

# CONNECTIONS

The quarterly newsletter of



The **COMMUNITY** Foundation for Greater New Haven

**O P P O R T U N I T Y + E Q U I T Y**

## Stepping Forward Doubles Grant Resources

### Funding for Racial Equity and COVID Response

The Foundation's 2021 annual responsive grant program awarded \$3.88 million to 72 local nonprofits, an unprecedented total amount that was made possible by the three-year commitment **Stepping Forward**. "This is far beyond what we've done in the past. It reflects new spending and new priorities around racial equity and COVID recovery," says The Community Foundation President and CEO Will Ginsberg. In addition to increasing grant resources, The Foundation also modified its application process to increase accessibility. As a result, a quarter of the grant awards went to organizations that were applying for the first time. The Katal Center for Equity, Health and Justice, one of the new grantees, will use its award to train local residents in advocacy work and connect them to statewide campaigns. For the complete list of awards, visit [cfgnh.org/2021ResponsiveGrants](https://cfgnh.org/2021ResponsiveGrants).



Students from New Haven anti-violence youth organization Ice the Beef rehearse "Romeo and Juliet" with Elm Shakespeare Company. Ice the Beef is among the 72 recipients of a 2021 responsive grant from The Community Foundation.



Photos: Dexter Atlas Photographer

Participants of the BIPOC Cohort for Nonprofit Leadership, a new program launched with Stepping Forward resources.

## Stepping Forward Update

### Work to Address COVID-19, Advance Racial Equity Progresses

In just a few months, Stepping Forward (SF), The Foundation's \$26 million commitment to address COVID-19 and to advance racial equity, has made great strides. A special appropriation from the endowment has enabled both the expansion of existing and the launch of new grants programs. The expanded resources have allowed TCF to:

- double the amount of responsive general operating support grants
- augment resources to the Greater New Haven COVID-19 Fund, which awarded a round of grants in April
- launch the BIPOC Cohort for Nonprofit Leadership program (see related story below)
- launch the REACH through the Arts awards (see related story below)
- along with other gifts, award grants from the newly-formed Basic Needs Fund

Learn more about Stepping Forward at [cfgnh.org/SteppingForward](https://cfgnh.org/SteppingForward).

### New Grant Programs and Partnerships Support Artists, Professionals of Color

Under Stepping Forward, the Racial Equity and Creative Healing (REACH) through the Arts pilot grant program was developed in partnership with the Arts Council of Greater New Haven. Seventeen local art projects were selected by a panel of peers to receive \$600,000. A second new grant program created in partnership with the University of Connecticut expands career development opportunities for 10 nonprofit professionals. The two-year BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color) Cohort for Nonprofit Leadership course offers current nonprofit middle managers training for future leadership positions and grants totaling \$300,000 to the agencies they represent.



Photo: Roger Castonguey/Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

Cesar Aleman, Executive Director of the Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative.

## Foundation Collaborative Hires Director

### Leading Work to Advance Equity in Urban Areas

A new collaborative formed by The Community Foundation *for* Greater New Haven, Fairfield County’s Community Foundation and Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has hired Cesar Aleman to coordinate work to dismantle structural and systemic racism and promote social and economic mobility. As Executive Director of the Connecticut Urban Opportunity Collaborative (CUOC), Aleman will work to align the strategic and programmatic efforts of the three foundations. Aleman will use his background as an organizer to build a network of relationships with national, regional and local partners and manage collaborative investments in urban areas. Since January, CUOC has been part of a national cohort of nine community foundations working to align strategies, attract donor funding and catalyze progress toward dismantling structural racism. Learn more about the collaborative at [cfgnh.org/cuoc](http://cfgnh.org/cuoc).

### Mission Investments in Black Business Growth, Expanding Entrepreneur Community

The Community Foundation Mission Investments Company (TCF-MIC) added two recent investments to its support for the Greater New Haven entrepreneurial ecosystem. In partnership with CT Next and the New Haven Innovation Collaborative, TCF-MIC is helping fund KNOWNpreneurs Growth Lab, a free business mentorship and training program for BIPOC entrepreneurs held by the New Haven co-working space, KNOWN. TCF-MIC is also providing support to the expansion of the Black Business Alliance, a Connecticut-based organization which provides technical assistance and networking opportunities to Black entrepreneurs. Learn more at [cfgnh.org/tcfmic](http://cfgnh.org/tcfmic).



Photo Courtesy of Urban Resources Initiative

With URI, Common Ground High School students learn landscape design while helping install bioswales.

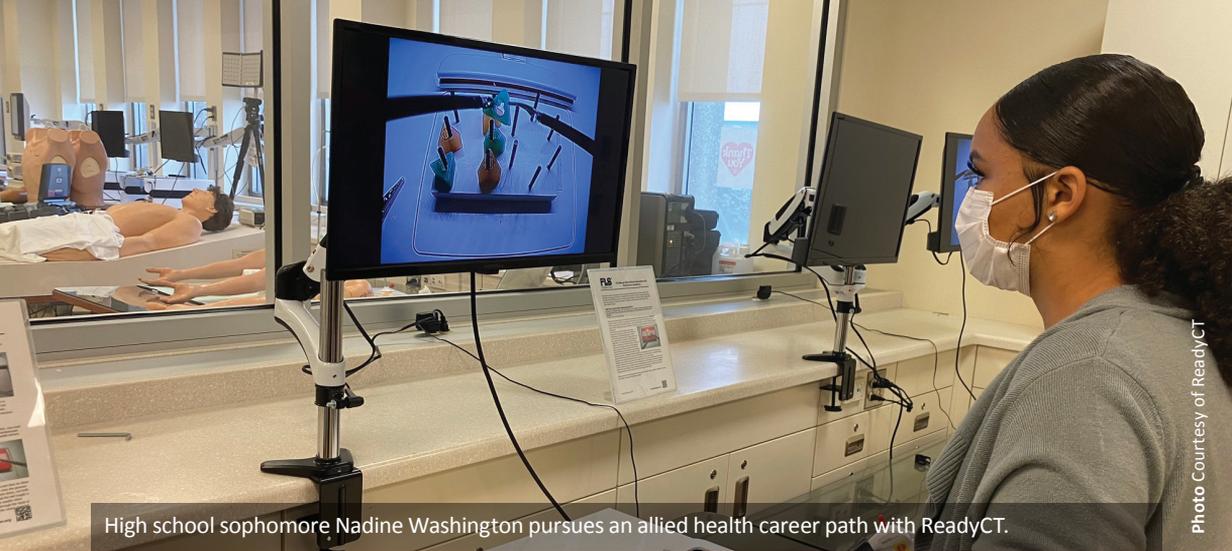
## Building Community One Tree at a Time

### Fund Ensures Future of Urban Connections to Nature

Trees have always been central to the identity of New Haven, renowned as the “Elm City.” Urban Resources Initiative (URI) is the principal steward responsible for replenishing the urban forest and the greenspaces that lend natural beauty and build neighborhood bonds. URI partners with volunteers and offers paid green jobs to adults and teens in need of opportunities. “Ultimately, we are trying to connect people with nature in the urban environment,” says URI Associate Director Chris Ozyck. To ensure URI has the resources it needs for years to come, Ozyck and supporters Lauren and Ben Heruska created the Urban Resources Initiative Legacy Fund. TCF’s support of URI dates back to the 90s, when URI managed the Community Greenspace portion of TCF’s Community Gardens and Greenspace program. URI eventually took on the program as one of its own, and has completed more than 300 diverse urban restoration projects with an annual participation of about 1,000 New Haven residents. Learn more at [cfgnh.org/URILegacyFund](http://cfgnh.org/URILegacyFund).

### Current Needs Prompt Donors to Give Now

With the challenges of current times, donor giving to address current needs is increasing. Two women whose endowed funds have distributed grants for years decided to tackle needs now. Ruth Grannick’s gift was used for the healing in the arts program and to support arts organizations through the responsive grants process. Cynthia Parker’s gift was used to support Havenly Treats and Elena’s Light, organizations supporting refugee and immigrant women. Additionally, two private foundations with local roots made first-time grants of nearly \$300,000 to the Greater New Haven COVID-19 Community Fund.



High school sophomore Nadine Washington pursues an allied health career path with ReadyCT.

## Pathways to Jobs in Growth Sectors

### Opportunities Grow With Training

The healthcare, biomedical and advanced manufacturing industries need skilled workers. The Foundation is working to support education and training that lead to good careers. Recent grants were made to ReadyCT which connects the classroom to the workforce. By creating a mutually beneficial relationship in which businesses provide work-based learning and students deliver much needed work, ReadyCT prepares students with career-connected learning. Additionally, a grant was made to CT NAACP's One Million Jobs Campaign (OMJC), a program offering job recruitment, training and placement for formerly incarcerated community members. Buoyed by the success of Baltimore's Johns Hopkins Hospital, Yale New Haven Health System made an early commitment to the program and the CT Hospital Association is helping to expand employers for OMJC participants. These education and training efforts are preparing residents for emerging middle-to-high skill occupations, leading to increased family economic stability.

### The Great Give® Finishes Strong for Second Year in a Row

Greater New Haven's community raised an impressive \$3.35 million online for a record number of 431 local nonprofits during The Great Give® 2021 in May. Support for youth-serving organizations was strong, which provided a welcomed boost in the face of added costs for summer programming due to pandemic-related expenses. An active peer-to-peer network and matching funds from donors catapulted the Boys and Girls of Club of New Haven to the top of the leaderboard. A grateful Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen raised twice as much as its goal, despite the effects of the pandemic and continued sluggish economy. Learn more at [thegreatgive.org](https://thegreatgive.org).



Community members share powerful reflections in both the Annual Meeting and Report to Our Community.

Photos Aligning LLC

## Community Voices Enrich Annual Meeting

### 2020-21 Reflections Inspire and Reveal What is Still Needed

Presented virtually, The Community Foundation’s Annual Meeting on May 3 showcased inspiring demonstrations of community strength. “This pandemic has revealed so much about what it is we need to do to make our world and our community better,” said President and CEO Will Ginsberg, outlining ways that Stepping Forward, The Foundation’s \$26 million response to COVID-19 and commitment to advance racial equity, is both building on and transforming core philanthropic practices. A highlight of the event was a powerful documentary video of the pandemic experience. The poignant stories shared by community members in the video were also an important part of The Foundation’s 2020-21 Report to Our Community. Watch a recording of the event at [cfgnh.org/AnnualMeeting2021](https://cfgnh.org/AnnualMeeting2021) and view the full Report to Our Community at [cfgnh.org/Report2020-21](https://cfgnh.org/Report2020-21).

### Valley Community Foundation (VCF) Celebrates Hope and Resilience

VCF’s annual reception in June and 2020 Annual Report, entitled “A Year of Resilience,” honored the hope and inspiration found throughout the lower Naugatuck Valley in 2020. Former Chair Don Smith joined current Chair Jack Walsh and CEO Sharon Closius in thanking residents for the “shining light of hope, the foundational presence of community.” A special montage of photos submitted by residents was a highlight. Closius outlined VCF’s partnership in Stepping Forward, the commitment to address the impact of COVID-19 and to advance racial equity. Also acknowledged was the \$1.9 M made in grants and the 11 new funds established in 2020. Learn more at [valleyfoundation.org](https://valleyfoundation.org).



Dr. C. Nicole Mason, President and CEO, Institute for Women's Policy Research.

Photo Courtesy of Dr. C. Nicole Mason

## Convening Looks at Gender Equitable Recovery

### Conversation Pinpoints Post-Pandemic Priorities

A national expert on women's policy brought the national debate about the need for universal childcare and other supports for women and families to a local audience in a June event co-hosted online by The Foundation and the Community Fund for Women & Girls. Dr. C. Nicole Mason, President and CEO of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, outlined key findings in the recently published report, "Building the Future: Bold Policies for a Gender Equitable Recovery." In an interview with local resident Keisha Blake Harp of the Women's Business Enterprise Council Metro New York, Mason also shared her personal journey as the child of a single mother, recounted in her recently published memoir, "Born Bright." The two stressed the need to keep applying pressure to elected representatives, especially at critically-important local levels, and the need to involve more men in the fight for women's issues. Learn more about the Fund at [fundforwomenandgirls.org](https://fundforwomenandgirls.org) and about Foundation Convenings at [cfgnh.org/convenings](https://cfgnh.org/convenings).

### Progreso Latino Fund Hosts Guided Conversations on Race and Identity

The Progreso Latino Fund (PLF) held a series of interactive sessions this spring exploring the complex intersections of race, identity and the work to interrupt systems of injustice. Ingrid Canady, Executive Director of the State Education Resource Center of Connecticut, led the sessions, which explored critical social justice concepts. "Dr. Canady's workshops were enlightening and had me reflecting on my own cultural awareness and my responsibility to reject implicit biases in an effort to advance social justice in our community," noted Anna Rivera Alfaro, a member of the PLF advisory committee. Learn more about PLF at [progresolatinofund.org](https://progresolatinofund.org).



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# OPPORTUNITY + EQUITY

## Joining Others to Create a Common Destiny

Members of the Nettie J. Dayton Circle are a special group of forward-looking individuals who chose to provide lasting support to the people, programs and organizations that enrich our community. Members have named The Community Foundation as a beneficiary in their will, a retirement plan, personal trust or life income gift. To view the full list of these visionaries and learn how to join them, visit [cfghn.org/PlannedGiving](http://cfghn.org/PlannedGiving).



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