

GRANTS IN ACTION

Grant Supports Prevention Program for Wolcott Youth

Wolcott youth will benefit from new technology that will support a program that is instrumental in reducing substance use. Wolcott Crossroads was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Bristol Savings Bank Fund at Main Street Community Foundation to install a projection system at the Wolcott Activities and Learning Center (WALC).

STAR, Students Taking an Active Role, is a program being offered to 8th grade Tyrrell Middle School students that addresses drug and alcohol prevention based on the social and emotional learning model. Its purpose is to strengthen student decision-making, explore healthy options for living, gain a better understanding of themselves



and others, and to figure out how they fit into the world around them in a fun dynamic environment at WALC.

"We anticipate the projection system will be used for the presentation of activities students will participate in as STAR commences in the spring," stated Christina Welch, a member of Wolcott Crossroads Board of Directors. "This new technology will become a well-used vehicle to further inform our youth and the community of the substance use crisis."

Wolcott Crossroads is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in June 2010. The mission is to unite the

local community and create new ways and ideas to combat drug use affecting our youth and to provide support for families. It is composed of a volunteer group of concerned citizens who work collaboratively with dedicated helpers and community partners to deliver education and resources to the Town of Wolcott and surrounding areas.



Wolcott middle school students dance at the Kindness Dance, a substance-free event that attracted 113 students.

Barnes Memorial Trust Improves Southington's Well-Being

Main Street Community Foundation recognizes that many factors affect



ECCS members and the Family Resource Center marched in the Southington Apple Harvest Festival parade to promote car seat safety and the new car seat law.

the health and well-being of individuals in addition to traditional medical care received at a hospital or physician's office. Local community resources, the workplace, the safety of the surroundings,

food security and the cohesiveness of neighborhoods all impact physical and mental health. To help address this, the Bradley Henry Barnes and Leila Upson Barnes Memorial Trust Advisory

Committee launched a grant initiative in 2017 known as the Southington Community Well-Being Initiative.

In the late spring, an information session was held with nonprofit organizations in Southington to provide an overview of this new initiative, to discuss what the unmet needs of the community and their clients were and to hear ideas for improving overall health and wellness. From that session came several concepts for possible grant requests, with four programs selected to receive grants. A total of \$234,750 was awarded to the following organizations to improve the lives of Southington residents:

- *Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington (ECCS) - \$23,150*

To support five educational initiatives within the ECCS community to improve the well-being of Southington's young children.

- *LISA, Inc*

(Living in Safe Alternatives) - \$25,600

To reduce substance abuse in Southington teens through prevention, intervention and recovery supports in partnership with the Southington Youth Services Bureau and the STEPS Coalition.

- *Neighbor Brigade - \$1,000*

To support the recently established Southington chapter of Neighbor Brigade that mobilizes a network of volunteers to help neighbors with a short-term crisis.

- *United Way of Southington - \$40,000*

To enhance transportation services for Southington seniors through the provision of additional rides through a collaboration between the United Way of Southington and Senior Transportation Services of New Britain.

WOMEN & GIRLS' FUND



Celebrating Partnerships

"We want to empower Plainville middle and high school students to think critically, avoid risky behaviors and make choices which lead to healthy relationships and futures free of violence," said Barbara Damon, Executive Director of Prudence Crandall Center, while accepting a grant at the Women & Girls' Fund's Annual Meeting & Grantee Reception in January. "Partnership to Promote Healthy Relationships, which will be in Plainville schools once again, will educate teens on the warning signs and risk factors for domestic and teen dating violence, as well as the behaviors and attitudes that lead to healthy relationships. We offer a series of intensive classes to groups of 8th and 9th grade at-risk students enrolled in health education courses."



2017 WGF Grantees

The Women & Girls' Fund's Annual Meeting & Grantee Reception gathered together donors, community members and Fund representatives to award a record \$51,111 in grants to 14 organizations serving women and girls in Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott.

Grants were made possible with the proceeds from the annual Wonder of Women (WOW) event, the Barbara Hackman Franklin Fund for Women, the John & Gloria DiFrancesco Fund for Women and Girls, the Dumont Family Fund, the Furey Family Fund and the Smith Family Charitable Fund. For a

full list of grants awarded and the programs they supported, visit www.mainstreetfoundation.org/women-girls-fund.

Leadership Change

Leading the Fund into the next year is a new slate of officers. Officers serving for 2018 are: **Julia Weston, Chair; Susan Moreau, Recording Secretary; Lisa Palen, Treasurer; and Dawn Nielsen, Past Chair.** In addition, the following Advisory Board members were reelected to a second three-year term: **Sofia Bayne of Bristol; Catherine Cassin of Bristol; and Ursula Sowinski of New Britain.** The Women & Girls' Fund's Advisory Board consists of 14 dedicated community volunteers.



INSIDE VIEW

New Year Welcomes New Board Member

Before a gathering of more than 30 board members, past leadership and staff at Main Street Community Foundation's Annual Meeting, the Foundation welcomed Kelly Leppard of Southington to the Board of Directors. In addition, the following Board members were reelected to a second three-year term: Dan Daigle of Southington; Scott Fournier of Bristol; and Jackie Merchant of Plymouth.

"The Board of Directors plays an essential role in guiding the Foundation's work in the region," said Susan Sadecki, President & CEO of the Foundation. "We are grateful for their generous commitment of time and the valuable expertise each brings to the Foundation."

Kelly Leppard is a Southington native and is deeply involved in the town. She is currently the Youth Prevention Coordinator for the Town of Southington, Youth Services Department and is a Certified Prevention Specialist. She is the liaison to STEPS and serves on several local nonprofit committees and boards.



Kelly A. Leppard

The Community Foundation Board consists of 21 community leaders charged with ensuring donors' intentions are fulfilled in perpetuity.

2017 Sees Record Grantmaking

The Annual Meeting celebrated 2017, which saw the distribution of a record \$1.7 million in grants and scholarships to benefit the residents of Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott through programs and community leadership initiatives. Over \$15.5 million has been distributed since the Foundation's establishment in 1995.

Furthermore, the Foundation received \$2.3 million in contributions in 2017 and 10 new funds were established at the Foundation by local individuals, families and organizations to support causes they care about to better their communities.

"Our local communities have very generous residents," Sadecki explained. "They have established a total of 225 funds and made contributions that fuel these grants to their favorite nonprofits, their towns and their most passionate causes, like education, healthcare and humanitarian efforts. We are honored to help our donors carry out their wishes and fulfill their charitable goals."

Did you know?

Recurring online recurring donations increase the impact of a gift while helping you stay on budget. You now have the option to setup automatic recurring donations on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis at www.mainstreetfoundation.org.

A Conversation with a Past Scholarship Recipient



Natalie Minor Ponte

Natalie Minor Ponte grew up in Bristol and graduated from Bristol Eastern High School in 2002. That year, she received scholarships from two endowment funds at Main Street Community Foundation to assist her in achieving her educational and career goals: the E. Bartlett Barnes Award of Journalism Fund and the Bristol Boys & Girls Club Schulman Fund. She currently lives in Fairfield County and commutes to New York City where she works for Tenor, the company that makes the GIF Keyboard. Her job is to work with entertainment and publishing companies to get GIFs from your favorite shows into the platform.

How did receiving scholarships impact you?

Tremendously. The scholarships I received were crucial in enabling me to attend Boston University, my dream school, and pursue my career.

One of the scholarships you received was for students pursuing journalism or

a writing related career. How did you use journalism/writing in your career?

I graduated from BU's College of Communication with a focus on Advertising as well as a minor in English. I ended up getting an internship at Facebook when I was a senior in college, and that became my full-time job for more than a decade after graduation. I used and still use the writing skills I acquired at BEHS and at BU in my career; whether that was building persuasive proposals to win advertising dollars, or creating marketing and training materials for our customers, I never stopped writing professionally.

What is your passion?

I'm passionate about access to education and economic equality and trying to find the best way to make an impact there. On a more personal level, I love to write and recently have gotten back to writing short stories for fun.

Do you have any advice for current or future scholarship recipients?

There are a number of organizations like the Main Street Community Foundation that offer scholarships to all types of students. Think about what makes you stand out, even if it's not your grades. Is it a hobby, a cultural tradition, or maybe a commitment to

giving back? Think about what makes you who you are and you may be surprised how many organizations will be willing to help you pursue those interests at a college level.

Do you have anything else to share?

Connecticut residents are extremely lucky to have a number of excellent and affordable public schools in-state. That said, I know my experience leaving the state to attend university set my sights higher and gave me more opportunities than I would have had if I'd stayed local. Even if you ultimately want to move back to Connecticut, college is a perfect time to explore another place and bring that experience back home. If attending school out of state is not an option for you, I highly recommend looking into doing a semester abroad (or even a semester in a different city within the US, which many schools offer). These are all ways to take advantage of your time in college to have experiences you might not have access to otherwise, and that can open your mind and change your life for the better.

To read our full conversation with Natalie, visit www.mainstreetfoundation.org/natalie-minor-ponte.

MEN & BOYS' FUND

A Small Step for Local Men & Boys, a Big Impact on Individual Lives

Men & Boys' Fund's mission: Make it possible for men and boys to improve the quality of their lives, increase self-sufficiency and make a positive difference in their community.

Little things make a real difference in life. In 2017, the Men & Boys' Fund demonstrated this truth by responding to identified needs of men and boys in Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott:

Immediate needs

- Transportation costs for a student to attend a National Youth Leadership Forum event
- Funds toward a new stove for a transitional education program for

18-23-year-olds with special needs

- Rental assistance for a single father between jobs
- Sports opportunity for a high school youth with family and personal challenges

Program grants

- Bristol Youth Services' "Skills to Pay the Bills" program--to help young men learn life and independent living skills
- Bristol Parent & Child Center's Full Circle program--to hire a male facilitator for this single fathers' program

Only a growing group of committed volunteers and an outpouring of community generosity made fulfilling these needs possible. The Advisory Board of the Men & Boys' Fund is humbled by this support. Now we are

hoping you will join in making an even greater impact in 2018.

If you made a donation in 2017, thank you.

Please consider joining in our mission as a volunteer or by making a donation. To learn more about these opportunities, call the Foundation at 860.585.6363 or visit mainstreetfoudation.org/men-boys-fund.



A student in a transitional education program learns how to cook on a new stove.



WHO WE ARE

Main Street Community Foundation, Inc. is a public charity committed to partnering with individuals, families and businesses who wish to build permanent charitable connections, now and for generations to come. We support and better the communities of Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott, Connecticut. Since 1995, the foundation has provided opportunities to donors to support the causes they believe in and to help further their desire to give back and improve their community.

Vision, Mission, and Core Values

OUR VISION

To be widely recognized as the comprehensive center for leadership and philanthropy in the communities of Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott

OUR MISSION

To enhance the quality of life for both present and future generations in the communities we serve. We accomplish our mission by encouraging and promoting:

Gift Planning ~ Prudent Stewardship of Assets
Effective Grantmaking ~ Community Leadership

OUR CORE VALUES

Excellence, Integrity, Inclusiveness and Transparency in all we do.

Communities We Serve



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Thank you.

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