

# Discussion on mens', boys' needs in the community coming Jan. 30

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BRISTOL - The Men & Boys' Fund at Main Street Community Foundation will be holding a community briefing and conversation on the unmet needs of local men and boys at the Burlington Public Library Jan. 30.

“About two years ago a group of men came to Main Street Community Foundation with an overwhelming concern,” said Foundation President and CEO Susan Sadecki. “They were concerned about things like the need for more positive male role models, increased school achievement among boys, the growing number of single parent fathers, and more.

“We asked local town, school, and social service agency leaders to identify the unmet needs they observe and the Men & Boys' Fund was established to help try to meet some of those challenges.”

The Fund has already provided more than \$10,000 in program and immediate response grants to boys and men in the six towns the Fund covers: Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott.

The 90-minute conversation at Burlington Public Library, located at 34 Library Lane, will begin at 5:30 p.m. A snow-date is set for Jan. 31.

Light refreshments will be served and community members are invited to come with questions and ideas.

This will be the third community briefing the Foundation has held on the unmet needs of local men and boys.

The event will also feature the story of a local man who struggled through foster care and school but found support with resources like the Fund.

“Our main speaker, Christopher Marinelli, is an example of just the type of person the Fund tries to help,” said Rodger Stotz, the Fund's Advisory Board Chair. “We're always looking for ways to encourage boys and men to become more self-sufficient, gain work and life skills, and make a positive impact in their community.”

In 2018, the Men & Boys' Fund awarded \$6,000 in grants to four local nonprofits.

Those grants support ongoing programs that teach high school students work and life skills, help single fathers improve their parenting skills, and engage young boys in activities that build character, leadership, and positive behavior.



Photo courtesy of the Main Street Community Foundation Representatives of Bristol Youth Services, Bristol Hospital's Parent & Child Center, the Boys & Girls Club of Bristol Family Center and the Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut display ceremonial checks representing grants received from the Main Street Community Foundation in December 2018.

The Fund also awards immediate response grants for small needs that can make a big difference.

Examples include paying a rental application fee for a homeless man, providing a high school graduate with clothes for his job interviews, and helping an aspiring student attend a national invention convention.

An RSVP is required to attend this program. To RSVP, call Julie Matthews at 860-583-6363.

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