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Neighbors for Neighbors Fund at Work!

What you've made possible.

Through the generosity of donors of all sizes, and in partnership with the United Ways of Southeastern CT and Central and Northeastern CT, the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut made its first round of grants in response to the COVID-19 crisis in June. The Neighbors for Neighbors Fund awarded more than \$473,000 to 61 organizations across Eastern Connecticut for a wide range of needs. They included emergency food for residents, programs to keep children engaged amid school and summer camp closures, and protective supplies for nonprofits, schools and other workplaces, as well as operating support to help agencies keep their doors open during a critical time. A second round of grants is slated to be made in October.

The pandemic and its fallout continue to affect us all. Food and housing insecurity, childcare needs for working families, and scarcity of PPE and cleaning supplies are ongoing challenges for many. As governmental efforts and other partnerships continue, the Community Foundation's staff, board and volunteers remain engaged in local, regional and state-level meetings and in listening to and learning from people and organizations on the ground about how and where we can best help.

In this time of uncertainty and always, the Community Foundation is committed to supporting the nonprofits and other organizations that are always there for us—that deliver meals to our elders and that care for our youth. That heal the sick and nurture the hungry. That ensure that all people have opportunities no matter their race, gender or zip code. That remind us that we are all in this together and that together, we will get through this and thrive.

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From
Maryam Elahi
President & CEO



We always need heroes

On September 23, more than 100 former clerks of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg stood in respect as her coffin was carried into the United States Supreme Court.

As I watched, my heart sank with sorrow over her loss. She was an icon of justice and resilience, who dedicated her life to fighting for equal justice under the rule of law. Similarly, many of us were heartbroken over the death of Congressman John Lewis, a lion of the civil rights movement and "conscience of the Congress." And now these heroes are gone. But are they, really? Their work, leadership and humanity will continue to live on, to influence our nation for generations. We need our heroes. They give us hope. They model just and moral leadership. And they remind us of our better angels.

Today, let's celebrate all the heroes in our lives. They are the essential workers, teachers, mentors for our youth, social justice advocates and nonprofit staff and volunteers. They are people who, despite the threat of a deadly virus, are dedicated to making lives better—for others less fortunate in their communities, and for

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all of us. They are examples of courage, kindness and generosity. They give us hope and make our communities resilient. We are grateful to have them in our lives, for a world without heroes is a cold and lonely place.

You have been a part of our circle of kindness that supports the work of many of the heroes in our midst. Thank you for caring about making this world a better place.

OUR VISION FOR OUR REGION

A healthy, thriving, sustainable Eastern Connecticut with greater equity for all

OUR MISSION

Collaborate with partners to put philanthropy into action to address the needs, rights and interests of our community in Eastern Connecticut

OUR VALUES

- Integrity
- Equity
- Respect
- Courage
- Empathy

OUR WORK

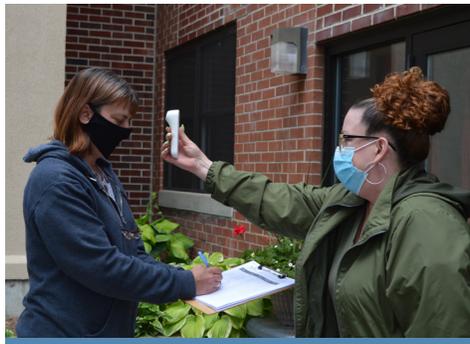
- Convene and serve as a thought partner with like-minded donors, nonprofits and other leaders to ensure collective impact, especially around four priority focus areas:
 - Empower youth
 - Promote basic needs and rights
 - Preserve the environment
 - Advance animal welfare
- Bring resources and knowledge to nonprofit organizations in Eastern Connecticut so that they may effectively and strategically carry out their missions to meet the needs of our community.
- Advise and support our donors to fulfill their philanthropic interests.

Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut Board of Trustees

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 Maryam Elahi, *Ex Officio*

To see a complete list of the Neighbors for Neighbors grants, visit cfect.org/NFNFundGrants. On the Spotlight page, you can read more about some of our incredible nonprofit partners who have been addressing food insecurity, housing, healthcare, shelter, childcare and other supports to ensure the stability and well-being of our region's residents.



Staff from The Arc Eastern Connecticut using their newly acquired PPE supplies, purchased through a grant from the Neighbors for Neighbors Fund.

Are you with us for another Neighbors for Neighbors Fund Challenge? Double your gift!

Thank you to all the donors who together have given more than \$1 million to the Neighbors for Neighbors Fund since March, when it was established to respond to immediate needs and longer-term recovery from the pandemic.

We are pleased to announce that another group of donors has issued a new Challenge to match all gifts dollar for dollar, up to \$100,000.

We hope every person who can will renew their support or make a new gift to the Neighbors for Neighbors Fund. Your gift will have double the impact!

Give online at www.cfect.org or send your gift to CFECT/NFN Fund, 68 Federal Street, New London, CT 06320.

Racism, COVID-19 and Inequities, Oh My!

By Stephanye R. Clarke



Starting in the spring, the “normal” rush of our daily lives came to a grinding halt because of COVID-19. Suddenly, we were forced to pay attention to people and things we had taken for granted. Health care and other essential workers were seen as heroes. Businesses large and small shut down (and some ended up closing permanently). Of particular note for the Foundation was the way schools were

catapulted into online learning—leaving many students and parents struggling in the wake with inadequate Wi-Fi access, childcare, unemployment, and financial woes.

That’s to say nothing of the actual illness of COVID-19. People were dying at an alarming rate. And while this was happening, a completely ordinary, typical, not-surprising story emerged: that people of color were being disproportionately impacted by the disease. It wasn’t surprising for us Black and Brown folks. It wasn’t surprising for the people who had been in these trenches, fighting these disparities for years. And what also wasn’t surprising was the way some white people stepped in to blame us for the fact that this was happening.

The reality is that racism got us here. Racism built the inadequate health care system that failed to care for us, no matter how many times we asked/demanded the system *not* do so. Racism built our communities, through federal mandates that prohibited developers and banks from making loans to Black families, relegating them to less-desirable areas. Racism built

law enforcement—from slave patrols to Black codes to Jim Crow to the War on Drugs to mass incarceration. Racism created the environment in which Black and Brown folks would be hit harder by COVID-19. No matter how perfect an individual’s health behaviors were, racism meant that they were more likely to suffer... and die. Then racial violence took center stage... and the conversation about racism and health was dropped for a much larger conversation about racism overall. All against the backdrop of COVID-19 and an election.

But all hope is not lost, and there is plenty of work to be done. The Foundation is committed to advancing equity, living its mission through enhanced grantmaking and a focus on advocacy, policy and systems change. We hope you’ll join us as we work with partners across the region and state to achieve our vision—a healthy, thriving, sustainable Eastern Connecticut with greater equity for all.

Stephanye R. Clarke is a Program Officer at the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut.

Summer Fun After All

2020 Norwich Youth Grant Recipient Creates Safe and Memorable Camp Experience.

*A note from Cheryl Hancin Preston,
Norwich Recreation Director*

A fun activity this summer was “gifted” from our Easter Egg Hunt day! Since we did not run our community Easter Egg Hunt in April due to COVID-19, we gave the eggs to camp. Staff hid all the eggs around camp. The kids loved it so much we did it two more times throughout the summer!

This year we were not able to go to the beach so we bought Slip ‘N Slides and water slides and brought those to camp and had lots of water days in the hot sun!

We also held a Connect 4 tournament, a new idea that was a big hit. We created

teams and the kids competed and had a blast. We will continue this in the future and even have a site-to-site competition.

Eighty percent of the youth in the Moriarty School program were supported by Community Foundation scholarship funding provided through the Norwich Youth grants cycle. We saw an uptick of youth in the Department of Children & Families (DCF) and in the foster care system so these kids needed a safe place to go for the summer. DCF was grateful that we ran our program.

We just saw the Neighbors for Neighbors Fund round two grant opportunity and plan to submit an application. Parents are calling and really in need of child care for the hybrid virtual/in person school year on the days their children are home. Many families can’t afford our services. We hope to offer our youth programming with your continued support.

Thank you so much to the Community Foundation for your help!



A Summer of Civic Leadership

Our Superhero Moment

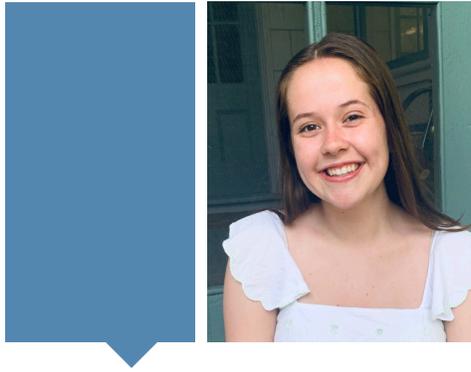
A college with an historic commitment to community service. Key organizations with important projects to accomplish. Students with a need for summer jobs and an interest in learning about—and giving back to—the community where they go to school. The Community Foundation saw a way to become part of the equation by launching the **Summer Civic Leaders Scholarship Program**.

With a grant to the Holleran Center for Community Action at Connecticut College, the students were assigned readings on ethical community engagement and participated in discussion groups. They identified organizations in their interest areas for practical study and service: the Public Library of New London, the New London Homeless Hospitality Center, and FRESH's Sprout Garden.



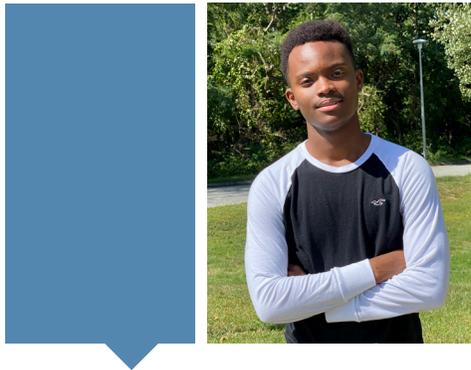
Melissa worked in FRESH's Sprout Garden to research food security in the New London area, including how local farmers have adapted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. She translated the FRESH New London newsletter into Spanish to reach more people and was also "hands on" in the garden.

"I was able to explore the world of academia through research and gain more knowledge on food justice, the economics of food and food system resilience. This knowledge allowed me to understand in a much broader way how New London is affected by systemic inequality."



Elisabeth worked for the New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC) and focused on creating an equity and cultural competency plan to improve access for clients, including a feedback loop to share their experiences.

"I feel that my work will have a positive impact on NLHHC. I was able to update grievance and suggestion forms that will be used regularly at the Center. This effort will engage residents in important conversations around the topic of equity."



Bilis also worked for NLHHC and focused on new approaches to raising awareness about COVID-19 through the agencies' online services and client engagement.

"My project was to use the personal interactions that the residents had among their social circles to relay key information about the pandemic. We trained a few peers to relay the information back to their friends. After applying for a grant from the Connecticut Health Foundation, I was able to use my science background to research COVID-19 and create a mini-curriculum that addressed the needs of the homeless people and how best to support them during the pandemic."

"We are thrilled to have partnered with the Community Foundation to launch the new Civic Leaders Program. As an institution long dedicated to civic education, Connecticut College is committed to advancing positive change in the region by working with our community partners. Our students learned valuable lessons about citizenship and leadership through their work in nonprofit organizations in the New London community. We look forward to continuing the relationship and to supporting a second cohort in 2021."

- Katherine Bergeron, President, Connecticut College

Cathy Zall, Executive Director of the New London Homeless Hospitality Center, welcomed the students' contributions, especially given the heightened demand for services created by the current health crisis. "It's been great working with Bilis and Elisabeth, who are very proactive and self-directed. We would never have had the time to delve into these important projects without their help."

All students agreed in their final evaluations that the Summer Civic Leaders Program was an invaluable experience in shaping their academic and career goals. Connecticut College plans to expand this opportunity for more students next year.

As Bilis summed up his summer experience: "It was our superhero moment!"

Scholarships Help Open Doors

Every day, we work with donors, schools and nonprofits to help students – regardless of race, ethnicity, or zip code – afford post secondary education and training.

Be inspired by these three scholarship recipients who are sure to make their mark on the world, thanks in part to the generous donors behind their Community Foundation scholarships.

Best wishes to all of our students as they launch their college and technical careers in challenging circumstances.



“I live each day grateful for the sacrifices that my parents have made for me and I am determined to help others by pursuing my dream of getting a nursing degree. Nursing aligns with the values that I have lived by my entire life: hard work, sacrifice and helping others. I am honored to have received the Anderson Scholarship, which will help ease the financial burden during my studies at the University of Connecticut.”

- Jonathan Garcia Vazquez, Willimantic, recipient of the **Dr. James T. Anderson Scholarship**



“From experiences during my academic career, I realized that in order to change things, for me as an individual, or in the world, I must stand up, speak out, and be an agent for change. I am majoring in photography so that I can bring awareness to the injustices that underserved communities suffer from around the world. During my time at Spelman College and beyond, I hope to honor the people for whom my scholarships are named.”

- Teala Avery, Norwich, recipient of the **Danny Gilman Memorial Scholarship** and the **Thomas P. Quinn Memorial Scholarship**



“My dream job is to become a journeyman welder and travel the country to work in various places. At Goodwin University, I am being trained in a wide range of areas, including basic blueprint reading and hands-on lab work. I am grateful for the Skip Thavenet Scholarship in helping me pursue my dreams.”

- Isaac Mason, Stonington, recipient of the **Skip Thavenet Scholarship**

Jumpstart

Fundraising capacity building by Network for Good.

The Community Foundation is part of the Southeastern Connecticut Nonprofit Capacity Building Collaborative, a group of grantmakers that is working together to help the region's nonprofits thrive and deliver on their missions. By regularly asking them what they need, the Collaborative has offered educational and professional development workshops on a variety of topics, as well as technical assistance and one-on-one strategy sessions.

A top priority that many nonprofits have expressed is the expansion of fundraising efforts. Enter Jumpstart, a program of Network for Good. Jumpstart takes a customized approach to building fundraising capacity through tools, planning, coaching and technology.

In 2020-21, the Collaborative is partnering with Network for Good to offer the Jumpstart program to a cohort of eight organizations working across a broad range of issue areas: The Connection, Hispanic Alliance of SECT, IASC (Immigration Advocacy and Support Center), Madonna Place, Mystic & Noank Library, SECT Community Land Trust, S.T.E.P.S. (Striving Toward Empowered Personal Success), and Waterford Country School.

Each organization will get individualized, virtual one-on-one coaching and an easy-to-use donor management system to scale up their online fundraising and donor engagement to secure support for their mission. The Collaborative anticipates that this strategy will be successful and replicable with future cohorts.

To learn more about the Community Foundation's focus on nonprofit capacity building visit www.cfsect.org/NonprofitExcellence.



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We are going virtual!

To receive updates, please consider signing up for our emails at admin@cfect.org... *Stay tuned!*

CONNECT YOUR PASSION TO A PURPOSE

Contribute to your own or an existing fund and/or promote your Community Foundation's work through these funds:

- **Neighbors for Neighbors Fund** supports short- and long-term COVID-19 relief and recovery.
- **Community Leadership Fund** helps us to build powerful partnerships that strengthen our region's nonprofits in their work within our four priority areas.
- **President's Discretionary Fund** enables us to provide leadership when needed and to back innovative projects as they emerge.

In addition to making a straight tax-deductible donation, there may be other tax-advantaged ways for you to make a difference:

- Transfer appreciated securities.
- Roll over up to \$100,000 of your IRA assets if you are age 70 ½ or older (*donor advised funds excluded*).
- Make gifts that produce life income, such as Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Lead Trusts, and Charitable Gift Annuities.
- Donate gifts of real estate.

START A CONVERSATION TODAY

Whether you are new to philanthropy or looking to do more through your giving, we can help you have a meaningful impact on the issues and communities that you care about. Contact **Alison Woods** at alison@cfect.org or **Lauren Parda** at lauren@cfect.org for a confidential conversation. Or call them at 860.442.3572.

Build a Fund

Did you know that you can create a permanently endowed fund and build it up over time? You can start a fund and add to it over 3-5 years to reach the \$10,000 minimum (\$25,000 for scholarships). You can then add more as circumstances allow. A long-term plan might include a legacy provision in your estate plan or naming your fund as a beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy.

Your community.
Your legacy.
Your power to
do good.

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