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PRESS RELEASE

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Community Foundation Awards More Than \$530,000 in Grants

The New Canaan Community Foundation (NCCF) recently announced \$531,000 in grant investments supporting local nonprofit organizations. On June 10th, the Foundation hosted a webcast announcing the 76 local nonprofit organizations receiving new grant awards. This year's virtual event was attended by over 100 nonprofit staff and Board members, the Foundation's staff and Board, and many of the 80 volunteers from New Canaan who gave their time to vet these investments.

The Foundation's annual grant process distributes funds raised from donors across the community, who give at all different levels to pool their collective resources and make their community a better place. Together, with the Foundation's other grantmaking programs, NCCF will invest more than \$1.5 million in the community this year.

Local families and businesses work with the Foundation to plan how to reach their charitable goals. Some set up donor-advised funds within the Foundation, as an efficient vehicle to manage their charitable giving. This year, the Foundation's donor-advised fundholders co-invested over \$35,000 of additional funding to the spring grants. While fundholders can give anywhere across the country, Sharon Stevenson, the Foundation's Board Chair, called this "a testament to the shared passion for making our community a better place."

Every year, NCCF's grantmaking goal is to provide impactful funding for a range of programs serving our community. This spring's 76 grants support five categories, in pursuit of the following results:

- Human Services – Community members are able to meet their basic needs
- Arts, Culture & Community Resources – Community members benefit from New Canaan's cultural, recreational, and other community resources
- Youth & Education – Youth have the academic, social, and financial support they need to succeed
- Health – Community members have the information and access to services they need to stay healthy
- Seniors & Special Needs – Older adults and persons with special needs achieve and maintain a high quality of life

This year, the Foundation chose to place additional focus on several key areas – the biggest being behavioral health, for the second year in a row. Behavioral health is a broad category that includes mental health as well as substance misuse issues. For the past two years, the Foundation’s Behavioral Health Committee has overseen this strategy. Together with this spring’s awards of \$80,500 to 8 organizations, the Foundation is investing over \$100,000 in this area of work – effectively doubling the investment in this area over the last two years.

Notably, the Foundation last year doubled its investments in Domestic Violence prevention and intervention, and again sustained those investments, totaling \$40,000.

By dollar amount, the largest portion of resources are invested in human services, closely followed by health. The largest percentage increases in funding this year, however, supported the categories of seniors and health. Lauren Patterson, the Foundation’s President & CEO, commented on how this increased funding reflects what nonprofit organizations and community members are telling the Foundation about growing community need.

Also notable, new grantees for the Foundation’s investments this year include: Positive Directions - The Center for Prevention and Counseling, and RE/COACH, both organizations expanding behavioral health services available to our community.

Total grants this spring were made as follows. An asterisk (*) indicates co-investment by a donor-advised fund:

Human Services – \$173,150 to 22 organizations, ensuring community members feel safe and are supported to get their basic needs met.

- **All Our Kin:** To support individualized coaching and other supports for family child care providers in the organization's Norwalk/Stamford site. By building their capacity as early childhood educators, they are able to give the youngest, most vulnerable children high-quality early learning experiences.
- **Building One Community:** To support its Workforce Preparation and Placement programs providing immigrants with research-based services that are proven to help them gain the English language and job skills that increase their employability leading to self-sufficiency.
- **CASA of SW Connecticut:** To expand volunteer advocacy services, including the CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) program. Connecticut's CASA law became effective January 2017 and Child Advocates has successfully begun the first and only CASA program in Connecticut with plans to expand the program in Fairfield County. The CASA Legislation makes it possible for 100% of abused and neglected children to be appointed a CASA volunteer as an advocate.
- **Circle of Care:** To support the organization’s efforts to provide practical, emotional and financial support to Connecticut families directly affected by childhood cancer, and help make the journey a little bit easier. The goal is to meet the unique, challenging, and changing needs that arise for patients and families during diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship.
- **Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants:** To support affordable, high-quality immigration legal services to low-income immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, naturalized citizens, and foreign-born victims of serious crimes in lower Fairfield County. Many cases include

domestic violence victims and are referred by partner organizations including the Domestic Violence Crisis Center.

- **Domestic Violence Crisis Center:** To support DVCC's Center for Legal Services and Center for Economic Empowerment, or SustainAbilityCT. Court and Legal Services attorneys and advocates ensure that victims of intimate partner violence are informed about their rights and remedies within the courts and supported in their interactions with law enforcement. The SustainAbilityCT program assists survivors to find safe, affordable housing and achieve economic security.
- **Exchange Club Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse of Southern CT:** To support the HELP for Kids program, serving families with children ages 0-18 who are victims of child abuse or neglect and living at or below the poverty line. Interventions ensure that a family's basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, and medical care have been met, then help parents learn positive parenting skills and access community support to assist them on an upward path.
- **Fairfield County House:** To support the Resident Assistance Fund, so that financial barriers will not prevent people from getting the best end of life care.
- **Family Centers:** To support for the Den for Grieving Kids, which provides an array of programs that enable children ages 3-18 to process and cope with their grief.
- **Family ReEntry:** To support the organization's Re-entry, Domestic Violence, and Youth & Family Programs which support the safety and self-sufficiency of families impacted by crime, violence/abuse, and incarceration.
- **Filling in the Blanks:** To support the Weekend Meal Program, which provides food for students facing food insecurity, and to specifically expand the organization's partnership with fellow grantee Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County, from serving 40 students to 65 early childhood students each week.
- **Food Rescue US:** To support the organization's volunteer-driven, community-based food rescue platform in Fairfield County. This year's request includes updating the technology's app platform based on learnings from the first 2 generations of mobile app-based food recovery.
- **Human Services Council:** To support Children's Connection, a Nationally Accredited Child Advocacy Center, which provides wrap-around case coordination, support, education and treatment services to children who have been sexually and/or physically abused and their family members. Services are available completely free of charge to individuals who live, work or were victimized in the communities of New Canaan, Norwalk, Wilton, Weston and Westport.
- **Inspirica*:** To support the Family Housing Program, Jumpstart Career Program, Early Childhood & Parenting Program, and Children's Services Program. Inspirica's mission is to shelter the homeless and to fundamentally break the cycle of homelessness by addressing not just the physical component, but also its underlying root causes. To this end, they have developed a unique two-generation approach to ending family homelessness that addresses all components of the family: adults and children alike.
- **Kids in Crisis:** To support the Safe Haven for Kids, the only program available to children and families in New Canaan or the rest of CT that provides free 24/7 crisis prevention, counseling, and comprehensive emergency shelter to children under 18. Referrals come through families, friends, neighbors, schools, agencies, police, hospitals and others concerned about a child's safety and well-being.
- **New Covenant Center:** To support the operations of NCC's four food programs (Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry, Inspirica Dinner Program, and Saint Joseph's Parenting Center's Food Pantry)

enabling New Covenant to continue providing as much food as possible as well as healthier and more nutritious food to those in need in Stamford and neighboring towns.

- **Open Door Shelter***: To support case management, housing and behavioral health services for individuals in the shelter seeking stabilization and housing and support the organization's overall mission to effectively address the causes and complexities of the homeless and working poor. Open Door provides shelter, food, clothing, case management services, treatment services, transitional planning for short and long-term goals, subsidized housing, education, employment, health services, and a path towards independence and success.
- **Pacific House***: To support the emergency shelter's meals program, which leverages volunteers and community donations to operate 365 days a year and serve nearly 20,000 meals each year.
- **Person-to-Person**: To support the organization's new Mobile Food Pantry, that launched to increase food access in Stamford, and to support the campership program, providing summer camp scholarships for children in need.
- **Saint Joseph Parenting Center**: To support the organization's mission to strengthen families at-risk of abuse and neglect by providing parent education and support.
- **Tiny Miracles Foundation**: To support services for families with premature babies, including financial assistance for families, bereavement counseling, and support groups.
- **Women's Mentoring Network***: To support the E to the 4th POWER Program (Employment, Education, Economic Security, Empowerment), which engages low-income women in building their job skills, financial literacy, and life skills.

Health – \$130,250 to 14 organizations helping community members have the information and access to services they need to stay healthy. As part of this total, \$80,500 specifically addresses behavioral health:

Health

- **Americares Free Clinics**: To support the Bob Macauley Americares Free Clinic of Norwalk, ensuring that low-income uninsured patients are able to receive medical care.
- **Norwalk Community Health Center**: To support the organization's mission of providing quality, innovative care that enriches the lives of our patients, from newborns to seniors, and of the community, regardless of ability to pay, primarily serving the geographic service area of Norwalk, New Canaan, Westport, Weston and Wilton.
- **The Rowan Center**: To support the Center's mission to provide counseling and support services to victims of sexual assault and eliminating sexual violence through community-wide education programs.
- **Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County**: To support hospice and palliative care for New Canaan and Fairfield County families facing financial hardship.
- **Voices of September 11th***: To support general operating, including internships for students who learn about September 11th, other incidents of mass violence, and resiliency.
- **Waveny LifeCare Network**: The third and final installment of a multi-year grant to support a new Outpatient Rehabilitation Center.

Behavioral Health

- **Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut:** To support high-quality mental health services for children and teens in New Canaan and surrounding communities, regardless of their families' ability to pay.
- **Laurel House*:** To support the Supported Education program and provide family support. Supported Education is a free evidence-based program that helps economically disadvantaged high school and college aged children living with a mental health disability enroll and succeed in post-secondary education or vocational certification or complete a GED. It provides the coping skills, learning strategies, and skill building for individuals living with mental health disorders (and some with co-occurring disorders) that is needed to productively integrate into the local community. The program ensures successful transition of vulnerable students to a continued path toward a vocation and self-sufficiency.
- **Liberation Programs:** To support general operating, including inpatient treatment programs, outpatient services, and resources for youth, adults, and families struggling with substance use.
- **Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance Center:** To support general operating, including comprehensive behavioral health services to children and families.
- **New Canaan CARES:** To support the organization's mission to advance the health and well-being of youth and families through responsive educational programs that support and strengthen parenting skills, positive youth development, and healthy lifestyles.
- **New Canaan Parent Support Group*:** To support the organization's mission to provide support for parents of loved ones struggling with substance use disorder or in early recovery; and to raise awareness about addiction, mental health and recovery in our community.
- **Positive Directions - The Center for Prevention and Counseling:** To support the organization's outpatient treatment services in behavioral health and substance abuse for adolescents, adults and families, as well as financial assistance for those who cannot afford out-of-pocket fees.
- **RE/COACH:** To support the development of a team of community recovery coaches. Recovery Coaches are peer support specialists, trained with the skills and knowledge to help guide, mentor and support anyone who'd like to enter into or sustain recovery from drugs or alcohol.

Seniors & Special Needs – \$81,250 to 9 organizations ensuring older adults and persons with special needs achieve and maintain a high quality of life.

- **ElderHouse*:** To support the Subsidy Program, which ensures low-income seniors have access to its adult day services, providing aging seniors with a safe, nurturing environment where they can share time with others while receiving the care they need to continue living at home.
- **Family & Children's Agency:** To support expansion of social work/case management services for seniors served by the organization's home care program.
- **GetAbout:** To support the organization's mission of providing transportation services to seniors and anyone with special needs in the New Canaan community.
- **Meals on Wheels of New Canaan*:** To support meal delivery services for the growing number of New Canaan seniors aging in place.
- **New Canaan Mounted Troop:** To support the Super Troopers equine care and adaptive riding therapeutic programs, which are dedicated to serving children and adults with special needs who reside in the local community.

- **New Canaan YMCA***: To support a Camp Nurse for Campers with Special Needs to be on site at the Y's Camp Y-Ki summer camp program held at Kiwanis Park, a traditional summer camp program held at Kiwanis Park and serving children ages 5-15.
- **Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs**: To support a comprehensive arts program, including music therapy, music, photography, movement, visual arts and literacy, for children and young adults with special needs giving them the opportunity to participate more fully in the community.
- **Schoolhouse Apartments***: To support the existing health and wellness programs which have been modified to recognize their aging and disabled population and to stimulate their residents to leave their rooms to get exercise, have social interaction, and take in healthy nutrition.
- **STAR, Lighting the Way**: To support the Birth to Three Program, an in-home early intervention service for young children with intellectual and developmental disabilities including autism, as well as family support services. The program goal is for children to enter school developmentally on-track in literacy and social, emotional and intellectual skills with a personalized transition plan.

Arts, Culture & Community Resources – \$81,200 to 19 organizations working to preserve, expand, and use New Canaan cultural and recreational resources.

- **Connecticut Fund for the Environment**: To support the restoration of the Norwalk River at Merwin Meadows Park in Wilton, Connecticut. Goal of the project is to remove a derelict dam in order to enable fish to reach critical habitat, eliminate a significant flooding hazard, and improve a community resource.
- **Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County**: To support the Alliance's peer networking programs, which benefit the professional development of more than 260 arts and cultural organizations serving Fairfield County.
- **Earthplace**: To support Harbor Watch's water quality monitoring program in the Noroton and Rippowam Rivers in New Canaan and also for support of experiential learning programs for high school and college students, including New Canaan students. Water quality monitoring will provide municipal officials with the data necessary to locate and fix pollution sources. Due to budget limitations, most municipalities do not have the funding, laboratory space, or qualified personnel to collect this critical data.
- **The Glass House**: To support "Glass House Presents" at the New Canaan Library, an on-going series of free public talks about architecture, design, and Modernism in New Canaan and beyond. Audiences have an opportunity to interact with prominent writers, curators, and others who engage with topics related to New Canaan's history as well as international developments in architecture and design.
- **New Canaan Conservation Commission – Bristow Bird/Wildwood Preserve***: To support the Commission's efforts to restore the main trail to a more child and senior friendly walking path as part of the Bristow Bird Sanctuary & Wildwood Preserve's master plan. The main trail is a central artery of the Preserve acting as a "GreenLink" between Mead Park and Old Stamford Road, and eventually will be connecting Irwin Park and the Nature Center to Waveny Park.
- **New Canaan Garden Club**: To support the Club's work to eradicate invasive plants, such as Japanese knotweed, which have taken over selected portions of Irwin park. Grant funds would

support a second year of goats, provided by Green Goats Farm -- a more environmentally friendly alternative to the use of herbicides.

- **New Canaan Museum & Historical Society:** To support the purchase of signage for the Hanford-Silliman House, with any additional funds to go towards UV liners for windows.
- **New Canaan Nature Center*:** To support the organization's mission of inspiring people of all ages to respect, protect, and enjoy the world of nature through environmental education, stewardship of natural resources and service to the community.
- **New Canaan Society for the Arts – Carriage Barn*:** To support the organization's mission of promoting the visual and performing arts, and enriching the community through exhibitions, education, and cultural experiences, and operating the Carriage Barn Arts Center.
- **New England Dance Theater:** To support their Arts Accessibility Program offered through NEDT In the Community and NEDT Dance! This includes: the Annual Nutcracker Benefit show; their dance demonstration series and participation in community events; classes for Carver Center and STAR, Inc.; and their Spring 2021 Carnival of the Animals inclusive ballet.
- **Norwalk Symphony Society:** To support Not Just For Kids, a free music education program. Six presentations will be held at the New Canaan Library and and six presentations will be held for underserved populations in Norwalk. Many children who attend have never seen, held, or played a musical instrument before and are often transformed when they hear the notes, and sounds coming from their own efforts.
- **Pro Bono Partnership:** To support free legal services to nonprofit organizations serving Fairfield County, including many Foundation grantees.
- **Shakespeare on the Sound:** To support the Educational Outreach Program, bringing their works to a broader audience through a variety of school, library arts and adult education programs that reach a diverse cross section of our communities.
- **Silvermine Arts Center:** To support the organization's mission to cultivate and encourage growth through the arts; to promote and showcase artists; and to provide arts education opportunities for the greater community.
- **Stepping Stones Museum for Children*:** To support the continuation and possible expansion of the Mutt-i-grees program in New Canaan. Mutt-i-grees is a social and emotional learning curriculum that brings shelter animals into spaces that encourage literacy, communication, empathy, and understanding. Stepping Stones recruits volunteers from their teen empowerment internship program to train as Mutt-i-grees program facilitators, and incorporates shelter animals identified through their existing partnership with Norwalk PAWS Animal Shelter.
- **Summer Theatre of New Canaan:** To support the required replacement of much of our wireless sound equipment, due to limited supply, extensive overuse, and outdoor conditions which age equipment much faster.
- **Treetops Chamber Music Society*:** To support four concerts at the Carriage Barn Arts Center, as well as post-concert receptions which allow for audience members to interact with the artists and ask questions, which further enhances the educational experience.
- **Waveny Park Conservancy:** To support the restoration and enhancement of the front courtyard of Waveny House to visually enhance the entrance to the historic mansion. Funding will be used to undertake a complete restoration of the courtyard including trees, lighting, shrubs and ground cover. This grant specifically would most likely be directed to plantings and lighting.

- **Wildlife in Crisis:** To support a new black bear habitat to provide permanent appropriate rehabilitation housing and care for cubs in the future should they become injured or orphaned.

Youth & Education – \$65,300 to 12 organizations helping youth build the academic, social, and financial support they need to succeed.

- **ABC House of New Canaan:** To support the mission to support minority students who, because of their desire to learn and participate in a strong and successful secondary education environment, will bring their talent, energy and diversity to the high school and to our community as a whole.
- **Carver Foundation of Norwalk:** To support the Youth Development Program, which takes place at the Carver Community Center, Norwalk's four middle and two high schools, and at Side by Side Charter School, helping seniors graduate high school on time and become first generation college students.
- **Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County:** To support its early childhood education (birth to five years old) and support services for low-income families in Stamford and lower Fairfield County.
- **Domus Kids:** To support the organization's mission to empower young people to rise above adversity through academic support, social-emotional skill building, and personal and practical connections that help guide them through critical junctures to become resilient, positive contributors to their communities.
- **Future 5*:** To support the organization's mission serving motivated, low-income high school students in Stamford, so that they graduate with an actionable plan and the necessary resources to move on to a four-year or two-year college, trade school, professional job, or the military.
- **Grassroots Tennis & Education:** To support the expansion of their impactful programming at the New Canaan Racquet Club through the implementation of a new winter schedule that will bring tennis, social-emotional, and academic support to children and youth in a safe nurturing environment. They are hoping to provide that experience to all of their core student-athletes.
- **Horizons at New Canaan Country School*:** To support the organization's mission of transforming the lives of underserved children and youth from Stamford and Norwalk through year-round academic and enrichment programs to inspire learning, encourage success, and close the opportunity gap.
- **INTEMPO*:** To support the organization's Music School, an afterschool music-education program that provides free or low-cost small group instrumental and choral music lessons. Intempo provides high-quality music education to low-income children predominantly from immigrant or first-generation backgrounds and from communities underrepresented in the arts, helping them build critical emotional, cognitive, and behavioral skills, and empowering them to leverage these skills to achieve life success.
- **LiveGirl:** To support Confidence Clubs (formerly known as LiveGirlTalk) for middle school girls grades 5-8 at Saxe and NC Library. Confidence Clubs are afterschool mentoring groups that provide girls with a positive adult role model and an emotionally and physically safe BRAVE SPACE to develop self-esteem and social emotional intelligence, the building blocks of a confident leader. Grant support will also provide Camp LiveGirl scholarships for New Canaan residents, as well as New Canaan Community "Parent/Daughter" Workshops (Social Media

Wellness, Know Before You Go - Sexual Assault Awareness). These workshops will serve as an ongoing resource for parents and community on a wide range of topics impacting girls today.

- **Mercy Learning Center:** To support a variety of programming for women, including part-time tutoring, full-time classroom instruction, technology education, employment and life skills training, family literacy programs, and enrichment. Holistic support services including case management, childcare, legal counsel, nursing, citizenship application assistance, food, and diapers are freely available to all program participants.
- **Norwalk Community College Foundation*:** To support the Summer Bridge Math Intensive Program, which prepares students who have placed into remedial math for college-level courses.
- **United Way of Western Connecticut:** To support the Stamford Cradle to Career Initiative, a community-wide partnership working to collectively align resources to ensure that all youth succeed in education, career and life. The initiative is housed at the United Way of Western Connecticut and involves many leaders of local nonprofit organizations.

The New Canaan Community Foundation, founded in 1977, serves as New Canaan's local partner for advice, leadership, and facilitation of charitable giving. Their vision strives for a New Canaan that comes together to address both individual and local challenges, enriching the lives of all community members. To-date, the New Canaan Community Foundation has invested more than \$16 million in nonprofit organizations, working with individuals and businesses to achieve their philanthropic goals through donor-advised funds and other partnerships. Learn more at www.newcanaancf.org

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