

# Two Decades & Beyond

*A Foundation for Generations*





## A Letter from the President and CEO, and Board Chair

Dear Friends:

As we reflect on 2024 and spotlight the growth of the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) during the last 20 years, we do so with immense gratitude and admiration for the visionary men and women who had the prophetic foresight to create a community foundation dedicated to serving the Valley. Their belief in the power of local philanthropy and their commitment to ensuring a legacy for generations to come have allowed VCF to become the trusted steward of charitable giving in our region.

During the past two decades, VCF has grown from an ambitious idea into a dynamic and thriving foundation with nearly \$40 million in manageable assets and steward to more than 260 funds. Last year's milestone 20th Anniversary was an opportunity to celebrate the generosity, dedication, and resilience of our community and continue that successful model into VCF's next 20 years. However, 2024 was not without its challenges.

On August 18, 2024, our Valley was devastated by a catastrophic flood, one of the most destructive natural disasters reminiscent of the Great Flood of 1955. Lives were tragically lost, homes and businesses were destroyed, and the financial toll on our community has been estimated at more than \$300 million in damage. Yet, in the face of such heartbreak, our Valley's spirit of unity shone brighter than ever. Neighbors helped neighbors, first responders and volunteers

worked tirelessly, and charitable organizations stepped in to provide critical support. The outpouring of generosity and kindness is a tribute to the unwavering strength of our community.

Despite these challenges, 2024 was also a year of remarkable growth. We are proud to share that nine new funds were established at VCF in 2024, each a testament to the spirit of giving that defines our Valley. We extend our deepest gratitude to these fundholders whose generosity will have a lasting impact on the Valley.

As we look ahead to the future, we remain committed to the ideals set forth by VCF's founders -- one of strengthening our community, building local philanthropy, and ensuring that charitable dollars remain in the Valley for the benefit of all. We thank each one of you -- our fundholders, donors, nonprofit partners, and friends -- for making this possible.

Sincerely,

Sharon Closius, President and CEO  
Nancy Valentine, Board Chair



Sharon Closius, President and CEO and Nancy Valentine, Board Chair



2005



2006



2007



2008



2009



**Contributions**  
**\$2,748,877**

**Grants Awarded**  
**\$2,142,038**

**New Funds**  
**9**



## Index

- 4-5 A Foundation for Generations
- 6-11 New Funds for 2024
- 12 How to Set Up a Fund
- 13-17 Valley Community Foundation Funds
- 18 The Gates Society
- 19-21 Donors in 2024
- 22-27 Community Investment/Grants
- 28-29 Stewardship of Charitable Assets
- 30 Great Give 2024/Valley Rises in Unity
- 31 Board, Committees, Council, Staff, and Volunteers



2010



2011



2012



2013



2014

# A Foundation for Generations

When the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) was founded in 2004, its mission was clear: to serve as a permanent source of support for the Valley region, ensuring that local philanthropy stayed local. Spearheaded by the Valley's visionary leaders, VCF began as a bold experiment in community-driven philanthropy. Today, two-plus decades later, it stands as a testament to their foresight, having grown into one of the region's most trusted philanthropic institutions.

In its early years, VCF focused on establishing funds, building awareness around local philanthropy and encouraging endowments to support nonprofits throughout the Valley.

"We always believed that creating the Valley Community Foundation was the single most important thing we could have done for our community," said Mary Pepe, a founding member of the VCF's Board of Directors. "From its humble beginnings, over the past twenty years, VCF has flourished, both facilitating and maximizing the generosity of the Valley people in supporting hundreds of organizations and individuals, serving as a trusted resource in times of crisis, and exemplifying the Valley's unique hallmark of 'connectedness' beyond what we ever could have imagined."

During the past 20 years, VCF has awarded more than \$25 million in grants to local nonprofits and causes and now is steward to more than 260 funds and scholarships, managing nearly \$40 million in charitable assets. Through special initiatives, programs, generous donors and fundholders, VCF has strengthened the Valley's nonprofits, making a tangible impact on countless lives.

## Valley Community Foundation and The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

Many of VCF's achievements over the past 20 years were made possible because of the support of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (TCF) and its leadership. In 2004, after years of discussion and input from the Valley Advisory Committee, Will Ginsberg, TCF's then-President and CEO, worked alongside those dedicated Valley leaders to bring VCF to life.

The idea of a Valley-based foundation had been debated for some time, as local leaders sought a way to instill confidence and trust with Valley donors that charitable dollars raised or endowed and intended for the Valley, would remain in the Valley. The challenge was balancing that goal with the long-standing partnership the region had with TCF, which for decades had been steward of Valley preference funds, like the Gates Fund. In fact, for many years the Gates Fund was TCF's largest fund.

The breakthrough came with an agreement that VCF would operate as an independent community foundation while maintaining a strong partnership with TCF, leveraging the New Haven-based foundation's support structure that allows VCF staff to focus on leadership, grant-making and development. Also, TCF's significant financial support to VCF, through those Valley preference funds, allows for VCF to have substantial grant-making impact in the region. This unique collaboration has proven to benefit all involved and continues to be instrumental, allowing VCF to grow from a bold idea into a pillar of philanthropy in the region.

Over the years, VCF and TCF have worked together supporting local

nonprofits, responding to crises, expanding charitable giving and more significantly, partnering on major and transformative projects. This partnership remains a model of how regional and local philanthropy can thrive. VCF and TCF share these critical resources, but both are independent nonprofits with separate boards of directors, and unique missions.

"Without the support of TCF and its respect for the Valley's leadership and vision, and their Valley preference funds, like the Gates Fund, VCF would not be where it is today," said Sharon Closius, VCF's President and CEO. "This partnership in philanthropy is truly extraordinary and will continue to allow our Valley to grow and prosper in so many ways."

## Transformative Investments in the Valley

One of VCF's most significant contributions to the Valley has been its commitment to strengthening the region's health and human services sector. In 2023, VCF announced a \$600,000 three-year grant to the Valley Council for Health and Human Services (the Council) with major support from TCF's Stepping Forward initiative. This transformative investment enabled the Council to expand its work, build infrastructure that will strengthen community partnerships and address systemic challenges in healthcare access and social services.

"There is no other entity in the state that has such significant collaborative reach than our Valley Council," Closius said. "This may well be a model for others to emulate."

VCF has also played a critical role in supporting local journalism, ensuring



2015



2016



2017



2018



2019



that the Valley continues to have access to reliable, community-focused news and information. In 2009, VCF and TCF, helped seed the creation of the Valley Independent Sentinel, an online nonprofit news outlet, with a \$500,000 two-year passthrough grant from the Knight Foundation. The Valley Indy -- as it's now affectionately called -- filled a critical void left after the closure of the popular 100-year-old Evening Sentinel newspaper in 1992.

Since its inception, VCF has continued to support the Valley Indy through its parent nonprofit, the Online Journalism Project, reinforcing the belief that strong local journalism is essential to an engaged and informed community. The Valley Indy has provided vital coverage of government affairs, local issues, and community stories, ensuring that Valley residents stay connected to the region's most pressing topics.

### COVID-19 and the 2024 Flood

VCF's role in the community has been especially evident during times of crisis. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, VCF partnered with the Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Valley Council for Health and Human Services, and the Valley United Way to create the Valley Community COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund. This fund raised \$230,000 and provided flexible resources to local organizations serving those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

"We knew we had to act quickly to help our community," recalled former board member, Marianne Smythe. "VCF stepped up in a way that truly demonstrated its value."

The foundation's ability to mobilize resources was evident once again in 2024 when the Valley was devastated by a historic flood on August 18, 2024. The

disaster claimed lives, displaced families, destroyed homes and businesses, and left the community reeling. But as in past crises, the Valley came together. TEAM launched a special flood relief fund, raising more than \$1.2 million to support residents in need. VCF and its donor-advised fundholders contributed generously to the fund and encouraged others to give, demonstrating the power of collective philanthropy.

"The way this community rises up in times of crisis is nothing short of inspiring," said Closius. "It's proof of the strength and resilience of the Valley."

### A Legacy of Data-Driven Change for Good

The Valley Community Index is a vital tool that has shaped decision-making and policy in the region for nearly a decade. However, its roots go back even further. The Index is part of a decades-long tradition of analyzing social and economic conditions in the Valley. Previous studies that laid the groundwork for the Index include the 1996 Healthy Valley Report, the 2001 Mt. Auburn Report, the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center Community Health Profile, and the 2010 Valley Cares Report. In addition, Griffin Hospital's 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment and the Naugatuck Valley Health District's 2013-2015 Community Health Improvement Plan further highlighted the need for comprehensive, data-driven community planning.

In 2014, the Valley Council for Health and Human Services asked VCF to take over a critical data-capture project, as it was an all-volunteer organization at that time. In response, VCF convened an Advisory Committee and partnered with DataHaven and Griffin Health to create The Valley Now: A 2015 Snapshot, a report outlining key community well-being indicators. This effort laid the foundation for the full-length

Valley Community Index reports, published in 2016, 2019, and 2022, each offering a deeper analysis of economic, social, and health trends in the Valley. Now, with the next Valley Community Index set for release in June 2025, the project has come full circle, returning to the stewardship of the newly restructured Valley Council for Health and Human Services.

### Two Decades and Beyond

As VCF looks to the future, its mission remains as critical as ever. The Valley is a unique and resilient region and VCF will continue to champion the power of local philanthropy to strengthen its communities. With a growing endowment, a deep commitment to data-driven impact, and an unwavering dedication to nonprofit support, VCF is poised to make an even greater difference in the years ahead. "I think the next 20 years will be just as transformative as the first," said Nancy Valentine, VCF's Board Chair. "What we've built together is a strong foundation, one that will ensure the Valley thrives."

Lynne Bassett Perry, a former board member, envisions an even stronger community thanks to VCF. "VCF is about people investing in their own hometowns. That's what makes it so special," Perry said. "In the next two decades, I see more people coming together, more endowments being created, and a deeper commitment to ensuring that local needs are met with local resources."

With a special focus on long-term sustainability, Closius said building VCF's unrestricted and discretionary endowment will assure that the foundation's support is secure for our Valley.

"It's about ensuring that the Valley has a permanent, dedicated source of support for generations," Closius said. "I truly believe VCF's best is yet to come."



2020



2021



2022



2023



# New Funds of the Valley Community Foundation



As we celebrate the Valley Community Foundation's (VCF) 20th Anniversary, we are honored to introduce the new funds established in 2024 and the inspiring individuals, families, and organizations behind them. For more than two decades, donors have turned to VCF to strengthen local philanthropy, relying on our deep-rooted knowledge of the Valley and steadfast commitment to ensuring its prosperity. These new funds continue that legacy, each created with care and purpose to uplift our community. The Board of Directors, Board Advisory Council and staff are profoundly grateful to the 2024 fundholders for entrusting their legacies and cherished memories to VCF. As we mark this milestone year, we remain dedicated to ensuring these funds create lasting impact -- building a stronger, more vibrant Valley for generations to come.

## Rosalie and Richard Averill Scholarship Fund



Rosalie and Richard Averill have long considered establishing a charitable fund to support their beloved Valley community. Having attended several Valley Community Foundation (VCF) annual

meetings and receiving VCF's correspondences since 2012, they were familiar with VCF's role in strengthening local philanthropy. However, it was a Griffin Hospital Corporators event that solidified their decision to act.

"When Stone Academy closed suddenly in 2023, students had their education interrupted, leaving them with an uncertain future," Rosalie said. "We were very impressed that the Griffin Hospital School of Allied Health Careers stepped in and provided a new home for former Stone Academy students and other interested students. That dedication to education and community service resonated deeply with us."

The couple were determined to make a difference, so they had decided to support the Valley and its next generation of healthcare professionals and establish the Rosalie and Richard Averill Scholarship Fund. This scholarship provides financial assistance to students attending the

Griffin Hospital School of Allied Health Careers, with priority given to students from Valley towns, who might otherwise not be able to afford a healthcare education.

"The fund will help students starting a career in healthcare," Rosalie said. "With an aging population, the need for well-trained healthcare professionals is increasing. We wanted to support those willing to step up and serve the community."

Richard and Rosalie's decision to create a VCF fund was purposeful.

"We are both Valley born and raised and establishing the scholarship here ensures that local students have the opportunity to succeed," Richard said. "We wanted to create something that would provide ongoing, long-term support for future healthcare professionals."

Richard and Rosalie hope that the students who receive assistance from this scholarship will remain in the Valley, giving back to the community by providing essential healthcare services.

"Deep gratitude for those who helped us in our early years drives us to set an example for future generations," Rosalie said. "For anyone considering starting a fund, pick an objective for the fund that you feel passionate about. Do your research to understand how a fund can meet your personal goals and make an impact on someone's life."

***"The fund will help students starting a career in healthcare."***



## Thomas and Diane Baklik Family Fund



Walk into The Yankee Clipper, and you'll know right away Tom Baklik is a gregarious, joyful and positive-energy person who is always working on behalf of some cause. His barbershop, now a fixture in Seymour, isn't just a

place for a haircut, it's a community hub where stories are told, laughter echoes, and friendships deepen. It's a place that embodies everything Tom loves about the Valley -- a strong sense of belonging, neighbors looking out for one another, and a deep pride in the community he's always called home.

In 2024, Tom and his wife, Diane, established the Thomas and Diane Baklik Family Fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) to support organizations that have touched their hearts throughout their lives, such as The Recreation Camp in Derby and the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley. Their donor-advised fund allows them flexibility, during their lifetimes, to support other causes as well.

"The Valley has given me so much, and this is a way to give back," Tom said. "These organizations have been part

of my life since I was a kid, and I want to make sure they continue to be there for future generations."

Tom, a lifelong Derby native who built his business and raised a family in this small city, never lost sight of the values that make this community special. Diane, who spent 35 years as a dedicated teacher at Derby High School, shares that same commitment to the Valley. Together, they've made giving back a way of life.

Tom's legendary barbershop at his home, The Yankee Clipper, was originally in Derby for 30 years before he moved it to Seymour 25 years ago to "retire."

"You don't just go to Tom's for a haircut, you go for the camaraderie, the conversation, and the stories," said Sharon Closius, VCF's President and CEO. "Tom has created a space where the Valley comes together, and his generosity extends far beyond his shop."

That generosity is evident in the many ways Tom and Diane give back. They host multiple fundraisers each year to support local causes including their famous Yankee Clipper Annual Christmas Breakfast, where hundreds of people come to kick-off the holiday season and bring toys for TEAM's Toys 4 Kids program.

"Tom and Diane's fund will be their legacy to the Valley," Closius said. "It's a reflection of who they are, deeply rooted in the Valley, passionate about community, and always ready to help. Their impact and their fund will be felt for generations to come."

*"The Valley has given me so much, and this is a way to give back."*

## John A. Bondos Scholarship Fund



John A. Bondos dedicated his life to education and his beloved hometown of Shelton. A proud WWII veteran and lifelong educator, John spent decades shaping young minds as a mathematics teacher and later as principal of Shelton High School and Lafayette School. When he retired in 1984, he chose to give back to the community by establishing a scholarship at Shelton High School to help

future graduates pursue their educational dreams.

For years, the John A. Bondos Scholarship was managed

at Shelton High School, supporting students in need and funded by annual donations. However, in 2014, as part of a broader effort to ensure the longevity of local scholarships, former Shelton High School Principal, Beth Smith, transferred the scholarship to the Valley Community Foundation's (VCF) Scholarship and Awards Fund. At that time, the Bondos fund had not yet reached VCF's \$10,000 endowment minimum, but John was committed to reach that goal with yearly donations. After he passed away in 2021, his daughter, and the Bondos family, remained committed to building the fund. They contributed regularly, determined to make John's vision of a lasting educational legacy a reality.

"Education was everything to my dad," said Leslie Bondos, his daughter. "He was always grateful that his own education had been covered by the military, knowing that his immigrant parents could never have afforded to send him or his eight siblings to college. He wanted



to ensure that future students would not miss out on opportunities due to financial hardship.”

Leslie’s dedication was met with a heartfelt and transformative moment in 2024 when her aunt, made a generous contribution to fully endow the fund. With this donation, the John A. Bondos Scholarship Fund became a permanent source of support in honor of her father.

“Knowing that my dad’s scholarship will live on in perpetuity means the world to me,” Leslie says. “Many scholarships, when managed solely by schools, risk being spent down or abandoned over time when family

members pass on and can no longer support them. By transferring the fund to VCF, we’ve ensured that it will continue to thrive and help deserving students for years to come.”

Leslie’s journey with her father’s fund serves as an important reminder that with careful stewardship, a family’s legacy of generosity can be preserved and strengthened. She encourages others to follow their passions when considering charitable giving. “Choose something you care deeply about,” Leslie said. “Giving back in a meaningful way creates an impact that lasts far beyond our lifetimes.”

***“He wanted to ensure that future students would not miss out on opportunities due to financial hardship.”***

## Ralph, Thelma, and Paul Davis Fund



For John and Laura Zaprzalka, giving back to the Valley isn’t just something they do -- it’s who they are. Their dedication to the community has been woven into their family’s fabric for generations. With the establishment of the Ralph, Thelma, and Paul Davis Fund -- their fourth Donor Advised Fund at the

Valley Community Foundation (VCF) -- they continue a remarkable tradition of philanthropy that honors their family’s enduring commitment to the Valley.

This newest fund is deeply personal. It is named in honor of John’s grandparents, Ralph and Thelma Davis, as well as his uncle/godparent, Paul Davis, and cousin, Paul Davis, Jr., collectively the Davis Oil Company of Derby. The fund reflects the values of hard work, generosity, and service that have been hallmarks of the Davis family for decades. Through quiet, everyday acts of kindness, they made a lasting impact in the community by helping those in need. The Zaprzalkas are no strangers to giving through VCF. Their first fund, the John & Laura Zaprzalka Family Fund, was established in 2014 while John was serving on the

VCF Board of Directors, including a term as chairman. Just a year later, he and his siblings established the Joe & Judy Zaprzalka Family Fund in memory of their parents, ensuring that their family’s spirit of giving would live on. In 2016, John and Laura established the Katarzyna & Ludwik Zaprzalka Fund in honor of John’s grandparents, further cementing their commitment to the Valley.

“John and Laura’s generosity is a powerful reminder of the family heritage that makes the Valley such a special place and where every family has the opportunity to create such a legacy,” said Sharon Closius, VCF’s President and CEO. “They are setting an incredible example for others in the Valley who want to not only give back but also pay tribute to family members who impacted their lives and the lives of others in the Valley.”

With each fund, the Zaprzalkas are honoring their family members who had a big impact on their lives. Each fund will support organizations that they supported during their lifetimes. John, who served on the VCF Board from 2007 to 2016, is also a proud member of the Gates Society alongside Laura.

“This fund is a beautiful tribute to John’s grandparents, uncle, and cousin,” said Beth Colette, VCF’s Donor Services Manager. “The Davis family’s kindness and willingness to help others in need left a lasting mark on the Valley, and thanks to John and Laura, that spirit of generosity will continue for years to come.”

***“Generosity is a powerful reminder of the family heritage that makes the Valley such a special place and where every family has the opportunity to create such a legacy.”***



## Paul and Sherry Konwerski Future Plumbers Scholarship Fund



In 2024, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) welcomed the establishment of the Paul and Sherry Konwerski-Future Plumbers Scholarship Fund. The heartfelt initiative was created by Paul and Sherry who

are dedicated to supporting graduates of Platt Technical High School in Milford. For the Konwerski family, this scholarship represents not only a commitment to their community but also a way to address a pressing need within the plumbing industry.

Paul -- owner of Paul the Plumber, Inc. -- has built a thriving plumbing and heating business serving New Haven and Fairfield Counties. Known for their professionalism and expertise, they have always emphasized the importance of reliable and skilled tradespeople.

"The plumbing industry is shrinking," Paul said. "Many licensed individuals are retiring, and this scholarship will help others enter the field, ensuring the trades' future." Sherry owns a financial consulting firm -- Bonus Business Services, Inc. -- and teaches business and financial skills to entrepreneurs.

The Konwerskis are no strangers to philanthropy or to VCF. They previously established a family fund to honor Paul's late parents, Paul and Gloria Konwerski, both lifelong educators.

"Supporting students entering the trades is so important for our community," said Sharon Closius, President and CEO of VCF. "Jobs in the trades provide a living wage for young people, teach them self-reliance, and equip them with business skills that offer lifetime job security. This fund will not only help individuals succeed but will also strengthen our local workforce and economy for years to come."

The Paul and Sherry Konwerski-Future Plumbers Scholarship Fund will provide the trade school's graduates -- Paul's alma mater -- with the financial resources needed to attain apprenticeships by being able to purchase essential plumbing tools and equipment, a critical step for starting a career and gaining the experience required to become licensed.

"We hope to see the number of licensed plumbers grow as younger people enter the industry and eventually become business owners themselves," Sherry said. "The Konwerski family has been part of the Valley for generations and we wanted to create something that would continue to help others long after we're gone." Through this scholarship fund, Paul and Sherry want to create a legacy that others can contribute to, ensuring future generations of skilled tradespeople while continuing to make a profound impact on the Valley community they cherish. The new fund, the couple says, can be built up by family, friends and supporters, and will go on to help students long after they are gone.

***"The plumbing industry is shrinking, many licensed individuals are retiring, and this scholarship will help others enter the field, ensuring the trades' future."***

## Paul R. Lutson Charitable Fund



Paul R. Lutson dedicated his life to service -- both to his country and to his fellow veterans. As a proud U.S. Army veteran who served in Korea and Germany, Paul never stopped looking out for those who served. Whether through his work as a Service Officer at the American Legion Post #24 and City Hall in Derby, or his involvement with the

Catholic War Veterans, the VFW, and the Disabled Veterans of America, Paul made it his mission to help his fellow veterans.

It was this unwavering commitment and love of his community that led Paul to establish the Paul R. Lutson Charitable Fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) in December 2024. His vision was clear -- create a lasting resource that would continue to support charitable causes important to him.

Sadly, Paul passed away suddenly in March of 2025, just before the publication of this Annual Report. Although



he did not live to see his fund in action, his generosity, dedication and foresight will endure for generations. “He was patriotic and loyal and Paul was always the guy you could count on,” said his longtime friend, fellow Derby veterans service officer, Andy Cota. “If a vet needed help, Paul was the first to step up, no questions asked.” Cota recalls how Paul would spend hours helping fellow veterans navigate the complex benefits system -- local, state and federal -- making sure they received the support they had earned.

“He believed no veteran should be left behind,” Cota said. “Plus, he was relentless when it came to helping someone. If a vet needed something, anything, he found a way. A

program, a fund and grant, something, to make sure that vet got what they needed.”

“Paul wanted to make sure that his efforts to help others continued long after he was gone,” said Sharon Closius, VCF’s President and CEO. “He had such a big heart, and his fund is a perfect reflection of his generosity. Now, it will be there to help others, just like he always did.”

Through the Paul R. Lutson Charitable Fund, Paul’s legacy of service and kindness will live on, Closius said.

“His impact on the Valley’s veteran community is immeasurable, and his commitment to his fellow veterans and community will never be forgotten,” Closius said.

*“Paul wanted to make sure that his efforts to help others continued long after he was gone.”*

## Christ Episcopal Church Ansonia Fund



Last year, the leadership of Christ Episcopal Church in Ansonia decided to secure the future of several cherished bequests by transferring them to the Valley Community Foundation (VCF). This move, guided by Nancy Valentine, Senior Warden of Christ Episcopal Church and Chair of VCF’s Board of Directors, was driven by a shared commitment to preserving the intentions of past donors amidst a period of transition for the church.

The bequests -- one from a devoted, long-time parishioner and another from her sister, who lived in Virginia but was inspired by her sibling’s glowing accounts of church life -- represent decades of faith and trust in Christ Episcopal Church. Over time, the church had managed these funds through CDs, a process that required meticulous tracking and reinvestment.

However, Valentine said the church members recognized the need for a more streamlined and impactful approach.

“Dealing with church funds by the vestry is tedious work done by community volunteers,” Valentine said. “Knowing we needed to be good stewards in the management of church finances, I recommended combining the many CDs into one fund with VCF, and that was met favorably in 2024.”

The newly established Christ Episcopal Church Ansonia Fund is an Investment Only Organization Fund, a specialized fund designed for charitable organizations. This type of fund allows assets to be collectively invested, ensuring financial growth while maintaining alignment with the organization’s mission. For the church, this step is especially significant as it navigates uncertainties, including declining membership, the future of its 176-year-old building, and the sustainability of its vital outreach programs like the Samela Food Pantry.

Valentine’s deep connection to both Christ Episcopal Church and VCF underscores the alignment of their missions. Her personal history with VCF -- from participating in its founding discussions more than 20 years ago to establishing her own fund in 2009 -- provided valuable insight into the benefits of a community foundation.

“Having been the recipients of bequests means Christ Church has the responsibility of prudent management of these funds,” Valentine said. “VCF provides us with detailed reporting on the performance of our investment, building trust with the congregation.”

Looking ahead, the Christ Episcopal Church Ansonia Fund stands as a testament to thoughtful stewardship and community commitment. By partnering with VCF, the church ensures that the legacy of its donors will continue to support its mission and the Valley community, regardless of what the future holds. This collaboration exemplifies the power of philanthropy to preserve history while building resilience for generations to come.

*“VCF provides us with detailed reporting on the performance of our investment, building trust with the congregation.”*

## Valley Foundation Fund



In 2024, in a historic moment for the Valley Community Foundation (VCF), the Valley Foundation Fund, established in 1980, was transferred from The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (TCF) to VCF. This transfer represents the fulfillment of a long-anticipated vision set forth by committed Valley leaders and advocates more than four decades ago.

The Valley Foundation Fund was born from the foresight of the Valley Chamber of Commerce, which in the late 1970s formed a Foundation Feasibility Committee to explore the establishment of a dedicated foundation to serve the Valley's five towns: Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. The committee, led by William E. Hoblitzelle III, recognized the importance of securing local control over charitable funds while leveraging the established infrastructure of TCF. In 1979, Attorney Charles Kingsley said that a Valley-based foundation should one day be able to assume full control of its own fund.

On July 31, 1980, Henry (Harry) W. Bassett, a prominent Valley business leader and philanthropist, made the first contribution of \$2,000 to what was then called the Valley Fund. This fund, later renamed the Valley Foundation

Fund, was intended to serve the long-term philanthropic needs of the Valley. Bassett and his colleagues envisioned a future where the Valley would have its own community foundation, dedicated to addressing local needs. That vision became a reality 24 years later with the help of Valley philanthropists and leaders who worked hard with TCF to establish VCF in 2004.

"This is a full-circle moment," said Bill Purcell, President and CEO of the Valley Chamber of Commerce. "When the Chamber and Harry Bassett established the Valley Foundation Fund in 1980, the hope was that one day it would grow into something that could truly benefit the entire Valley."

For decades, the Valley Foundation Fund was managed by TCF to support charitable work in the Valley. In 2024, VCF staff met with then-TCF President and CEO, William Ginsberg, to discuss its future. Given the fund's strong Valley ties and VCF's upcoming 25th Anniversary endowment campaign, they determined it would be the perfect repository for the initiative. Ginsberg and the TCF Board wholeheartedly agreed. The fund, now a preference fund at VCF, will provide vital support for future VCF community and leadership building initiatives.

"People from the Valley have always been very benevolent minded," said Sharon Closius, VCF's President and CEO. "Harry Bassett and the Valley Chamber had the foresight to lay the foundation for a community-based philanthropic vehicle, long before VCF existed."

*"People from the Valley have always been very benevolent minded."*



### VALLEYNESS™:

Valleyness is a word coined by the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) Board of Directors to express the Valley's unique essence. It's a word that captures the neighborly, kind, caring spirit, and rich history engrained in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. Valleyness encompasses a set of values, characteristics, and actions that traditionally define the Valley community and its people. Valleyness is the embodiment of positive and good qualities, actions, and deeds, that create a strong and vibrant community that cares for its members and works together to build a better future.



# How to set up a Fund

## How to Set Up a Fund with the Valley Community Foundation

1

### Define the Goal of Your Fund

Would you like your fund to be flexible so that it can address changing community needs and opportunities? Is there a specific charity or cause that you would like to support? Would you like to be involved in the grantmaking?

2

### Name Your Fund

This is your legacy. You, of course, can be anonymous if you prefer. Whether it is a family fund or created in memory of a loved one, the fund will still be making grants many decades from now and beyond.

3

### Contact Us

Let's have a conversation about how we can tailor your charitable goals to fit your personal situation. Whether you establish a fund now or give later via a planned gift, we will ensure your legacy and interests will be honored today, tomorrow, and forever.

## Our Vision:

A vibrant inclusive Valley that is thriving, collaborative, generous, with a shared sense of community and opportunity.

## Our Mission:

To inspire philanthropic growth, provide and foster leadership, engage donors, and strengthen the Valley community both now and for future generations.

## Our Values:

**ACCESSIBLE** - User-friendly to individuals and entities with diverse interests

**COMMITTED** - to having a stake in solutions, partnerships and cultivating new leaders

**EQUITABLE** - always seeking full participation of diverse cultures and perspectives

**RESPONSIVE** - listening and addressing the current needs and interests of the community

**STRATEGIC** - anticipating future needs, opportunities and solutions

**TRUSTED** - by the community, donors, and nonprofit organizations

**UNIFYING** - by recognizing the Valley's cohesive regional identity.

# Valley Community Foundation Funds

Since its founding in 2004, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) has been a driving force for philanthropy, helping local donors establish more than 260 funds that continue to make a lasting difference in the region. These funds have supported scholarships for countless students, strengthened area nonprofits, and provided essential resources to those in need.

This section of the Annual Report highlights the many impactful funds that have enriched the lives of Valley residents and organizations. Whether through education, community programs, or direct assistance, these funds

reflect the generosity and vision of those dedicated to making the Valley a better place.

VCF-managed funds have also been a lifeline in times of crisis, offering crucial aid during the COVID-19 pandemic and, more recently, in response to the devastating flood on August 18, 2024. In moments of uncertainty, these funds have provided critical support, reinforcing VCF's commitment to helping the Valley remain strong, resilient, and prepared for the future.







## Donor Designated Funds

**If you want to show your support for a specific organization or organizations during your lifetime or endow your giving to a favorite nonprofit in perpetuity, a Donor Designated Fund allows you to name one or more organizations to receive an annual gift from your fund.**

1920 Society Fund  
 Bette Mae's Memorial Fund  
 Birmingham Foundation Fund  
 Edward J. & Marie M. Cecarelli Book Fund  
 Center Stage Theatre- Building Community Fund  
 Herbert M. Clark Fund  
 Cohen Family Book Fund  
 Edward J. Cotter Jr. Memorial Fund  
 Angela Curas Fund  
 D'Addario Family Fund for the Benefit of Griffin Hospital  
 Derby Public Library - Harold B. Yudkin Historic Preservation Fund  
 Gerry Hellmann Eckhardt Fund for the Woodbridge Town Library  
 Harvey and Gerry Eckhardt Fund for the Seymour Oxford Food Bank  
 First Taxing District and the Mulvoy - Tarlov - Aquino VFW Post 603 Cannon Preservation Fund  
 Neville Osmond Forsythe Senior Memorial Fund  
 Griffin Family Memorial Fund  
 Health Initiative for Men (HIM) Fund  
 Housatonic Council, BSA Fund  
 Jones Family Farms Fund for the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station  
 Rita Rae Keefe Memorial Fund  
 Robert C. Lang Fund  
 Planetree Fund  
 Maureen, Megan and Katey Ryan Fund  
 Gary and Francesca (Riggio) Scarpa Fund for Center Stage Theatre  
 Dorothy E. & Kenneth E. Schaible Fund for the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley  
 Seymour-Oxford Rotary Club Fund  
 Shelton Excellence in Education Fund (SEEF)



Frank and Helene Skoronski Memorial Fund  
 Donald W. & Lillian C. Smith Family Fund  
 Sturgis A. and Madeleine Martin Sobin Family Fund  
 Peter Stamos Fund for the Ansonia Public Library  
 TEAM, Inc., Richard J. Knoll Endowment Fund  
 Torbi-Saldamarco Family Fund  
 Emil J. Varga Catholic School Fund  
 Peter J. Vartelas Invest In Youth Fund #2 for the Valley YMCA  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 597 Fund  
 Walsh Family Fund  
 E. B. Walsh Fund\*  
 Henry Shelton Wells and Edith Birdseye Wells Family Fund  
 Thomas H. and Alyce S. Wells Family Fund  
 Colonel Lloyd E. and Joan Platt Witmer Fund  
 Women In Networking Fund

## Donor Advised Funds

**The easiest way to support nonprofits and causes dear to you in the Valley and beyond is through a Donor Advised Fund. Offering maximum flexibility, you recommend grants from the fund to any qualified public charity in the country. You can also add to your fund and recommend grants from it at any time.**

Kathleen and Mariano Adamo Community Service Fund  
 Advancing Heroes Fund  
 John and Paraskeve Vartelas 'AGAPE' Fund  
 Alesevich Family Fund  
 Thomas & Diane Baklik Family Fund\*  
 Bassett Family Fund  
 Beel Pesch Family Fund  
 Monty Blakeman Fund  
 Peter F. Burns, Sr. Fund  
 Champagne Family Fund  
 Cohen Community Advised Fund  
 Cohen-DeToro Charitable Fund  
 Jane C. and David B. Cohen Fund  
 Ralph, Thelma, & Paul Davis Fund\*  
 Nick Collicelli Legacy Fund  
 Frank and Ann Conroy Fund for the Joy of Music  
 Mary Lou Cicia Cook Memorial Fund





Salvatore and Linda Tiano Coppola Family Fund  
 Thomas and Ruth Curran Family Fund  
 D'Addario Family Fund  
 Michael and Elizabeth Dalton Family Fund  
 Derby Sister City Fund  
 Walter and Bonnie Drozeck Fund  
 Frey-Hershey Foundation Fund  
 Marc J. Garofalo Cultural Experience Fund  
 Mario Garofalo Family Fund  
 Raymond and Gloria Gildea Memorial Fund  
 David M. & Gail A. Grant Family Fund  
 Guarrera Family Fund  
 Harbinson Heritage Fund  
 Carol Ann Hyder Memorial Fund  
 Jones Family Farms Fund  
 Kaplan Family Fund  
 Paul & Gloria Konwerski Family Fund  
 Edward and Laura Lane Family Fund  
 John Lauretti Memorial Family Fund  
 Barry and Josephine Lifrieri Fund  
 Lombardi Twins Fund for The Valley  
 Paul R. Lutson Charitable Fund\*  
 Kate Marks Brilliant Female Fund  
 Mary Fund  
 Carl and Patricia Miller Fund  
 William C. and Elaine N. Nimons Family Fund  
 Joseph A. Pagliaro Sr. Family Fund  
 Palazzi Family Fund  
 Pepe Family Fund  
 Drew Pickering, Sr. Memorial Fund  
 Nina Poeta Scholarship Fund  
 President's Fund of the Valley Community Foundation  
 Sophie and Robert W. Rapp Family Fund  
 Samuel Rifkin Fund  
 Leah Rondon Fund  
 Anthony (Sonny) Savignano Memorial Fund  
 Dorothy E. & Kenneth E. Schaible Donor Advised Fund  
 Mary A. Schmecker Turtle Shell Fund  
 Seymour Public Schools Fund  
 Shelton CT Gaels Alumni Fund  
 Marion Shortell and Joseph Meade Fund

Dr. Beth A. Smith Fund  
 Smythe Family Fund  
 Stengel Family Fund  
 Sterling Opera House Endowment Fund  
 Sally & Dominick Thomas Fund  
 John Tyma Fund  
 Uncle Joseph's Fund  
 Uncle Louie Fund  
 Nancy Valentine Fund  
 Valley Bar Association Memorial and Commemorative Fund  
 Valley Breast Health Care Fund  
 Valley Pride Fund  
 Van Egghen Family Fund  
 Ted Vartelas Family Fund  
 Alphonso and Eulalia Vitello Family Fund  
 Warichar Family Fund  
 Katarzyna and Ludwik Zaprzalka Fund  
 Joe and Judy Zaprzalka Family Fund  
 John and Laura Zaprzalka Family Fund

## Organization Funds

**Nonprofit organizations can set up either a permanent Organization Endowment Fund, or an investment-only Organization Fund. Both funds provide a stable source of distributable revenue for the nonprofit.**

Anonymous  
 Agency on Aging Fund at VCF  
 Ansonia Rotary Club Fund  
 Christ Episcopal Church, Ansonia Fund\*  
 Derby Community Endowment Fund  
 Derby Historical Society Organization Fund  
 Derby Public Library Endowment Fund  
 Housatonic Council, BSA Fund  
 Edmund D. Strang Campership, Housatonic Council, BSA Fund  
 Edmund & Caroline Strang Eagle Scout Scholarship Award, Housatonic Council, BSA Fund  
 Edmund D. Strang Scout Reservation Camp Maintenance, Housatonic Council, BSA Fund  
 Massaro Community Farm Fund  
 Massaro Farm Legacy Fund  
 Oak Cliff Cemetery Association Fund



\* New Fund in 2024







Oxford Land Trust Fund  
 Parent Child Resource Center Endowment Fund  
 Plumb Memorial Library Reserve Fund  
 Plumb Memorial Tri-Centennial Endowment Fund  
 Recreation Camp Endowment Fund  
 Ritchie Fund for Plumb Memorial Library  
 Seymour Pink Endowment Fund  
 Seymour-Oxford Nursery and Child Care Association, Inc.  
 (SONCCA) Fund  
 Shelton Historical Society Endowment Fund  
 Shelton Land Trust Reserve Fund  
 St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley Fund  
 Rowland R. Strong and Edith H. Strong Memorial  
 Scholarship Organization Fund  
 TEAM Legacy Fund  
 TEAM Reserve Fund  
 Town of Seymour Endowment Fund  
 Troop 3 - Derby BSA Alumni & Friends Fund  
 Valley United Way Fund  
 Valley YMCA Endowment Fund  
 Peter J. Vartelas Invest In Youth Fund #1 for the Valley YMCA

## Preference Funds

**Also known as a field of interest fund, a Preference Fund supports evolving needs and a variety of nonprofits by focusing on broad areas of interest. This fund can support education, childcare, environmental issues, healthcare, or a specific geographic area. VCF makes grants to nonprofits that serve the donor's field of interest in perpetuity.**

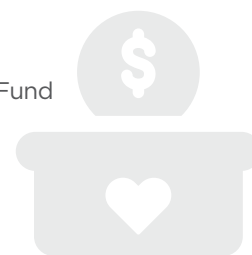
Ancient Order of Hibernians, Derby Division Fund  
 Cohen Community Fund  
 Susan Coyle Family Fund  
 Lawrence J. DeTullio, Jr. Fund  
 The Future Fund  
 Herb Rollinson Fund  
 Shelton Congregational Church Fund  
 Valley Foundation Fund\*  
 Mary Vartelas Stamos Fund  
 Angelina M. and Valentina V. Vitali Fund  
 Selma L. and Harold B. Yudkin Fund



## Scholarship Funds

**You can help students pursue their educational dreams with a Scholarship Fund. Scholarship funds are often created in honor of someone and can be used to support educational opportunities for students at specific schools.**

Michael J. Adanti Scholarship Fund  
 Joseph 'Jay' Amico Artistic Memorial Awards Fund  
 Ansonia High School Endowed Fund  
 Ansonia High School Non-Endowed Fund  
 Ansonia Public Schools Fund  
 Rosalie & Richard Averill Scholarship Fund\*  
 Bruno Battaglini Memorial Fund  
 Stella Behuniak Fund  
 Winston J. Bish Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 John F. Blake, Jr. Memorial Prize Fund  
 John A. Bondos Scholarship Fund\*  
 Andy Brennan Memorial Fund  
 Rachel and William Brogadir Scholarship Fund  
 Stanley and Irene Chlebowski Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Stephen & Emily Chuckta Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Class of 1940 Scholarship Fund  
 Eddy Conklin Scholarship Fund  
 Ruth H. Feinberg Connors Principal's Award  
 Eleanor Rae DeFelice Scholarship Fund  
 Lou and Dolly DeFilippo Scholarship Fund  
 Rosa Dell'Oso Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Derby High School Non-Endowed Scholarship Fund  
 Derby High School Endowed Scholarship Fund  
 Domorod-Youd Shelton High School Scholarship Fund  
 Capt. Jerry Drugonis Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Ellen DuBoff Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Agnes and Helen Dubrava Fund  
 Honorable Joseph P. Flynn and Family Scholarship Fund  
 Francis Family Fund  
 Louis 'Neni' Gaetano, Sr. DHS Scholarship Fund  
 Geissler Family Scholarship Fund  
 Brandon Giordano Football Scholarship Fund  
 Peter S. Goumas Presidential Scholarship Fund  
 Mayor Richard A. Grande Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Traci L. Haines Memorial Scholarship Fund





Amos Hawley Memorial Award Fund  
 Arthur Hayes Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Randall R. Holden Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Imperato Family Scholarship Fund  
 Industrial Arts/Vocational Education Fund  
 Joey's Way Fund  
 Wasil Katz Scholarship Fund  
 Coach Bobby Kelo Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Winifred Bennett Kerins Memorial Prize Fund  
 Patricia M. Kondrath Scholarship Fund  
 Paul & Sherry Konwerski- Future Plumbers Scholarship Fund\*  
 Julia Krizan Scholarship Fund for the Arts  
 Russell & Joanne Kiley Kulawiz Fund  
 Frank J. Lang Fund  
 Anthony and Catherine LoPresti Family Fund  
 Jesse McCord Lewis Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Michael R. McMahon Scholarship Fund  
 Patrick R. McNamara Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Dr. Carol Merlone Scholarship Fund  
 Elliott Moscato Scholarship Fund  
 Luke Moseley Aviation Scholarship Fund  
 Bernice Nicolari Howard Gura Award Fund  
 Louis L. Nicoletti, Sr. Business Scholarship Fund  
 Anna and John O'Neil Memorial For Integrity Award Fund  
 Anthony Pagliaro Scholarship Fund  
 Dr. Michael A. Parlato Scholarship Fund  
 Lillian Pawlowski Fund  
 Ann C. Petro Scholarship Fund  
 Pam Petro Pawlowski Scholarship Fund  
 Joseph E. Potter Memorial Fund  
 John Quake Memorial Fund  
 Michael J. Regan Scholarship Fund  
 George and Beatrice Ryan Scholarship Fund  
 V. Gerald Ryan Scholarship Fund  
 John Sabulis Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Norman K. and Janet N. Santa Fund  
 Seymour Historical Society Scholarship Fund  
 Shelton High School Endowed Scholarship Fund  
 Shelton High School Non-Endowed Scholarship Fund  
 Shelton High School Education Fund  
 Dr. Teresa Tottenham Sievers Scholarship Fund

Gaeton and Elizabeth Simonetti Family Fund  
 Frank and Helene Skoronski Memorial Fund  
 Charles P. Smith Jr., Scholarship Fund  
 Karen R. Stanek Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Rowland R. Strong and Edith H. Strong Memorial Renewable Scholarship Fund  
 Howard Tassitano Fund  
 Julian A. Taylor Scholarship Fund  
 Margaret Ann Kofarago Thomas Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 John 'AL' Tiano Scholarship Fund  
 George Vartelas Ansonia High School Scholarship Fund  
 Peter Vartelas Ansonia High School Scholarship Fund  
 John J. Wabuda Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Joseph and Pauline Warichar Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 Alexander George Wilson, Sr. Scholarship Fund  
 Anne M. and Vincent J. Zak Memorial Scholarship Fund

## Unrestricted Funds

**You can help us support emerging issues and the most pressing needs in the Valley by creating an Unrestricted Fund. As the need in our community is ever-changing, unrestricted funds allow VCF the flexibility to prioritize and address high-priority issues.**

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Ansonia Fund  
 Raymond F. Mackowski Fund  
 Ortoli Family Fund  
 Dorothy E. & Kenneth E. Schaible Community Fund  
 Valley Community Fund  
 VCF Administrative and Reserve Fund



\* New Fund in 2024





# The Gates Society

For nearly two decades, the Gates Society has stood as a heartfelt cornerstone of the Valley Community Foundation (VCF), ensuring that the kindness and generosity of its members continue to touch lives for generations. Through planned gifts and endowments, the Gates Society carries forward the charitable vision of those who have gone before, leaving an enduring legacy for future generations. Named in honor of Ross and Frank Gates, two brothers whose philanthropic efforts helped shape the Valley community, the society honors individuals who, like the Gates brothers, have made provisions in their estate plans to support the Valley long after they are gone.

Joseph and Donald Warichar are shining examples of this legacy of giving. Like the Gates brothers, Joe and Don dedicated themselves to their families and careers early in life, and later, in retirement, they sought to give back to the Valley -- a community that had provided them with stability and a sense of belonging.

Raised in Derby, Joe and Don were instilled with the values of hard work and community by their parents, Joseph and Pauline Warichar. "During our lifetime, we have witnessed the economic changes in the Valley, particularly in Derby, and we wanted to contribute in our own way," Don said.

In 2006, to honor their parents, the brothers established the Joseph and Pauline Warichar Memorial Scholarship Fund at VCF. Their parents had always emphasized the importance of education, and this fund has since provided four-year scholarships to Derby High School students pursuing careers in nursing, pharmacology, or agriculture. In 2012, they expanded their

philanthropic efforts by creating the Warichar Family Fund, a donor-advised fund that allowed them to support a variety of causes close to their hearts, such as Valley food banks, critical equipment for first responders, animal welfare, and community leadership.

Although Joe and Don had already made a commitment to the Valley through their funds, they recognized that their estate gift could have an even greater, lasting impact, extending their contribution to the Valley well beyond their lifetimes. By naming VCF as a beneficiary, their plan became straightforward, designating their fund as the beneficiary of their life insurance, retirement assets, and bank accounts.

"Our family is very small, and we consider the Valley like a beloved family member," Don said. "We know we can't take anything with us when we leave this world so wanted to give back in a way that would have the greatest impact."

In 2024, Joe passed away at the age of 89. Now, Don is honoring the plans they created together, through estate planning ensuring that their legacy continues to support the community they loved so dearly. The Warichar brothers' deep commitment to the Valley, combined with their thoughtful, enduring approach to philanthropy, reflects the true spirit of the Gates Society.

"Philanthropy isn't just about giving -- it's about the love of humanity and community," said Beth Colette, VCF's Manager of Donor Services. "Joe and Don's gifts to the Valley through VCF will stand as a lasting testament to their profound affection for the community and their prevailing belief in its potential."



Joseph Warichar



Donald Warichar



2024

## The Gates Society Members

Anonymous (6)  
Dayne & Dawn Bachmann  
Twan & Karen Bentlage  
Leslie Bondos  
Sharon Closius  
Jamie Cohen  
Jane Cohen\*  
Edmund J. Conklin\*  
John Corrado  
Angela Curas\*  
Patricia DeCicco  
Walter & Bonnie Drozeck  
Helen Dubrava\*  
Patricia Dziuba  
Gregg Goumas  
Robert & Sheri Grier  
William & Jo-Anna Holden  
Michael Hyder\*  
Heidi Kaplan  
Deborah Kelo  
M. Elizabeth Kennard  
Richard Knoll  
Laura Lane  
Robert C. Lang\*  
Barry & Josephine Lifrieri  
Bette Mae Luedecker\*  
Raymond Mackowski\*  
Mary Theresa Mahoney\*  
Ned Miller

Raymond Oppel  
David & Dale Ortoli  
Fred Ortoli  
Lynn Ortoli\*  
Joseph Pagliaro, Jr.  
Dorothy Palazzi  
Carol Pendagast  
Lynne Bassett Perry  
David & Joan Rifkin  
Beth Ann Smith  
Donald W. Smith, Sr.\*  
Brad & Marianne Smythe  
Fred Stanek  
Karen Stanek\*  
Nicholas & Patricia Tarasovic  
Alan Tyma  
Robert & Eleonora Van Egghe  
Marc C. Vincent\*  
Valentina Vitali\*  
Kathie Vriik  
Jack Walsh  
Donald E. Warichar  
Joseph R. Warichar\*  
Lynn Wozniak  
John & Laura Zaprzalka

\*Deceased





Anonymous (8)  
 Advancing Heroes Fund, Inc.  
 Susan Agamy  
 Robert Ahearn  
 Kimberlee Allison  
 Stephen Anderson  
 Bruce & Lee Angeloszek  
 Kim Aston  
 Rosalie & Richard Averill  
 Erik Baker  
 Thomas & Diane Baklik  
 Eloise Ballard Raymond  
 Bill & Pat Banfe  
 Bank of America Charitable Gift Fund  
 Ronald Barber  
 Barnum Engineered Systems, Inc.  
 Scott Barton  
 David & Blanche Beck  
 Ryan Beel & Olivia Pesch  
 Horace & Edith Behrle  
 Jeanne Belchak  
 Benevity Community Impact Fund  
 Mark & Shelly Bennett  
 Antonius Bentlage & Karen Bentlage  
 Charitable Lead Trust  
 Patricia Birch  
 Heather Blacha  
 Hilary Black  
 Michael Black  
 Ken Blanchard  
 Raymond & Janet Blanchette  
 Paul Blanco  
 Robert Bock & Mary Gengo-Bock  
 Leslie Bondos  
 Ronald Bonito  
 Will Bothwell  
 Barbara Bottiglieri  
 Mary Brandon-Yourwith  
 William & Jo Ann Brennan  
 Francine Buckley  
 Jay Budahazy

William & Rita Budahazy  
 Rory Burke  
 Jeff & Marcia Burkitt  
 Patricia Burns  
 Peter Burns  
 Tammy Burrell  
 Samantha Burroughs  
 Michelle Calkins  
 Nicholas Cannata  
 Anita Cardona  
 Kimberly Caro  
 Robert & Nancy Carroll  
 Dana Casey  
 Cassetti for State Rep  
 Karen A. Cassetti  
 Melanie Cecarelli & Michael Smith  
 Chaotic 3 Workshop, LLC  
 Charities Aid Foundation of America  
 Jara Chen  
 Christ Episcopal Church  
 Doreen Chudoba  
 Alan & Mary Lou Clapes  
 Barbara Clifford  
 Sharon Closius  
 Matthew Cohen  
 Frank Colandro  
 Randall & Beth Colette  
 Edmund & Barbara Conklin  
 Edward Conroy  
 Theresa Conroy  
 John Coppola  
 Whitey Costello  
 Michael & Susan Cox  
 Eric Darmofal  
 Elizabeth Deane  
 Albert Decant  
 Martin DeFelice  
 Lynn Dell  
 Corinne Dellaera-Bish  
 Derby Public Schools  
 Brian & Louise Desmond

John & Elizabeth DiBiaso  
 Carmen Dicenso  
 Dominick Di Gangi &  
 Valerie Knight-Di Gangi  
 Divining Your Life  
 Peter & Carole Doyle  
 Annmarie Drugonis  
 Eagle Hose #6  
 Jason Edwards  
 Patti Ellis  
 Joyce Emmett  
 Evisions  
 Fairview Tree Farm  
 Edward Faulkner  
 Martin Ferraro  
 James & Cindy Filipowich  
 Mike Fitzgerald  
 Mike & Nicole Fitzgerald  
 Donna Forte  
 Kirk & Marian Frederickson  
 Friends of the Southington  
 Public Library  
 Melanie & Malcolm Galen  
 Michael Gallo  
 Dennis Garofalo  
 James & Nancy Geissler  
 Sandra Gesek &  
 Elizabeth Sponheimer  
 Christopher Giannone  
 Daniel Giannone  
 John Giannone  
 Mathew Giannone  
 Nick Giannone  
 William & Kel Ginsberg  
 Francis & Dona Ginty  
 Lynn Giordano  
 Gregg Goumas  
 Mark & Gwen Goumas  
 Linda Gryniuk  
 James & Bert Guarrera  
 Howard & Judy Gura

# DONORS







Frank Haines  
Teri Haines  
Sandra Haley  
Matthew Halko  
Logan Hallett  
Harbor Oak Team  
Sara Harper  
Ralph & Lynne Harrison  
Keith & Rebecca Hedegus  
Jacob Heerdt  
Kurt & Carmel Heim  
Neil Heslin  
Judy Higson  
Arthur & Lovisa Hill  
Chuck Hite  
Katrina Holden  
Robert Hyder  
Stanley & Phyllis Jachimowski  
Edward Jaekle  
Carmelo & Mary Jimenez  
Jones Family Farms, LLC  
Edward Jones  
Terry & Jean Jones

Julia Day Nursery of Ansonia, Inc  
John Jurkowski  
Thomas & Michelle Kachmarck  
Lorraine Kapinos  
Harriet Karkut  
Sue Keefe  
Deborah Kelo  
Kelsel Temple  
Richard & Barbara Kemp  
M. Elizabeth Kennard  
David Kennedy  
Kathleen Kiley  
Sandra Kiley  
Ed & Aleta Kisluk  
Sheryl Konnik  
Richard Kollet  
Paul Kondrath  
John & Janet Konicki  
Paul & Sherry Konwerski  
Peter Konwerski & Leah Rosen  
Sheila Kozerowitz  
Krafty Pineapple Creations, LLC  
Edward & Laura Lane  
James Lane  
Jill Lanese  
Estate of Robert Lang  
Joan Lawlor & Karen Bilodeau  
John & Eileen Lawlor  
Catherine Lesko-Boneski  
Debra Lieberman  
Michele Linane  
Robert & Karen Lisi  
Anthony LoPresti  
Sean LoPresti  
Joan Lozier  
Pegs Lucarelli  
Robert Lungarini  
Paul Lutson  
Cathleen Lynch  
Jean Lynch  
William & Judi Lynch  
Thomas & Susan Macisco

Walter Mack  
MaryEllen MacKinnon  
Jennifer Magri  
Kathleen Malerba  
Dannel Malloy  
Arthur Martin  
Laura Martin  
Susan Martin  
Erik Martire  
Gerald Matusovich  
Barbara Mayers  
Dave Mazzulli  
Mary McAndrews  
Christopher McCabe  
Girard & Suzanne McDonald  
Peggy McGough  
Karen McGovern  
Erin McKnight  
Thomas & Maryann McMahon  
Felicia McPhail  
Rachel Meier  
Denise Miles  
Mark & Carol Miller  
Ned Miller  
Albert Misiewicz & Nicole Cignoli  
Carol Mobilio  
Grace Monahan  
Franco & Silvana Monaco  
Pat Moran  
Robert & Sheila Moseley  
Cheryl Nally  
Janice Napoletano  
Steven Ng  
Elizabeth Nicoletti  
Amy O'Brien  
Pamela J. O'Brien  
Brian O'Connell  
Tricia O'Malley  
Ryan Oppel  
Patricia Oram  
Chikezie Orchingwa  
Fred Ortolini





Jennifer Ottalagana  
 Dr. Michael Parlato Trust  
 John Pawlowski  
 Jon & Kristin Pedersen  
 Lucas Peixoto  
 Joe & Valerie Pellegrini  
 Nancy Pereiras  
 Linda Perini  
 Craig & Lynne Perry  
 Michael & Susannah Petro  
 Candace Pickering  
 Patty Picoli  
 Carmen & Margaret Pitney  
 George Plaumann  
 Wendy Poeta-Tisi  
 Joe Potenza  
 Catherine Primavera  
 Paul Primavera  
 Lorraine Pucci  
 Joseph Purdy  
 Robert Puterski  
 Quincy High School Football  
 John & Margaret Rafferty  
 Aaron Rak  
 Robert Rapp, Jr.  
 Barbara Regan  
 Jeanne & Robert Reichelt  
 Linda Reznik  
 Melissa Rice-Jarrel  
 David Rivera  
 Steven Roseboro  
 Ed & Jean Rostowsky  
 Rotary Club of Ansonia,  
 Seymour, and Oxford, CT  
 David Ryan  
 Saber Guild  
 John Sabulis  
 Jay Saccone  
 Peter & Karen Saccu  
 Peter Saccu  
 Joann Sardo  
 Marian Schmitz

Schwab Charitable Fund  
 Elizabeth Schwebel  
 Alice Seccombe  
 Bob Seccombe  
 Charles & Renee Seccombe  
 Patricia Allen Selsky  
 Seymour Democratic  
 Town Committee  
 Seymour Fathers Club  
 Seymour High School  
 Seymour High School Goal Club  
 Shelton Ct Gaels Alumni Association  
 Cindy Simell-Devoe  
 Thomas Simonetti  
 Kate Slomkowski  
 Martha Smart  
 Donald & Lisa Smith  
 Brad & Marianne Smythe  
 Christie Sobin  
 Sturgis Sobin  
 Mary Sorcinelli  
 Peter & Cheryl Sosnovich, Jr.  
 St. Barbara Greek Orthodox  
 Paul Stamos  
 Frederick Stanek  
 Shaun Supp  
 Douglas Sutherland  
 Leon & Barbara Sylvester  
 Christine Syriac  
 Richard Szanto  
 Penelope Tambis  
 Patricia Tarasovic  
 Lani Marc Tarozzi  
 TEAM, Inc.  
 Teddy Bear Treehouse  
 Learning Center  
 Debra Testa  
 Janet Thomas  
 Rev. Christopher Tiano  
 Fred & Beverly Tidmarsh  
 Deidre Tindall  
 Jeffrey Tottenham

United Way of Greater Waterbury  
 Carole Urban  
 John Uysal  
 Valley United Way  
 Allan Vartelas  
 John Vitello & Janice Howard  
 Kathie Vrlík  
 Wallingford Public Library  
 Elizabeth Walsh  
 Jack Walsh  
 Donald Warichar  
 Jean Webber  
 Tom & Jodi Welch  
 Sandra Wellinghoff  
 Deborah Wells  
 Nathaniel Wells  
 Patricia Wells  
 Rodney Wells  
 Royal Wells  
 Thomas Wells  
 Ken & Jody Wilson-Hajducky  
 Stephen Winkel  
 Lynne Wozniak  
 Cary Yeh & Lynn O'Neil  
 Thomas Zaldumbide  
 John & Laura Zaprzalka  
 Gary & Marybeth Zaremski  
 Katherine Zollo  
 Robert Zuraw  
 Sandra Pepe Zuraw

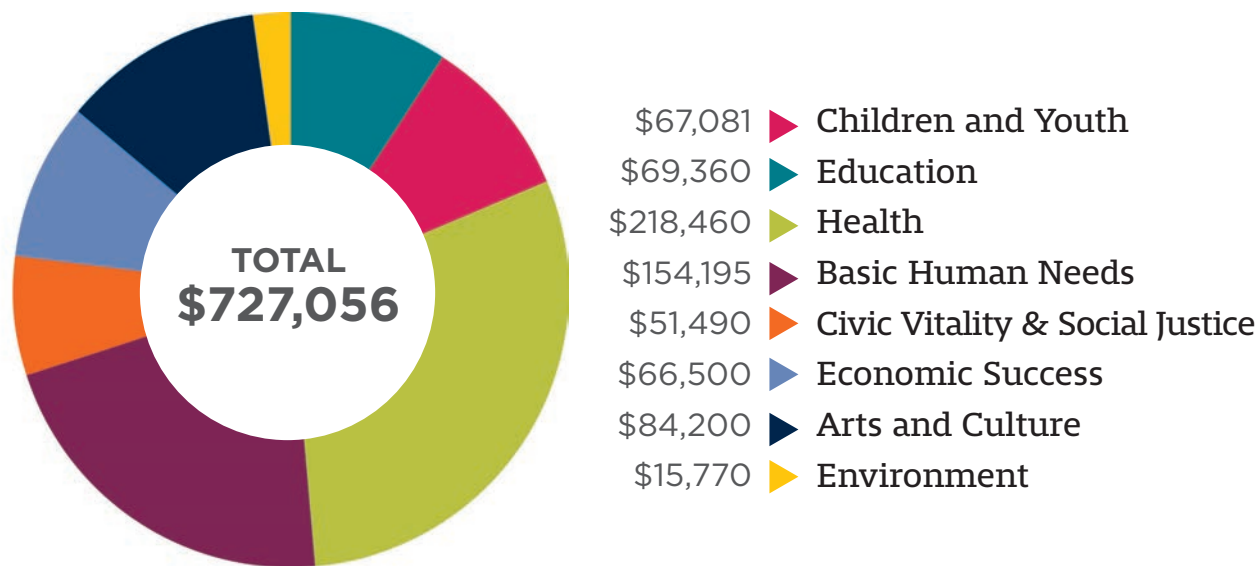
# DONORS





# Community Investment

The Valley Community Foundation’s mission is to inspire philanthropic growth, provide and foster leadership, engage donors, and strengthen the Valley community both now and for future generations.



This data reflects grants made through the Responsive (New and Multi-year), Needs and Opportunities, Sponsorship, and Community Grants programs. It does not include \$88,090 in Community Initiative support. These grant programs would not be possible without the significant financial and staffing contributions provided by our partner in philanthropy, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven.

Type of Funds	Number of Funds	Assets	Number of Grants	\$ of Grants
DONOR ADVISED	76	12,082,730	218	520,512
DESIGNATED & ORGANIZATION TRANSFERS	75	19,232,564	53	386,744
SCHOLARSHIPS	90	4,145,407	111	209,465
UNRESTRICTED & PREFERENCE	15	3,197,205	40	188,681



## Responsive Grants



The Valley Community Foundation's (VCF) Responsive Grants program supports organizations and programs that serve Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour and/or Shelton. Organizations marked with a single asterisk (\*) represent one-time grants. Grants marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) represent organizations that received a continuation grant from 2023. All other organizations listed are receiving multi-year grants.

**Adam's House** - To provide general operating support for its bereavement program. **\$10,000**

**Area Congregations Together, Inc.** - To provide general operating support for its housing program. **\$25,000**

**BHcare** - To provide general operating support for behavioral health and to help victims of domestic violence. **\$20,000**

**Boys and Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley** - To provide general operating support for youth education and recreation programs. **\$25,000**

**cARTie** - To provide general operating support for its mobile art museum, and programs for families and people of all ages. **\$9,750\*\***

**Center Stage Theatre** - To provide general operating support for its performing arts programs. **\$20,000**

**Cornell Scott-Hill Health Corporation** - To provide general operating support for the health and wellbeing of underserved Valley residents. **\$10,000**

**Hope Counseling and Behavioral Center** - To provide general operating support for service and programs for people with mental health needs. **\$10,000\***

**Housatonic Council, BSA** - To provide general operating support for Valley youth leadership, and character-building programs. **\$19,500\*\***

**Julia Day Nursery of Ansonia, Inc.** - To provide general operating support for early education and healthy practices programs and services. **\$20,000**

**Junior Achievement of Greater Fairfield County** - To provide general operating support for education-to-workforce programs. **\$25,000**

**Life Health and Wellness Center** - To provide general operating support for child-care, community outreach, and elder services. **\$19,500\*\***

**Massaro Community Farm** - To provide general operating support for initiatives that help Valley residents access educational programs and affordable, healthy and locally grown food. **\$6,500\*\***

**Online Journalism Project** - To provide general operating support for online local coverage. **\$25,000**

**Rape Crisis Center of Milford** - To provide general operating support for programs that help victims of sexual assault in the Valley. **\$3,900\*\***

**St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley** - To provide general support for infrastructure, sustainability and client outreach. **\$20,800\*\***

**Salvation Army, Greater Valley Corps** - To provide general operating support to assist in meeting client basic needs. **\$20,000**

**Shelton Historical Society** - To provide general operating support to help the Society present and promote history from multiple perspectives. **\$14,950\*\***

**TEAM, Inc.** - To support the installation of a new elevator at its main Derby office. **\$50,000**

**Traveler on a Mission** - To provide general operating support to help Valley residents with access to hygiene supplies, incontinence products, and youth education programs. **\$6,500\*\***

**Valley Emergency Medical Services** - To purchase new heart-monitoring equipment. **\$30,000**

**Valley YMCA** - To provide general operating support for programs in the Valley that strengthen families, youth development, healthy living, volunteerism, and access to food and affordable housing. **\$13,000\*\***

## Needs and Opportunities



Needs and Opportunities grants range from \$250 to \$10,000 and are designed to promptly address the needs of Valley nonprofits through a simplified application process.

**Agency on Aging of South Central CT** - To provide monthly, home delivered groceries and annual gift cards to low-income older adults and people with disabilities living in the Valley. **\$10,000**

**Best Buddies Connecticut** - To support the Virtual School Friendship and Leadership Development Programs in Valley Schools. **\$10,000**

**Derby Historical Plaque Project** - To provide 3 nonprofits in Derby that own historical buildings with support to purchase and install plaques identifying the historical significance of the structures that house their organizations. **\$3,150**

**Derby Historical Society** - To support for the printing of a recently produced book entitled "350 Years of Derby History". **\$500**

**Haven's Harvest** - To provide general operating support to conduct food recovery work in the Valley. **\$10,000**



**Housatonic Council Boy Scouts of America** - To purchase a new and more easily handled tractor mower to maintain its Camp Strang property. **\$1,971**

**Literacy Volunteers of Greater New Haven** - To provide general operating support to serve 125 Valley adults, **\$10,000**

**Mishkan Israel Day Camp** - To support a summer day camp season for underprivileged children from the Valley. **\$1,400**

**Moving with Hope** - To provide general operating support to expand its 6,000 square foot headquarters in Shelton. **\$10,000**

**New Haven Symphony Orchestra** - To provide support for the Valley Pops Concert Series. **\$10,000**

**Operation Fuel, Inc.** - To support emergency energy assistance to families living in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. **\$10,000**

**Oxford Main St. Project** - To enhance the entrance to the Little River Nature Preserve in Oxford. **\$5,000**

**Partnership to End Human Trafficking** - To provide emergency care to self identified or referred victims of human trafficking in the City of Shelton. **\$6,000**

**Read to Grow** - To bring its bookmobile to the Valley. **\$2,500**

#### **Seymour Ambulance Association**

- To purchase new and more efficient training equipment for its volunteer EMS staff. **\$6,000**
- To purchase a new radio system to replace one which was destroyed during the August 2024 Valley Flooding event. **\$6,000**

**Shelton High School Gaelhawks Robotics Team** - To help continue its mission of spreading STEM awareness. **\$6,360**

**Sustainable CT** - To support a summer Fellow at the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments for work in the Valley region. **\$2,270**

**Traveler on a Mission** - To support moving expenses and minor renovations to its new space in Ansonia. **\$1,895**

**Valley Independent Sentinel** - To support the hiring of an experienced freelance reporter. **\$2,500**

### **Community Grants**



This application process recognizes smaller, volunteer or neighborhood groups with grant awards from \$250 to \$2,500.

**All in For Oxford** - To support a series of facilitated conversations for neighbors to voice needs and concerns. **\$1,400**

**All in for Seymour** - To support three community conversations to discuss the challenges families are encountering. **\$1,540**

**Annual Thanksgiving Basket Committee** - To support the purchase of perishable and non-perishable food items and supplies for distribution of Thanksgiving baskets to families in need. **\$2,000**

**Belle Sol Inc** - To support social emotional programming at the Ansonia Boys and Girls Club specifically focusing on self-care, anxiety, and self confidence topics for girls. **\$2,000**

**Boy Scout Troop 51** - To support the building of a trailer to use at events and camping. **\$1,500**

**Cub Scout Pack 51** - To support a Pinewood Derby race for current and perspective members of scouting. **\$2,200**

**Friends of the Derby Public Library** - To support the maintenance and augmentation of the Derby Public Library Community Garden. **\$1,500**

**Little Free Pantry on Skokorat** - To support a free food pantry that is accessible 24/7 365 days a year. **\$2,500**

**Master's Table Community Meals, Inc.** - To support the distribution of 130 gift cards for the 2024 holiday season. **\$2,500**

**Oxford Neighbor to Neighbor Pantry** - To support a free food pantry that is accessible 24/7 365 days a year. **\$2,500**

**Ruth's House** - To support Ruth's house with essential security and computer equipment. **\$2,100**

**Seymour Food 2 Kids** - To support a food assistance program for students in the Seymour community. **\$2,500**

**Shelton CT Farmers Market** - To support the Valley Sprouts Program. **\$2,000**

**Southford Falls Quilting Guild** - To support the continuation of the legacy of quilting program in the Valley. **\$1,000**

**St. Thomas the Apostle Church** - To support its grief counseling program. **\$1,260**

**The Table** - To support free meals for those with food insecurity and isolation. **\$1,500**

**Traveling Toys, Inc.** - To support expanding the existing toy lending library at the Ansonia Public Library. **\$2,500**



## Sponsorship Grants



Nonprofit organizations can apply for support from VCF for up to \$2,500 for special events, especially those events that inform the community about a particular cause.

### American Legion, Emil Senger Post 10

- To sponsor one boy and one girl to participate in its annual Boys' State and Girls' State Programs. **\$800**

### American Legion, John Collins Post

- To sponsor a patriotic essay writing contest for Derby. **\$500**
- To sponsor one girl for its annual Girls' State Program. **\$400**

**Best Buddies** - To sponsor the annual friendship walk. **\$500**

**BHcare** - To sponsor its annual Rise and Shine event. **\$1,000**

**Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley** - To sponsor the 20th Commodore Hull Thanksgiving Day 5K Road Race. **\$2,500**

### Boy Scout Troop 3

- To sponsor its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. **\$500**
- To sponsor its annual gang show. **\$500**

**Celebrate Shelton** - To sponsor its 2024 Calendar of Events. **\$2,500**

### Covering My Sisters, Inc. -

To sponsor its breast cancer awareness program and paint party celebrations of survivors. **\$1,000**

### CT Foundation for Dental Outreach

- To sponsor a free dental clinic. **\$1,000**

### CT Hurricanes Drum and Bugle Corps

- To sponsor a Veteran's Appreciation Concert. **\$750**

**CT Voices for Children** - To sponsor its First for Kids Event. **\$1,000**

**DataHaven** - To sponsor its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. **\$500**

**Derby High School PTO** - To sponsor a post prom event. **\$750**

**Derby Historical Society** - To sponsor a Derby History Bus Tour. **\$1,000**

**Derby Shelton Rotary** - To sponsor Flags for Heroes. **\$2,500**

### Echo Hose Hook and Ladder

**Ambulance Corps** - To sponsor its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. **\$1,000**

### Friends of the Ansonia Nature Center (FANci)

- To sponsor its annual Earth Day and Fall Harvest Celebrations. **\$1,500**

**Griffin Hospital** - To sponsor its annual gala. **\$1,000**

### Housatonic Council Boy Scouts of America

- To sponsor its golf tournament. **\$250**

### Junior Achievement of Greater Fairfield County

- To sponsor its career pathways program at Shelton High School. **\$1,000**
- To sponsor its high school heroes program. **\$750**

**Literacy Volunteers** - To sponsor its annual Scrabble Challenge. **\$500**

**Massaro Community Farm** - To sponsor Dinner on the Farm. **\$500**

**Master's Table** - To sponsor its holiday craft fair. **\$500**

### NAACP, Valley Chapter

- To sponsor transportation for Ansonia High School Students to view a debate between Yale and Howard Universities. **\$900**
- To sponsor its annual gospel breakfast. **\$1,000**

**New Haven Symphony** - To sponsor its annual gala. **\$600**

### Oxford High School Booster Club

- To sponsor a senior class lockdown for fun event. **\$750**
- To sponsor Take a Stand Day. **\$600**
- To sponsor "Ryan's Story". **\$1,000**

**Ruth's House** - To sponsor its third annual golf tournament. **\$250**

### Seymour Ambulance Association

- To sponsor a mass casualty bus rollover drill. **\$1,000**

**Seymour Historical Society** - To sponsor the 2023-2024 Educational Speakers Series. **\$2,500**

**Seymour Pink** - To sponsor the Annual Pounding the Pavement for Pink live and virtual 5K run/walk. **\$2,500**

**Shelton Exchange Club** - To sponsor its annual mini-golf tournament. **\$250**

**Shelton Historical Society** - To sponsor its 2024 Valley Antique Car Show and Harvest Festival. **\$1,000**

**St. Joseph's School** - To sponsor its Maroon and Gold Gala. **\$500**

### TEAM Inc.

- To sponsor its 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. **\$500**
- To sponsor Men Who Cook. **\$1,000**

**Traveler on a Mission** - To sponsor its Christmas in July and anniversary events. **\$1,000**

**Valley Juneteenth Committee** - To sponsor its Juneteenth celebration. **\$500**

**Valley United Way** - To sponsor its community meeting. **\$2,500**





## Recognition Grants



Each year, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) Board of Directors recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations for their service to the community. In the spirit of Valleyness and VCF's ongoing dedication to encouraging volunteerism and leadership, these honorees received a VCF Recognition Grant to donate to any Valley nonprofit of their choice. The honorees below are listed with the nonprofits they supported with their grant. These grants were made possible thanks to the shared appreciation of leadership and volunteerism of the Bassett family.

### Raymond P. Laviertes Service to Youth Award - Boys and Girls Club

Calvin Price - The Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley

### Charles L. Flynn Humanitarian Award - Valley United Way

Patrick Carey - The Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley

Jim Guarrera - The Valley United Way

Terry Jones - The Valley United Way

### Housatonic Council Valley Leadership Awards

Anthony Delucia - Eagle Hose, Ansonia

Jeffrey Luff - Oxford Main St. Project

Carl J. Miller - Housatonic Council, BSA

Eugene A. Skowronski - Housatonic Council, BSA

### In Recognition of Service: Troop 3's 110th Anniversary Honorees

James E. Cohen - BSA, Troop 3

Christine Jalowiec - BSA, Troop 3

Ray Oppel - Housatonic Council, BSA

Gary Parker - BSA, Troop 3

Fr. Chris Tiano - Housatonic Council, BSA

Anne Stankye - Housatonic Council, BSA

## Unrestricted and Preference Funds



Unrestricted and Preference Funds allow the VCF Board of Directors to address a pressing need of an organization or community. \*

Adam Wysota Foundation  
 Boy Scout Troop 3 Derby  
 Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley  
 Christ Episcopal Church  
 Regional Data Cooperative, dba DataHaven  
 Derby Historical Society  
 Echo Hose Hook and Ladder  
 Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc.  
 Griffin Hospital  
 Housatonic Council, Boy Scouts of America  
 Julia Day Nursery of Ansonia, Inc  
 Junior Achievement of Greater Fairfield County  
 Master's Table Community Meals Inc.  
 Online Journalism Project Inc.  
 Oxford High School Booster Club, Inc.  
 Oxford Main Street Project  
 Seymour Ambulance Association  
 Seymour Pink, Inc.  
 Shelton Economic Development Corporation  
 Storm Engine Company Ambulance Corps, Inc.  
 TEAM, Inc.  
 Valley Shakespeare Festival  
 Valley United Way

*\* Grants made by Donor Unrestricted and Preference Funds.*

## Scholarships



Scholarship Funds provide awards and scholarships to students chosen through a selection process at individual high schools, elementary schools, or community organizations.

Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Lauralton Hall  
 Amity Regional High School  
 Ansonia High School  
 Assumption School

Bassick High School  
 Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley  
 Bunnell High School  
 Central Connecticut State University  
 Derby High School  
 Derby Public Schools  
 DeSales University  
 East Haven High School  
 Emmett O'Brien Regional Technical School  
 Gateway Community College  
 Hamden High School  
 Oxford High School  
 Perry Hill School  
 Rochester Institute of Technology  
 Sacred Heart University  
 Seymour High School  
 Shelton High School  
 Shelton Intermediate School  
 Southern Connecticut State University  
 Trumbull High School  
 University of Connecticut  
 University of New Haven  
 University of Rhode Island  
 University of South Florida  
 Vermont State University  
 West Haven High School  
 Western Connecticut State University

## Designated Grants and Organizational Fund Transfers



Designated Funds are established by a donor(s) to benefit one or more specific nonprofit(s). In addition, VCF manages the endowment and reserve funds of several local nonprofit organizations.

Animal Haven, Inc.  
 Ansonia High School  
 Ansonia Public Library  
 Ansonia Public Schools  
 Assumption Church  
 BHcare  
 Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley  
 Center Stage Theatre Inc.  
 Central Connecticut Coast YMCA  
 Chatfield-LoPresti PTA  
 Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station  
 The Culinary Institute of America



Derby High School  
 Derby Neck Library  
 Derby Public Library  
 Emmett O'Brien Regional  
 Technical School  
 Great Hill Hose Company  
 Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce  
 Griffin Hospital  
 Housatonic Council, Boy Scouts  
 of America  
 The Kennedy Collective  
 Lower Naugatuck Valley  
 Parent Child Resource Center  
 Massaro Community Farm, Inc.  
 Oak Cliff Cemetery Association  
 Oak Hill School  
 Old Cemetery Association  
 of Huntington  
 Our Lady Queen of the  
 Apostles Parish  
 Oxford High School  
 Planetree, a Subsidiary of  
 Griffin Health Services, Inc.  
 Plumb Memorial Library  
 Recreation Camp, Inc.  
 Rotary Club of Ansonia,  
 Seymour, and Oxford, CT  
 Salvation Army, Eastern Territorial  
 Headquarters  
 Seymour Oxford Food Bank  
 Shelton High School  
 Shelton Historical Society, Inc.  
 Shelton Public Schools  
 Storm Engine Company  
 Ambulance Corps, Inc.  
 Rowland R. Strong & Edith H.  
 Strong Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 TEAM, Inc.  
 Treasurer, City of Derby  
 Trinity Cemetery Association  
 Trinity Episcopal Church  
 Valley United Way  
 Valley YMCA  
 Woodbridge Town Library

A More Balanced World  
 Afrique Prospere Education  
 ALS Association, CT Chapter  
 American Farmland Trust  
 American Red Cross, CT Chapter  
 Ansonia Public Schools  
 Ansonia Rescue Medical Services  
 Area Congregations Together, Inc.  
 Assumption School  
 Bethany Library Association  
 Beth-El Center Inc.  
 Better Days Rescue Fund  
 BHcare  
 Boy Scout Troop 3 Derby  
 Boys & Girls Club of the Lower  
 Naugatuck Valley  
 Bridgeport Animal Rescue Crew of CT  
 Capri Christian Church  
 Catherine Violet Hubbard Foundation  
 The Center for Family Justice  
 Center Stage Theatre Inc.  
 The Children's Heart Foundation  
 Christ Episcopal Church  
 CitySeed, Inc.  
 Clifford W. Beers Guidance Clinic  
 CoCo's Animal Rescue Efforts  
 of Seymour  
 Common Ground High School  
 Connecticut Agricultural  
 Experiment Station  
 Connecticut Burns Care Foundation  
 Connecticut Farmland Trust  
 Connecticut Foodshare  
 Connecticut Forest & Park Association  
 Connecticut Hospice, Inc.  
 Derby High School PTO  
 Derby Historical Society  
 Derby Little League  
 Derby Public Schools  
 Derby Running Club  
 Echo Hose Ambulance Training Center  
 Echo Hose Hook and Ladder  
 Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc.  
 Edmund D. Strang Scout Reservation  
 Alumni Association  
 Emmett O'Brien Regional Technical School  
 The Farms Country Club Foundation  
 The Foundation School  
 Frances Perkins Center  
 Friends of Derby Public Library  
 Friends of the Ansonia Nature  
 Girl Scouts of CT, Inc.  
 Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce  
 Griffin Hospital  
 Griffin Hospital Development Fund  
 The Guilford Foundation  
 Hope Counseling and Behavioral  
 Health Center  
 Housatonic Council, Boy Scouts of America  
 International Festival of Arts & Ideas  
 IRIS - Integrated Refugee &  
 Immigrant Services

Junior Achievement of Greater  
 Fairfield County  
 Literacy Volunteers of Greater New Haven  
 Literacy Volunteers of Southern  
 Connecticut  
 Lower Naugatuck Valley Parent  
 Child Resource Center  
 Massaro Community Farm, Inc.  
 Master's Table Community Meals, Inc.  
 Mishkan Israel Day Camp  
 National Right to Work Legal Defense  
 and Education Foundation, Inc.  
 New Haven Promise  
 Oxford High School Booster Club, Inc.  
 Perfect Imperfections  
 Planned Parenthood of Southern  
 New England  
 President's Fund of the Valley  
 Community Foundation  
 Read to Grow  
 Recreation Camp Inc.  
 Ronald McDonald House of  
 Connecticut and Western Massachusetts  
 Rotary Club of Ansonia, Seymour,  
 and Oxford, CT  
 Yale New Haven Hospital  
 Saint Raphael Campus  
 Salvation Army, Greater Valley Corps  
 Save the Sound  
 Seymour Ambulance Association  
 Seymour Community Center  
 Seymour High School  
 Seymour Oxford Food Bank  
 Seymour Public Schools  
 Shelburne Farms  
 Shelton Economic Development  
 Corporation  
 Shelton High School  
 Shelton Historical Society, Inc.  
 Shelton Land Conservation Trust  
 St. Mary St. Michael School  
 St. Rita School  
 St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley  
 Storm Engine Company  
 Ambulance Corps, Inc.  
 Susanna Wesley School  
 TEAM, Inc.  
 Traveler on a Mission  
 Troop 3 - Derby BSA Alumni  
 & Friends Foundation, Inc.  
 Tunnel to Towers Foundation  
 University of Connecticut  
 Foundation, Inc.  
 University of Nebraska Foundation  
 University of New Haven  
 University of New Hampshire  
 Valley Community Fund  
 Valley Emergency Medical Services  
 The Valley Independent Sentinel  
 Valley United Way  
 Valley YMCA

## Donor Advised Grants



Grants from Donor Advised Funds are approved by the VCF Board of Directors upon request and with the participation of the Donor. Donor Advised Funds are one of the many ways fundholders can advise on an area they are passionate about while partnering with VCF to make a positive impact.



# Stewardship of Charitable Assets

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) and The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (TCF) have been affiliated for the past 20 years, and the assets entrusted to VCF since 2004 have been invested and managed by TCF. Access to TCF’s commingled investment management program affords VCF funds the benefits of a globally diverse, long-term endowment model by providing direct access to more than 45 world-class institutional investment managers specializing in distinct and differentiated asset classes and strategies.

2024 was a big year macroeconomically and geopolitically. Many central banks started their easing cycles after almost two years of hiking interest rates to levels not seen since before the Great Financial Crisis. Nearly two-thirds of the world’s population participated in elections; the outcomes are expected to impact the global economy significantly. The fourth quarter

demonstrated continued strong U.S. equity performance, with the S&P 500 Index ending the year on another high note, up 25%. Following an S&P 500 Index return of 26.3% in 2023, this period highlights a streak of dominance for U.S. large-cap equities — the S&P 500 Index has not had consecutive annual returns exceeding 20% since 1995-1999. The robust economic data and additional Fed rate cuts further propelled U.S. equities to post another strong year of returns. Conversely, non-U.S. equities struggled as investors grappled with the potential tariff implications and a strengthening U.S. dollar.

The Commingled Fund’s goal is to be positioned for the best possible prospects for success across a wide range of potential economic scenarios. In 2024, VCF’s total return was up 10.8% vs. the benchmark’s 12.1%. For the year ended, the portfolio performed above the benchmark in global equities (+1.6), absolute return



Tammy Burrell  
VCF Treasurer

(+1.2%), and fixed income (+0.1%); however, the private asset investments continued their drag on the overall results of the Commingled Fund versus its market benchmark. While the private assets allocation has not kept pace during periods of robust public market results, especially during times when private exit opportunities are unfavorable, our continued attention on long-term investment goals has historically translated into brief periods of underperformance while remaining focused on producing long-term value-added results as displayed in the chart below.

## Investment Performance

Annualized, expressed as a %, and net of expenses.

Periods ended 31 December 2024	Trailing 1 Year	Trailing 5 Years	Trailing 10 Years	Since Inception <sup>3</sup>
The Commingled Fund	10.8	6.7	6.9	8.3
Policy Benchmark <sup>1</sup>	12.1	7.1	6.6	7.2
Passive Benchmark <sup>2</sup>	12.4	7.1	7.0	6.9

<sup>1</sup> The market benchmark is equal to the rate of return produced by specific market indices representing the asset classes contained in the asset allocation model, with such market indices weighted in accordance with that model’s target allocation.

<sup>2</sup> 70% allocation to MSCI AC World Index and 30% allocation to Bloomberg US Aggregate Index.  
<sup>3</sup> Inception date is January 1, 1994, or 30 years.  
Past performance is no indication of future results. The Commingled Fund is managed by The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, Inc., which is a Connecticut registered investment adviser.

## Assets Growth





STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$700,327	\$962,012
Investments at market value – component funds	24,330,470	21,615,209
Investments at market value – organization funds	14,420,144	12,826,137
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>\$39,450,941</b>	<b>\$35,403,358</b>
Contributions receivable	7,686	750,000
Other assets/Operating Lease	150,910	166,927
Furniture and equipment, net	14,143	19,893
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$39,623,680</b>	<b>\$36,340,178</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	59,637	49,701
Organization funds	14,420,144	12,826,137
Grants payable	216,000	247,555
Operating Lease Liability	152,410	166,927
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$14,848,191</b>	<b>\$13,290,320</b>
Net assets without restriction	24,775,489	23,049,858
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$39,623,680</b>	<b>\$36,340,178</b>

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES	2024	2023
<b>REVENUE, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>		
Contributions	2,748,877	\$3,387,146
Less: transfers to organization funds	(704,705)	(1,088,400)
Net contributions	2,044,172	2,298,746
Investment gain (loss), net	2,390,551	2,408,365
<b>Total revenue, gains, and other support</b>	<b>\$4,434,723</b>	<b>\$4,707,111</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Grants and distributions approved, net	\$2,142,038	\$2,085,437
Less: grants from organization funds	(266,662)	(263,580)
Net grant expense	1,875,376	1,821,857
Grants for program management and direct charitable activities	541,917	543,114
Net grant and program expense	2,417,293	2,364,971
Development, donor services and fund stewardship	166,744	167,111
Financial management, leadership, and operations	125,055	125,332
Total administration expense	291,799	292,443
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$2,709,092</b>	<b>\$2,657,414</b>
Increase (decrease) in net assets	1,725,631	2,049,697
Net assets – Beginning of year	23,049,858	21,000,161
<b>Net assets – End of year</b>	<b>\$24,775,489</b>	<b>\$23,049,858</b>

# Fiscal 2024 In Review



## The Great Give 2024 was great once again in the Valley

Valley nonprofits raised more than \$507,000 during the 2024 Great Give, making the 36-hour online giving event one of its most successful.

In all, donors gave more than \$3.8 million supporting 550 nonprofits -- a record number of participants -- throughout the Valley and Greater New Haven region. Of that total, just over \$431,000 was donated to nonprofit organizations in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton.

By the end of the fundraising event, 58 Valley-based organizations had participated, and 1,440 individual donations were made by people who live and/or work

in the Valley. Also, more than \$234,000 of the Valley total was donated by 25 Valley Community Foundation Donor Advised fundholders.

The 36-hour online-giving event was started in 2010 by The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven to promote local philanthropy and support area nonprofits. In the last 14 years, The Great Give has raised more than \$28.6 million for nonprofits throughout the region.



## True Valleyness: A Community United After 2024 Flood

The August 18, 2024, flood will forever be etched in the Valley's history -- not just for the devastation it left behind but for the extraordinary response that followed. Torrential rains swept through Oxford, Seymour, and surrounding towns, destroying homes, displacing families, and tragically claiming two lives. Roads were impassable, businesses suffered massive losses, and entire neighborhoods were left unrecognizable. But from this tragedy emerged something remarkable: the indomitable spirit of the Valley.

As floodwaters rose, first responders braved treacherous conditions to rescue those trapped in their homes. "The firefighters, police officers, and emergency medical teams risked everything to protect us," said Patricia Tarasovic, an Oxford resident and VCF Board member. "We owe them an enormous debt of gratitude." Tarasovic, who witnessed the devastation firsthand, noted how the response mirrored that of the Great Flood of 1955. "Just like then, neighbors stepped up for one another without hesitation. The generosity and determination were breathtaking."

Long before the waters fully receded, the Valley was in motion. Churches opened as shelters, businesses donated food and supplies, and volunteers organized donation drives. In one inspiring example, a group of Oxford teens held a car wash that raised thousands for flood victims.



"Valleyness isn't just a word, it's a way of life," Tarasovic said. "It means that when times are tough, we're tougher together."

TEAM, Inc. spearheaded fundraising efforts that raised more than \$1.2 million, ensuring families could repair homes and replace essential belongings. "This effort would not have been possible without the remarkable collaboration between local nonprofits, businesses, and individuals," said Sharon Closius, VCF President and CEO. Recovery continues, and progress is visible. Homes are being rebuilt, businesses are reopening, and infrastructure improvements are underway to mitigate future disasters.

"The outpouring of support was staggering," said Jack Walsh, VCF Board member. "We've proven once again that the Valley is special."

The August 18th flood was a stark reminder of nature's power, but it also reinforced the strength of the Valley's people. Their unity, compassion, and resilience remain an inspiration.



# 2024 Staff, Councils, Committees, and Volunteers

## Staff:

Sharon Closius  
Beth Colette  
Valerie Knight-Di Gangi\*  
Marcie Monaco  
David Rivera  
Victoria Vilaysane

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Nancy Valentine, *Chair*  
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Christopher Grizzle  
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Bevon McLean  
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*Secretary*  
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Bevon McLean  
Ned Miller  
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## Finance:

Tammy Burrell  
*Chair, Treasurer*  
Aleta Miner  
Marcie Monaco  
Nancy Valentine  
Jack Walsh

## Governance:

Christopher Grizzle, *Chair*  
Tammy Burrell  
Mark Goumas  
Greg Stamos  
Patricia Tarasovic  
Nancy Valentine  
Donald Smith

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Jack Walsh, *Co-Chair*  
Tammy Burrell  
Marcie Monaco  
Ray Oppel  
Greg Stamos  
Nancy Valentine

## Community

### Grants:

Liz Kennard, *Chair*  
Janice Bonaparte  
Tammy Burrell  
Beth Carson  
Gail Catlin  
Jen Champagne  
Martha Dulla  
Terri Goldson  
Mark Goumas  
Christopher Grizzle  
Joan Kayser  
Cheryl McCollum

Ray Oppel  
Fred Ortoli  
Angelika Stamos-Cody  
Jack Walsh



Valerie  
Knight-Di Gangi

\* In January of 2025, Valerie Knight-Di Gangi, left VCF after more than 20 years of dedicated service. Everyone at VCF extends their heartfelt thanks to Val for her years of thoughtful, skilled and diligent work for the foundation and for our Valley.

## VCF thanks the following outgoing Board Members



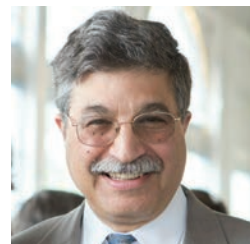
Greg Stamos



Jack Walsh

## Thank you, Will.

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) extends its deepest gratitude to William W. Ginsberg for his unwavering support and leadership throughout his more than 24 years as President and CEO of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, and as a member of VCF's Board of Directors. Will was instrumental in helping establish VCF in 2004, recognizing the importance of a dedicated community foundation to serve the Valley. His steadfast advocacy and commitment to our mission have strengthened VCF's ability to support local philanthropy and build a legacy for generations to come. We celebrate his contributions and express our heartfelt appreciation for his dedication to VCF and the Valley.



William W. Ginsberg

## Partners in Philanthropy

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) partners with The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (TCF) to carry out its mission in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. This relationship provides VCF with access to the strength of TCF, which was established in 1928 and is one of the oldest and largest community foundations in the United States and remains the largest grant-maker to nonprofits serving a 20-town region in the heart of central Connecticut. VCF shares staff using TCF's investment expertise, programming, and development knowledge. This strong relationship provides VCF with an immediate support structure that allows VCF's Board of Directors to focus on leadership and development. Everyone at VCF sends their heartfelt thanks to the TCF staff for their time, contributions, and expertise.





**ValleyFoundation.org**  
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