







The Fabric of Community



Powered by generosity, driven by partners













Dear Friends,

The fabric of our community is made from countless threads — people, ideas, and resources pulled together with care and purpose.

Alone, a single thread is fragile. But woven together, many threads create something strong enough to hold us all and vibrant enough to reflect who we are.

At a time of national uncertainty and mounting pressure on our social safety net, it can feel like that fabric might fray. Nonprofits near and far are being asked to do even more with less. In response, we see Fairfield County neighbors, leaders, and donors coming together to strengthen the weave — turning ideas into action, and action into hope.

This report shares a few of the ways those threads connect:

- ▶ Through **Career Pathways**, local students are building futures in healthcare careers with support from schools, employers, and partners.
- Through **The Allies advocacy trainings**, residents of all ages are stepping forward as effective voices for change.
- Through regional convenings and partnerships, leaders across sectors are shaping an economy that works for individuals, small businesses, and the public good.

These efforts — and so many more — show how people, generosity, and partnerships reinforce the very fabric of community. Because of you, these connections are possible. Every gift, every fund, and every act of generosity adds another strong thread to the whole.

As your community foundation, we are honored to help bring these threads together and create spaces where bold ideas are nurtured, people and capital converge across lines of difference, and barriers are broken down. By weaving these threads together, we strengthen the fabric that holds us, repair what has frayed, and make Fairfield County an even better place to live, work, and grow.

The threads are in our hands. And we are at a crossroads where we are called to do more with them. But when we reflect on what we've accomplished together over the past year, we are filled with hope. Hope that we can rise to the challenge. Hope that we can unlock the potential in all of us and craft a more beautiful and vibrant future.

In Community,



MENDI BLUE PACA
President & CEO



MAYA REDDI Chair

Inside

04

The Upside: A Data-Driven Path to Opportunity



06

Creating Career Pathways That Benefit Us All



08

Less Paperwork, More Impact



10

Meeting the Moment: Building Strong Nonprofits



12

From Learning to Action: **Advocacy in Motion**



14

In Memory: Charles MacCormack



19

A Giving Circle of SOUL



20

Dogged Determination to Giving Back



2025 by the Numbers

Grants to Nonprofits



\$26.9 million

in total grants awarded



\$19.4 million

were donor-directed grants, representing a 9% increase



746 grants

were made to nonprofits serving Fairfield County



\$3.1 million

in strategic grants to nonprofits

Advocacy • Economic Opportunity Health • Women & Girls • Youth



Gatherings

1573 people attended 63 community events **512** nonprofits represented

Scholarships

445 scholarships awarded to Fairfield County students totaling \$1.7 million





The Upside: A Data-Driven Path to Opportunity for All

We can create a Fairfield County where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

And all of us would be better for it.



Earlier this year, the Community
Foundation released *The Upside— Growth, Potential and the Future*of *Fairfield County,* a one-of-a-kind
study showing the payoff of closing
opportunity gaps that have left our
region with the nation's second
highest income inequality.

Implementing *The Upside's* recommendations could add \$15.6 billion to the county's GDP, plus an additional \$36.6 billion in increased home values, \$603 million more in local property tax revenue, and \$1.2 billion more in state income tax revenue.

That growth could translate into better schools, upgraded infrastructure, expanded transit, and greater support for the people who keep our communities running—like teachers, nurses, first responders, and healthcare workers. Families could move beyond financial insecurity, fueling a more resilient region.

Last spring, the Community
Foundation gathered more than 100
leaders from business, government,
education, healthcare, philanthropy,
and the nonprofit world to ask:

What would it take to unlock this potential? The answers and the energy—made clear that progress depends on crosssector collaboration.

To harness that energy, the Community Foundation is committing our time, talent, and resources to help build a Regional Partnership for Inclusive Economic Growth. But we can't do it alone. We need partners to:

- Join us as founding members, funders, or advisors
- Share insights, research, and workforce needs
- Amplify the initiative by hosting conversations and presenting The Upside research.

Lasting change will require teamwork, innovation, and belief that success for some doesn't mean loss for others.

We have the roadmap. Now it's time to get moving.

Join the Regional Partnership for Inclusive
Economic Growth! Contact Rebecca Mandell at:
RMandell@FCCFoundation.org

Faritud County's Community Foundation TELEMENT COUNTY TELEMENT COUNTY TO SERVICE SET COU

▲ My Architecture Workshops students presented at the Upside Leadership Forum, showcasing systems change in action.

Blueprints for Promising Futures

A few years ago, while talking with a colleague about the lack of diversity in architecture, Dominique Moore was met with a simple but challenging question: "So, what are you going to do about it?"

The answer was My Architecture Workshops, a Stamford-based nonprofit Moore co-founded in 2020 to inspire and empower future architects, engineers, and builders. Through design studios, collaborative projects, and creative learning experiences, the organization opens pathways into the AEC fields for students of all ages, making architecture accessible, imaginative, and hands-on.

By connecting students, educators, and industry from the start, My Architecture Workshops is revolutionizing how young people learn about and experience architecture, creating a complete ecosystem that connects the dots from first inspiration to future career.

High school students engage with residents on municipal projects, ensuring that community voices are heard early in the process. One example is the Jackie Robinson Park of Fame revitalization project in Stamford, part of a citywide initiative.

Read more:

FCCFoundation.org/MAWorkshops

What's the upside of closing opportunity gaps in Fairfield County?



\$15.6 billion more

in the county's economy*



\$603 million more

local property tax revenue



\$1.2 billion more

state income tax revenue

*As estimated by the change in county gross domestic product



Creating Career Pathways That Benefit Us All

In Fairfield County, three in 10 employers report they can't fill entry-level openings due to a lack of available talent.

Help wanted. Those words ring across Fairfield County, where in 2023, an estimated 14,400 new entry-level roles were projected to go unfilled.* Closing that gap could have lifted 9,600 young adults out of poverty, supplied businesses with needed workers, and saved taxpayers nearly \$3 billion.

*Source: 2023 Building Tomorrow's Workforce report, commissioned by Fairfield County's Business Collaborative for Education Equity.



To help meet the need, Fairfield County's Community Foundation partnered with Nuvance Health and Connecticut State Community College (CT State) to launch the **Career Pathways Healthcare Pilot**. This public-private collaboration equips young adults, ages 18-25, with training and support to pursue meaningful healthcare careers.

"Our region cannot reach its full economic potential without crosssector collaboration and the inclusion of all residents in quality workforce opportunities," said Mendi Blue Paca, President & CEO of the Community Foundation.

Through CT State and Nuvance/ Northwell Health, young adults receive healthcare training, and through Family & Children's Agency they get wraparound support for transitioning into the workforce. Nonprofit partners also receive funding to help them deliver training and services. The Business Collaborative has contributed \$80,000, alongside other key funders, to help fuel this cross-sector partnership.

"As a founding member of the BCEE, we support investing in new models of collaboration to connect young people with career pathways," said Bill Tommins, President, Bank of America Southern Connecticut. "This pilot program is an example of how businesses and employers join together to help our region's young adults thrive and our economy grow."

Though the pilot begins in healthcare, the vision is to expand across industries, opening doors for more young adults and driving inclusive economic growth for the region.

Learn more & get involved:

FCCFoundation.org/Pathways

Why invest in local workforce development?



76% of employers have difficulty finding and keeping workers.



The state's labor shortage has grown by **8.6%** since the pandemic.



Wage growth is less than half the national average for low-wage workers in Connecticut.

Statewide statistics. Sources: "The State of Working Connecticut," CT Voices for Children, July 2025: "2025 Survey of Connecticut Businesses," CBIA.

Explore more at:

FCCFoundation.org/BCEE

Helping Youth Reach Their Potential

For nearly 20 years, Ridgefield resident Robert Salaga has trusted the Community Foundation to guide his philanthropic journey.

"I love everything the Community Foundation does to help individuals figure out how to give back to the community in a meaningful way," said Salaga.

Salaga, a human resource professional, and his wife Heather, a real estate broker, have shared their expertise with organizations like Junior Achievement and Habitat for Humanity. Through a recurring monthly contribution, they also support the Community Foundation's Youth Education & Career Development Fund and other funds that align with their focus on helping young people identify career pathways. Looking forward, the couple hopes to amplify their impact and set an example for their two daughters.

"Right now, we support the funds that exist today, but we're looking to expand," Salaga said. "The Community Foundation has done a remarkable job opening our eyes to what's needed—and to the art of the possible."



▲ The Salaga family partners with the Community Foundation to support causes they care about.





Less Paperwork, More Impact

As local nonprofits face growing needs and uncertain federal support, the Community Foundation is simplifying how organizations apply for funding.

Starting in Fall 2025, The Community Foundation is moving from a two-grant annual cycle to a once-a-year grant cycle—satisfying a goal set in its 2022 strategic plan that aims to make it easier for nonprofits to plan, while reducing time spent on applications.

"It's simply a streamlining of the process so that we can be more responsive," said Lutonya Russell-Humes, Vice President, Grants & Programs. "Donors should be assured their investments will be even more targeted towards the organizations having the greatest impact, as we will have greater capacity to partner with our grantees and understand the needs of the community and their work more deeply."

Importantly, this change **does not** mean the Community Foundation will distribute less money in the community. Instead, it allows for more substantial investments to build and sustain momentum for projects and causes.

By cutting back on paperwork and administrative tasks, the Community Foundation is better positioned to be flexible in responding to a turbulent time.

"The fact that the safety net is rapidly eroding means more people are in need," Russell-Humes said. "This spring, we experienced one of the largest application pools we've ever seen." While most grants will now be awarded annually, the move also frees up resources for emergency funding and nonprofit capacity building.

"With our new approach nonprofits don't have to choose between using funding for programming or capacity building," Russell-Humes said.



Help the Community Foundation respond to urgent needs.

Donate to the Community Impact Fund: FCCFoundation.org/CIF

PROGRAM PROGRESS

the emme coalition

A signature investment of the Community Foundation's Fund for Women & Girls has completed its formal funding phase. A recently released evaluation report shows strong returns from the emme coalition, a Bridgeport-based initiative that connected more than a thousand women and girls with quality health care and holistic tools to achieve longterm success. Program results include:



100% of students graduated from high school on time



100% of expectant mothers had healthy full-term births



92% of new moms reported greater confidence in parenting

emme, named after the acronym for empowerment, mindfulness, motivation and education, was delivered in partnership with Optimus Health. The program also advanced leadership as community health workers navigated systems with empathy and cultural fluency. Their use of Social Determinants of Health screenings led Optimus to integrate the screenings into their own procedures.

Though grantmaking has ended, the program continues to make an impact as findings guide women's health strategy at Optimus.





Meeting the Moment: The Center for Nonprofit Excellence

By strengthening nonprofits through low-cost, effective programs, the Community Foundation is reinforcing the local leadership infrastructure.



As community needs rise and federal funding declines, nonprofit leaders often lack the time and resources to build executive and strategic skills. Since 2009, the Community Foundation's Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE) has filled this gap with capacity-building and professional development programs.

In fiscal year 2025, CNE served 373 individuals from 260 organizations, delivering 40 programs ranging from webinars to months-long cohorts. Looking ahead, CNE plans to move beyond general participant counts, adding new measurement outcomes like leaders' confidence, empowerment, and collaborations that expand community opportunity.

One of CNE's newest approaches is **Communities of Practice**, learning cohorts that offer peer support and flexible learning. Earlier this year, CNE launched three cohorts: Executive Directors, Development Professionals, and Program Leaders. For participant Tim McGee, being part

of the Executive Directors Community of Practice has helped him "stay grounded during a time of rising need and uncertainty."

"It offers practical tools for managing change and communicating transparently with stakeholders," said McGee, who serves as Executive Director for Shepherds Mentors. "It also creates space to think creatively about partnerships, program delivery, and sustainability in the face of shifting funding and political landscapes."

Soon, new cohorts will launch focused on data and research, board leadership, and advocacy and systems change. CNE has also earmarked funds for nimble, responsive programming requested by the nonprofit community, aiming to stay connected through ongoing conversations and pulse surveys.

"Staying aligned with our nonprofit community's evolving needs is at the heart of all we do," said Rebecca Cordero, CNE Director.

CNE's Impact in Fiscal Year 2025



373 individuals served



260 organizations served



40 programs delivered

Executive leadership is a new role for me, and everything I have learned through CNE's Community of Practice has helped me develop greater confidence to move forward in a strong direction."

NANETTE GINISE Founder & Director, Self Care for Recovery



Explore our programs: FCCFoundation.org/CNE

Building Community & Capacity Other initiatives launched through CNE this year include:



New sessions of our culturally-informed leadership cohorts

Leading for Change (with Five Frogs) and the Equitable

Leadership Cohort (with The Justice Walk).

The launch of **Brewing Community**, an evening
networking series that
builds on the success
of **Fueling Community**,
our coffee shop
networking series.

A new Cybersecurity Learning Cohort (with Novus Insights) to give nonprofits education and practical tools to help safeguard their finances and data.



From Learning to Action: Advocacy in Motion

Fairfield County is stronger when community members and local organizations actively shape the policies that affect our communities.



For years, community-led change has been central to the Community Foundation's efforts to promote civic engagement and support local advocacy to advance policies that create a fairer, more just Fairfield County and state.

As part of that work, the Community Foundation has provided financial support—more than \$600,000 over the last three years—to nonprofits championing local and state efforts to expand educational, health, economic, and housing opportunities and increase voter participation. The Community Foundation has also built strong connections with local leaders, lawmakers, businesses, and organizations to engage in dialogue and express support for policies promoting fairness and opportunity.

Last fall, the Community Foundation launched an effort to give members of its Allies for Equity community year-round opportunities to connect at social and learning events, and explore how they can effectively share their perspectives with state and local lawmakers.

Through a new, no-cost lunch-and-learn series, 36 Allies took part in four 90-minute sessions that focused on the following topics:



How a bill becomes a law in Connecticut and understanding CT's state budget process.



How to build relationships with elected leaders.



How to become effective advocates through letter writing and delivering testimony.



Understanding key policy issues in Fairfield County and how to get involved in advocacy efforts.

Participants didn't just listen and learn. They took action!

More than 20 members of the group used their voice on issues related to the Community Foundation's strategic impact areas—contacting state officials and delivering testimony to support measures to establish a permanent child tax credit, provide free school meals, support transit-oriented development, prohibit evictions without just cause, and prohibit scholarship displacement.

To keep The Allies informed, the Community Foundation added two follow-up sessions this spring to provide status updates on key pieces of state legislation.

"I've lobbied in Hartford before, but now I understand how the budget is created and the steps for ideas becoming laws so much better," said Jacqueline Paige, a member of the Racial Justice Pathway at Fairfield's First Church Congregational, of her participation in The Allies program. "I feel that I was more effective with my outreach with elected leaders during the last legislative session."



Explore more at:

FCCFoundation.org/Allies



Join The Allies!

The Community Foundation plans to continue and grow its training and coordinated advocacy work with The Allies community. If you would like to get involved, reach out to:



RYAN DEAL
Director of Community
Philanthropy
RDeal@FCCFoundation.org



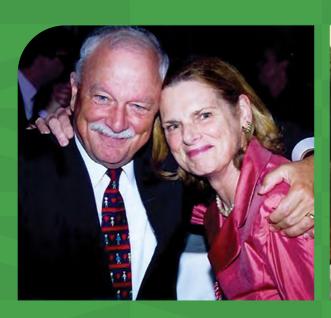
Now I understand how the budget is created and the steps for ideas becoming laws so much better...I feel that I was more effective with my outreach with elected leaders during the last legislative session."

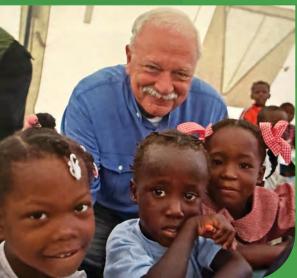
JACQUELINE PAIGE Member & Trainee The Allies



Remembering Charlie MacCormack

(1941-2025)





Charlie MacCormack, together with his wife, Susan Ross, exemplified compassionate leadership, whether it was on another continent or right here in Fairfield County.

Charlie made enduring contributions through his humanitarian work, most visibly during his 18 years leading Save the Children U.S.. There, he expanded the organization's reach to more than 50 countries and shaped a global movement for children's rights. He also served as chair of InterAction, the largest alliance of U.S.-based international nonprofits; and on the boards of World Learning and Malaria No More.

In later years, Charlie found equal purpose close to home, serving on the board of Fairfield County's Community Foundation. His wife, Susan M. Ross, had already left an indelible mark as the Foundation's President & CEO from 1996 to 2011. Under her leadership, the Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE) was founded, offering low-or no-cost training and capacity-building guidance to local nonprofits.

In his will, Charlie honored Susan's legacy with a significant estate gift to the Susan M. Ross Fund for Great Leadership, which sustains CNE programs including an annual leadership workshop in Susan's name.

Just as important is the legacy the couple left to their two sons. Cameron and Fraser Ross-MacCormack now carry forward their parents' example: that love, purpose, and action can change both the world and one's own community.

Read more: FCCFoundation.org/SharedLegacy

The Future Society

We gratefully acknowledge these visionary donors whose bequests and planned gifts are building a brighter future for the communities they love.



Living

Nada Albritton

Millette Alexander

Jeannette Archer-Simons and Robert Simons

James and Kaye Barker

Barbara Louise Blauvelt

Elisabeth Breslav

Gene Celentano

Lauren Cohen

Vernon and Anita Coles

Sharon Danosky

Daryl Duarte and David Schiffer

Bari Dworken

Jonathan Fraade

Fllen Funck

Brian Goldstein

Sally Harris

Lori Hashizume and

Douglas Fried

Fiona Hodgson

Juanita James

Charles and Rachel Jensen Jr.

William Knobloch

Helen Koven

Gary Kraut

John Marshall Lee, CLU, RHU

Barbara Littlefield

Jeremy Main

Ann Mandel

Brian and Cindy Meehl

Jacqueline and Doug Millan

Jonathan and Elena Moffly

Linda Molnar

Liz Morten

Steven Mueller

John Nelson, II

Gregory and Sue Neumann

Jane Norgren

James Photis

Margaret Platka

Marianne Pollak

Jane Ready

Maya Reddi

Cynthia Richter

June Rosenthal

John and Sally Schlachtenhaufen

Charlotte and John Suhler

Anne Thaxter

Curtis and Katharine Welling

Herbert and Deanne Winokur

Remembered

Donald Baldwin

Elizabeth Wingfield Barnett

Frances Barry

Nancy Bassett

Evelyn Bausman

Stuart Bernard

Harry Brodbeck

Ida Davidoff

Barbara Benton Davis

Frances Marian Deas

Sally Dickson

Joan Diedolf

Anna Dziuba

Robert and Sally Factor

Mary Elizabeth Farman

Eric Ferguson

W. Michael Funck

Thomas Gilmartin

Father John Giuliani Jane Gade Halliwell

Irene Handleman

Eunice and C. Lee Hanson

Frances Hansson

Mike Harris

Edward Harrison

Dorothea Havighorst

Eduvina Hennigar

Helen Hermes

Dorothy Herrmann

Mary Elizabeth Hill

Mia Holthausen

Ellen Hosiosky

Gloria Marion Jankowich

Shirley Jankowich

Joan Kadlec

Henry Katz

Audrey Knobloch

Richard Koven

Helen Kukiel

Vicki Lesser

Charlton Lyman

Charles MacCormack Patricia Main

Dorothy Massello

Elizabeth Matthews

Thomas McCullough

Stella Margaret McHenry

Jordan and Sylvia Mitchell

Kenneth and Katharine Mountcastle, Jr.

Helen Muller

Roy and Carolyn Neumann

Leo Nevas, Esq.

Elizabeth Bissell Northcross

Edward and Grace Nunes

Sharon Orloski

Janice Park

Nancy Pilgard

James Powell-Tuck

Jonathan Prince

Mary Josephine Rahatz

Philip and Frances Ramer

Robert Ready

Dr. Charles Reed

Elizabeth Phillips Rich

Jean Gregory Richmond

Pamela Ritter

Leah and David Robinson

William Morris Saba

Joseph Santry

Dorothy Savage

Edgar See

Hariett Sherman

Gary Allen Smith

Richard Smith

Marilyn Spence

Edmund Spencer

Virginia Squiers

Ruth Sternbach

Susan Supple

Cecelia Telickey

Mary Varaljai

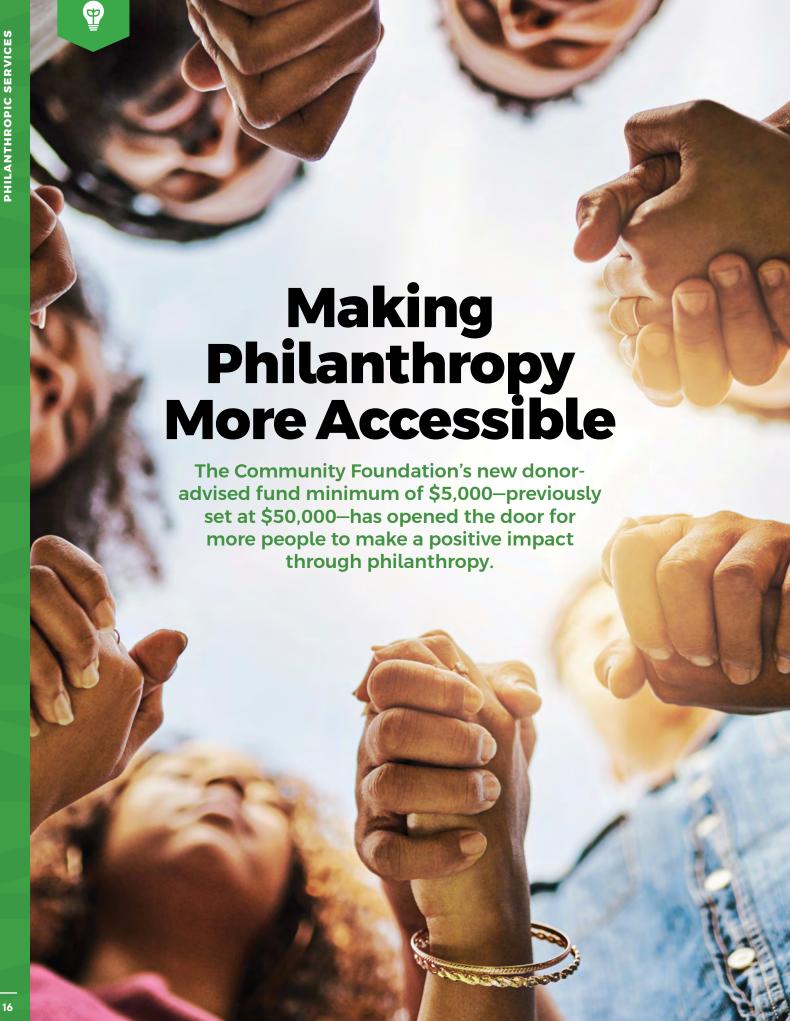
Joan Warburg

Edward Warren Julia Wasserman

Ernest and Lee Wiehl, Jr.

Gene Wilder

Dudley Williams, Jr.



"People want to be part of directing change in their communities, and a \$5,000 fund minimum makes that more achievable," says Leah Mayor, a Newtown resident who recently established her donor-advised fund, The Oxford Road Fund, at Fairfield County's Community Foundation.

Mayor believes donor-advised funds help households think more strategically about giving and invest intentionally in the future of their communities. She plans to align future grants made from The Oxford Road Fund with the Community Foundation's data-driven strategies, with special interest in improving access to quality education and closing the wealth gap in Fairfield County.

"Individually, I don't have a ton of investment," she notes. "But collectively, as part of this community and aligned with the Community Foundation's vision and research, my giving has the power to make a strategic impact beyond my own dollars."

I'm impressed with the Community Foundation's vetting of nonprofits. With all the changes going on, I'm concerned about where nonprofit funding will come from, and I want to continue to direct my money where the need and the impact are the greatest."

BEVERLY FRANK



Talk with us about making your giving go further. All conversations are offered at no cost, and with no obligation.

Contact Joe Collin, VP of Philanthropy, at: (203) 750-3200 or JCollin@FCCFoundation.org

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

Creativity Offers a Path to Healing and Resilience



We see you. We hear you. We believe in you. Those powerful phrases are all encompassed in one Zulu word: **Sawubona**.

So it's fitting that Sawubona serves as the name of an innovative nonprofit that supports youth and teens in Bridgeport through creative expression. A first-time grantee this year, Sawubona aims to nurture resilience and mental well-being through expressive arts such as drawing, drumming, movement, writing, music, and gardening.

"Studies show that for people who suffer from trauma, talk therapy is not always the most effective," said Dr. Charles Morgan, Sawubona co-founder. "Trauma often resides in the body. If we can get people to express that, especially young people, who aren't necessarily comfortable talking to adults, then that's a win."



The Vivienne C. Finn Fund

Established in loving memory of Vivienne after her brave battle with Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), a rare and inoperable pediatric brain tumor, the Fund is dedicated to finding a cure for pediatric brain cancer—and to carrying forward Vivienne's light, love, and legacy.

The Myron L. and Claire B. Gordon Fund

This fund was established to support the eligible charitable activities of organizations that align with the donor's interests.

The Heavy Weather Fund

This fund supports eligible public charitable organizations focused on carceral programs and carceral reentry; trade schools; community colleges; and empowerment of women and girls with an emphasis on education.

The Kavey Family Fund

This fund was established to support the eligible charitable activities of organizations that align with the donor's interests.

The Reagan Sloane Shanley Fund

This fund empowers individuals with intellectual disabilities by fostering inclusive communities and creating pathways for reaching their fullest potential. Inspired by Reagan's journey, it also supports scientists in advancing the treatment of hydrocephalus, fueling research to improve outcomes and bring hope to those impacted.

The Oxford Road Fund

This fund was established to support the eligible charitable activities of organizations that align with the donor's interests.

The Ted Sonnenschein Charitable Fund

The Ted Sonnenschein Charitable Fund focuses its support on Fairfield County as well as other parts of Connecticut. Its emphasis is on criminal justice and historic preservation.

The SOUL Fund

This donor-advised fund was established to support Black-led and -serving nonprofits in Fairfield County through grants directed by members of The SOUL Fund Giving Circle and its volunteer steering committee.



A Giving Circle of SOUL

Supporting Opportunity & Uplifting Leadership

After attending a Black Philanthropy Month event at the Community Foundation last August, Bianca Shinn-Desras and her fellow attendees were inspired to ask: What's next for all the months that follow?

The answer: Creation of The SOUL Fund.

The SOUL Fund Giving Circle empowers members to make a bigger difference by pooling resources, fostering shared learning, and collaboratively directing grant funding to Fairfield County nonprofits dedicated to creating positive change within and for the Black community.

To stay focused on the mission, Shinn-Desras often turns to a quote by former United Nations Foundation president Kathy Calvin: 'Giving is not just about making a donation. It's about making a difference.'

"That's what I believe all our members are looking to do with this fund," she said. "Foster lasting and impactful change."

Join more than 100 members!

Be part of The SOUL Fund Giving Circle.



Get started: FCCFoundation.org/SoulFund

It's a privilege to be a part of The SOUL Fund Giving Circle because it not only provides resources, but also affirms the leadership and vision of nonprofits that bring solutions to the community.

BIANCA SHINN-DESRASSteering Committee Member
The SOUL Fund





Dogged Dedication to Giving Back

At a glance, Westport-based Benebone is all about dogs—specifically, making nylon chew toys. But at the heart of its business is also a commitment to helping people.





One example: Benebone's scholarship program, which gives students the chance to earn awards of \$2,500 to \$10,000 through a scholarship fund held at Fairfield County's Community Foundation.

Initially limited to children of employees, the scholarship program has since expanded to allow applications from any current or incoming college, university, or trade school student. In a unique selection process, applicants are evaluated on an essay about a dog that has impacted their lives.

Recent winners include a first-generation college student pursuing nonprofit PR, and another who was inspired to study animal behavior by watching her sister's service dog in action.

The scholarships reflect a broader culture of philanthropy fostered by Benebone's Founder and CEO, Peter Toolan. Benebone matches employee donations, and encourages and gives time off for volunteer projects such as Habitat for Humanity. The organization also highlights giving in a staff newsletter produced by Toolan's sister, Marie Loht.

"My dad—we call him Papa Benebone—has rooted my brother and myself in philanthropy," Loht said. "We grew up volunteering at local nonprofits. He's that guiding light for us when it comes to giving back to the community."



Interested in starting your own fund?

Learn more:

FCCFoundation.org/CreateFund

With Thanks to Our Business Partners

We are proud to celebrate these significant business partnerships that help build a stronger Fairfield County.



























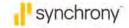






















Donors

Together, we're creating a future where everyone in Fairfield County can thrive. Thank you!

Gifts noted were made from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

Charles and Georgia Adams

Shirley Alexay

Jane Amero

Anonymous (3)

Lillian Anderson

Andrews Family Foundation

Joan and Nigel Andrews

Karen Andrews

Janet Angerame

Rita Appel and Jonathan

Fraade

Apple Pickers Foundation

Aquila's Nest Vineyards

Tichianaa and Joseph Armah

The Ashforth Company

Association for Corporate

Growth

Mary Madelyn Attanasio

Thomas Auray and Dea

Paoletta

Susan Auslander

Alexandra and David Austin

Avangrid Foundation

Back to You Fund

Jim Bacon

The Bacon Fund

Deborah Baer

James Bagley

Karena Bailey

_. . . . _ _ . . .

Christine Baird

William Balch

Amy Balducci

James Baldwin

Martin Bank

Bank of America

Charitable Fund

Surinder and Dolores Banta

Christopher and Susan

Barstein

Harvey Barten

Jerome and Margaret Barton

Sara Bartow

Zara Basmadjian

Nancy Bassett

Linda Baumstein

Diane and Scott Bearce

Beardsley, Brown & Bassett

Jon Beck

Benebone LLC

The Benevity Community

Impact Fund

Debbie Benner

Susan Bergheiser

Berkowitz & Hanna, LLC

Kent and Margaret Bernard

The Bernard Family

Endowment

Steve and Kathy Bernhard

Bernstein Philanthropic

Impact Fund

Daniel Bernstein and Claire

Foerster

Bessemer Trust

Bharucha Charitable

Foundation

Judith Biggs

Anne Binnie

Catherine and Timothy Birch

Kirsten Wiese Bitzonis

Juliette Blake

Blansfield Family

Wendy and Jason Block

Douglas Bloom and Richard Peebles

Alexander Bluman

Susan Blumenthal and Steven Silver

Marion Bonomo

Bourgeon Capital Management LLC

Diana Bowes

Gwendolyn Brantley

G. William Brautigam

Marc Breslav and Arlene

Seymour

Elisabeth Breslav

Bridgeport Hospital

Foundation

Bridgeport Rotary Club Foundation, Inc.

Harry Brodbeck Trust

Matthew Broder and Susan

Neitlich

John and Sue Brohel

Brooklawn Country Club, Inc.

Ashlea Brown

Margaret Brown

Ruth W. Brown Foundation

William Brown

Eugene and Sandra Bruce

George Bruckman

Tom Buccellato

The Burkey Family

Ross and Janie Burkhardt

Annie Burleigh

Dr. Patricia Jenkins Burns

Elizabeth Bysshe

Robert Bysshe

Elizabeth Cagnassola

The Canavan Family

Eleanor Carley
Jane Carlin

Curtis Carlson

Wesley Carpenter

Stephanie Carter

Andrew Cartwright

Amanda Castellano

Kieran Cavanna

Leslie Cenci

Central Connecticut Coast

YMCA

CF Leads

Shirley Chan

Kaveeta Channamsetty

Charitable Funds at Fidelity

Charities Aid Foundation of

America

Howard Chatzinoff

Veronica, Nicolas and Lucas

Chiavaroli

Diane and John Chiota, Esq.

Sara Church

Anne Citrin

The Hayes & Clare Clark

Family Charitable Fund

Jeanne Clarke

Rebecca Clizbe

Peter Clough

Vincent J. Coates Foundation

Kevin Coles

Amanda and Bradley Coley

Geoffrey Coley

Colorectal Cancer Alliance

Como & Nicholson, Inc.

The Community Foundation

for Greater New Haven Mayra Concha-Barrios

Connecticut Automotive

Retailers Association

Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo Juliet Forrester Sue and Ed Greenberg Bryan Doto, Esq. Robert Cooke Dougherty Family Clayton Fowler Peter and Maryann Grierson Guilford Fund Andy and Cait Copelan Thomas and Adilia Douglas Karen Leigh Fox John Corcoran Julienne Foy Janienne P. Hackett Fund DR Bank Janet O'Connor Cornell Dream Come True of Luisa Francoeur Half Moon Foundation Western CT Beverly Frank Ali Hall Eleanor Cox Chris Duffy and Family William Frawley Martin Hamar Teruko Craig Bari Dworken Chris Cranos Christopher Freeland Ashley Carr Hampton Daniel Dzombak Sheila Creatura Ann Freeman Hand Family Judy and Charles Eaton Fred and Sonia Handt **Christopher Crosby** Keith and Judy Frey Mary Edgar Andrea and David Cross Robert and Diane Fried Leslie Hardy **Evelyn Edmonds** Joan and Don Cullman Marion Fuchs Nina Harkrader Steve Edwards, CFA Richard and Sally Cummings Ellen Funck Harley & Co. The Elias Foundation Andrew Cunningham Jacqueline Fusek Djana Harp Thomas Errichetti Halvor Gaasrud Richard Harper Christopher Curran Dean and Cynthia Ervin Kevin Curry Harvey Gaberman and John and Nancy Harrigan Esler Companies, Leslie Harkavy Joan Harrington Jenny Curtin Renew By Andersen Robert and Jane Gallagher Estate of Mike Harris, Jr. Ayda Dabiri and Andraz Kastelic Jeanine Esposito Gallatin Point Capital Walter and Louise Dages Barbara Harty Courtney Coles Evans Hannah Garrison **Gregory Hauck** Dalio Education R. Bradford and Barbara Evans Betsy Garti Dalio Philanthropies Eleanor Haugestad Robert Roy Evans Amy and Andrew George Dammann Fund Barry and Lilyan Hawkins Gregory Fabso Edward Gerber Daniel and Ingeborg Damstra Wilda Morgan Hayes Factset Charitable Foundation Darlene and Bob Gerke Dierdre Danahy Pedro and Judy Hecht Adenike Fadina Marjan Ghahramani Danbury Hospital & New Milford Julie Hedge Nancy Fairchild Hospital Foundation, Inc. Nasr and Gisoo Ghahramani Dorit Heimer, Esq. Fairfield Chamber of Commerce Sassan Ghahramani and Sheila Datt Kelly Helstein Lily Ann Marden Fairfield County Business Laurie Davis Bill and Jevera Hennessey Collaborative for Education Soroush Ghahramani Douglas Dawson Equity Timothy Hodges Jeffrey Gilbert Constance Deans Fairfield Rotary Club Foundation Dale and Stephen Hoffman Paige Gillies Victor Debiasi Fairfield University Mrs. Harrison Hoffman Amy and John Gillis Nicholas and Susan DeCarlo Family & Children's Agency Harriet Holmes Thomas Gillon Deerfield Foundation Richard and Jaclin Farrell Joe Holmes Taylor Glasebrook Leopold DeFusco James and Laura Farrelly Ward and Alexa Horton Joanna Gleason Antonio DeLise Marie Fauth Charitable Fund Steven and Anne Hoss Lindsey Goldfaden Ernest DeLucia Esta and Jay Feinsod Glenn and Mindy Houck Goldman Sachs Ralph DePanfilis, CPA Laura Ferrante The John & Cheryl Hunt Philanthropy Fund Charitable Foundation Inc. Anthony DePaul Victor Ferrante, Esq. Jennifer and Steven Goldstein Barbara King Huth Rose Marie DePaul Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC Carolyn Matos Gonzalez William Irvine Diageo North America, Inc. David and Mairead Finn Ramsey Goodrich Ives Bank Paul Dinto First County Bank John and Alice Gordon Foundation, Inc. Irene Dixon Harvey and Joan James Myron L. & Claire B. Gordon George and Ann Fisher Jesse Lee United Methodist David and Carolyn Dolan Foundation Church Margaret Flaherty Richard Davoud Donchian James Gould Foundation Christopher Johnson Heather Flynn Greater Bridgeport Worthington Johnson Jr. Francis Donelan Denice Fogel Bar Association, Inc. and Maria Johnson Jennifer Donnalley Erica and Joel Green Edwin and Veronica Ford

Lisa Doocy

Kelvin Jones

Robert and Marion Green

Forester Capital, LLC



JP Morgan Charitable Giving Fund Marc Kaminsky **Doris Kanter** Amy Kaplan

Joan Kaskell Joette Katz

Neil and Sheila Kavey Virginia Keeshan Richard and Ginny Keim Michael and Jaclyn Kelly

Kendall Family Foundation Betty Leota Kent Cheryl Kestnbaum Christina Kilpatrick

Jim and Suzie King

Anna Kish

The Kite Key Foundation

Leelee Smith Klein Kirby Klump Dorothy Kmetz William Knobloch Nancy Koch

Konstantin Family Foundation

Dwayne Kratt Alexandra Kreiter Susan Kroeger Rick Krug Glen Kudlicki

Ronald and Bernice Kuntzman

Joanne Lacey Lawrence Lacey Dennis Ladd Laganza Family Janet and Peter Lebovitz

Vanessa Lecorps

Likeu and Lum Lee James and Kay Leisenring Barbara Leonhardt

Brian and Naida Leslie

Melissa Leonhardt

Michael Lesnick and Martha McCann Lesnick

Dan Levinson Littlejohn & Co. LLC Louise Linsky Deborah Lione

Little Wings Foundation Inc.

Theresa Liu Liva Foundation Virginia Loch George Loening

Lone Pine Foundation, Inc.

Loretta Loomie Tony Lorenzen Sarah Lowrance Eleanor Lubeley Jack Lubeley John Lubeley

Michael and Gail Lubeley

Sarah Lubeley John Luczaj Joy Hunt Luke

Katharine and Scott Lumby Josephine Fuchs Luscombe

Valerie Luther

John and Lillian Lynch

Shirley Mabe

Susan and Doug MacFaddin

Kristen Macleod Christina Madhany

Peter and Laurie Maglathlin Robert Mainiero and Jill O'Connor Mainiero

Peter and Isabel Malkin Susan and Stephen Mandel, Jr.

Ann Mandel Judith Manderbach Darryl Manning Neil and Lisi Marcus Judith Margulies Alison Marsh

Susan and Thomas Mason

Leah Mayor McCaffrey Family Foundation, Inc. Ellen McDonald Edward McGettigan Jr.

Meadow Ridge Residents Association

Andrea Mednick-Ponchak Brian and Cindy Meehl Joel and Ellen Mellis Pat and Bob Mendelsohn

John Mendez Merck Foundation Tracy and Joe Merrill Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith, Inc.

Henry and Katherine Minchin, Jr.

Lisa Migliardi

William Moffitt, IV Carol Morgan Jason Morgan

Morgan Stanley Global Impact Funding Trust, Inc.

Charles and Alexandra Morse Robert and Marjorie Morton

Peter Mott, Esq. The M&T Charitable Foundation

Kathleen Ryan Mufson

Francis Murphy

National Philanthropic Trust John and Rilla Neafsey

Jane Neighbors

Charles and Anne Nemetz

William Newbauer, Jr.

New Canaan Community Foundation

Stanley Newman and Dr. Brian Rosenthal

Newpol Fund Neuberger Berman

Claudia Breslav Nielsen and Peter Nielsen

Henry E. Niles Foundation, Inc. Loretta Nolan Associates LLC

Ronald Noren Glori Norwitt

David and Nancy Nurnberger

Wendee Nussle Nuvance Health

Carolyn and Donal O'Brien David and Daria O'Connor

Jake O'Hara

Merril Adelman

O'Herron Family Foundation

Old Farm Partners Frederick O'Neill Frances O'Neill Jennifer Openshaw Paula Oppenheim David Orenstein and Sharon Orloski Anne and Jeff Orum Elizabeth Outlaw

Edward and Jacqueline Paige

Paul Palmateer Carol Patterson

Luke Owen

Richard Payne and Patricia

Davie and Christopher Peck David and Faith Pedowitz

Nancy Pelz-Paget

Katherine Swartchild Penna Sheila and Charles Perrin

Christopher Perrini William Peterson

Pitney Bowes Matching Gift

Program

Point32Health Foundation

Marianne Pollak **Bob Polster**

Paul and Susan Poniatowski

Diane Porter **Chuck Presbury**

Cameron Anthony Prevost

Svbil Prezioso

Pritchard Foundation Candace Procaccini

Prudential Annuity Services Pullman & Comley, LLC

Brad Purcell Mark Rajkowski **Brian Ramsay** Hiroko Rawald Ann Raymond Jennifer Rearden Maya Reddi

Redding Life Care, LLC Michael Reid-Schwartz

David Reis Bruce Reitman Jamie Renwick

Meredith and Eric Reuben

Richard Reutter Howard Reynolds Martha Rhein Peter Richardson

The Grace Jones Richardson Jill Sendor-Laychak Charlotte and John Suhler Wendy Warnecke Trust David Sullivan III and Gioia Nancy Watson Stuart Serenbetz Laura Risimini Riccio, M.D. Judith Sewell Marjorie Webb Susanne Rittenberry Mary Sullivan Shanley Family Foundation Webster Bank Hartford CT William Roberti Sean Sullivan Brian and Marilyn Shannahan Joyce Weiser Marie Rocha Summer Hill Foundation Joan Weisman Toni Shapiro Valerie Rockefeller Richard and Jean Swank Gary Shaye Ryan Welch Barbara Rodin Magali Swanson The Gary Shaye Giving Fund Wescustogo Foundation Eileen Swerdlick Charles Rodin Ed and Carla Sheehan Brian and Sheri West Celie Rosenau Synchrony James White Allen Siegel Lil & Julie Rosenberg The Tai Family Howard and Simone Silbersher Jeffrey White Foundation, Inc. Margaret Taylor Elizabeth Silver Randall and Joanne White Margaret Ross Terex Corporation Richard Silver Christopher Whitney Karen Free Royce George Thierry Silverbird 29 Fund Elisa and Thomas Wilson Robert Runk Michael Thornton Gary and Susie Singer Herbert and Deanne Winokur Carol Russell TisBest Philanthropy S&L Marx Foundation Winokur Family Foundation, Inc. Robert Russell Family Fund Preston Tisdale Barbara Witzel **SMG** Corporate Services Lutonya Russell-Humes Ashley Suhler Tobin George Smith, Esq. and J. L. Wolcott Patricia Russo Daddona The Tokeneke Foundation Martin and Hinda Wolf Robert Dante Russo III Conor Soden Susan Toliver and Stephen Perry Marjorie Wolff **RZH Advisors** Alberto and Suzanne Solis Johnna Torsone Steven and Gail Wolff Lewis Sachs Jon and Cleo Sonneborn Robert and Novella Tortorella Ruth Wolsch Katherine and Peter Sachs Ted Sonnenschein Philip and Ina Trager Mary and Bob Woods Krystal Sachs The Sousa Family Nancy Traube Susan and Doug Woods Miho Saito Manny Sousa Joan Trefz Venman & Co., LLC Robert and Heather Salaga Southern Connecticut Alexander Trembicki Laura Sanders Wyatt Salem Lutheran Church Church of Christ Inc. Giedra Troncone Ferdinand Wyckoff of Bridgeport Southport Congregational Kelly Tschantz Karen Wylie Roy Sambrook **Tudor Foundation Xerox Corporation** Spinnaker Real Estate Partners, Lydia Vande Sande Dr. Arthur Turner LLC Nathaniel and Mary Yordon Elizabeth Sanders Elaine Tyler Eleanor Harrison Smith and YourCause, LLC Trustee for Sharon Sanford Donald Ralph Smith Charitable UBS Financial Services. Inc. Diageo Matching Employee Rosemarie Sangiuolo Fund Funds Unitarian Universalist **Emily Saster** Virginia B. Squiers Foundation YourCause, LLC Trustee Congregation in Westport for New York Life The Savicki Family The Starly Foundation Alessandra and Baxter Urist Adam Zachary Chris and Deb Sawch Foundation Kyle Steger Francine Schechter U.S. Administration for Shannon Zakka Carol Steiner Children & Families Donna Zalichin and Barry Laurie Schellenberg Benat Stenbeck Vanguard Charitable Kramer **Everett and Sarah Schenk** Lauren Stephens and Kaki Craig Varrelman Lauren Zane McGrath Jim Schneider Stuart Zarich Chris and Christine Victory M K Sternlicht Family School Sisters of Notre Dame Foundation Luciana Vieira Susan Zaveruha

Palmer Walker Foundation

Karyn Ward and Joseph Gentile

Webster U. Walker, Jr.

Foundation, Inc.

Bill Wallace

Teri Walsh

Eric Zielinski

Andrew Ziolkowski

and Robin Sherwood

Kerry & Jed Stevens Family

Charitable Fund

Judith Stewart

John Stimpson

Harlan Stone

Joy Styles

Schwab Charitable Fund

Harry and Christina Schwefel

Juan Sebastian and Barbara

Betsey and Arthur Selkowitz

Beulah Schwaeber

John and Lynn Scott

Scripps



NAVIGATING A VOLATILE MARKET

A Look Back at Fiscal Year 2025

This year brought both challenges and opportunities in the financial markets. In early April, international tariffs triggered the steepest market drop since the pandemic, but markets quickly rebounded—driven by strong gains in the technology sector, particularly companies leading in artificial intelligence. Throughout, our investment approach remained steady and diversified across asset types, regions, and industries. This strategy helped manage risk and preserve long-term value, even as returns trailed the tech-heavy U.S. stock market. Guided by our Investment Committee and NEPC, our consultant, we remain focused on diversification, alignment with our investment goals, and mission-driven stewardship for long-term strength.





OPTIMIZE YOUR PLANNING Investment Options

Fairfield County's Community Foundation offers a variety of investment options to support your philanthropic goals, all carefully constructed to maximize return and minimize volatility.







Long-Term Options



Learn more:

FCCFoundation.org/Investments25

New Rules Coming in 2026

Beginning in 2026, the tax benefits of charitable contributions will change, modifying deduction limits and introducing new thresholds for itemized giving. That makes 2025 an important year to contribute to your donor-advised fund, scholarship, or other fund. By giving more this year, or even bunching several years of contributions together, you can secure current tax benefits, retain flexibility to recommend grants in the future, and ensure your generosity continues to make a lasting impact.

To discuss how these changes may affect your strategy, please reach out to set up a call or meeting.

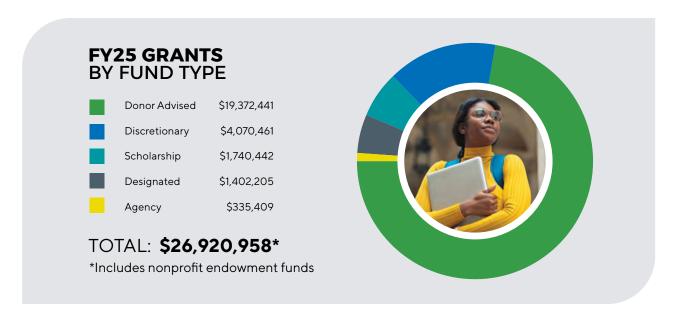
Contact Joe Collin, VP of Philanthropy, at 203.750.3200 or JCollin@FCCFoundation.org.

Financial Statement*

	FY2025	FY2024**
Revenues		
Contributions and Other Revenue	\$ 15,807,376	\$ 14,658,681
Investment Income, Net of Expenses	25,592,476	28,967,293
Total Revenue	\$ 41,399,852	\$ 43,625,974
Expenses		
Program Expenses	\$ 29,545,843	\$ 25,928,388
Other Expenses	 2,423,837	3,049,923
Total Expenses	\$ 31,969,680	\$ 28,978,311
Change in Net Assets	\$ 9,430,172	\$ 14,647,663
Assets		
Cash and Other Assets	\$ 735,918	\$ 360,049
Investments	289,971,883	280,598,186
Operating Lease Right of Use	 864,806	1,072,387
Total Assets	\$ 291,572,607	\$ 282,030,622
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Grants Payable & Accounts Payable	\$ 1,069,957	\$ 1,329,757
Operating Lease Liability	1,053,327	1,290,308
Agency Funds & Other Liabilities	10,180,912	9,673,992
Total Liabilities	12,304,196	12,294,057
Net Assets	279,268,411	269,736,565
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 291,572,607	\$ 282,030,622

^{*} Unaudited; excludes nonprofit endowment funds.

For a complete copy of our audited financial statements and tax returns (IRS Form 990), please visit FCCFoundation.org/Financial or contact our Finance Department at (203) 750-3200.



^{**}FY24 figures have been audited.

Fairfield County's Community Foundation Board of Directors

OFFICERS



Dr. Maya Reddi Chair



Clay Fowler Vice-Chair



Jon Fraade Secretary



Christopher Whitney Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Rev. Anthony L. Bennett
Amanda Castellano
Terrence Cheng
Steve Edwards
Laura Farrelly
Carolyn Gonzalez
Mindy Houck
Christopher Johnson
Joette Katz
Katharine Sachs Lumby
Neil Marcus*
Charles Presbury
Marie Rocha
Preston C. Tisdale, Esq.
Nathaniel Yordon

EX-OFFICIO

Mendi Blue Paca President & CEO

EMERITUS

Edwin A. Bescherer, Jr. Ann S. Mandel Sheila A. Perrin

With Special Thanks to Our Committee & Council Members

We are deeply grateful to all who serve on our committees and councils and help guide and shape the Community Foundation's strategic approach, grantmaking, operations, and philanthropic services. Your dedication and support help us better meet needs and serve our community.



40 Richards Avenue | Norwalk, CT 06854 (203) 750-3200



FCCFoundation

FCCFoundation_CT

in Fairfield County's Community Foundation

FCCFoundation.org

^{*} Outgoing Board Member