2017 | No. 2

CONNECTIONS

The quarterly newsletter of
The **COMMUNITY** Foundation *for* Greater New Haven
NOW MORE THAN EVER

Imagine. | Inform. | Invest. | Inspire.

Another Class Graduates, College Bound

Due to their hard work, students all across New Haven have earned the merits and title of Promise Scholar. These outstanding youth have made good grades (3.0+GPA) and contributed more than 75,000 hours in community service between 2015–2017. The number of New Haven Promise (NHP) scholars has increased by more than 75% since 2014, and partnerships with post-secondary schools are also going strong. UCONN alone will have 200 Promise Scholars beginning the 2017–2018 academic year. For hundreds of NHP scholars who are from families that earn less than $30,000 a year, the chance to attend college and enter the workforce with substantially less debt is a life-changing opportunity. According to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), college graduates, on average, earned 56% more than high school graduates in 2015; employment and higher wages from the start impacts an individual's lifetime earnings potential. NHP was awarded a $1.3 million multi-year Foundation grant in 2016 and continues to be the largest programmatic commitment by The Community Foundation.

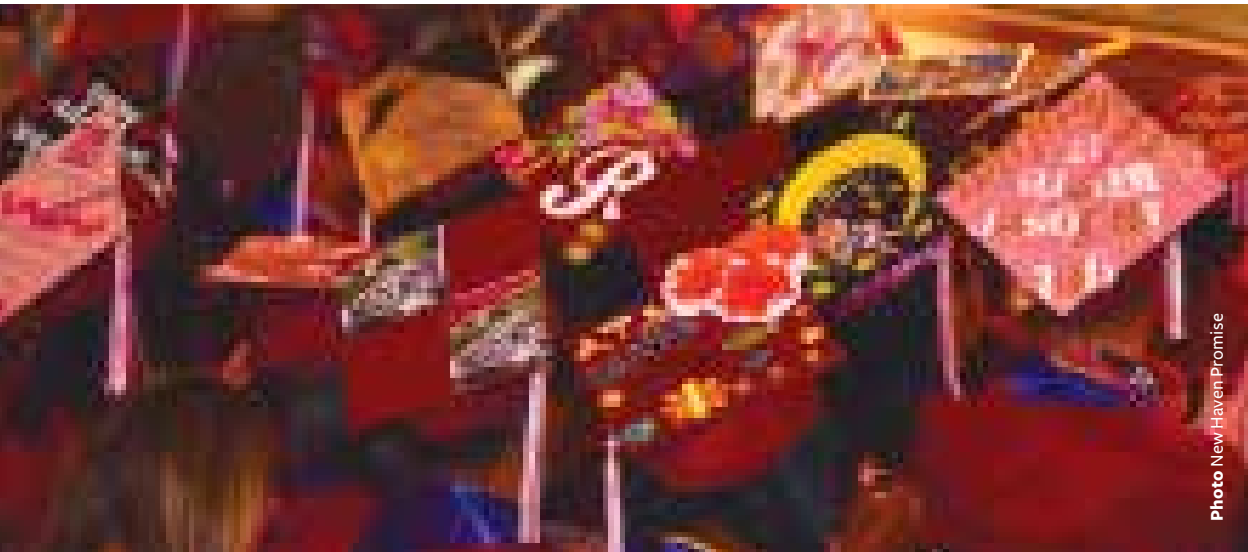

Photo New Haven Promise

Now We Will Come to Know Ourselves: A mess

In recent weeks, many in the field of philanthropy have joined with leaders from all walks of American life to denounce the brazen and violent display of hatred that despoiled the streets of Charlottesville on August 12. Recoiling at the resurgence in our midst of the demons that have written humanity's darkest stories, philanthropy has re-asserted its shared values of civility, unity, generosity and inclusion.

In Greater New Haven, while at any given time we may have our differences on the issues of the day, these values have always been the bedrock on which our community is built. Over the years, these values have been our guide as we have surmounted our challenges and realized our aspirations.

Since last fall, our message at The Community Foundation has been **Community Now More Than Ever.** These words are our way of saying that what is urgently needed now is a recommitment to these core values, for they are what connect us to one another, to this place that we share, and to our common destiny as one diverse and indivisible community.

"The time

Nearly 300 people gathered Sunday August 13, 2017 in New Haven, Connecticut, at the corner of Chapel and C

sage from Will Ginsberg, President & CEO

And these words are also our way of saying that that the times we are living in demand that we do more than proclaim our values; we in Greater New Haven need to stand together and work together.

The headwinds are fierce. Even beyond the ugliness and divisiveness of the national mood, proposed new Federal policies combined with Connecticut's budget catastrophe threaten so much of what we have long invested in and cared about in our community.

Last November at The Foundation's annual meeting, we foresaw that we might soon be tested more severely than at any time within memory, and we expressed our determination to meet whatever tests may be coming. Today, nine months later, it is clear that the gloomy forebodings of autumn 2016 have become the deeply alarming reality of summer 2017. Yale historian Timothy Snyder expressed it well recently in *The New York Times,* first quoting the wisdom of Polish Nobel Prize-winning poet Wislawa Szymborska that "We know ourselves only insofar as we have been tested,"

# of testing is

Church streets, in the wake of a weekend of violence in Charlottesville, Va. that left one young woman dead and more tha

Photos Markeshia Ricks/*New Haven Independent*

and then adding his own post-Charlottesville comment: "We are being tested and so we will come to know ourselves."

In Greater New Haven, the time of testing is upon us. Will we stand up to the powerful forces that would substitute hatred and demonization for the inclusive, unified and optimistic spirit of community that we have so painstakingly built over the decades? Will we step forward and continue to take responsibility for one another and for our shared future?

We are seeing signs already that our community will be up to the test. Let us continue and strengthen our resolve.

Now more than ever, it is up to each of us to undertake the urgent daily work of strengthening connections, embracing and supporting those on the margins, and creating a future where the many and not just the few will have the opportunity to build a better life.

Now more than ever, the future of the Greater New Haven community is up to us. Will you join us?

s upon us."

an 30 wounded after white nationalists gathered for a "Unite the Right" march.

Photo Courtesy of Lauralton Hall

Nurse Gives Hope to Lyme Disease Sufferers

Grants Made for Unconventional Treatment

A woman with a can-do happy spirit, Elizabeth (Betsey) White inherited her generosity of spirit, quick sense of humor, love of politics and socializing from her parents. Trained as a psychiatric nurse, Betsey worked at the Veterans Hospital for many years until Lyme disease made it impossible for her to continue. After being diagnosed, Betsey met with her attorney, Ingi-Mai Loorand, and Foundation staff about ways she could help others suffering with the illness. Important to Betsey was diagnosis and treatment that goes beyond traditional short-term antibiotic therapy. In 2014, Betsey left a bequest creating the Elizabeth White Fund for Lyme. The Fund distributed its first grant for $25,500 to the Lyme Connection to support Connecticut residents dealing with Lyme and other tick-borne diseases. When told of the grant's impact and reading the letters of thanks from patients, Ingi said, "Betsey would be so happy."

Alleviating the Financial Burden of Living with Lyme

Ninety-five percent of confirmed Lyme disease cases occur in just 14 states — Connecticut being one and home to the town from which the disease derives its name. Diagnosis of Lyme can be difficult, often requiring many trips to many doctors. Fortunately the Fund for Lyme was there to help Lisa, a patient at Lyme Connection. "It is very difficult to worry about medical costs and deal with financial limitations when one is suffering from a baffling and frightening array of ever-changing symptoms. It is so wonderful that there is financial assistance for those of us that need it to survive this horrifying disease. Without [it], it is impossible to have access to skilled and experienced Lyme specialists."

Photo Courtesy of Mary Johnson

A Good Place to Raise Children

Branford and Guilford Foundations Release Community Reports

CFGNH partnered with the Guilford and Branford Community Foundations and DataHaven to produce 4-page reports on the two shoreline communities. The reports were based on CFGNH's *2016 Community Progress Report* about the well-being of the entire Greater New Haven region. Although Branford and Guilford have much lower poverty and low-income rates than the state or the region, 14–15% of the towns' households are severely cost-burdened. And while 91% of Branford and Guilford residents rate their town as a good place to raise children, the percentage of children living in low-income families is 22% and 14%, respectively. High school graduation rates in both towns exceed 90% and residents have lower health risks (such as anxiety, obesity, asthma and food insecurity) compared to state percentages. If others would like to partner with CFGNH to create a local well-being report, contact Christina Ciociola, SVP of Grantmaking & Strategy, at 203-777-7088.

Local Clinical Psychologist Replaces Departing Board Member

We are sad to report that June 1 marks the end of Emily Byrne's membership to The Foundation's Board. Emily was appointed to the Board in 2013 by former Mayor John DeStefano for a term of seven years. She resigned from the Board after receiving a fellowship that will take her out of the country to Germany for several years. Dr. Maysa Akbar was appointed by the current Mayor of New Haven to serve out Emily's term. Dr. Akbar is a Board certified Adolescent and Child Clinical Psychologist and a Clinical Instructor at Yale School of Pediatric Dentistry.

Photo Judy Sirota Rosenthal

Searching for the Common Denominator

Women & Girls Fund Talks Feminism, Inclusivity and Action

On June 14, The Community Fund for Women & Girls held its Annual Meeting entitled *Feminism: The Common Denominator?* Over 200 people turned out to hear from Linda Sarsour, co-chair of the Women's March 2017 and *The New York Times* best-selling author Rebecca Traister. Each woman spoke for 15 minutes and then engaged in a discussion moderated by Foundation Board Chair, Kica Matos. The message to women of all ages and backgrounds was to find the commonality in divergent viewpoints and work together to advance women's equity. Female leaders were called upon to make room for a more diverse feminism, to support the work at a grassroots level, and to keep a long view of history in mind while trying to make headway.

Read more in "How Feminists Can Lead the Charge for Change" published in the *New Haven Independent*, June 15, 2017

Those Closest to the Challenge Are Closest to the Solution

On August 10, 2017, The Community Fund for Women & Girls hosted an intimate discussion with local leaders Dena M. Castricone (Partner at Murtha Cullina LLP; Founder of the Connecticut Alliance for Business Opportunities, now known as Greater CT Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce), Dr. Chaka Felder-McEntire (Founder and Executive Director of Higher Heights Youth Empowerment Programs, Inc.) and Elaine Peters (co-chair of Mothers for Justice and a longtime community activist). These inspirational women were called to lead in a variety of ways, from wanting to help young people and honor others who had helped them along the way, to always wanting to be the lady that all the kids looked to for guidance, and wanting to bring to the local community a national model for leveraging economic power for social justice.

Visit fundforwomenandgirls.org for ways you can show your leadership.

Taking Care of the Valley: A Strong Tradition

Valley Gives Back™ Website Launched

Planned gifts are thoughtful and intentional charitable gifts that make an impact now *and* in the future. There is no one-size-fits-all planned giving solution because every donor has unique philanthropic goals and objectives. The Valley Community Foundation, partners with CFGNH, launched a community-wide planned giving initiative in May called the Valley Gives Back™. The site offers tools to help inform how to make a commitment to your favorite nonprofits during your lifetime without jeopardizing your nest egg. The Valley has a rich history of its citizens taking care of their community long after they are gone. Well-known figures like Katharine Matthies and Wilbur Fisk Osbourne and every-day citizens have expressed their love of the Valley through their estates for centuries.

$1.2 Million Bequest to Benefit Valley Residents in Perpetuity

Raymond Mackowski gave decades of service and good works to his hometown of Ansonia and the larger Valley region until his death in 2016. His charitable spirit now lives on through the Raymond Mackowski Fund that he established by bequest with Attorney Christine Curtiss of Cohen and Thomas, Attorneys at Law. Of the 14 funds established at The Valley Community Foundation in 2016, the Mackowski Fund is the only unrestricted one and the largest. “He was a private man, but he enjoyed life to the fullest,” nephew Richard Mackowski said of Raymond. “He was just a good man, that’s really the best way to put it.”

The COMMUNITY Foundation
for Greater New Haven

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Summary of Our 2016 Work

As noted in the *2016 Report to Our Community* its clear that The Community Foundation is operating from a position of strength thanks to the generosity of donors and 2016 successes, including:

- 3 major Convenings, 2 Professional Advisor events
- 24 new funds
- $508, 995, 026 Million in assets at year end
- More than $19 Million in new gifts and transfers; thousands from donors
- Over $23 Million in grants and distributions to more than 1,000 nonprofits
- Distribution of a comprehensive *Community Progress Report* and *sponsorship of the 2016 Community Index Report* to further collective understanding of the region and ourselves

Important Message inside from President & CEO of The Foundation

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