, a \$100,000 general operating support grant from the Anne Hope Bennett and George W. Mixter [preference funds](#) at The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven was awarded to ensure the provision of valuable services to adults like Omar, as well as the prevention, mental health and addiction recovery programs Bridges offers to children and families.

To show your support or to learn more, please visit the [Bridges giveGreater.org®](https://bridgesgivegreater.org/) profile.

Did You Know?

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness ([NAMI](#)), in the U.S. “nearly 44 million adults experience mental illness in a given year.”

Source: “[Mental Health Facts in America](#)” infographic

Helping Greater New Haven's Hungry

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/288/Helping-Greater-New-Haven-s-Hungry.aspx>

Children in New Haven are going hungry. According to findings from Feeding America, nearly 1 out of 5 children living in New Haven County are food insecure. Jewish Family Service of New Haven (JFS) has increased their food assistance program to address this troubling concern.

It is not a new focus for the organization, which has been providing social services to residents in New Haven County and throughout Connecticut since 1881. However, with the help of a \$60,000 multi-year grant from The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven, JFS is able to expand their Food Pantry and Nutritional Health Clinic to serve more of those in need, while offering a wider variety of nutritious, fresh foods.

JFS endeavors to help anyone in need of support, serving individuals of all faiths and backgrounds. Their Food Pantry provides more than 300 families with monthly food assistance amounting to more than 10,000 lbs. of food.



Students of Gateway Community College's Nutrition and Dietetics Program advise Jewish Family Services clients on ways to eat healthy on a budget. Photo courtesy of Jewish Family Services.

In addition, given the vital importance of nutrition for children, JFS (in partnership with Women's Philanthropy of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven) began offering the Food4Kids program in the fall of 2013. The program, which has received support from [donor advised](#) funds at The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven, provides backpacks filled with food and snacks so that children who receive supplemental nutrition through school do not go hungry on the weekends.

Another partnership with Gateway Community College has enabled JFS to offer nutritional guidance as well. Recently students from the College's Nutrition and Dietetics program developed presentations and advised JFS clients on ways to eat healthy on a budget, along with tips for managing various health concerns through nutrition.

JFS's programs have been vital in addressing the immediate needs of our most vulnerable residents, including not only children but also the elderly, and the demands for aid continue to grow.

"In the past year we provided assistance to over 9,500 individuals," says Executive Director, Jonathan Garfinkle. "That is a 12% increase over last year." As such, many of JFS's services include counseling and education aimed at empowering people to support themselves during these challenging times.

"We want to be there for the emergency needs of the community, but our ultimate goal is to help people grow to support themselves."

In addition to their food assistance programs, the organization provides comprehensive social services including mental health counseling, adoption and foster care services, support groups, domestic violence services, employment assistance, elder adult services and more.

If you would like to support this longstanding organization, please visit the [Jewish Family Service of New Haven giveGreater.org](#)® page.

Did You Know?

According to the USDA, "food security" is when, "people have access, at all times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. At a minimum, this includes: 1) readily available, nutritionally adequate, and safe foods, and 2) assured ability to acquire personally acceptable foods in a socially acceptable way."

Source: [Hunger & Food Security Programs](#); United States Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture

For more information about hunger in Greater New Haven, read The Community Foundation's issue brief [Hunger: A Growing Problem](#).

A Voice for New Haven Youth

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/286/A-Voice-for-New-Haven-Youth.aspx>

It is hard to imagine life without social media, texting and online videos. Yet, that was the case in 2003 when Youth Rights Media (YRM) first incorporated. Although technology was less accessible back then, the pioneering young nonprofit focused on educating teens on their rights and responsibilities in expressing themselves as positive, proactive members of the community through the power of their collective voices.



Students learn valuable media and social skills through Youth Rights Media programming. Photo courtesy of Youth Rights Media.

For over 13 years, Youth Rights Media has recognized and valued youth as an untapped source of creativity, insight and compassion. They have helped students unleash their full potential by promoting confidence and providing the hands-on technical skills to create film, music, photography, social media and audio - all aimed at social justice.

Through a variety of programs held during the school year and over the summer, students work as paid interns learning the intricacies of creating effective media projects from interviewing skills and public speaking, to project management and video production. Students ultimately gain marketable media skills, but the true value is much greater.

Alumni of the YRM programs are eager to report just how powerful the nonprofit has been in changing their lives. Several recently reunited to reflect on their experiences. The interviews were coordinated, filmed and edited by Adina, a fellow alum who will be completing an internship this summer with a high-profile media organization in Manhattan.

Many alumni have gone on to pursue post-secondary education.

Chelsea, a former summer intern who is now a Media Studies major, enthusiastically reflected on her experience with YRM, “They teach us a lot of stuff that goes WAY beyond the realm of filming.”

Emmalise, who is now attending Southern Connecticut University, recalls that “Before coming to YRM, I was very quiet. I did not talk at all.” For her, YRM was “a big family, a place where you can feel comfortable and be yourself.”

Stephen also gained confidence and the ability to find his voice. He stated that prior to joining YRM, “I was not as organized as I am now. I didn’t really talk to people. I kept to myself. Working here encouraged me to be more social.” In regards to the efforts of the organization he explained, “We’re making the community aware, but we’re also being the voice of the people.”

Yasani, who attends Vassar College reported, “YRM taught me how to work with people. How to deal with different personalities on a project.” Not afraid to speak her mind, she noted, “I’m an activist, an anti-racism activist at school.”

Over the years, YRM has tackled difficult societal issues like the challenges faced by LGBT youth, dating violence, bullying, gender stereotypes, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), tobacco use and more. Their latest project explores the intersection of food insecurity and the school lunch program in New Haven. The final product, the documentary “[Fed: From Legislation to the Lunch Room](#)” premieres on Thursday, June 11th at the Yale University Art Gallery, 1111 Chapel Street, New Haven. You can view the trailer below:

Youth Rights Media is supported by individual donations and has been a recipient of a multi-year grant from The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven to help the organization empower youth to know, protect and advance their rights. To learn more about the organization and support their work with local youth, please visit the [Youth Rights Media giveGreater.org profile](#).

Did You Know?

There are more than 37,000 food-insecure children in New Haven County, alone.

Source: “[Childhood Hunger](#),” [www.CTFoodBank.org](#)

Safety and Peace for Refugees

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/285/Safety-and-Peace-for-Refugees.aspx>

Although he now plays with the carefree joy characteristic of most children, not long ago two-year-old Anas lived in fear with few toys of his own. The children and adults of war-torn or unstable countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Colombia and more, flee terrible conditions and persecution in search of a better life. One New Haven nonprofit greets these battered and frightened refugees with open arms.

Established in Connecticut over 30 years ago, IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services) helps refugees and displaced individuals find safety in the United States. By assisting approximately 500 refugees annually, 230 of which are new arrivals requiring resettlement, IRIS transforms pain and suffering into safety and peace, all while preparing individuals to assimilate into their new country.

When refugees first arrive in Connecticut, everything is new. Navigating daily life, such as utilizing public transportation, locating housing, purchasing food and adjusting to our many forms of technology, can all be difficult and intimidating. As a result, the agency offers virtually everything a refugee needs to adjust to life in the US, from English lessons to bus orientation, all teamed with loving care.

Recently approximately 15 women from Afghanistan participated in a stress-relieving yoga session. Although yoga classes are accessible throughout New Haven, in their native country such a communal, joyful activity would not have been possible.

All of the resettlement services provided by IRIS require the hands-on support of dedicated staff and volunteers. As Executive Director, Chris George explained, “Helping someone adjust to life in America requires intensive, one-on-one attention. Nothing is more helpful to a refugee than the comforting presence of one of our caseworkers or volunteers. A welcoming office space is also important.”

IRIS is planning to move to a new, larger location, with help from a grant by The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven. The new building will provide greater space for group activities and includes private meeting rooms, which, as George explained, “Are essential when serving those who have experienced trauma and are anxious about what the future holds.”

The Community Foundation also recently awarded IRIS a multi-year, general operating support grant to help the nonprofit fulfill its mission and offer refugees and displaced individuals the education and foundational tools that will help them become vibrant members of the Greater New Haven community.



Paulina and her son Gustave. Photo courtesy of IRIS.

Tito, his wife Paulina and their young son Gustave, are only one example of IRIS's important work. Just two months after arriving in the United States, Tito had already started working. The family was then able to begin the complicated process of reuniting with Paulina's three older children, who she painfully had to leave behind.

It is hard to imagine a life of constant fear and worry, one where your personal safety and livelihood is continually threatened. Yet, that is what life is like for many refugees. The staff and volunteers of IRIS work to allay such fears and foster the joy and peace that all people deserve. Their work is greatly appreciated in New Haven, as evidenced by the organization's recent selection as a "Best Local Charity" in the Best of New Haven Readers' Poll for 2015.

For more information or to support IRIS, please visit their giveGreater.org® page.

Did You Know?

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "A refugee is someone who has fled from his or her home country and cannot return because he or she has a well-founded fear of persecution based on religion, race, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group." The latest data available indicates that there are 15.4 million refugees around the world.

Source: "[Refugee Admissions](#)," US Department of State: Diplomacy in Action

A Solid Education Starts Early

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/281/A-Solid-Education-Starts-Early.aspx>

For 36 years, little ones in the West Haven community have benefited from the comprehensive, caring education offered at the West Haven Child Development Center (WHCDC). As the area's only accredited early education program offering care on a sliding scale, the popular program has a long waiting list.

“The need for quality early education is great, and we know it is an important component in school readiness, but there is very limited funding available to support implementation,” reports Executive Director, Dr. Patrice Farquharson.



Professional staff at the WHCDC explore new activities that take a comprehensive approach to learning.

Recognizing this need, The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven has been supporting the work of the WHCDC since 1993, including a 2005 grant from The Foundation's Community Fund for Women & Girls to create a playground area for infants and toddlers.

According to Farquharson, the funding has been vital in “continuing to support families in a warm, secure and educationally stimulating environment, while also attracting additional support.”

Foundation funds and gifts from individuals help the Center care for 173 infants and toddlers annually. More than 50% of these children come from families with income levels below the state median. In addition, many are raised in single-parent homes.

At the Center, children benefit from the expertise of highly trained staff members including a nurse, social worker, and four teachers who have earned the Early Childhood Teaching Credential. Children not only gain education in core areas such as literacy, language and social interaction, but also receive health services including dental and weight screenings, along with training in healthy living, nutrition and even gardening.

In 2012, this led to recognition from First Lady Michelle Obama's "[Let's Move](#)" initiative as a center of excellence in 2012 and 2014. The WHCDC is the only organization in the northeast to receive this award for their work in addressing childhood obesity. The Center was also recently featured as a success story on the Let's Move Childcare site for their innovative solutions to encouraging physical activity in children and their families.

With exceptional care like that, it is easy to understand why the Center's services are in such high demand. A recent multi-year grant from The Foundation's Peter & Judith Schurman and Joseph & Susan Bishop preference funds is helping to meet the demand, but more support is always needed.

To learn more about the West Haven Child Development Center or to donate to their programs, visit their [profile on giveGreater.org](#)[®].

Did You Know?

If at-risk children do not receive quality early childhood education they are 25% more likely to drop out of school, and 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime.

Source: [OunceofPrevention.org](#)

Celebrating 20 Years of Arts, Ideas and Community

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/278/Celebrating-20-Years-of-Arts-Ideas-and-Community.aspx>



Every June, the New Haven community unites in celebration of the magical power of artistic expression. From music and dance, to theater performances and important conversations, the International Festival of Arts & Ideas has something for everyone.

The popular citywide event has been bringing together artists and thinkers from around the globe for 20 years. What all started as a simple idea – to shine a light on New Haven’s rich artistic and educational culture – has expanded to include hundreds of events drawing artists and visitors from around the world.

As Festival co-founder Anne Calabresi recently reflected, “We are all partners in each other’s tragedies and companions in each other’s joys.” That sentiment cuts to the heart of what the Festival is really about, which is bringing people together. It is ultimately a platform for open conversation and a shared celebration of the human spirit.

The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven has been supporting the Festival from the very beginning, providing seed funding that helped it to gain its place as one of the Northeast’s foremost art festivals. Most recently, The Foundation’s Arts Fund was used to provide a multi-year grant. Various [donor advised funds](#) have also supported the cultural and economic advancement that the

Festival brings to the community. This funding helps to make the programs more accessible to residents, with over 80% of Festival events available free of charge.

The Foundation's relationship with organizers of the International Festival of Arts & Ideas is a collaborative one. "We are working together toward building a stronger community," shares Thomas Griggs, Director of Development for the Festival. "We are true partners."

As for what is in store for the Festival this year, Griggs explained that, "We don't see our 20th year as a birthday or anniversary, but rather as a graduation. We are looking back to where we came from, while looking forward to the future." This graduation celebration honors the more than 2 million participants who have enjoyed the Festival over the past 19 years.

Some of the highlights of the 2015 Festival, which runs from June 12-27th, include:

- [Rodney King](#) – It has been 24 years since the beating of Rodney King exploded into riots, as racial tensions flared. In this one-man show written and performed by Roger Guenveur Smith, the life and struggles of King are vividly portrayed, bringing attention to racial issues that continue to plague our country. (June 18 - 21, 2015, Long Wharf Theatre)
- [Carmen de Lavallade](#), "As I Remember It" – Witness a living legend, as this renowned performer, dancer, choreographer and former Yale professor reflects on her 84 years of life. Through captivating dance, film and the spoken word, de Lavallade shares how she broke glass ceilings in the 70s as an African American woman exploding onto the art scene in New Haven. (June 25 - 27, 2015, Yale Repertory Theatre)
- [Cry You One](#) – This outdoor performance by New Orleans-based Mondo Bizarro and ArtSpot Productions utilizes dance and music to share the stories of South Louisiana's diminishing wetlands, while also honoring and celebrating the people who live there. Set amidst the natural backdrop of the Regional Water Authority's Maltby Lakes, this unique performance keeps participants actively involved as they move along with the performers. (June 13 - 21, 2015, Maltby Lakes)

Did You Know?

In 2010, 8.1 million Connecticut residents, along with 1.1 million visitors, attended arts and culture events in the state.

Source: "The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences in the State of Connecticut (Fiscal Year 2010)," Americans for the Arts
www.americansforthearts.org

New Haven Students Benefit from Rowing Program

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/277/New-Haven-Students-Benefit-from-Rowing-Program.aspx>



These indoor rowing machines help New Haven youth develop the strength and stamina needed to row as part of an eight-person crew. With the help of a Year Round Small Grant from The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven, the Canal Dock Boathouse Inc. will provide the opportunity for students to test their skills out on the water.

A mention of the sport of rowing may elicit thoughts of boats parting the waters of the Charles River in Boston, or perhaps visions of the English elite rowing on the River Thames. Traditionally, however, New Haven is not what comes to mind. The Canal Dock Boathouse Inc. (CDBI) is looking to change that perception by encouraging rowing in the city, starting with its youth.

The CDBI has been running free indoor rowing programs for students at Metropolitan Business Academy and James Hillhouse High School. Led by volunteer coaches, the programs meet twice a week after school. Students work on rowing machines to gain physical strength and endurance, while also learning correct form and the importance of working together. Of course, they have a lot of fun too.

That fun is soon to grow as the result of a \$3,500 Year Round Small Grant from The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven, which will assist the organization in taking the programs to the water. The move will give students a more hands-on feel for the sport.

John Pescatore, one of CDBI's volunteer coaches, is eager to enhance the program before the end of the 2015 school year. "Students are excited to see what real rowing is like. The indoor program has been excellent, but there is nothing quite like your first experience on the water."

Rowing requires stamina, concentration and teamwork – valuable skills for any young adult. The sport also unleashes a passion for the water that is not always available to children living in the city.

The rowing programs offered by the Canal Dock Boathouse Inc. are just a piece of what the New Haven nonprofit has to offer. The City of New Haven is actively developing the Canal Dock Boathouse, which will be leased to CDBI. Located on the New Haven Harbor, adjacent to Long Wharf Pier, the Boathouse will be a hub for boating enthusiasts, as well as those who share an appreciation for [New Haven waterways](#).

The final project will include a waterfront promenade, dock space and boat storage. In addition, the organization will continue to provide recreational activities based at the New Haven Harbor and extending to the Quinnipiac River. For more information, visit www.canaldock.org.

Did You Know?

Rowing – or crew, as it is often referred to in the U.S. – has its roots as a school sport right here in Greater New Haven, when the first American college rowing club was formed at Yale University in 1843.

Source: [US Rowing](#)

Preserving Native American Culture in New Haven

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/273/Preserving-Native-American-Culture-in-New-Haven.aspx>



With the help of a \$3,000 [Year Round Small Grant](#) from The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven, the Connecticut Native American Inter-Tribal Urban Council is focusing its efforts on educating Native American youth on the practices of their ancestors.

Tucked away in a small storefront at 545 Whalley Avenue, you will find the Connecticut Native American Inter-Tribal Urban Council. The small office that serves as the organization's headquarters is easy to miss amidst the activity of one of New Haven's busiest streets. That is a shame, because inside is a nonprofit dedicated to preserving a key piece of history - the cultures and traditions of our earliest inhabitants.

The Council, as it is known for short, was founded in 2010 to ensure that the spiritual and cultural activities of Native Americans live on in New Haven and throughout Connecticut. Led by James Rawlings, an elder of the Seaconke Wampanoag Tribal Council, the small nonprofit has expanded its

reach in the past several years by collaborating with local organizations, regional tribes and Yale University's Blue Feather Drum Group.

Through activities such as naming ceremonies, pow-wows, storytelling, drumming lessons and craft making, Native American youth are able to uncover and further develop the depth of their identities.

There is great need for these programs, according to Rawlings.

“All over Indian Country the challenge to our continued survival rests in working with our youth to secure their future in our traditional ways.” He further explains that cities like New Haven are at particular risk of losing cultural awareness given the “danger assimilation presents to our youth in urban centers.”

The future of any group depends on the support of its children. In addition, the ability to experience one's heritage fosters a sense of pride and connection. Educational programs like these are vital to the Native American community, and the cultural history of the region as a whole.

If you would like to support the ongoing educational efforts of the Connecticut Native American Inter-Tribal Urban Council, please contact James E. Rawlings at 203-215-1521.

Did You Know?

According to 2010 census records, of the 5.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives living in the United States, 31.6% are children (under the age of 18), whereas in the total population only 24% of individuals belong to that age group.

Source: “[American Indian Children and Families](#),” National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), www.nicwa.org

Guide Dogs Give Veterans Freedom

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/270/Guide-Dogs-Give-Veterans-Freedom.aspx>



Those who serve in the military often do so to fight for freedom. Ironically, through the tragedies of war, far too many experience injuries that can take away their personal freedom by affecting their sight. The Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind is dedicated to helping these individuals live without boundaries – restoring the freedoms of mobility and independence for veterans and others who are visually impaired.

Dog owners know that their pets can bring unconditional love and friendship. The exceptional dogs trained by the Guide Dog Foundation offer much more to their owners: greater confidence, fewer mishaps, and the ability to tackle challenging environments. These assistance dogs help those who

are blind, visually impaired, or experiencing other disabilities to maneuver through their world on their own terms.

It is a need that is unfortunately growing steadily. An estimated 16 percent of injured veterans returned from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan with serious eye injuries. Likewise, traumatic brain injuries have led to impaired vision and mobility challenges for many. Furthermore, as our population ages, an increasing number of individuals are experiencing vision problems that require help with daily activities.

Guide dogs are able to act as the eyes for their human companions, becoming an inseparable team. Through comprehensive training, these special animals learn to follow commands to help their companions navigate their environment. The dogs even learn intelligent disobedience, an amazing skill that enables them to disregard commands when those commands might put the team in jeopardy.

The training involved is extensive and thorough. As such, breeding and training dogs, as well as providing ongoing aftercare services, costs an estimated \$50,000 per dog. The Guide Dog Foundation covers these costs in full, eliminating the financial obstacles for those in need.

The Guide Dog Foundation does not receive government funding. Instead, it relies on the support of caring donors and funders throughout the country. In Connecticut, approximately 5,500 donors support the Guide Dog Foundation; among them is Mildred Kelly, who provides support through a [designated fund](#) at The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven. The Mildred A. Kelly Fund was established in 1966 by bequest in memory of Mildred's father, Fergus Kelly, and supports several nonprofit organizations that were important to Mildred during her lifetime.

To learn more or to make a charitable donation, please visit [The Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind's profile](#) on giveGreater.org®.

Did You Know?

According to the 2012 National Health Interview Survey Report, 20.6 million Americans have experienced vision loss.

Source: "[Facts and Figures on Adults with Vision Loss](#)"; American Foundation for the Blind, www.afb.org

Help, Hope and Hair for CT Cancer Patients

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/262/Help-Hope-and-Hair-for-CT-Cancer-Patients.aspx>



Among its variety of services, CancerCare provides **customized wigs, caps and turbans** to women who have hair loss due to cancer treatments.

When a woman is diagnosed with cancer, it affects much more than just her health. Many women coping with the side effects of chemotherapy also lose their hair. This loss can take a significant toll on a woman's confidence, sense of femininity and wholeness. CancerCare, a national nonprofit established in 1944, is here to restore the dignity and identity in these women, enabling them to heal fully.

CancerCare's Connecticut office upholds the organization's mission of bringing help and hope to all of those affected by cancer including individuals, families, caregivers and the bereaved. They fulfill their mission through a variety of services including counseling, support groups, educational publications, workshops and financial assistance – all free of charge to the men and women they serve.

One of CancerCare's popular programs provides wigs to women who have lost their hair due to cancer treatments. The power of a beautiful wig can't be understated. As one woman who participated in the program shared, "I was so anxious to come here today to try on wigs. I cried all morning but once I came here you helped me to relax and I actually had fun! I feel beautiful for the first time in months!"

CancerCare's support is multi-dimensional. Although women are initially referred to be fitted for wigs, they leave with much more than the customized wigs, caps and turbans that are provided. They are also assessed to uncover financial burdens, as well as unmet physical or emotional needs.

In the case of Barbara from Orange, during her personal wig fitting the oncology social worker who was working with her learned that Barbara had not been able to afford the nutritional supplement her doctor recommended. Through a quick screening, it was determined that Barbara was eligible for CancerCare's financial assistance program, which would allow her to afford the appropriate nutrition care.

Similarly, Margaret from New Haven shared with her oncology social worker that she was having a great deal of pain from lymphedema, and was also struggling to explain her condition to her grandchildren. CancerCare gave her a grant to cover the cost of a lymphedema sleeve. In addition, Margaret was given a [Comfort Pillow Activity Kit](#) for each of her grandchildren, along with a copy of "In Mommy's Garden," tools designed to help the children understand and process the challenging emotions that come with cancer.

Beginning in 2012, CancerCare Connecticut's work received a \$30,000 multi-year grant from The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven to help the organization provide outreach and support services to families affected by cancer in Greater New Haven. The grant was made possible through funds at The Foundation such as the Nathan and Ellen Holbrook Fund, established in 1960 by bequest.

For more information, or to support the emotional and physical needs of those with cancer, please visit [CancerCare's giveGreater.org® profile](#).

Did You Know?

A 2008 literature review assessing the impact of chemotherapy on quality of life found that, "Hair loss consistently ranked amongst the most troublesome side effects, was described as distressing, and may affect the body image."

Source: "Chemotherapy-induced alopecia and effects on quality of life among women with breast cancer: a literature review", PubMed [Psychooncology](#). 2008 Apr;17(4):317-28.

Making College Accessible – There’s An App for That

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/261/Making-College-Accessible-There-s-An-App-for-That.aspx>

The cafeteria of Hill Regional Career High School will be buzzing on Friday, April 10th from 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. It won't be breakfast that has students talking. Instead, students and teachers will experience a technological treat, an App-a-thon aimed at demystifying the college application process.



These Connecticut Peer Leaders were trained to serve as experts on various apps to help make College more accessible to students.

Utilizing technology such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, an App-a-thon introduces students and educators to an exciting array of apps that make college more accessible. The apps, which were developed through the technical expertise of Facebook, are available at [College App Map](#). By combining the support of social networking, the excitement of online gaming, and the practicality of price calculators and other research tools, these apps encourage students to envision college as part of their future.

The App-a-thon is an innovative program of College Summit, a national nonprofit dedicated to helping low-income students access a college education. With the support of a 2014 grant of \$2,000 from The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven, College Summit Connecticut Peer Leaders were trained on the technology so they could ultimately serve as experts on the various apps. During the App-a-thon and beyond, these Peer Leaders will guide their fellow students — along with educators — through the challenges of preparing for college.

College Summit was founded in 1996, with the Connecticut office opening in New Haven in 2008. Over the past seven years, the office has grown dramatically, partnering with 14 high schools in two districts, and impacting nearly 6,000 students.

For more information, along with student success stories, visit [College Summit Connecticut's website](#).

Did You Know?

According to findings from the Pew Research Center, among Millennials (25-32 years old) who are employed full time, those who graduated from college earn \$17,500 more than those who only graduated from high school.

Source: "[The Rising Cost of Not Going to College](#)"; PewSocialTrends.org

Books & Pediatricians: A Healthy Pair

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/260/Books-Pediatricians-A-Healthy-Pair.aspx>

For young children, doctor's visits can be scary. Toys or lollipops are often offered to help comfort and console. Thanks to one Madison-based nonprofit, a healthier gift makes pediatric checkups a pleasure, while encouraging the child's development for years to come.



Reach Out and Read Connecticut distributes nearly 70,000 books each year.

Reach Out and Read Connecticut, the local office of a national organization, teams with health care providers to promote literacy in low-income children. At each pediatric checkup, the medical provider educates caregivers on the importance of reading, giving them a new book to take home. The book fulfills multiple roles, calming and engaging the child, while also enabling the medical provider to assess the child's development. Additionally, the gifted book becomes part of a "prescription" to the caregiver to read aloud daily to the young child.

Dr. Cathy Wiley, Medical Director for Reach Out and Read Connecticut, explains the power of this program through the story of one family. "When I gave a book to the youngest child, the parents explained that they kept every book in a special bag and each night they took out the books and read them with their three children." The magic of that simple act meant that the family, "not only internalized the reading message, but they absorbed the practice of reading routines into their daily life." Carla, a member of that reading family, has since gone on to graduate from college, an achievement that is rare for the disadvantaged families that Dr. Wiley serves.

The American Academy of Pediatrics promotes Reach Out and Read's approach as an essential component of well-child visits. The innovative program is also supported by 15 published research studies demonstrating its success in developing early literacy skills and fostering healthy brain and social/emotional development. Children served by Reach Out and Read are read to more often, have better expressive and receptive language skills, and are better prepared for success in school.

Support from individuals and foundations, such as The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven (which awarded a grant in 2013 from unrestricted funds and the Henry E. and Nancy Horton Bartels Fund for Education) help the organization assist nearly 40,000 children and families through 71 clinical locations throughout Connecticut and distribute nearly 70,000 new books each year.

To learn more about this nonprofit, read the [Reach out and Read Connecticut](#) profile [with video] on www.giveGreater.org®.

Did You Know?

90% of brain development takes place during the first 5 years of a child's life.

Source: Zero to Three, [FAQs on the Brain](#)

20 Years of Support for Area Youth

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/242/20-Years-of-Support-for-Area-Youth.aspx>

What happens when you team a research-based center affiliated with the Yale School of Medicine with a vibrant network of organizations serving New Haven's youth? The result is an experienced and dedicated training center that empowers youth organizations in New Haven and statewide.



Participants in the 2014 YOUth Matter event.

Known as the Youth Development Training and Resource Center (YDTRC), this capacity-building initiative started in 1994 as a collaboration between [Citywide Youth Coalition](#) and [The Consultation Center](#). Through youth development courses, specialized trainings and ongoing technical assistance, YDTRC supports and unites the diverse organizations serving Connecticut's youth.

YDTRC Director, Deborah Stewart explained the evolution of the organization. "The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven provided critical match support from the very beginning of our founding." She went on to note that ongoing Foundation assistance has, "enabled many folks to take advantage of the YDTRC collaborative training, special projects, mini grants, consultation and more, especially in New Haven, but also across the region and throughout Connecticut."

In addition to training adults to support the unique development of adolescents ages 12-19, the YDTRC inspires youth to use their voices and actions to make a difference.



Members of the Hill Youth Action Team with Deb Stewart.

[The Hill Youth Action Team](#) is one of their successful youth engagement projects. Composed of a group of 10-12 high school students in the Hill neighborhood of New Haven, the team proactively works to improve their community by addressing tough issues such as preventing substance abuse and bullying, and encouraging better youth and police relationships. The young leaders involved in this program learn to collaborate with adults, while the adults gain keen insight into the challenges adolescents face.



Two Spoken Word performers pose with the keynote speaker, Frank Brady, at the 2014 YOUth Matter event. (L-R) Rasheedah Shahid, Frank E. Brady, Najay Henry.

This past October, in celebration of their 20th anniversary, Stewart and her team led a “YOUth Matter” event at Gateway Community College. The event drew over 100 area youth leaders and adult supporters/advisors and included interactive sessions focused on uniting young people and caring adults in order to strengthen New Haven. One participant summarized the impact of the gathering as, “Hearing the stories and experiences from both sides of youth-adult partnerships reminds me what I’m working towards and what is possible.”

For more information on the Youth Development Training and Resource Center, please visit their website: ydtrc.org.

Did You Know?

According to the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP), “Positive youth development involves civic involvement and civic engagement—youth contribute through service to their communities.”

Source: FindYouthInfo.gov

Spreading Reading's Power in New Haven

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/247/Spreading-Readings-Power-in-New-Haven.aspx>

Do you remember what it felt like to huddle together on the floor with your friends for story time? Enchanted by the words and thrilled by the pictures as you anxiously awaited the turning of each page. Listening to a story brings joy to children and adults alike. Yet, when a child realizes they can make their own magic through reading, with their very own book – that is something truly special.

The more than 375 volunteers who support New Haven Reads fully understand the joy and potential that reading provides. They are dedicated to supporting the small New Haven nonprofit as the organization promotes critical literacy skills through tutoring, college preparation, and a community book bank, ultimately touching the lives of over 500 students every week.

“Part of the tremendous impact that New Haven Reads is able to make comes from the support of our parents – in conjunction with their children in our program,” explained Executive Director, Kirsten Levinsohn.



A tutor paired with a young boy in the one-on-one after school tutoring program offered by New Haven Reads on Bristol Street.

Levinsohn shared the story of a seventh grade student who had been failing in school for four years prior to working with New Haven Reads staff. With the assistance of the girl's grandmother and the tenacity of the organization's staff, the young girl was given the extra educational attention and support she needed to thrive.

The beneficial one-on-one tutoring programs provided by New Haven Reads are extremely popular, with students receiving 698 tutoring hours per week in 2014. However, in that same year there was also a waiting list of 103 students hoping for assistance. Responding to the need, The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven awarded New Haven Reads a 3-year grant of \$90,000 to enable more families to receive literacy assistance.

To learn more, or to offer your support for literacy services, please visit [New Haven Reads](#) on [giveGreater.org](#)®.

Did You Know?

According to the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy, 14% of adults had “below basic” literacy skills. In addition, 55% of adults with “below basic” prose (reading) skills did not graduate from high school.

Source: [National Center for Education Statistics](#)

A New Reach toward a Better Life

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/249/A-New-Reach-toward-a-Better-Life.aspx>

Dominic was just 5 years old when he started having seizures. He struggled in school for several years before his mother, Eve, learned that her son was living with autism. Like many parents, Eve would do anything for her child, including moving hundreds of miles to Connecticut in search of a better life.



Each year, New Reach staff (above) help provide families with shelter, housing, stabilization and furniture services to over 1,900 individuals.

Eve and 8-year-old Dominic moved in with family, initially living in an attic as Eve worked to fulfill their dreams. She set goals for her small family, but found it difficult to juggle Dominic's care on her own. Eve finally found the resources and assistance she needed through the Family School Connection (FSC) program, a partnership between Fair Haven K-8 School in New Haven and New Reach, a New Haven-based nonprofit organization.

New Reach, which was formerly known as New Haven Home Recovery, assists women like Eve in securing safe housing, affordable furniture and educational support services, ultimately helping families get back on their feet after times of turmoil.

In reference to the organization's name, CEO, Kellyann Day, MSW explains, "When people ask us why 'New Reach'? Now we can tell them, it means reaching for your potential, it means helping others reach their potential, it means reaching for and attaining our mission."

For Eve and Dominic, the assistance of the New Reach program meant a new home and a stronger sense of independence. Eve began volunteering at Fair Haven K-8 School, and her dedication and hard work turned into a paid position in the special education program.

The Community Foundation has supported New Reach throughout the organization's development. Recently in 2014, the FSC program received a three-year grant of \$60,000 so that more families could reach for better, more stable lives. The funding provides casework services to the many students at Fair Haven K-8 School. Students like Brianna, who at just 6 years old lost her mother to cancer, causing her to question why other girls had a mom when she did not. Her father Ignacio was left to raise her and her sister, Samantha, 8, on his own until the Family School Connection program stepped in. Zuly, a Case Worker assisted Ignacio in establishing a budget and accessing resources that enabled him to secure a home for his family. Zuly also provided life skills and parenting support so that Ignacio and his daughters could grow together as a loving family.

For more information on New Reach and the many services they provide, as well as, ways you can support their good work, please visit their [profile on giveGreater.org](#).

Did You Know?

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, in January 2014 on any given night 578,424 people were homeless in the US. Of that figure, 37% were people in families.

Source: "[Snapshot of Homelessness](#)"; National Alliance to End Homelessness

A Place for Nurturing Artistic Talents: Creative Arts Workshop

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/204/A-Place-for-Nurturing-Artistic-Talents-Creative-Arts-Workshop.aspx>

Nestled in the heart of New Haven's art district is the Creative Arts Workshop (CAW), a home for seasoned and aspiring artists of all ages. Since 1961, CAW has enabled area residents to nurture their creative talents, and appreciate the showcased works of local and international artists.



circa 1961: Students at the Creative Arts Workshop learn how to express their talents. A Foundation grant is helping this association in its initial efforts to promote artistic aptitudes.

The Community Foundation has supported its Audubon Street neighbor with unrestricted funds for the Workshop's fine arts programming and free art exhibitions since CAW first opened in 1961. In 2013, Foundation funding helped CAW serve 2,115 students and offer 315 classes ranging from family pottery and origami programs, to free onsite art classes for three New Haven Senior Centers.

The value of these programs cannot be measured in numbers, but is more aptly expressed through the human potential they create. "I will always appreciate whoever is responsible for opening the Workshop," said one CAW participant recently. "It's where my artistic side developed, and it was a place where I could exercise my artistic talents."



Looking for a Unique Gift for the holidays?

The Creative Arts Workshop gallery features exquisite items from local and international artists in their annual [Celebration of American Crafts](#), going on now through Christmas Eve. Visit the gallery to purchase artisanal glass, ceramics, jewelry, decorative fibers, custom clothing, and handcrafted furniture. The proceeds from your purchase directly support the artists and CAW's community programming.

In addition to unrestricted funds, Creative Arts Workshop has received support from the Richard A. Rathbone Memorial, and the Charles Long and Roe Curtis Family funds. To learn more about Creative Arts Workshop, or to support its efforts please visit giveGreater.org.

Did You Know?

Arts not only contribute to the enrichment of the community, but also drive revenue. In 2011, the production of arts and cultural goods contributed more than \$504 billion to the United States economy, composing 3.25% of the GDP (gross domestic product.)

Source: [National Endowment for the Arts](#) (PDF), 2013.

Everyone is Home at Farnam Neighborhood House

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/209/Everyone-is-Home-at-Farnam-Neighborhood-House.aspx>

Although the programs and people have changed over its 95-year history, Farnam Neighborhood House has remained true to its original goal – providing a “home away from home” for New Haven children. As the city’s oldest neighborhood center, located in Fair Haven, Farnam House has brought smiles to the faces of thousands of children of all ages.

Being a “Farnam kid” means access to a safe, enriching environment that includes preschool, before and after-school programs, recreational activities, youth leadership training, summer camp programs, and more. Farnam’s popular Bidy Basketball program serves over 350 boys and girls annually, and has produced such athletic successes as [Queen Smith](#) and Geary Claxton.



Farnam Neighborhood House youth making bags filled with toiletries and health information for a community event.

Many of the 3000 children served by Farnam House give back by participating in volunteer activities that contribute to a healthier community. The outcome is a win-win, as these children show improvements in communication and social skills, along with better conflict resolution abilities and greater academic standings.

According to Executive Director, Liz Gambardella, “98% of Farnam families have reported a positive difference in their children after participating in programs.” In order to capitalize on such success, Gambardella and staff involve parents as much as possible. Through a variety of parent education programs including a newsletter, participation in the [New Haven Public Schools Parent University](#), and seminars on fatherhood, they encourage stronger, more engaged families.

Farnam Neighborhood House is able to provide such a wealth of services to New Haven families due to individual donations as well as general operating support grants from unrestricted funds and grants from designated funds such as the Eleanor and Henry Farnam and Elizabeth Kingsley Harvey funds at The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. For more information on the Farnam Neighborhood House, please view their profile on [giveGreater.org](#).

Did You Know?

The National Center for Children in Poverty reports that children in low-income families display delays in cognitive and behavioral development as early as 2 years of age, when compared to children in higher-income families.

Source: "[Young Children at Risk National and State Prevalence of Risk Factors](#)," National Center for Children in Poverty

Building Community One Neighborhood at a Time

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/220/Building-Community-One-Neighborhood-at-a-Time.aspx>

New Haven's many neighborhoods create a tapestry rich in history. Each city section has its own unique characteristics and challenges, and ingenuity is necessary to weave them together as one strong community. Neighborhood Housing Services is up to the task. Their pioneering programs bring energy-efficient, affordable homes, along with education and community engagement to New Haven's most disadvantaged neighborhoods.



Hope Morris and family in front of their Beaver Hills dream home.

Spurred by a \$65,000 multi-year grant from The Community Foundation, since September 2013 Neighborhood Housing Services has rehabilitated nine houses to meet historic and Energy 3.0 standards. They expect to complete three more by the start of 2015, for a total of 19 housing units available to New Haven families. Funding was made possible, in part, through The Community Foundation's Neighborhood Endowment Fund, established in 1992 as a [preference fund](#) to support tangible, people-oriented activities that build indigenous leadership and a sense of pride.

In addition to home renovations, Neighborhood Housing Services offers comprehensive education for homebuyers and homeowners, while also, as Executive Director, James Paley aptly expresses, “connecting residents with each other, and empowering them to reclaim their neighborhoods.” In order to fulfill that multifaceted mission the organization initiated more than 3,716 volunteer hours and hosted 25 volunteer events in 2014.

One such event sponsored by The Community Foundation brought residents of the Hill neighborhood together to plan the revival of the [Stevens Street Community Garden](#). The “[Evening in the Garden Event](#)” included a barbecue, along with arts and crafts projects for area children. The gathering raised interest in additional gardening plots and led to two subsequent volunteer-driven events.



Local boys show off their festive pumpkins, painted at the “Evening in the Garden” Event.

Neighborhood Housing Services knows that the strength of a city is based on the strength of its neighborhoods. They seek to keep New Haven strong by educating, uniting, and empowering residents. For more information, visit their profile on giveGreater.org.

Did You Know?

In 2011, The White House released a “Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative Report” highlighting five key elements to neighborhood revitalization and building strong communities.

Learn more by reading the [Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative Report](#) [PDF, 529KB].

Preserving New Haven's Architectural History

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/223/Preserving-New-Haven-s-Architectural-History.aspx>

There is no greater display of a city's artistic and cultural heritage than its architecture. The historic districts from Wooster Square to City Point, and the revered buildings and homes found there, are constant reminders of New Haven's deeply rooted past.

A small area nonprofit, the New Haven Preservation Trust, is focused on honoring and protecting that storied past through advocacy, education, and collaboration. Their efforts make New Haven a place-of-pride for residents and visitors alike.



A crowd of over 100 attended this New Haven Preservation Trust 2014 Arts & Ideas tour on Edgehill Road.

“When people appreciate the heritage of their city,” the Trust’s Anita Buckmaster explains, “they understand the negative impact when a historic property is threatened by demolition or severe alteration.”

Over the past two years, the Trust’s part-time staff, with the assistance of a \$20,000 general operating support grant from The Community Foundation, has helped area residents and visitors cultivate a deeper appreciation for New Haven’s architectural treasures. Reaching more than 1,000 people through walking tours, public lectures, and workshops, The Trust emphasized the values of preserving the past. These values go beyond the artistic and aesthetic, translating to tax credits for area residents.

In fact, New Haven is the largest recipient of State Tax Credits for Historic Preservation, with 76% of all applicants and \$3.4 million in renovations (as of 2013) originating from the city, due in part to the Trust’s grassroots efforts.

Their latest educational endeavor looks to a more global audience via a gallery-style website highlighting New Haven's Modernist architecture. The site, NewHavenModern.org displays the many buildings and houses that exhibit Modernist design. The very building that the The Community Foundation calls home is featured for its clean, modern lines.

To learn more about the New Haven Preservation Trust's work, please [view their profile](#) on giveGreater.org[®].

Did You Know?

Historic preservation projects create jobs, grow tax revenue, help preserve or increase property values, promote tourism, and encourage cohesiveness within communities.

Source: [*Economic Reasons For Investing In Historic Preservation*](#), Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Making Loss Easier for Young Children

<https://www.cfgnh.org/About/NewsEvents/ViewArticle/tabid/96/ArticleId/227/Making-Loss-Easier-for-Young-Children.aspx>

Loss is difficult for adults. Imagine what it must feel like to a small child who is just learning to navigate the world. The caring team at Friends Center for Children strives to make challenges like loss, trauma, and the stresses of living in poverty easier for the infants, toddlers, and preschoolers they serve.

Center Director, Allyx Schiavone explains, “We have multiple children navigating different forms of loss. We see this every day. We see this through relationship changes such as divorce or separation; we see it through the death of loved ones. We also see it when families or teachers leave.”



Friends Center for Children supports children who endure adverse experiences.

With partial funding from a \$15,000 [unrestricted](#) grant from The Community Foundation, the Friends Center for Children initiated the Adverse Childhood Experiences Pilot Program. That comprehensive plan identified children who endured adverse experiences, educated staff and parents on how to support those children, and ultimately reshaped the Center’s early childhood education model to include ongoing social, emotional, and mental health components.

Early on in the program’s evolution, it became clear there were few tools appropriate for the young children, ages 3 months to 5 years of age, Friends Center supports through its year-round early

childhood education services. Social Work Consultant, Bonnie Muller was inspired by a creative solution; a heart-warming song, which was developed into the following video: [link removed]

Through the use of the “Presence now. . .and then” song and video, along with a variety of other research-based tools, Friends Center educators were able to comfort children, while also guiding parents to recognize and address emotional issues. Studies have indicated that addressing adverse childhood experiences through such supportive measures may promote fewer at-risk behaviors and a greater sense of well-being throughout a child’s life.

To learn more about Friends Center for Children, and to support their innovative early childhood education programs, please visit giveGreater.org®.

Did You Know?

After screening 17,000 adults, the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study concluded negative childhood experiences are strongly associated with the leading causes of illness and death, along with poor quality of life.

Source: Injury Prevention & Control: [Division of Violence Prevention: ACE Study](#)