

CONNECTIONS

The quarterly newsletter of



The **COMMUNITY** Foundation for Greater New Haven

OPPORTUNITY + EQUITY

Meeting the Moment

The Foundation Sets Agenda of Action

At The Foundation's Annual Meeting in June, President and CEO Karen DuBois-Walton advanced a vision to meet the moment as new federal policy and priorities have made local communities and nonprofits less secure. "No matter the language, the community needs are clear. The moment calls for action," said DuBois-Walton. DuBois-Walton emphasized The Foundation's commitment to protecting the most vulnerable, defending and strengthening democracy and continuing its work to advance opportunity and equity. Throughout 2025 and beyond, The Foundation will continue to meet the moment by holding public forums on the impact of federal actions, making strategic grants to meet community needs and growing the charitable capital in Greater New Haven.

MEET THE MOMENT

OPPORTUNITY + EQUITY



DuBois-Walton (third from left) moderated the discussion on upholding our democracy with (left to right) Jens Frederiksen, University of New Haven; Mark Contreras, Connecticut Public; and Kica Matos, National Immigration Law Center.



Fair Haven Community Health Care, which opened its new facility in June, was one of 81 organizations to receive a responsive grant from The Foundation this year.

Foundation Awards \$2.8 M in Responsive Grants

Funding Prioritized for Nonprofits Affected by Federal Actions

The Community Foundation awarded \$2,879,000 through its annual responsive grants program to 81 nonprofits serving Greater New Haven. The annual responsive grant program is The Foundation's largest competitive grant program and awards general operating support funding for one, two or three years to organizations serving local residents across a broad range of service areas including health, arts and culture, youth programs, advocacy and civic engagement. This year, The Foundation prioritized organizations that were negatively affected by federal actions, which have included policy changes and major funding cuts. "Nonprofits are facing unprecedented challenges from the federal government's shifting priorities and funding cuts, coupled with increased need in our community. The general operating support provided by these grants is one of the many ways that The Foundation is working to meet the moment for Greater New Haven residents," said Foundation President & CEO Karen DuBois-Walton.

Demanding Dignity; Redefining Basic Needs

In July, grantees of The Foundation's Basic Needs Fund gathered to share best practices and highest-level needs. The group underscored deepening economic stressors experienced by clients and the increasing need for cross-organizational collaboration, particularly as the federal government cuts funding for the social safety net. "The floor has dropped off," said Jennifer Paradis of Beth-El Center in Milford. As homelessness rates rise, "it's more than just the resource you're offering; it's the feeling of dignity when you call, the sense of belonging when you're in the building, and how we are committed to each other that way." Learn more at cfgnh.org/basicneedsfund.



Foundation donors were celebrated with a reception and tour of New Haven's past at Lost in New Haven.


Donors Celebrated at Appreciation Reception

Gathering Honors Community Supporters

In May, The Foundation celebrated its donors with a reception and a tour of New Haven's past at Lost in New Haven. Board Chair Fernando Muñiz welcomed attendees and President & CEO Karen DuBois-Walton opened her remarks with "the most important message of the night — a huge thank you. Thank you for being here, thank you for giving, and thank you for believing in a vision of Greater New Haven where equity, opportunity and justice are within reach for every member of our community." Lost in New Haven founder Robert Greenberg introduced the exhibit space featuring thousands of artifacts from the city's history. DuBois-Walton also recognized and thanked Senior Vice President of Development and Donor Services Dotty Weston-Murphy, who retired in June, for her spirit, commitment and compassion. "You leave a legacy that will outlast your time with us. We are deeply grateful," said DuBois-Walton.

Progreso Latino Fund Panel Discussion to Explore Latina Leadership

Cultural identity is a powerful strength within the Latine diaspora. While bilingualism and biculturalism can foster creativity, connection and belonging, they also come with challenges — including stress, discrimination and pressure to code-switch. Join The Foundation's Progreso Latino Fund online October 1 for "Latina Leadership Unfiltered: Strength, Culture and Systemic Truth," a compelling conversation on Latina leadership — its strengths, its challenges and its future. Hear from Latina leaders across sectors as they share their journeys, reflect on systemic barriers and supports, and explore how cultural identity has shaped their paths to success. Learn more and register at cfgnh.org/PLF.

A photograph of a woman with dark hair tied in a bun, smiling and holding a young child. The woman is wearing a light-colored top, and the child is wearing a white shirt. They are both looking towards the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

The Save Healthy Start campaign urges community members to take action across the country.

Infant Mortality Awareness Month: Take Action

Tell Your Lawmakers to Save Healthy Start!

For nearly 30 years, New Haven Healthy Start has made significant improvements on maternal and infant health outcomes in our region. Engaging in direct service delivery, care coordination and research partnerships are part of New Haven Healthy Start's mission to ensure moms, dads and babies thrive. Now, this federal program to end infant mortality is on the chopping block, putting New Haven Healthy Start in jeopardy along with its 100-plus Healthy Start partner sites in rural and urban communities across the country. Mark Infant Morality Awareness Month (September) by taking action today: Contact your representatives and tell them, "Babies can't wait. Protect Healthy Start! Our region can't afford to lose these instrumental, impactful community resources." Learn more at cfgnh.org/savehealthystart.

Briefing Explores Effects of Executive Actions in Greater New Haven

In May, Foundation President & CEO Karen DuBois-Walton moderated an online conversation with local nonprofit leaders about implications of recent federal executive actions for local nonprofits and the residents they serve. The leaders, who work in the areas of health, housing and emergency food and basic needs services, shared concerns about funding cuts interfering with day-to-day operations. Cuts to food assistance programs will mean less food available at local pantries, and come at a time when child food insecurity rates have risen more than 35% in the past two years, according to the panel. Learn more about upcoming briefings at cfgnh.org/events.



Community members gathered online and in person for a discussion on Black philanthropy in Connecticut and the cues we can take from history and from heritage.

Photo: Katie Pellico

Remember, Reclaim, Rise Across Connecticut

Foundations Host Celebration of Black Philanthropy Month

In honor of Black Philanthropy Month, a global celebration elevating African-descent giving and funding, The Community Foundation co-hosted a webinar in August together with the Connecticut Community Foundation, Fairfield County's Community Foundation, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and The Prosperity Foundation. The conversation kicked off with a spoken word poem by Manchester Poet Laureate Nadia Sims that called for reigniting old traditions and touched on this year's organizing theme, "Sankofa Now! Remember. Reclaim. Rise." For panelist Althea Marshall Brooks of Waterbury Bridge to Success, Sankofa describes the importance of "bringing it back to bring it forward." As part of the event, The Vineyard Project in New Haven's newly-formed advisory committee hosted a watch party at the African American Lodge #024 in Hamden.

Reporting the Truth: Journalism in a Divided Era

New business models and philanthropy are keeping local news alive and protecting democracy, according to industry veterans in an online discussion hosted by The Foundation in August. Panelists highlighted the importance of local news gathering by reporters on the ground who care about communities. While corporate consolidation and social media have eroded legacy media, nonprofit and subscription-based business models are creating a new public square. "Local journalism is the basic material of democracy," said panelist Paul Bass, founder of the New Haven Independent. Learn about upcoming briefings on protecting institutions vital to our democracy at cfgnh.org/events.



Photo Courtesy of Vanessa Priya Daniel

A powerful voice for equity and economic justice, author Vanessa Priya Daniel will be the keynote speaker at the Fund for Women & Girls 30th Anniversary Celebration luncheon November 13 at the Omni Hotel.

Save the Date: November 13, Vision in Action

Fund for Women & Girls to Host 30 Year Celebration Luncheon

Vanessa Priya Daniel will be the keynote speaker for Vision in Action: The Community Fund for Women & Girls 30th Anniversary Celebration, to be held at 11 a.m. on November 13 at the Omni Hotel in New Haven. The founder and former executive director of Groundswell Fund, a leading funder of women of color-led grassroots and electoral organizing, Daniel is the acclaimed author of the book, “Unrig the Game: What Women of Color Can Teach Everyone About Winning,” a bold blueprint for dismantling systems that hold women and girls back and building new ones that center care, connection and community. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, visit the Fund’s “Many Voices, One Vision,” anniversary website at manyvoicesonevision.org. As the Fund marks 30 years of impact and looks to the work ahead, you are invited to explore the “Many Voices, One Vision” website to read powerful stories about local changemakers, vote for a favorite nonprofit, and help two organizations secure a \$2,000 grant.

\$130K Supports Education, Workforce Programs Serving Local Women and Girls

A diverse and dynamic group of 12 Greater New Haven nonprofits were selected for the Community Fund for Women & Girls’ Pathways to Economic Security grants program in July. This year, \$130,000 will go toward projects and programming that promise to serve more than 4,000 local women, including introductory courses in emerging technology and AI, business support for entrepreneurs, career readiness resources and more. At Christian Community Action, Inc., grant funds will help support integrated services and promote family engagement, ensuring families with female heads of household are working towards stability and self-sufficiency.



Photo Judy Sirota Rosenthal

Thanks to Nettie J. Dayton Circle members like David P. O'Sullivan, our community will have the philanthropic resources needed in the coming years — to solve problems and seize opportunities to strengthen our region.

The Gift of Stability, in Perpetuity

David O'Sullivan Centers Human Services in Estate Plans

In 1928, the first fund at The Community Foundation was established by the bequest of Nettie J. Dayton. Over the years, The Foundation has grown from gifts by thoughtful people who made a provision in their will or trust, or made The Foundation a beneficiary of retirement plan assets, life insurance policies or bank accounts. Among these visionary donors is David P. O'Sullivan, longtime director of the Community Soup Kitchen in New Haven. "A fund, a foundation, creates stability for many organizations," reflects O'Sullivan. His 40-plus-year career in human services has informed and inspired his support of local organizations through a donor advised fund at The Community Foundation. Now, estate planning adds another layer to O'Sullivan's story of giving back, offering stability to social service organizations in perpetuity. "You really have a lot of ways of giving and having impact. You don't have to be a billionaire." For help in making your plans, contact Liana Garcia, director of gift planning, at 203-974-1646.

Valley Community Index: "More Than a Snapshot, A Shared Call to Action"

The 2025 Valley Community Index — produced by Valley Council for Health and Human Services and DataHaven, with support from The Community Foundation and the Valley Community Foundation — blends hard data with local voices, offering rich insight into the "lived experiences, strengths and challenges" of the lower Naugatuck Valley region. As the executive summary explains, "At first glance, the Valley appears stable, unemployment is low ... and many residents report general life satisfaction. But a closer look reveals disparities by town, race, income and age that influence everything from who can access care to who has a stable place to live." Read more at valleyfoundation.org.



The **COMMUNITY** Foundation *for* Greater New Haven

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Photo (stock.com/Philip Hoeppli)

Planning to give in 2025? We're ready to assist.

The time is now! When giving through The Community Foundation, you increase the power of your support to the causes you care about most, now and forever. Our development staff is available to personally assist you with your year-end charitable giving through December 31. Contact us today! Learn more at cfghn.org/giving.

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