



COMMUNITY NEWS, LOCAL NEWS

Organizations earn grants from Barnes Memorial Trust

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By SHERIDAN CYR

STAFF WRITER

The Main Street Community Foundation distributed \$200,000 awarded from the Bradley Henry Barnes & Leila Upson Barnes Memorial Trust to three Southington organizations working to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

“The organizations provide programs that enhance community wellness, support local seniors and improve access to behavioral health services,” MSCF officials said in a press release. Bread for Life, the Southington-Cheshire Community YMCA and Hartford HealthCare Senior Services, Inc.’s Southington Care Center will all benefit from the trust.

“We are honored to carry out Bradley Barnes’ legacy through these important health initiatives,” said Susan Sadecki, president and CEO of the Community Foundation, in a press release. “The advisory committee’s thoughtful review of all the proposals to ensure feasibility, sustainability and impact as well as their commitment to honoring donor intent is essential.”

Bread for Life, Southington’s soup kitchen, will receive \$21,300 to fund a Wednesday night dinner and Saturday lunch for residents in need of food assistance. The grant will also fund a new commercial refrigerator and freezer to accommodate overflow food donations and an automatic external defibrillator.

“Bread for Life is deeply honored to have been awarded this grant,” said executive director Donna Ayer. “Expanding our meal service will help those who rely on Bread for Life for their meals. It is an unfortunate truth that many people in our community go hungry every day.”

SCCYMCA will receive \$29,500 to establish a new diabetes prevention program. They will also purchase a NU Step recumbent cross trainer and a 3D body scanner dedicated for the program’s use.

YMCA executive director John Myers described the program as a community-based educational and fitness program with the purpose of helping adults who are at high-risk of developing Type 2 diabetes reduce their risk by taking steps that will improve their health and well-being.

“The Centers for Disease Control estimates that diabetes affects more than 29 million people,” Myers said. “While diabetes cannot be cured, pre-diabetes



Leila Upson Barnes

can be reversed. Education and physical activity are the best tools to do this.”



The program will begin in the fall and meet twice a week for 12 weeks with a goal of participants reaching the recommended 150 minutes per week of physical activity.

“We are incredibly grateful to the Bradley Henry Barnes & Leila Upson Barnes Memorial Trust at the MSCF in supporting our efforts in providing a diabetes prevention program to our community,” he said. “What a terrific validation of our work and efforts.”

Hartford HealthCare Senior Services, Inc. will use their \$150,000 to renovate the garden room lounge and patio area of the Southington Care Center to create a home-like, soothing space for residents with dementia.

Executive director Bill Kowalewski said the trust is a “true partner” which sees the importance of ensuring the physical environment matches the

Bradley Henry Barnes

quality of care.

“Much like the state of Connecticut, Southington’s population is aging,” he said. “We are seeing rising numbers of people with dementia and we are here for them, for both patients and their family members. These improvements help to create the best environment possible for our dementia community and their caretakers.”

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