Leadership Forum Promotes Nonprofit Excellence, Brings Leaders Together

More than 150 Board Chairmen and Executive Directors from nonprofits throughout Northwest Connecticut, as well as Massachusetts, and New York, gathered for Board Leadership Forum, a daylong training and networking event.

Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation collaborated with Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and the Foundation for Community Health to provide the forum, which featured nine workshops by experts in governance, fundraising, and change management.

Keynote speaker Rodney Christopher of Fiscal Management Associates, a consultancy that serves nonprofits and foundations nationwide, kicked off the event speaking about nonprofit resilience.

Board leadership forum presenter Marco Sternheim addresses attendees during breakout session

Culture (Bucks Strategy) Every Time

Also Online...

The Women & Girls Fund Welcomes New Committee Member Mani Williams of United, Connecticut is excited about the addition of the Women & Girls Fund. Jane is the coordinator for the Community Foundation's Development at Northwestern Connecticut Community College.

Read more at northwestcf.org/womensgirlfund

Local Nonprofits Awarded $190,000 in Fall Grants

Spring and Summer Grants support access to healthful food, a clean and green environment, education, and addictions recovery and mental health, homelessness recovery, and much more.

Learn more at northwestcf.org/springsummer

Draper Foundation Fund Awards More than $800,000 in Fall Grants

The Draper Foundation Fund of the Community Foundation supported addiction recovery and mental health, homelessness recovery and much more.

Learn more at northwestcf.org/draper

Congratulations LEAP 2018 Graduates

The professionals from Northwest Connecticut have graduated from the Leadership Enrichment for Advancing Professionals (LEAP) program. The graduates completed the intensive program designed toward building skills in all areas of nonprofit leadership.

Learn more at northwestcf.org/leap

Kindness, Compassion, and Giving Freely—A Wang Family Tradition

In the 1930s, Jo Wang Loi’s father, Chinese diplomat GH Wang, arrived in the United States with the goal of improving cultural understanding between the United States and China. He and his American-born wife, Gladys Chen Foin, worked for decades toward this goal, broadening relationships in communities in Chinatown and New Orleans, and displayed seemingly limitless generosity and compassion toward their friends and neighbors.

As a diplomat, GH refused gifts and recognition—once turning down an apron of linen, a common perk for diplomats who wanted to live in the New Orleans bayous—because he said it would be an “outward show of wealth.”

GH’s and his wife Gladys established The G&G Educational Foundation, an endowed charitable foundation to promote understanding of Chinese culture. For many years, they managed the Foundation themselves, researching programs and organizations, and awarding grants in support of unique and creative arts, scientific, and cultural programs.

The Wangs philanthropic spirit and love of community stemmed from their family tradition. GH and Gladys lived—as the Wang family members still do—by a family code of ethics. This code is noted in the Wang family book of records, which tracks, among many things, births, marriages, accomplishments, and deaths.

Washington Environmental Council, Khushred Bhumgara Fund Mind the Recycling Gap

The Washington Environmental Council in Washington, Connecticut, is always seeking new ways to reduce waste for the health and welfare of all life forms on earth. It hosts events on environmental topics, and holds events annually, such as Earth Day Roadside Clean-up and 5K. WEC also awards scholarships to Washington Student entering environmental studies. Early in 2018, through a grant from the Khushred Bhumgara Fund, WEC launched Zero Waste Washing. Through the initiative, Terra’s Zero Waste boxes allow residents to recycle items that are not permitted in the single stream recycling. Boxes through-out Washington collects items, including toothbrushes, art supplies, hair products, tubes, make-up containers, shaving- foam tubes, backpads, shoes, alkaline batteries, and garden products.

“My family of items are almost non existent—I end up using the trash stream,” said Diane Lash Decker, WEC Co-President. “Every time an individual learns that there is the possibility of recycling a certain item (such as a tape dispenser, a CD, or a candy wrapper), it affects the way they look at that item for the rest of their life.”

Stevan Garbin Honors His Parents, Gives Back to his Hometown

Stevan L. Garbin grew up in Torrington the only child of Mario and Helen (Balgo) Garbin. He translated a love of cars into a business, owning Triumph Taxi in Boston for more than 20 years. But when he was ready to retire, he came home to the south end of Torrington.

The Helen and Mario Garbin Scholarship Fund awards scholarships annually to local students beginning their first year of college and continuing their education.

Stevan owned several antique vehicles, and frequented antique shops and flea markets looking for unique items. He played cards with longtime friends and visited with his mother at her final resting place in St. Francis Cemetery. When he was no longer to the care of himself any longer, he moved into Wolcott Hall Retirement Center, still frequenting Saturday’s at his favorite restaurant.

Stevan passed away in early 2017 at the age of 84. Throughout estate planning, he left an enduring gift and a legacy of compassion and love that continues to enrich an endowed fund named in honor of his parents. The Helen & Mario Garbin Scholarship Fund provides scholarships to local students, and will continue to do so, forever: “I believe in a kind and generous person,” said Egidio Raciardi, a longtime friend. “Stevan’s generous gift is a testament to his love of Torrington.”
Donors Feed the Hungry Bright, Make Holidays Bright

In Litchfield County, 10 percent of residents experience food insecurity from time to time, meaning they don’t know where their next meal is coming from. Most are working, but struggling with low wages and balancing other basic need expenses, such as utilities, healthcare, and housing.

Northwest Connecticut nonprofits are working to fill the gaps for those struggling financially by providing warm meals and pantry staples.

The Friendly Hands Food Bank serves 1,600 adults, children and elderly members of our communities with food twice a week, and provides Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas meals and gift cards annually. The Food Bank is one of more than 20 food pantries, soup kitchens, and nutritional programs in the Northwest Corner working to ease the pain of hunger for vulnerable members of our communities.

Critical-Needs Grants Provide Additional Year-end Support

Through the Draper Foundation Fund, the Marwin Wm. and Alice Edwards Fund, and a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, the Community Foundation awarded $67,000 in critical-needs grants to nonprofits servicing some of the area’s most economically distressed residents and providing the most basic necessities—food, warm clothing, fuel assistance and shelter.

Organizations apply for grants each fall. Grants are awarded in December.

Critical-Needs grants recipients at northwest.org/criticalneeds

Be What’s Possible…

Year-end gifts make a world of difference. Did you know if you are a 70 1/2 years old or older you can support the community you love and the causes that matter to you by transferring up to $100,000 per-year from your IRA to the Community Foundation—without incurring federal income taxes today or estate and income taxes in the future.

Contact Bradford Hoar, VP of Philanthropic Services at bhoar@northwestcf.org or (860) 526-1245 for more information. And, explore the Guide for Giving at northwestcf.org/guide for more creative giving options.

Vol 11: Issue 2: Fall/Winter 2018

2018 Grants in Support of Food Security

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Donors Feed the Hungry Bright, Make Holidays Merry

In Litchfield County, 10 percent of residents experience food insecurity from time to time, meaning they don’t know where their next meal is coming from. Most are working, but struggling with low wages and balancing other basic need expenses, such as utilities, healthcare, and housing. NorthEast Connecticut nonprofits are working to fill the gaps for those struggling financially by providing warm meals and pantry staples.

The Friendly Hands Food Bank serves 1,600 adults, children and elderly members of our communities with food biweekly, and provides Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas meals and holiday gifts annually. The Food Bank is one of more than 20 food pantries, soup kitchens, and nutritional programs in the Northwest Corner working to ease the pain of hunger for vulnerable members of our communities.

2018 Grants in Support of Food Security

Khursheed Bhungara Fund
Friends Hands Food Bank in support of stocking the food pantry for the winter months

Food Rescue in support of the launch of Food Rescue US in Northwest Connecticut, a platform for transferring food from grocers, restaurants, and other food industry sources that would otherwise be thrown away and delivering it to organizations assisting those struggling with food insecurity.

Hands of Grace in support of the purchase of a commercial freezer, enabling the nonprofit to store larger quantities of fresh produce.

Marion Wm. and Alice Edwards Fund
Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry in support of the purchase of two freezers to store food and prevent spoilage.

Draper Foundation Fund
Connecticut Food Bank in support of the Kid’s Backpack Program, which provides meals when school is not in session for 112 food insecure children in Torrington and Winsted.

Community Kitchen of Torrington in support of a consultant to create a strategic plan for long-term sustainability.

Echo Valley Foundation Fund
The Corner Food Pantry of Lakeville in support of the organization and its mission.

Torrington Library, Lucia Tuttte Fritz Fund Save Historical Treasures

Staff at the Torrington Library recently made a discovery of historic proportions. Tucked among stored items, staff uncovered a collection of historical letters and documents dating from the 1700s through the mid-1800s.

The well-preserved documents include a Revolutionary War discharge letter signed by George Washington, a letter written by James Madison, and correspondence between abolitionist John Brown and his most valued militant (some would say lap dog), John Celik. The letters were dated 1855, four years before the dusky infamous raid at Harper Ferry, which historians believe played an important role in provoking the Civil War.

Through a grant from the Lucia Tuttte Fritz Fund of the Community Foundation, library staff worked with Liberty Art and Framing of Torrington to preserve and frame the documents to then be viewed online at torringtonlibrary.org and in-person at the Torrington Library.

“Each document was framed using state-of-the-art materials to show the public the documents in the smallest details,” said Llesia E. Gueniat, Torrington Library Director.

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What matters to you? Tell us at northwestcf.org/contact

Critical-Needs Grants Provide Additional Year-end Support

Through the Draper Foundation Fund, the Marion Wm. and Alice Edwards Fund, a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, the Community Foundation awarded $67,000 in critical-needs grants to nonprofits serving some of the area’s most economically distressed residents and providing the most basic of necessities—food, warm clothing, fuel assistance and shelter. Organizations apply for grants each fall. Grants are awarded in December.

View a complete list of critical-needs grant recipients at northwestcf.org/BeneficiaryGroups

Funds Put Education within Reach for Local Students

Nearly two hundred students from the Northwest Corner were awarded scholarships for the 2018-2019 academic year, receiving a total of $158,500 in scholarships through various Community Foundation funds.

Students are awarded based on parameters set by donors that may include financial need, academic performance, community participation, extra-curricular activities, work experience, and/or essays.

“Thank you so much for awarding me the Khursheed Bhungara Fund scholarship. The scholarship will allow me to advance my schooling, prepare me to become a veterinarian in veterinary sciences,” said Taylor Marchand.

Among the historical treasures recently discovered and preserved at the Torrington Library is a Revolutionary War discharge letter signed by George Washington.

Funds to Support Education

Edward W. Diskovich Scholarship Fund
Mr. Diskovich established this fund through his estate plan to provide scholarships through various Community Foundation funds.

Students are awarded based on parameters set by donors that may include financial need, academic performance, community participation, extra-curricular activities, work experience, and/or essays.

Recently Established Funds that Support Education

The Community Foundation recently published Guide to Giving. The Guide provides answers to questions that arise in conversations with thoughtful, creative givers like you. The Guide explores topics including:

- Is charitable giving important to me?
- Do I want to give many small gifts or fewer large gifts?
- How long of my giving should I give?
- Which types of gifts are best for me: cash, stock, insurance policies, in-kind, etc.?
- Should I consider a bequest in my will?
- Is my legacy something I care about?
- Explore the Guide to Giving at northwestcf.org/guide

Contribute to your favorite fund online at northwestcf.org

Kindness, Compassion, and Giving Freely—A Wang Family Tradition

Jo Loi Wang and Kua Loi Continue Tradition of Giving

As of one of four funds created from The G&G Educational Foundation, The G&G Educational Foundation-Jo Wang and Kua Loi Family Fund supports initiatives, scholarships and programming that deepen the knowledge and understanding between China and America and address the human-service needs of Asian people and communities in the United States.

Recent grants include support for Running Start, a non-partisan organization that brings young women into politics and training them to become political leaders; and Oberlin Shans, an organization dedicated to building mutual understanding and respect through educational and cultural exchanges; and individual projects with universities and non-governmental organizations in China, India, Indonesia, and Japan.

“Giving was ingrained in me growing up,” said Jo. “I truly feel that if we live in a community we have to be willing to give up some of our individual wants and needs for the benefit of the whole. It’s a crucial part of being a citizen of the U.S. and the world.”

What are your passions and personal interests? What are the needs of your community? How can your gifts make a difference? Please explore the options available to make your gift count.

Connecticut Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry provides healthful meals to more than 500 individuals, mostly from children, each December.

Vol 11: Issue 2:  |  Fall/Winter 2018

Please Visit Our Website: northwestcf.org

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What matters to you? Tell us at northwestcf.org/contact

Contribute to your favorite fund online at northwestcf.org
Donors Feed the Hungry

Friendly Hands Food Bank volunteers prepare for a Thanksgiving feast and stock their shelves for those who need a little help this holiday season.

“Those experiencing a financial crisis are often forced to buy cheap, low-quality food in order to stretch their budget,” said Kiersten Schiffer of Hands of Grace, of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, who recently assisted a woman whose child was suffering from anemia as a result of eating mainly inexpensive canned and processed foods. Hands of Grace assists individuals and families referred by social service agencies. The nonprofit provides emergency food to more than 2,000 Northwest Corner residents annually; almost half of whom are children. Hands of Grace also offers Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and holiday gifts.

Nonprofits providing for basic needs, including access to nutritious food, receive support through Community Foundation discretionary grants awarded three times per year, through critical needs grants awarded in December, and through the generosity of donors and fundholders throughout the year.

For more information, read the Community Foundation report Starved for Attention, Food insecurity in Northwestern Connecticut at northwestcf.org.

Foundation Focus

Victor M. Muschell of Torrington and Lori Risika of Winsted have been named to the Community Foundation Board of Directors.

Victor M. Muschell is an attorney who engages in the general practice of law with an emphasis on labor and employment and municipal law. He is labor counsel for the City of Torrington and has recently been appointed its Interim Corporation Counsel. He is a certificated member of the Connecticut State Board of Mediation and Arbitration and a former president of the Connecticut Bar Foundation, which is the state’s bar association’s source of legal aid to underprivileged residents of Connecticut.

An advocate of a walkable downtown, he is co-president of the Torrington Development Corporation, which is responsible for the completion of Torrington’s Municipal Development Plan, providing the outlines of major infrastructure improvements to the downtown area. He currently serves as corporate secretary and board member of the Warner Theater, and board member of Five Points Center for the Visual Arts, the Torrington-Winsted Area Rotary Club, the United Way, the Torrington Parkers’ Support Group, an Emeritus of the Northwestern Connecticut YMCA, and a Trustee of Center Congregational Church.

Victoria is a Corporation Counsel, a member of the Historical Society and the Brook Memorial. He has received the NW Chamber’s Business Leader Award, Rotary's Paul Harris award, the YMCA Legacy award, the Wisdom House Promotor of Community Progress Award, and the Boy Scout Good Scout Award.

Lori Risika, CPA, owner, Lori Risika CPA, LLC is a life-long resident of Connecticut and a graduate of the University of Connecticut. She is a member of the LeGros Foundation Board of Directors and serves on the alumni, audit, human resources, and development committees. She is a founding member of Women in Philosophy and was keynote speaker at the 2013 December graduation reception.

Lori is Chair of the Connecticut Society of CPAs Peer Review Committee, a Trustee of both the Northwest Connecticut YMCA and the Draper Foundation Fund, a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, an Advocate for the Business Professionals, and is a director of Northwest Community Bank.

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The keynote speaker Rodney Christopher of Management Associates, a consultant that serves nonprofits and foundations nationwide, closed off the event speaking about nonprofit resilience.

View photos of the event at northwestcf.org

Also Online...

The Women & Girls Fund Welcomes New Committee Member

Jennifer Williams of Winsted, Connecticut has been named an executive committee of the Women & Girls Fund. Jane is the coordinator for the Warwick for Workforce Development at Northwestern Connecticut Community College.

Read more at northwestcf.org/womensgirls

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Washington Environmental Council, Khursed Bhumgar Fund Mind the Recycling Gap

Washington Environmental Council, Connecticut, is always seeking new and creative ways to reduce waste for the health and welfare of all living creatures. WEC provides lectures on environmental topics, and holds events annually, such as its Earth Day Roadside Clean-up and 5K.

WEC also awards scholarships to Washington students entering environmental studies. Early in 2018, through a grant from the Khursed Bhumgar Fund, WEC launched Zero Waste Washington. Through the initiative, TerraCycle Zero Waste Bowes allow residents to recycle items that are not permitted in the single stream recycling. Bowes throughout Washington collect items, including toothbrushes, art supplies, hair-product tubes, make-up containers, shaving cream tubes, backpacks, shoes, batteries, and garden products.

“Many of these items are almost guaranteed to end up in the regular trash stream,” said Diane Lash Decker, WEC Co-President.

Each time an individual learns that there is the possibility of recycling a certain item (such as a tape dispenser, a CD, or a candy wrapper), it affects the way they look at that item for the rest of their life.”

Steven Garbin Honors His Parents, Gives Back to his Hometown

Steven L. Garbin grew up in Torrington the only child of Mario and Helen (Baligi) Garbin. He translated a love of cars and driving into a business, owning Triumph Sae in Boston for more than 20 years. But when he was ready to retire, he came home to the south end of Torrington.

The Helen and Mario Garbin Scholarship Fund awards scholarships annually to local students beginning their first year of college and continuing their education.

Steven owned several antique vehicles, and frequented antique shops and flea markets looking for unique items. He played cards with longtime friends and visited with his mother at her final resting place in St. Francis Cemetery. When the family car was no longer, he moved into Wooton Hall Retirement Center, still frequenting Scarpelli’s, one of his favorite restaurants.

Steven passed away early in 2017 at the age of 84. Through estate planning, he established a fund named in honor of his parents, The Helen and Mario Garbin Scholarship Fund provides scholarships to local students, and will continue to do so, forever.

“Each time and generation avens,” said Eppo Recicelli, a longtime friend, “Steve’s generous gift is a testament to his love of Torrington.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Board Leadership Forum presenter Mardi Sternheim attends the event speaking about nonprofit resilience.

ASAP! Business Manager Annie Moreau places a zero-waste art recycling box in the ASAP! Office in Washington Depot.

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In the 1930s, Jo Wang Lo’s father, Chinese diplomat GH Wang, arrived in the United States with the goal of improving cultural understanding between the United States and China. GH and his American-born wife, Gladys Chen Foi, worked for six decades toward that goal, raised four children in Chicago and New Orleans, and displayed seemingly limitless generosity and compassion toward their friends and neighbors.

As a diplomat, GH refused gifts and recognition—once turning down an acre of land, a common perk for diplomats who wanted to fish the New Orleans bayous—because he said it would be “an outward show of wealth.”

While living in Chicago, GH noticed many of the elderly struggling, living in cold damp basements or garages.

He recruited friends and colleagues to form a neighborhood redevelopment association that built low- and moderate-income housing in the Chinatown area. One of the projects was senior housing for the elderly—the construction of warm and welcoming one-bedroom apartments within walking distance of stores, restaurants, and churches.

To ensure continuity in their life’s work, GH and Gladys established The G&G Educational Foundation, an endowed charitable foundation to promote understanding of Chinese culture. For many years, they managed the Foundation themselves, researching programs and organizations, and awarding grants in support of unique and innovative educational, scientific, and cultural programs.

The Wongs’ philanthropic spirit and love of community stemmed from their family tradition. GH and Gladys lived—as the Wang family members still do—by a family code of ethics. This code is noted in the Wang family book of records, which tracks among many things, births, marriages, accomplishments, and deaths dating from 571 BC. Based on the teachings of Confucius, the Wang family code states that the Wang family members, their children, and others, contribute freely to charities to help the dispossessed and relieve the poor, judge others fairly, and practice courtesy and modesty.

“My father was amazing,” said Jo Wang Lo. “He would walk down the street in Chicago’s Chinatown, and people would grab his hand and thank him (for the senior housing). He set the example for all of us. He devoted his life to service and to giving to others.”

In 1999, GH passed away. The G&G Educational Foundation was left to his and Gladys’ children: Edward, James, Jo, and Nancy; with its serving as secretary-treasurer, Jo managed the Foundation from her home in Lakeville, Connecticut, determined to continue his family’s tradition. Jo and her brothers and sister worked diligently to research nonprofit programs and award grants, while maintaining the Foundation’s endowment.

“We wanted to create what dad set up with this fund—to further promote understanding between the West and China,” said Jo.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3