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Giving back to the community: Barnes Trust is still going strong

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By SHERIDAN CYR

STAFF WRITER

The Main Street Community Foundation recently completed and distributed its 2017 annual report, and between various grants and scholarships awarded to Southington nonprofits and individuals, the town had received over \$763,000.

Of that number, \$725,011 came from the Bradley Henry Barnes & Leila Upson Barnes Memorial Trust and was distributed to several nonprofits in Southington. A new grant-giving program that MSCF formed in 2017 called the “well-being grant initiative” was highlighted in their annual report.

“We chose to highlight the well-being grant initiative because it was something different that we were doing with the Barnes trust,” said MSCF president and CEO Susan Sadecki. “The hope was to spur some new ideas and have people think outside the box of physical health, and we got some really nice applications for that grant initiative.”

Sadecki explained the Barnes memorial trust distribution is limited, by the will of Bradley Barnes, to aid the healthcare and wellness of Southington.

“The way we handle distributions with that trust are to consistently ask questions and participate in the community, and have conversations about what is driving the health of Southington residents,” said Sadecki.

The well-being grant benefited: the Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington at \$23,150 for five educational initiatives to improve the well-being of Southington’s young children; LISA, Inc. (Living in Safe Alternatives) at

\$25,600 for a partnership with Southington Youth Services Bureau and the STEPS coalition to offer a comprehensive array of supports to reduce substance abuse in Southington teens; and the United Way of Southington at \$40,000 for a collaboration with Senior Transportation Services of New Britain to enhance transportation services to Southington seniors.



Bradley Henry Barnes

In addition to the well-being grant recipients, the Barnes Memorial Trust awarded 11 programmatic and capital grants totaling \$635,261 to Southington nonprofits. The grants fall within five community-identified health and healthcare areas: accessibility and affordability of health care; substance abuse prevention and mental health needs; health care for an aging population; better integrated health care delivery; and education about existing services.

“Those needs were identified in a 2013 study we commissioned, and those key findings are the same findings we are still addressing now,” Sadecki said.

Other grants made to benefit Southington residents come through competitive grant funding initiatives. Applications are sent to MSCF, and

every entity competes against each other for their applications to be funded. The grants are recommended by the distribution committee made up of volunteers from all six towns that MSCF serves.

“The distribution committee members meet with the applicant organizations, then come back and tell other members what they saw and heard,” Sadecki said. “They decide if the application would be a responsible use of the foundation’s money and determine if the applicant will be fully funded, partially funded or denied funding.”

MSCF supports through grants the towns of Southington, Plainville, Bristol, Wolcott, Burlington and Plymouth, Connecticut. Within one year of receiving support, organizations are required to provide a follow up report with specific metrics and responses to show how the monies were utilized.

“We are here to promote philanthropy, and we can only do that if we know what’s going on in our communities,” said Sadecki. “We are very in-tuned and involved with the six towns we support.”

MSCF is now accepting grant applications for the following grant cycles open to Southington: Bradley Henry Barnes and Leila Upson Barnes Memorial Trust (deadline Sept. 14), Men & Boys’ Fund (deadline Sept. 7) and Women & Girls’ Fund (deadline Sept. 14).

Contact (860) 583-6363 for more information or visit www.mainstreetfoundation.org.



Leila Upson Barnes