

HEALTH & WELLNESS

CIVIC VITALITY

BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

HOUSING & FOOD SECURITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



VALLEINESS

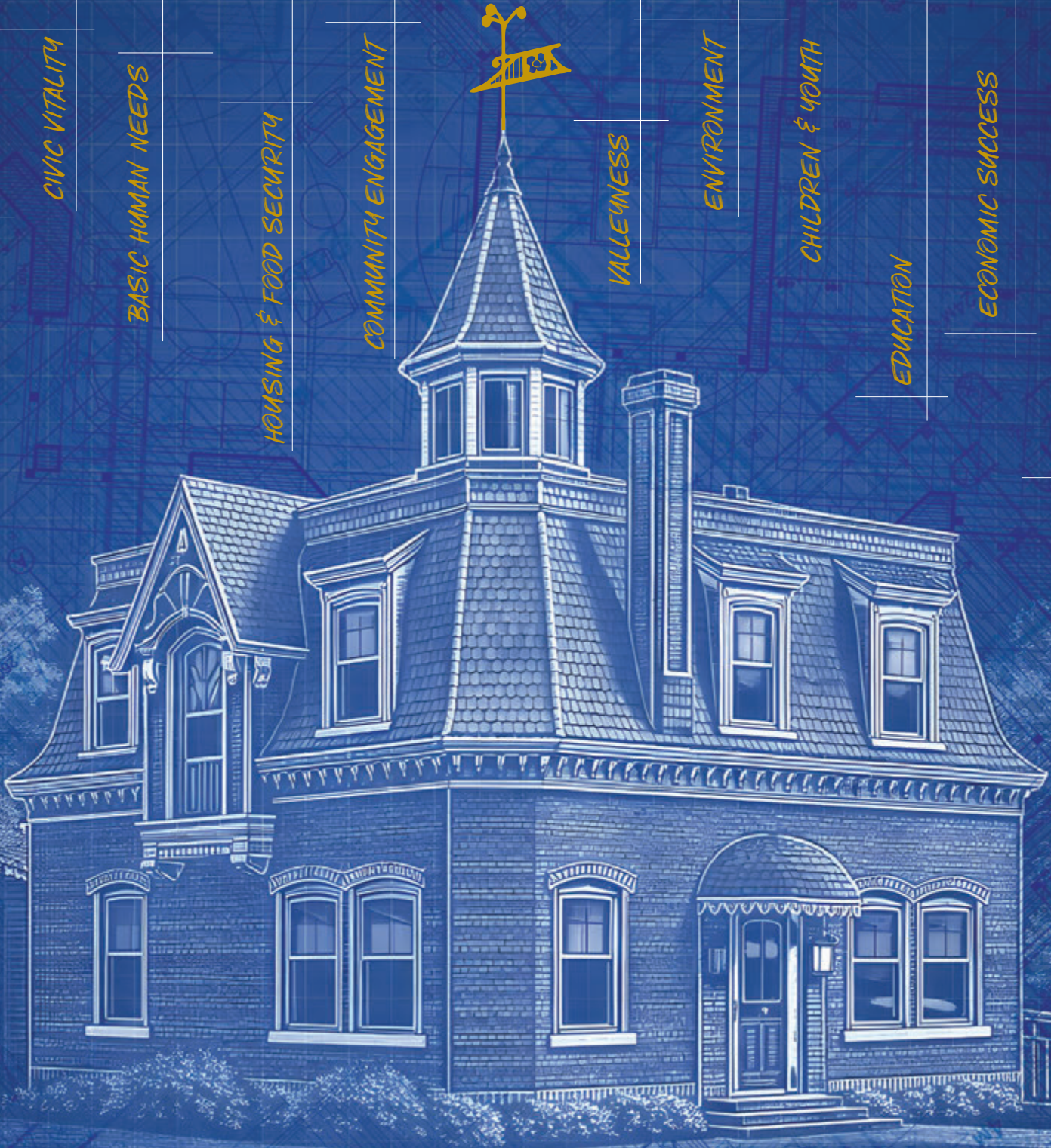
ENVIRONMENT

CHILDREN & YOUTH

EDUCATION

ECONOMIC SUCCESS

ARTS & CULTURE



Built for What Comes Next
Sustaining Today's Impact...Building Tomorrow's Legacy

VALLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
2025 ANNUAL REPORT

A Letter from the President and CEO



Aleta Miner, Sharon Closius, and Nancy Valentine

Dear Friends,

Each year, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) is reminded how fortunate we are to serve such a generous and caring community. The people of the Valley consistently demonstrate what we now call “Valleyness” -- neighbors helping neighbors and investing in the well-being of the place we are proud to call home.

In 2025, that spirit was on full display once again. Thanks to the support of our fundholders, donors, and community partners, VCF distributed more than \$2 million in grants and scholarships across the Valley. These grants, detailed in this report, supported a wide range of organizations and initiatives -- from food banks helping families facing food insecurity, to schools and youth programs preparing the next generation, to first responder organizations and countless nonprofits working every day to strengthen our community.

Each grant tells a story of generosity and impact. Together, they reflect a community that believes deeply in taking care of one another.

In 2025, we were proud to introduce an initiative focused on the future of the Valley -- one that honors the deep roots so many families and individuals have planted here over generations. It is called the 25 for the Next 25 campaign, with a central goal of growing VCF’s Gates Society -- a community of individuals and families who have chosen to include the foundation in their estate plans, ensuring their commitment to the Valley continues for years to come.

The Valley has always been shaped by people who believed in the promise of this community and invested in its future. Many of those families have built businesses, strengthened neighborhoods, and supported the organizations that make our community thrive. We understand that not everyone can make a gift today, but many share a desire to leave something meaningful behind.

While the full impact of this work may take years to realize, VCF is committed to serving the Valley for generations to come -- ensuring the foundation is built for what comes next. None of this would be possible without the people who care deeply about this community -- our donors, volunteers, nonprofit partners, professional advisors, and community leaders. Your trust and commitment allow VCF to serve as a steward of charitable resources and a catalyst for positive change throughout Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton.

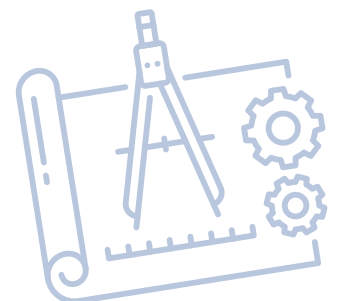
I extend VCF’s sincere gratitude to Nancy Valentine for her steadfast leadership and service as Board Chair during the past three years. Her steady guidance, deep commitment to VCF’s mission, and love for the Valley have helped position VCF for continued growth and impact.

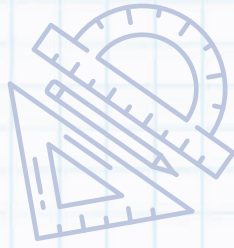
As we look ahead, we are so pleased that longtime board member Aleta Miner will serve as Chair of VCF’s Board of Directors in 2026. Aleta is a passionate supporter of the Valley and has been an ardent supporter and part of VCF since it was founded more than 20 years ago. We look forward to working together on the exciting opportunities and important work ahead for VCF and the community we proudly serve.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire VCF team, thank you for being part of this work and for believing in the Valley’s future.

Sincerely,

Sharon Closius
President and CEO





**Contributions
\$2,552,178**

**Grants Awarded
\$2,184,911**

**New Funds
9**



INDEX

- 4-5 Turning Shared Values into Lasting Impact
- 6-11 New Funds for 2025
- 12 How to Set Up a Fund, and VCF's Values, Vision and Mission
- 12-17 Valley Community Foundation Funds
- 19-21 Donors in 2025
- 22-27 Community Investment and Grants
- 28-29 Stewardship of Charitable Assets
- 30 Great Give 2025 and BAC Reimagined for Valley's Future
- 31 Boards, Committees, Councils, Staff, and Volunteers

Turning Shared Values into Lasting Impact in the Valley

Built for What Comes Next

Communities aren't built overnight. They take shape through the ways people show up for one another -- small, everyday moments that add up over time. A neighbor checking in. A hand extended when it's needed. These things have always mattered. The difference now is that they require a bit more intention -- something that has come into sharper focus over the past year.

Here in the Valley, promoting and practicing that intention has a name. We call it Valleyness. It reflects a neighborly, kind, and caring way of life, shaped by a shared history and expressed through the everyday actions that bring people together. Valleyness is more than a feeling; it's a set of values and behaviors that show up in how people look out for one another, contribute to their communities, and take pride in where they live. It lives in both small gestures and collective efforts, creating a sense of connection and continuity that carries forward over time.

Over the past year, there has been a growing recognition that Valleyness is not only something to preserve, but something to continue shaping -- expanding its reach and reinforcing it as a shared thread that connects people across towns, generations, and experiences. It's what gives this region its character, and what continues to anchor it as it evolves.

Inspiration doesn't come from programs alone -- it can also come from participation. For generations, people have found ways to contribute their skills and resources in support of the places they care about.

"Getting involved through time, treasure or talent is an old adage that is still exceptionally valid today," said Sharon Closius, the Valley Community Foundation's (VCF) President and CEO.

In 2025, that idea has taken on renewed energy across the Valley, with a growing focus on creating opportunities for people of all ages to take part, and for younger generations in particular, to see themselves not just as future members of the community, but as active participants in it now. Sustaining today's impact.

A community grounded in Valleyness moves forward when every generation has a voice, and a place at the table for what comes next.

Across the Valley, more individuals are finding their way to causes that resonate on a personal level -- organizations and initiatives that reflect their values, their experiences, and the things they care most deeply about. For many, that connection -- and like-mindedness -- begins with volunteerism, which not only builds relationships but also creates a sense of ownership and belonging, turning a cause into something that feels personal and meaningful. Just as important, it introduces younger generations to that same sense of connection early on -- giving them a place to engage, contribute, and understand the role they play in shaping their community.

Through that involvement, young people begin to develop practical skills -- communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership -- whether they're helping to organize a local event, supporting a local effort, or participating in a community initiative.



These are experiences that stay with them, shaping not only how they contribute today, but how they carry those values and abilities into adulthood. That early involvement has a way of carrying forward, influencing how people stay engaged over time and how they choose to give back in ways that are both personal and lasting.

One of the most meaningful ways VCF has supported this kind of engagement is through its Board Advisory Council (BAC), which was further developed over the past year to move beyond awareness and create real opportunities for action. Rather than asking community members to observe from the sidelines, the BAC provides structured, purposeful ways for individuals to contribute their time, insight, and expertise in areas that reflect the realities and complexities of everyday community life. It offers opportunities for people with a wide range of interests to get involved -- whether through shorter-term efforts, like celebrating our nation's 250th, or longer-term initiatives that are being built now and will continue to take shape in the years ahead. In doing so, it creates space for both established community leaders and emerging voices to contribute side by side.

Caring has always been part of life in the Valley. It shows up in the way people look out for one another, often without much fanfare -- just a steady understanding that what happens to one of us matters to all of us. But care, on its own, is often tied to the moment. What allows it to endure is the decision to carry it forward. That's legacy.

Building Tomorrow's Legacy

In 2025, much of VCF's work was intentionally focused on strengthening something less tangible but no less essential to the region's future: Community Engagement. At its core, that work is about deepening and building appreciation for Valleyness.

Through efforts like the continued evolution of the BAC, expanded pathways for involvement, and new opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in meaningful ways, VCF has placed a renewed emphasis on helping people connect -- not just to causes, but to each other. These are not one-time moments. They are building blocks that create shared experiences, foster understanding, and reinforce the sense that being part of the Valley means being part of something larger than oneself. This kind of engagement matters because it shapes how a community carries itself forward. When people feel connected, they are more likely to contribute. When they contribute, they help sustain the values and traditions that define the place they call home.

In the Valley, those values -- neighborliness, generosity, pride, and a willingness to show up for one another -- have been passed down over time. They weren't created overnight, and they don't sustain themselves automatically. They endure because each generation chooses to embrace them, build on them, and carry them forward in their own way. That is the work happening now.

By creating more ways for people to get involved -- whether through volunteering, civic participation, or simply showing up in support of their neighbors -- VCF is helping to ensure that future generations will not only benefit from the Valley's strong sense of community, but also understand it. They will see it in action. They will experience what it means to belong, and they will come to appreciate the people and efforts that shaped the Valley into the close-knit community it is today.

Because ultimately, the future of the Valley will not be built from a distance. It will be built by people who step forward. Who participate. Who invest their time, their energy, and their hearts in the place they love.



New Funds of the Valley Community Foundation

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) is proud to introduce the new funds established in 2025 -- and the remarkable people and stories behind them. Each fund reflects a deeply personal commitment to the Valley, honoring loved ones, uplifting local organizations, and investing in future generations. From scholarships and memorial funds to community-driven initiatives, these funds embody the spirit of "Valley-ness." We are grateful to our fundholders for their trust and vision. Together, these new funds are not only meeting today's needs, but helping to shape a stronger, more connected Valley for years to come.



"My father found his true calling in Seymour as a beloved science teacher and longtime coach of the boys and girls soccer teams."

Cicconium Scholarship Fund

Students and staff at Seymour High School still smile when they remember one of Antonio "Tony" Ciccone's favorite jokes.

As a popular science teacher with a quick wit, Mr. Ciccone liked to tell his classes that he had secretly discovered a new element for the periodic table and named it after himself: "Cicconium." According to Mr. Ciccone, the element had remarkable properties -- it was lighter than steel and stronger than titanium. Anyone who possessed Cicconium in their makeup, he would joke, was practically a superhero.

Nearly a decade after his passing, that playful classroom moment has become the inspiration behind the Cicconium Scholarship Fund, established in 2025 at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) by the school and his daughter, Stephanie Ciccone, to honor his legacy as a teacher, mentor, and community leader.

"The name felt like a fitting tribute to a family legacy rooted in science, education, and joy," Stephanie, now a Vice Principal at the school said. "As a chemist and science teacher with a great sense of humor, it perfectly captured his personality."

Born in Naples, Italy, Mr. Ciccone came to the United States at age fourteen and went on to build an

accomplished career in science and education. He earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Fairfield University, a master's degree in analytical chemistry from Seton Hall University, and later completed his sixth-year degree in education at Southern Connecticut State University.

After working as an electro-analytical chemist in the private sector, he changed professional directions and dedicated his career to being an educator. For many years, he taught science in the Seymour school system, where he became known not only for his passion for chemistry but for his ability to connect with students and encourage them to pursue their potential.

"My father found his true calling in Seymour as a beloved science teacher and longtime coach of the boys and girls soccer teams," Stephanie said. "The fund reflects his passion for academics and athletics and celebrates the values he believed in -- hard work, character, and community."

The scholarship will be awarded to a Seymour High School student who excels in science and plans to pursue a career in the field. But the family hopes recipients will also embody something more than academic achievement.

"To us, Cicconium means more than excellence in science," Stephanie said. "It means bringing joy to others, working tirelessly, making sacrifices for people you love, and connecting with others in ways that make the world a better place."



Eleanor and James Martin Memorial Fund

The story of Eleanor and James Martin is one of resilience, service, and an enduring commitment to family and community -- values that now live on through the Eleanor and James Martin Memorial Fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF).

Established in 2025 by Maura Powers, the Preference Fund honors her mother and stepfather while continuing the legacy they built together in Ansonia. For Maura, the inspiration was clear and deeply personal.

"Our parents were our greatest inspiration," Maura said. "Despite both working full time while raising a family, they always found ways to support others in the community."

Eleanor's life was defined by strength and determination. Widowed at just 34, she was left to raise five young children, the youngest only six months old. Drawing on her college education, she returned to work as a physical education teacher -- something she often said was a blessing that allowed her to support her family during an incredibly difficult time. Beyond the classroom, she was a coach, mentor, and active community volunteer who inspired countless young people to reach their potential.



"It is my desire that this fund support strengthening families, uplift children and foster a connecting, caring community."

Later, Eleanor found love again with James, a Navy veteran, skilled carpenter, and devoted civic leader. Also widowed at a young age, James understood firsthand the challenges of rebuilding a life while raising children. He embraced Eleanor's five children as his own and became a steady, compassionate presence in their lives. Whether building homes in Ansonia, serving in local government -- once as Mayor of Ansonia -- or supporting neighbors in need, James lived a life rooted in service and integrity.

Together, Eleanor and James created a home filled with love, humor, and unwavering support -- not only for their family, but for the broader community as well. That spirit is at the heart of the fund Maura created.

"It is my desire that this fund support strengthening families, uplift children and foster a connecting, caring community," Maura said. "That's exactly what they did."

The decision to establish the fund at VCF came after Maura and her family experienced VCF's impact firsthand.

"During VCF's Annual Reception, we were touched and inspired by the stories told of deceased loved ones and how the Valley had shaped and impacted their lives," Maura said. "We knew that if our parents were still alive, they would want to help others, and we felt this fund would be a meaningful way to carry out that intention."

Edward W. and Marie S. Miller Fund



For Ned Miller, giving back to the Valley has never been a question -- it has been a family value, woven into the fabric of his life since childhood. Born and raised in Shelton, Ned grew up watching his parents dedicate themselves to the wellbeing of their community. Their example left an enduring impression and ultimately inspired Ned to establish the Edward W. and Marie S. Miller Fund, a Donor Advised Fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF), in their honor.

Marie S. Miller Fund, a Donor Advised Fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF), in their honor.

"My parents instilled in us the importance of giving back

"My parents instilled in us the importance of giving back to the community that gave us so much."

to the community that gave us so much," Ned said. "It's really part of what I learned and saw growing up and watching them."

Ned's father, Ed, embodied that ethos through decades of service, including leadership roles as board chair at both The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and Griffin Hospital. His mother, Marie, was a registered nurse at Griffin Hospital until she stepped back to raise their family of five. Together, they modeled a life grounded in compassion, service, and responsibility and respect to others.

While there was no single moment that prompted the creation of the fund, Ned always knew he would one day pay tribute to them.

"When VCF was established 20-plus years ago, I thought at the time I would do something for them when I was older," Ned said. "VCF gave us the

opportunity to establish something that was, well, eternal. Other charitable giving is usually for a specific cause -- a one-and-done -- and I wanted something more sustaining and lasting.”

Ned’s new fund will support the values and institutions that shaped his parents’ lives: community health, local well-being, and the organizations that strengthen the Valley. Ned hopes the fund will contribute to the Valley’s vitality for generations to come.

“I’m not sure of its long-term impact,” Ned said. “...but together with all the other funds, we can make a significant impact in the quality of life in our valley.”

Ned -- like his late parents -- is no stranger to volunteer service. He’s well known across the region for giving

his time and talent to organization and causes. After graduating from St. Joseph High School and earning a degree in economics from St. Bernard College, he built a successful four-decade career in the insurance industry, ultimately serving as president of Ned Miller Associates. At the same time, he became one of the Valley’s most dedicated civic leaders -- chairing the Valley United Way, leading the Ansonia Rotary Club, serving the Boy Scouts, supporting youth and family causes, and contributing to numerous boards and committees.

Today, as a VCF Board Member and proud Gates Society member, Ned continues the legacy his parents began. Establishing this fund ensures their spirit of generosity will carry forward into the future.

“This is a way to turn his story into something that might save a life.”

Christian Robert Sobin Memorial Fund



For Christi Sobin -- January 17, 2022 -- was the day everything changed. Her son, Christian Robert Sobin, just 29, passed away. Christian succumbed to synthetic opioid overdose after battling addiction for years. “He was a beautiful soul, and losing my son Christian was the most devastating moment of my life,” Christi said.

“This is a way to turn his story into something that might save a life.”

Determined that her son would not be forgotten, Christi established the Christian Robert Sobin Memorial Fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) in 2022 as a Build-a-Fund. A build-a-fund at VCF is a new fund that hasn’t met the minimum \$10,000 fully endowed threshold. But in 2025, after two successful fundraising events in her son’s honor, the donor advised fund -- dedicated to helping individuals in the Valley who are battling addiction -- became fully endowed.

Christian’s story is rooted in the Valley. Born in New Haven and raised in Derby, he graduated from Ansonia High School, where he and his twin brother, Julian, were standout athletes. Christian earned All-Valley honors for baseball and was named to the All-NVL football team too. He loved working out and could often be

found at the gym. After high school, he pursued work in construction.

Yet behind his accomplishments, Christian faced a challenge that began in his freshman year, when a broken leg on the football field led to the need for pain medication. In the end, fentanyl would take his life.

“After breaking his leg medically prescribed drugs started this terrible journey,” Christi said. “But his struggles and his strength deserved to be honored in a way that would help others.”

That vision inspired her to give back through a VCF fund, and though her philanthropy was born from personal tragedy, Christi said she was still able to find meaning and hope in the loss. The fund named for her son will support people struggling with addiction and in critical moments of need -- those seeking detox, inpatient, or outpatient treatment when time and resources are scarce.

“The Valley is where we built our lives, where my son went to school, played sports, made friends and also where he experienced both joy and heartbreak,” Christi said. “Addiction affects every neighborhood here, no matter your background. I have experienced the struggle to access treatment and support, so this fund is my commitment to help someone else that is struggling that can’t afford a program.”

“Being a part of the Valley’s philanthropic legacy is incredibly meaningful to me and the greatest inspiration behind this is my son,” she said. “After his passing I felt a deep need to carry forward his spirit, his values and the light he brought into this world.”

American Legion John H. Collins Post 24 Fund



“This fund allows our mission to live on.”

For generations, the members of American Legion John H. Collins Post 24 in Derby have lived by a simple belief: honoring the sacrifices of America’s veterans means helping to shape the character of the nation’s future leaders. In 2025, the Post strengthened that commitment by establishing the American Legion John H. Collins Post 24 Fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF), ensuring that its work supporting Derby’s youth will continue for years to come.

The fund reflects the American Legion’s long-standing mission to promote the principles of Americanism -- values such as courage, honor, leadership, patriotism, scholarship, and community service -- within the local community. Through the fund, Post 24 will continue awarding monetary prizes to deserving Derby High School graduates who demonstrate those qualities.

“The American Legion has always taken an active role in educating our nation’s youth about the sacrifices America’s veterans have made to protect our founding principles,” said Post Commander Erwin “Gus” Williams.

“By recognizing young people who understand and carry forward those ideals, we hope to inspire future generations to appreciate the freedoms they enjoy and the responsibilities that come with them.”

Post 24 has long supported programs that help young people grow as citizens and leaders. In addition to its awards for graduating students, the Legion has traditionally encouraged youth participation in athletics -- particularly baseball -- and currently supports Derby’s Little League. VCF has also partnered with the Post in the past, awarding grants to help send local students to the American Legion’s Boys State and Girls State programs, civic leadership programs and experiences that teach students about government, citizenship, and public service. The creation of the fund now ensures that these efforts will endure, even decades from now.

“Recognizing that any organization can face challenges over time, we wanted to make sure these programs would continue even if the Post itself were ever unable to operate,” Williams said. “This fund allows our mission to live on.”

The idea to establish the fund was first suggested by longtime Post member and Service Officer Paul Lutson, who encouraged leaders to connect with VCF. Lutson, who passed away unexpectedly in March 2025, created a fund at VCF shortly before his death -- leaving behind his own legacy of service to the Valley.

“Our goal is a simple but very important one,” Williams said. “We want to make sure that the young people of Derby understand the values that define our country and carry those principles forward as tomorrow’s leaders.”

Monroe Center Cemetery Association Organization Fund

For nearly 250 years, the Monroe Center Cemetery has quietly safeguarded the history of its community. Established in 1776, the cemetery later expanded and assumed responsibility for the historic Walker’s Farm Cemetery, becoming the final resting place for generations of local families -- and a living archive of Monroe’s story.

In 2025, the Monroe Center Cemetery Association (MCC) took deliberate steps to ensure that this legacy endures by establishing an Organization Fund at the Valley Community Foundation, (VCF).

As caretakers of an active cemetery with more than two centuries of history, MCC’s volunteer board understands that its responsibility is not measured in years -- but in



perpetuity. Their mission is both simple and profound: to ensure the respectful care and long-term preservation of the cemetery grounds. With such an enduring commitment, the board recognized that its financial stewardship must be equally enduring.

“Our goal is to take care of the cemetery forever,” said Laura Trautz, MMC’s Board President. “To do that responsibly, we needed our funds to continue to grow and be professionally managed.”

The board, many of whom have generations of family members buried there, manages far more than investments. They oversee interments, monument approvals, groundskeeping standards, long-term planning, and historic preservation. Yet after a difficult experience with a previous investment firm -- marked by declining value, extensive paperwork, and limited communication -- the board sought a partner that understood the needs of a small, community-based nonprofit.

“Our goal is to take care of the cemetery forever.”

“It was frustrating,” said Jean Jones, MCC’s Board Vice President. “There was a lack of communication and assistance. As a small nonprofit, we felt treated like a corporate account when it came to fees, but without the service.

“But after several meetings with staff, we knew transferring all of our investment funds to VCF was the right decision,” Jones said. “The professionalism, expertise, and personal dedication of the staff gave us confidence.”

An Organization Fund at VCF allows a nonprofit to

invest its assets in a professionally managed, pooled portfolio while retaining control of its mission and governance. VCF provides investment oversight, administrative support, and fiduciary stewardship, helping organizations focus on their work while ensuring long-term financial stability.

For MCC, Jones said that stability means peace of mind and that cemeteries are among the most enduring institutions in any community. They connect generations, preserve local history, and provide sacred space for remembrance.

Seymour High School Scholarship Funds



When the Seymour Board of Education transferred its collection of local scholarships to the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) in 2010, the goal was simple but forward-looking: protect these cherished awards and allow them to grow over time through professional investment management so they could eventually become permanent, fully endowed funds.

Fifteen years later, that vision has become reality for three scholarships that now stand on their own at VCF -- the Eugene Coppola Scholarship Fund, the Clarence Hummel Scholarship Fund, and the Bel Air Water Sports Scholarship Fund.

“These scholarships have deep roots in Seymour,” said Beth Colette, VCF’s Donor Services Manager. “By bringing them under the Foundation’s umbrella, the school board ensured they would be professionally stewarded and preserved so Seymour students could benefit from them not just for a few years, but for generations.”

All three scholarships reached full endowment status after years of careful stewardship and growth. The Eugene Coppola Scholarship Fund honors one of Seymour’s most respected educators. Mr. Coppola

devoted 42 years to the Seymour school system, serving as a teacher, principal, assistant superintendent, and ultimately superintendent of schools from 1984 to 2002. Coppola believed every child deserves the opportunity to succeed. He is retired but continues to volunteer in the Valley. The scholarship in his name supports graduating seniors who plan to attend a four-year college and demonstrate financial need, strong academics, and involvement in extracurricular activities.

“These scholarships have deep roots in Seymour.”

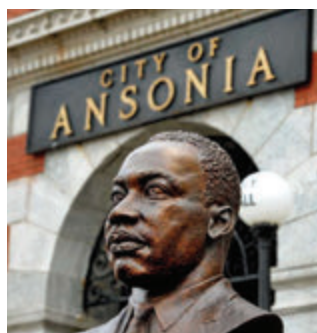
The Clarence Hummel Scholarship Fund celebrates the life of a decorated Marine, athlete, and community leader. A 1952 Seymour High School graduate, Hummel was a three-sport athlete at Seymour High who went on to play baseball in college and in the Marine Corps. He later had a 32-year career with SNET and remained active in community service. His family created the scholarship in 2010 at the school, and he passed away in 2019. This scholarship is awarded to a male graduate at Seymour High School who participated in high school sports.

The Bel Air Water Sports Scholarship Fund reflects a unique chapter of Seymour history. The Bel Air Water Ski Club, founded in 1959 along the Housatonic River, became known for its thrilling water-ski shows and strong community spirit. The scholarship gives preference to Seymour High students with financial need who may have connections to the club, and interest in water sports, or ties to the Housatonic River community.

TEAM Unity in the Community MLK Fund

In the Valley, honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has never been about a single moment -- it has always been about sustaining a message.

That belief is at the heart of the TEAM Unity in the Community MLK Fund, established at the



Valley Community Foundation (VCF) in 2025 by TEAM, Inc. and its MLK Community Committee. Created as a permanent organization endowment, the fund ensures that the Valley’s most visible tributes to Dr. King -- the bronze bust in Ansonia and the newly created mural along the Derby Greenway -- will be cared for and preserved for generations to come.

NEW FUNDS

The journey began in 2019, when a crowd gathered outside Ansonia City Hall for the unveiling of a striking bronze bust of Dr. King. As sunlight broke through the clouds, the moment felt symbolic. “People should feel a tingle at seeing this incredible prophet for freedom and humanity that Dr. Martin Luther King was,” said then TEAM, Inc. President and CEO David Morgan. “This is a physical reminder.”

The bust, the result of years of community effort, was never meant to stand alone. “This is history in the making,” Morgan said at the time. “This is a catalyst for every year. We want people to remember the messages and convictions of Martin Luther King Jr.”

That vision expanded in 2025 with the creation of a large-scale mural along the Derby Greenway -- an ambitious project that was years in the making. Designed by artist Isaac Bloodworth, the mural not only honors Dr. King, but also celebrates two influential Black figures with deep Valley roots: Mary Portis and Ebenezer Bassett.

“This mural has been a long time coming. This is a community mural. This is our mural,” said Greg Johnson, President of the Valley NAACP. “When you walk by, run by, cycle by or drive by, this is history right here in Derby.”

The creation of the TEAM Unity in the Community MLK Fund ensures that these efforts -- and the landmarks that symbolize them -- are not left to chance. Structured as a permanent endowment, the fund provides dedicated, long-term support for the care and upkeep of these sites, protecting them outside the uncertainty of annual budgets or fundraising cycles.

Together, these projects reflect TEAM, Inc.’s MLK Community Committee’s mission: to inspire unity, elevate history, and spark ongoing community dialogue. From annual MLK Day events to Juneteenth celebrations and community forums, the work continues to grow.

“This is history in the making.”

The Valley’s First Responders Fund

For generations, the five Valley towns of Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton have shared a simple but powerful belief: when a neighbor needs help, you step in.



From the early days of horse-drawn fire engines to today’s advanced EMS units, Valley first responders have always answered the call. They are volunteers and professionals. Parents and coaches. Small business owners and community leaders. They are the first on scene in moments of chaos -- and the steady hands that remain long after the sirens fade.

Today, their commitment remains unwavering. But the challenges they face continue to grow due to aging equipment, rising call volumes, shrinking recruitment, increasingly complex emergencies, and tighter municipal budgets.

That is why the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) created the Valley’s First Responders Fund, a community-advised Preference Fund designed to provide lasting, flexible support for critical needs that often fall outside municipal budgets. Stewarded by VCF and guided by a committee of volunteer first responders from each Valley town, the fund ensures resources go directly where they are needed most -- from recruitment and training to specialized equipment. Through planned legacy gifts -- including bequests, retirement assets, life insurance, or other estate vehicles -- donors can provide

ongoing support without affecting their current finances.

“This fund gives our volunteers and professionals something incredibly important, stability,” said Tom Lenart, Chief of Derby’s Storm Engine Ambulance Corps. “We raise money every year, but long-term support is harder to secure. The Valley’s First Responders Fund creates a permanent source of backing for departments like ours. It tells our members that the community stands with them not just today, but for the future.”

The idea for the Valley’s First Responders Fund grew directly out of what VCF’s Board and staff have seen year after year through the foundation’s grantmaking. Local fire companies, ambulance corps, and EMS departments frequently approach VCF seeking help for critical equipment and needs. These requests often involve specialized and expensive items that departments cannot easily raise money for or obtain through municipal budgets. In the past VCF has awarded grants that have helped first responders purchase drones, advanced radio communication systems, lifesaving EMS equipment, and even ambulances. The creation of this fund now provides a permanent, community-supported resource designed specifically to address these types of critical gaps.

“When you spend years answering 911 calls together, you become a family,” said Sharon Closius, VCF’s President and CEO. “Many of our volunteers want to continue supporting their departments even after they’re gone. This fund gives them peace of mind knowing their gift will always be there, independent of a municipal budget, protecting the organizations they love.”

“This fund gives our volunteers and professionals something incredibly important, stability.”

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

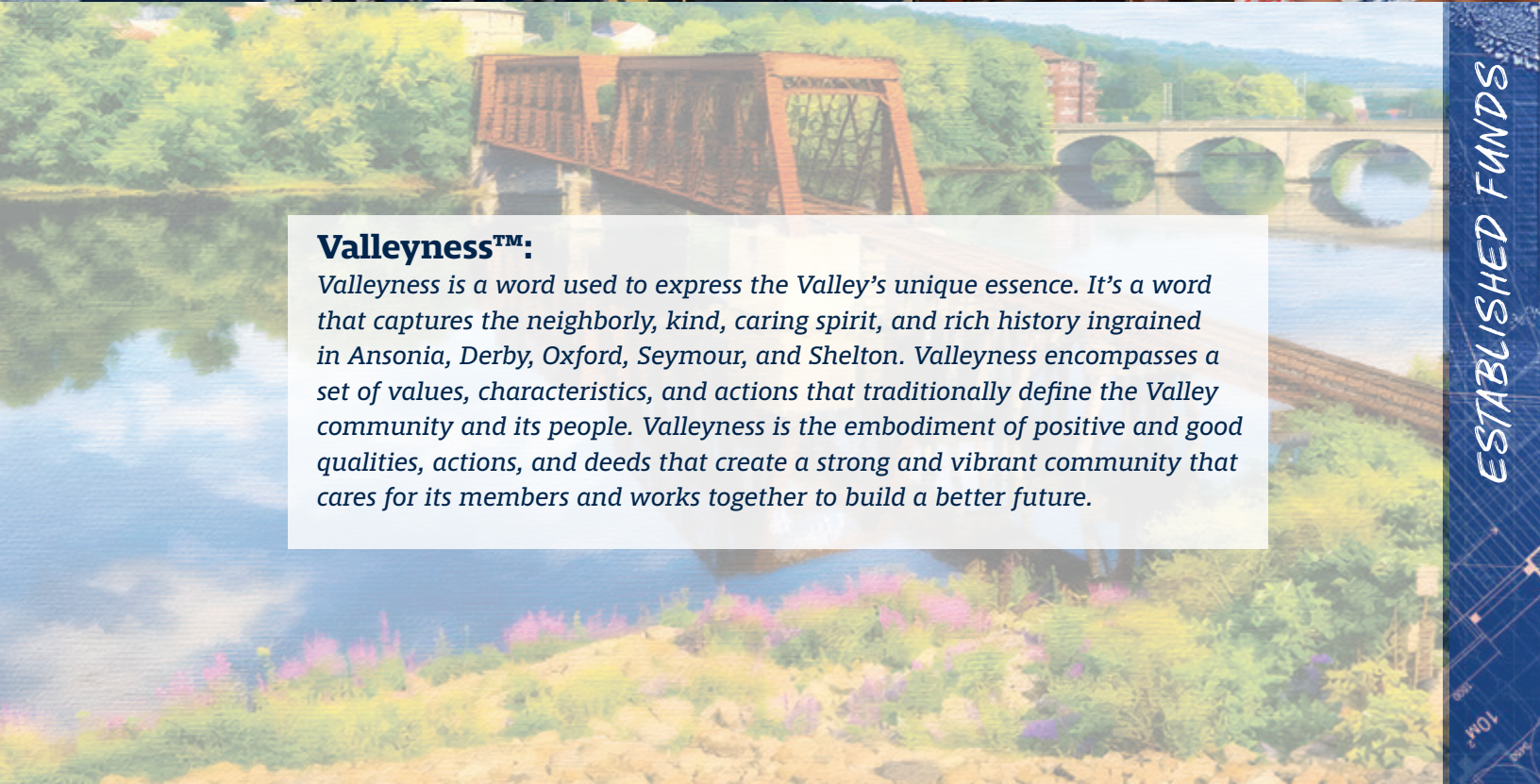
UNIFYING - by recognizing the Valley's cohesive regional identity.

Valley Community Foundation Funds

Since its founding more than 20 years ago, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) has been a driving force for philanthropy, helping local donors establish more than 275 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 when and where needed. 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.



Valleyness™:

Valleyness is a word used to express the Valley's unique essence. It's a word that captures the neighborly, kind, caring spirit, and rich history ingrained 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.



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.

American Legion John H. Collins Post 24 Fund*
 1920 Society Fund
 Bette Mae's Memorial Fund
 Birmingham Foundation Fund
 Edward J. and 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
 Carol Ann Hyder Memorial 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. and Kenneth E. Schaible Fund for the
 Boys and 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. and 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 and 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, and 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. and Gail A. Grant Family Fund
 Guarrera Family Fund
 Harbinson Heritage Fund
 Jones Family Farms Fund
 Kaplan Family Fund
 Paul and Gloria Konwerski Family Fund
 Edward and Laura Lane Family Fund
 John Laretti 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
 Edward W. and Marie S. 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. and 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

Christian Robert Sobin Memorial Fund*
 Sally and Dominick Thomas 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 and 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
 Monroe Center Cemetery Association
 Organization Fund*
 Oak Cliff Cemetery Association Fund
 Oxford Land Trust Fund
 Parent Child Resource Center Endowment Fund
 Plumb Memorial Library Reserve Fund

* New Fund in 2025





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
 TEAM Unity in the Community MLK Fund*
 Town of Seymour Endowment Fund
 Troop 3 - Derby BSA Alumni and 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
 Eleanor and James Martin Memorial 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 and Richard Averill Scholarship Fund
 Bruno Battaglini Memorial Fund
 Stella Behuniak Fund
 Bel Air Water Sports Scholarship 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 and Emily Chuckta Memorial Scholarship Fund
 Cicconium Scholarship Fund*
 Class of 1940 Scholarship Fund
 Eddy Conklin Scholarship Fund
 Eugene Coppola 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

* New Fund in 2025



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
 Clarence Hummel 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 and Sherry Konwerski - Future Plumbers
 Scholarship Fund
 Julia Krizan Scholarship Fund for the Arts
 Russell and Joanne Kiley Kulawiz Fund
 Frank J. Lang Fund
 Anthony and Catherine LoPresti Family Fund
 Jesse McCord Lewis Memorial Scholarship Fund
 Michael R. McMahan 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. and Kenneth E. Schaible
 Community Fund
 John Tyma Fund
 Valley Community Fund
 VCF Administrative and Reserve Fund

* New Fund in 2025



The Gates Society



I didn't always see myself as someone who would make a legacy gift and join a planned-giving group like the Valley Community Foundation's (VCF), Gates Society.

Like many people, I assumed that was a difficult process for later in life or for those with more to give than I had. But what I've learned is that legacy giving doesn't have to be complicated, and it doesn't have to be large to matter.

For me, it was simply choosing to allocate a small percentage of my life insurance and retirement assets to something I care deeply about. It didn't require a major financial shift. It didn't take anything away from my family. But it created something that will last beyond me.

Even a small percentage -- something manageable now -- can grow into something meaningful over time. It can open doors for someone else. It can support programs that matter and it can strengthen the kind of community you want to see continue.

And once I understood the importance of small gifts, the question became simple: what do I want to secure for the future?

That answer came from a path I never expected to be on.

There are some paths in life you choose, and others that find you -- shaped by the people you've loved and the experiences that stay with you long after everything else has moved on.

For me, that path to becoming a Gates Society member started with establishing the Advancing Heroes Fund at VCF. To be a Gates member you don't have to have or start a fund, I learned that too.

Editor's Note: For the first time, the Valley Community Foundation is proud to include a personal essay from one of our fundholders and Gates Society members, Kathie Vrlik. Her reflection offers a meaningful perspective on legacy giving and reminds us that philanthropy is not just about dollars, but about values and looking to the future. We hope her words inspire others to think about the legacy they wish to create.

The fund I began is in memory of my late husband Jeff, who lived a life defined by compassion, humor, and an unwavering commitment to caring for others. What started as a way to honor him has grown into something I could never have imagined -- a community. Today, Advancing Heroes Fund supports EMTs as they work to become paramedics, helping them take the next step in a career vital to the Valley and just as meaningful is the community that has formed around that mission.

Through shared experiences, storytelling, and a little bit of adventure, people come together to support something bigger than themselves. At its core are people who care deeply about those who show up for all of us.

These are the individuals who walk into the hardest moments of someone else's life. Once you truly see that -- once you understand the difficulty they carry -- it stays with you and over time, it shapes how you think about the future.

For me, it brought me back to legacy giving -- not as something for 'someday', but as something I could do now to make sure this work continues. Legacy giving isn't about giving everything away. It's about setting aside a piece of what you have to protect what matters most.

You don't have to choose between caring for your family and investing in your community. You can do both. You can plan for the future while also shaping it.

Advancing Heroes Fund has always been about showing up for the people who show up for everyone else. Legacy giving is one way I'm working to make sure that continues long after I'm gone.

If you've never explored it, I encourage you to start the conversation with Valley Community Foundation. It may be simpler -- and more meaningful -- than you think. Because in the end, a legacy isn't just what we leave behind. It's what we choose to carry forward.
-- Kathie Vrlik

Gates Society Members

Anonymous (6)
Dayne and Dawn Bachmann
Twan and Karen Bentlage
Leslie Bondos
Sharon Closius
Jamie Cohen
Jane Cohen*
Edmund J. Conklin*
John Corrado
Angela Curas*
Patricia DeCicco
Bonnie Drozeck
Walter Drozeck*
Helen Dubrava*
Patricia Dziuba
Gregg Goumas
Mark and Gwen Goumas
Bob Grier
Sheri Grier*
William and Jo-Anna Holden
Michael Hyder*
Terry and Jean Jones
Heidi Kaplan
Deborah Kelo
M. Elizabeth Kennard
Richard Knoll
Laura Lane
Robert Lang*
Barry and Josephine Lifrieri
Bette Mae Luedecker*
Raymond F. Mackowski*
Mary Theresa Mahoney*
Arthur C. Martin
Ned Miller
Aleta Miner
Raymond Oppel
David and Dale Ortoli
Fred Ortoli
Lynn Ortoli*
Joseph Pagliaro, Jr.
Dorothy Palazzi
Carol Pendagast
Lynne Bassett Perry
David and Joan Rifkin
David Rivera
Beth Ann Smith
Donald W. Smith Sr.*
Brad and Marianne Smythe
Fred Stanek
Karen Stanek*
Nicholas and Patricia Tarasovic
Alan Tyma*
Nancy Valentine
Robert and Eleanora Van Egghen
Marc C. Vincent*
Valentina Vitali*
Kathie Vrlik
Jack Walsh
Donald E. Warichar
Joseph R. Warichar*
Lynn Wozniak
John and Laura Zaprzalka

Donors

Anonymous (14)
 JoAnn Adefuin
 Advancing Heroes Fund, Inc.
 Robert Ahearn
 Anthony & Claire Alberimo
 Clifford & Bonnie Albright
 Robert Allen & Laura Donahue Allen
 American Legion, John Collins Post 24
 Doris Andrews
 Joyce Anglace
 Elaine Apicella
 ARTS-PAC
 Denise Aquilina
 Richard & Rosalie Averill
 Gloria Badamo
 Peter & Shirley Baiardi
 Elizabeth Bailey
 Eli & Janet Baldwin
 June Banfe
 William Banfe
 Bank of America Charitable Gift Fund
 Barnum Engineered Systems, Inc.
 Richard & Catherine Barton
 Sally Bassett McClure
 Luigi & Nadia Battaglino
 Marianne Bauer
 Kevin Baxter
 Kenneth & Beverly Bedini
 Ryan Beel & Olivia Pesch
 Benevity Community Impact Fund
 Thomas & Mary Jane Bennett
 Kenneth & Joan Benson
 Antonius Bentlage & Karen Bentlage Charitable Lead
 Anne Bidwell
 James & Joyce Blaskewicz
 Jeannine Blue
 Dena Boccardi
 Ronald Bonito
 Debra Borrelli
 Roland Bourque
 Lisa Brandstatter
 William & Jo Ann Brennan
 Keith & Jessica Brinsmade
 Augustitus & Deborah Brown
 David Brown
 Boy Scout Troop 3 Derby
 Richard & Deborah Bruciati
 Al & Kristen Bruno Jr.
 Alfred & Mary Bruno
 Francine Buckley
 Sally-Beth Buckner

William & Rita Budahazy
 Neil & Pamela Bulzgis
 Tammy Burrell
 Paula Burton
 Gary Cahill
 Michael Calkins
 Kimberly Caro
 Laura Carroll
 Robert & Nancy Carroll
 Robert Carroll
 Timothy Carroll
 Jennifer Caruso
 Karen A. Cassetti
 Ray & Gail Catlin
 Harvey Catlin
 Melanie Cecarelli & Michael Smith
 Thomas & Roberta Ceccarelli
 Sam Chakraborty
 Charities Aid Foundation of America
 Christ Episcopal Church
 Alan & Mary Lou Clapes
 Dennis Clarke
 CLC of Cheshire
 Barbara O. Clifford
 Thomas P. Clifford III
 Sharon Closius
 Amy Cobaugh
 Donna Coble
 Cohen and Wolf
 Randall & Beth Colette
 Margaret Comerford
 Compass Wealth Management
 John Connolly
 Vincent Connolly
 David M. Conroy Sr.
 Kimberly Cook
 Laura Cook
 Roberta Cook
 Marilyn Cormack
 John Corrado
 Joseph Corris
 Michelle Costabile
 Robert C. Costello
 Leslie Courtmanche
 Catherine Crawford
 Dyanne M. Crowley
 Victor & Judith Cweklinsky
 DAFgiving360
 Louis & Jeannette Dagostine
 Tom & Mary D'Addario
 Michael & Ellen D'Aiuto
 Taylor & Jodie D'Alexander
 Elizabeth Dalton
 Elizabeth Deane

Linda Decker
 Martin DeFelice
 Gary & Charlene DeFilippo
 Leopold & Jacqueline DeFusco
 Jennifer Degennaro
 Lynn A. Dell
 Corinne Dellaera-Bish
 Derby Public Schools
 Gail DePietro
 Gail Devine
 John & Elizabeth Dibiaso
 Diane Dietman
 Sally Dietrich
 Andrea Dizenzo
 Frank & Shelley Dorsio
 Christopher Douglas
 Keith Drewes
 Annmarie Drugonis
 Arline Drugonis
 Lynn Durham
 Bill Duskas
 Shelley Duval
 Jason Edwards
 Scott Elliott
 Erdmann Group, Merrill Lynch Private Wealth Advisors
 Georgeann Erhardt
 Estate of Walter Drozeck
 Estate of Robert C. Lang
 Estate of Joseph Warichar
 Explorers Learning Center
 Amy Evans
 Fairview Tree Farm
 Joe Falcha
 Connie Famiglietti
 Christine Fenn
 Cindy Fitzgerald
 William Flug
 Maryann B. Francolini
 Ruth Fririhio
 Glenn Fritz
 Jack & Josephine Gaida
 Christopher Galatioto & Emily Granelli
 Nicole Galiette
 Sandra Gardinier
 Barbara Garofalo
 James & Nancy Geissler
 Patricia Geissler
 Sandra Gesek & Elizabeth Sponheimer
 David Giambra
 Thomas Gibbons & Gail Reiss Gibbons
 Lynn Giordano



Gregg Goumas
 Mark & Gwen Goumas
 Theresa Ann Graham
 Mike Gray
 Jacqueline Grenier
 Mary Ann Groves
 Kathleen Gruttadauria
 James & Bert Guarrera
 Howard & Judy Gura
 Frank Haines
 Teri Haines
 Thomas & Sandra Haley
 Susan Hamilton
 John Hancock Life Insurance Co.
 John & Sylvie Hangen
 Karen Hardy
 Mark & Virginia Harger
 Ralph & Lynne Harrison
 Louisa Heeman
 Jacob Heerdt
 Kurt & Carmel Heim
 Carol Hellauer
 Judith Ann Heller
 Mary Hendrickson
 Jean Hibbitts
 Judy Higson
 Meta Hinze
 Katrina Holden
 Michele Holovach
 Kathy Horahan
 Kathleen Horton
 Tashawn & Nicole Howell
 Jessie Hoyt
 Maryann Iadarola
 Karen Ingraham
 Sherry Irvine
 Milton Jacoby
 Edward Jaekle
 Alfred & Karen Jennings Jr.
 Gary & Jan Jennings
 Frances Jesulaitis
 Jones Family Farms, LLC
 John & Doreen Jones
 Paul Jones
 John Jurkowski
 Thomas & Michelle Kachmarck
 Beverly Kamaitis
 Lorraine Kapinos
 Fiorina Kaplan
 Harriet A. Karkut
 Sue Keefe
 Deborah Kelo
 M. Elizabeth Kennard
 Kathleen Kiley
 Sandra Kiley
 Ed & Aleta Kisluk
 Michael Klein

Linda Klischer
 Robert & Nancy Knapp
 Jason & Dana Kneen
 Richard Knoll & Joan Keyser
 John & Ruth Kofarago
 Paul Konnik
 Paul & Sherry Konwerski
 Peter Konwerski & Leah Rosen
 Ken & Joan Kreiger
 Art & Joanne Kunze
 Robert Laccone
 Marcy Laden
 Tia Landry
 James E. Lane
 Laura Lane
 Jill Lanese
 Robert & Shelley Langer
 John Latte
 Shauna Laucella
 Domenico & Antoinette Lemma
 Michele Linane
 Joe Lipic
 Karen Liska
 Kevin & Leslie Lloyd
 Carol Loehmann
 Judy Long
 Shannon Lopes
 Luchs Consulting
 Engineers/DeCarlo & Doll
 David Lunt
 Cathleen Lynch
 Tara-Marie Lynch
 William & Judi Lynch
 MAC Casualty Ltd.
 Bruce MacDonald
 Chad Macek
 Jack & Louise Mackniak
 Robert & Jennifer Magri
 John & Sandy Mahony
 Kathleen Malerba
 Reina Marasco
 Christopher Marks & Kathleen
 McNichols-Marks
 Arthur Martin
 Carol Martin
 Susan Martin
 Ursula Martino
 Massaro Community Farm, Inc.
 Joel Mastrobattisto
 Christopher McCabe
 Lauren J. McCormack
 Dona McDuff
 Karen McGovern
 Felicia McPhail
 Lisa McPhie
 Sam Meccia
 Carol Meeks

Kristen Mellitt
 Nancy Shea Metcalf
 MaryAnn Meyer
 Ned Miller
 Sally Miller
 Milton High School
 Milton High School
 Remembrance Fund
 Albert Misiewicz & Nicole Cignoli
 Jim Mitchell
 Carol Mobilio
 Joseph Mobilio Jr.
 Franco & Silvana Monaco
 Jeffrey & Grace Monahan
 Monroe Center Cemetery
 Association
 Ryan Morris
 Robert & Sheila Moseley
 Tracey Moses
 Bill Moyher
 Stephen Mullany
 Deann Murphy
 Jennifer Murphy
 Laura Murphy
 Nicole Newkirk
 Carol Neyland
 Steven Ng
 Elizabeth Nicoletti
 Carol Noble
 Christine O'Connell
 Ryan O'Connell
 Pamela J. O'Brien
 Fred Ortolini
 Daria A. Osso
 Jeffrey & Diane Owens
 Christopher Pagliaro
 Elaine Pagliaro
 Ellen Pagliaro
 Prisco Panza
 John & Jane Papa
 Joe Patten
 Peter & Carol Pavone
 John Pawlowski
 Lucas Peixoto
 Gregory & Ann Pepe
 Mary Pepe
 Craig & Lynne Perry
 Ed Petrino
 Kathleen Petro
 Maureen Petro
 Melanie Petro
 Michael & Susannah Petro
 Linda Philie
 Cheri Piccolo
 Candace Pickering
 Kenneth & Jean Pieper
 Marie Pisacane

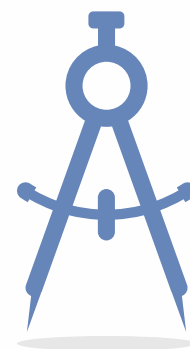
DONORS

DONORS

Susan Piscioniere
 Morgan Poeta
 Chris Polkabla
 Catherine Poole
 Lisa Popolizio
 Cynthia Poppa
 Elizabeth Power
 Mark Powers & Maura
 McNamara-Powers
 James & Barbara Printy
 Lorraine Pucci
 Melissa Pucci
 Pumpkin Festival Association
 Beth Purcell
 Joseph Purdy
 Recliner Pilots
 Eunice Rees
 Barbara Regan
 Thomas & Verneve Reilly
 Renaissance Charitable Foundation
 Linda Reznik
 Art Rhatigan
 Melissa Rice-Jarrell
 Robert & Kathryn Rich
 Nnangasuobo & Loni Richards
 Patrick & Kathleen Riddle
 David & Joan Rifkin
 John & Angela Riordan
 Randal Ritter
 David Rivera
 Joseph Roberto
 David & Frances Robinson
 Craig Rossetti
 Cheryl Rotolo
 Ken Rovack
 Donald Rovinelli
 Paul & Evelyn Roy
 Joseph & Jennifer Ruggiero
 Caroline Rullo
 Peter Russell
 David & Nadine Russo
 Emily Ryan
 Kyle Ryan
 Jeffrey & Kate Sabatini
 Beth Sabo
 John Sabulis
 Jane Santa
 Santa Energy Corporation
 Arlene Sardo
 Carl & Barbara Sastram
 SCDG Southbury
 Marian Schmitz
 Mark & Leanne Searles
 Seward & Monde
 Jean Sedor
 Seymour High School Goal Club
 Seymour High School

Sports Hall of Fame
 Seymour Historical Society
 Seymour Public Schools
 Joseph Shanahan
 Steven Sharp
 William Shea
 James Sheehy
 Janice Sheehy
 Shelton Republican
 Town Committee
 Dr. William P. Silberberg
 Jennifer Silva
 Anthony & Janice Simonetti
 Melissa Simonetti
 Thomas Simonetti
 Alan Skiparis
 Bob Skobel
 Mark Skobel
 Nancy Skobel
 Eugene Skowronski
 Slainte Milford, Inc.
 Kate Slomkowski
 Patricia A. Small
 Donald & Lisa Smith Jr.
 Christi Sobin
 Sturgis Sobin
 Matthew & Michela Solanch
 Paula Somo
 Michele Spekhardt
 Paul Stamos
 Fred Stanek
 Brian & Kara Steenburgh
 Julia Steinis & Aletha Abbott
 Robert & Deborah Stellavato
 Sarah Stephenson
 Mike & Sandy Stimola
 Adrienne Stosuy
 Edward & Cathy Sullivan
 George & Maureen Sullivan
 Patty Sullivan
 Sean & Carla Sullivan
 SV Design
 Leon & Barbara Sylvester
 Richard Szanto
 Jane Taft
 Penelope Tambis
 Justin Tanner
 Nicholas & Patricia Tarasovic
 Karin Tarring
 TEAM, Inc.
 Technolutions, Inc.
 Teddy Bear Treehouse
 Learning Center
 Roberta Tehan
 Sharon Thompson
 Deirdre Tindall
 Beverly Tischer

Barbara Tobias
 David J. Tomasheski
 Town Fair Tire Foundation Inc.
 Lauryn Tuttle
 Gary Tylinski
 United Way of Greater Waterbury
 John Uysal
 Nicole Uysal
 Vanguard Charitable
 Endowment Program
 Margaret Vicidomino
 Mary Lou Viola
 John Vitello & Janice Howard
 Christine Vitka
 John & Debra Volkmar
 John J. Volto
 Kathleen Vrlík
 Linda Vulovic
 John & Leslie Wallace
 Elizabeth Walsh
 Gail Walsh
 Donald Warichar
 Dennis & Joan Watkins
 Lynn Watson
 Bruce & Jean Webber
 Sandra Weber
 James & Linda Welch
 Tom & Jodi Welch
 Sandra Wellinghoff
 Thomas Wells
 Westport Library Association
 John & Claire Whalen
 Joan Whitman
 Joan Widomski
 Lorraine Williams
 Paul Wislocki
 Lynne Wozniak
 Cary Yeh & Lynn O'Neil
 Norman & Kathleen Yolish
 John & Laura Zaprzalka
 Gary & Marybeth Zaremski
 Katherine Zollo
 Robert & Sandra Zuraw
 Sandra Pepe Zuraw

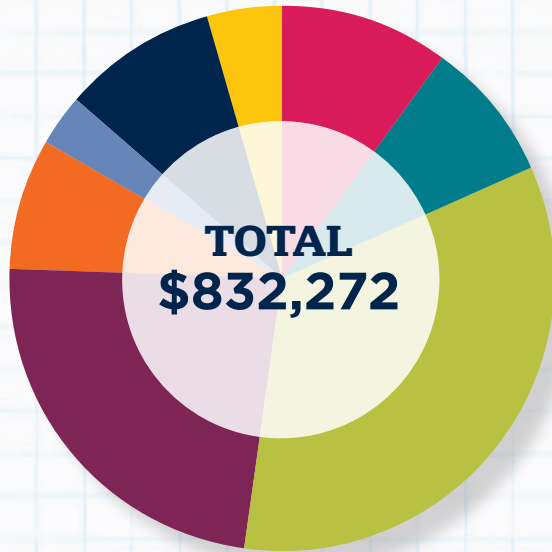


DONORS

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.



- \$84,350 ▶ Children and Youth
- \$70,350 ▶ Education
- \$280,522 ▶ Health
- \$195,238 ▶ Basic Human Needs
- \$63,750 ▶ Civic Vitality
- \$26,000 ▶ Economic Success
- \$75,350 ▶ Arts and Culture
- \$36,712 ▶ Environment

This data reflects grants made through the Responsive (New and Multi-year), Needs and Opportunities, Sponsorship, and Community Grants programs. It does not include \$84,250 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	77	12,649,215	214	589,049
DESIGNATED & ORGANIZATION TRANSFERS	82	21,806,484	88	392,970
SCHOLARSHIPS	96	4,627,361	105	200,879
UNRESTRICTED & PREFERENCE	20	3,456,146	20	97,084

Responsive Grants

The Valley Community Foundation's (VCF) Responsive Grants program supports organizations and programs that serve Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour and Shelton. Organizations marked with a single asterisk (*) received one-time grant award. All others received multi-year grant awards.

Adam's House - To provide general operating support. **\$12,000**

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

BHcare - To provide general operating support. **\$20,000**

Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley - To provide general operating support. **\$25,000**

cARTie - To provide general operating support in the Valley. **\$15,000**

Center Stage Theatre - To provide general operating support. **\$20,000**

Central Connecticut Coast YMCA - To provide general operating support for the Valley YMCA. **\$30,000**

Christ Episcopal Church - To provide general operating support for the Kathleen C.B. Samela Food Pantry. **\$34,000**

Cornell Scott-Hill Health Corporation - To provide general operating support. **\$10,000**

Echo Hose Hook & Ladder Ambulance Corps. - To provide general operating support. **\$25,000***

Griffin Hospital - To provide general operating support. **\$25,000**

Hope Counseling and Behavioral Health Center - To provide general operating support. **\$35,000**

Housatonic Council, Boy Scouts of America - To provide general operating support. **\$35,000***

Julia Day Nursery of Ansonia, Inc. - To provide general operating support. **\$20,000**

Life Health and Wellness Center - To provide general operating support. **\$25,000**

Massaro Community Farm - To provide general operating support. **\$34,000**

Moving With Health Oriented Physical Education, Inc. - To provide general operating support for the Valley. **\$10,000**

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

Salvation Army, Greater Valley Corps - To provide general operating support. **\$20,000**

Seymour Oxford Food Bank - To provide general operating support. **\$34,000**

Shelton Economic Development Corp - To provide general operating support. **\$15,000***

St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley - To provide general operating support. **\$34,000***

Storm Engine Company Ambulance & Rescue Corps - To provide general operating support. **\$20,000***

Traveler on a Mission - To provide general operating support. **\$27,000**

Valley Emergency Medical Services - To provide general operating support. **\$30,000**

Valley Shakespeare Festival - To provide general operating support. **\$30,000***

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.

Afrique Prospere Education Inc. - To support career development services for immigrants from French-speaking countries residing in the Valley. **\$6,000**

Best Buddies International, Inc. - To support friendship and leadership development programs in the Valley. **\$10,000**

Connecticut Hospice - To support outreach in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton to connect residents with the Magnolia Care program and the Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) program. **\$3,000**

Connecticut Main Street Center - To support the creation of a Main Street program in Derby to revitalize their downtown. This grant was awarded with the condition that 50% of the total cost of the project is raised in order for the grant to be released. **\$2,000**

City of Derby - 350th Anniversary Committee - To support events scheduled to celebrate the City of Derby's 350th Anniversary. **\$7,500**

HBCU/Civil Rights Tour Fundraiser Committee - To support an educational trip to historically Black colleges and universities and to civil rights landmarks in Atlanta and Alabama for 15 Ansonia High School students. **\$10,000**

Friends of Derby Public Library - To support digitization of Valley historical newspapers from Microfilm. **\$9,550**

Mishkan Day Camp - To support the summer season of 2025. **\$1,400**

Moving With Health Oriented Physical Education, Inc. - To support renovations to space within its Shelton facility to launch a new Small-Group Life Skills Program for adults with disabilities. **\$5,000**

Operation Fuel, Inc. dba Generation Power CT - To support emergency energy distribution in the towns of Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. **\$4,250**

Oxford Grange #194 - To support the purchase and installation of a new septic system. **\$10,000**

Paugassett Hook & Ladder Company #4 - To support the purchase of equipment for extinguishing wildfires. **\$3,300**

Read to Grow, Inc. - To support the Books for Babies Newborn Project at Griffin Hospital, and Books for Kids and the Bookmobile in Valley towns. **\$3,000**

The RiseUP Group, Inc. - To support The Creative & Service Leadership Program at Derby Middle School. **\$5,000**

Ruth's House - To support the construction of a half bathroom in a new conference room, as well as additional programming for single mothers and their children. **\$5,000**

Town of Seymour
- To support a mural on the corner of Route 115, Main Street & Broad Street bridge. **\$4,000**
- To support the Seymour Community Services/Senior Center's free Senior Fit Exercise Program. **\$4,000**

Seymour Ambulance Association - To support a mural on the corner of Rte 115, Main Street & Broad Street bridge. **\$7,972**

Seymour Food 2 Kids - To support the provision of food for Seymour public school students as well as the expansion into Oxford and Derby Public Schools. **\$4,000**

Sustainable CT - To support one Fellow to provide technical assistance to Valley towns during the summer of 2025. **\$3,000**

Community Grants

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

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. **\$2,500**

Audrey Dreyer Food Bank - To support food and grocery store gift card assistance five times a year to families in need who have children enrolled in the Shelton Public School system. **\$2,500**

Boy Scout Troop 3 Derby - To support an Eagle Scout project to build three food pantries in Derby with scouts and community volunteers. **\$2,000**

Friends of the Library in Oxford - To support the funding to create an all-ages nutrition program series entitled, "Healthy Eating at Every Age" that is hosted by the Oxford Public Library. **\$2,000**

Our Lady Queen of the Apostles Parish / St. Mary's Church - To support six 10x15 pop-up tents used in the parking lot to facilitate biweekly food distribution. **\$1,500**

Oxford Housing Authority - To support the Enrichment and Wellness Program by covering program-related expenses for the 34 senior apartments at Oxford Housing at Crestview Bridge. **\$2,000**

Oxford Neighbor to Neighbor Pantry - To support the addition of nine garden beds behind the community pantry. **\$2,488**

Southford Falls Quilt Guild - To support high school students introduced to the Blanket Fairy Mission. The tied-fleece blankets made during these sessions will be donated to the Blanket Fairy for distribution to children and youth in DCF care—prioritizing Valley towns—while the Guild continues creating quilted items for local charities and inspiring members to keep quilting through engaging programs. **\$2,500**

The Table - To support free community meals offered every Saturday at 178 Leavenworth Road in Shelton. **\$2,500**

Valley Community Gardens Collective - To support the upgrades to Beaver Brook Community Garden in Ansonia. **\$1,462**

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, John Collins Post 24 - To sponsor the Boys State/Girls State at the University of New Haven in West Haven. **\$900**

American Legion, Emil Senger Post 10 - To sponsor Seymour High School juniors to participate in the American Legion Auxiliary Boys and Girls State programs. **\$900**

American Legion, Sutter-Terlizzi Post 16 - To sponsor the Boys State Program. **\$900**

Best Buddies International Inc. - To sponsor a Friendship Walk. **\$500**

BHcare - To sponsor A Chance to Shine June 7, 2025, at Quarry Walk in Oxford. **\$1,000**

Binky Patrol, Inc. - To sponsor the Binkathons this spring. **\$250**

Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley - To sponsor the Commodore Hull Thanksgiving Day 5k Road Race. **\$2,250**

cARTie - To sponsor Fall Open House. **\$500**

Celebrate Shelton - To sponsor the 2025 calendar of community events. **\$2,500**

Connecticut Hospice - To sponsor the Bloom Gala on May 17, 2025. **\$250**

CT Hurricanes Drum and Bugle Corps - To sponsor the annual Veterans Appreciation Concert. **\$750**

City of Derby - 350th Anniversary Committee - To sponsor the 350th Anniversary weekend. **\$2,500**

Derby High School - To sponsor the yearly post prom event. **\$750**

Derby Shelton Rotary Club Foundation - To sponsor the Flags for Heroes Service Project. **\$2,500**

Friends of the Ansonia Nature Center (FANCI) - To sponsor Earth Day Celebration and Autumn Fest. **\$1,000**

Griffin Hospital - To sponsor the annual Gala on November 8, 2025. **\$1,000**

Girl Scouts of Connecticut, Inc. - To sponsor SPA-tacular! **\$500**

Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce

- To sponsor the 61st Annual Meeting & Breakfast. **\$500**

- To sponsor the Annual Holiday Breakfast. **\$500**

Hope Counseling and Behavioral Health Center - To sponsor the Friendsgiving fundraiser at Center Stage Theatre. **\$250**

Junior Achievement of Greater Fairfield County - To sponsor JA Pathways to Success immersive career and financial reality fair at Shelton High School. **\$750**

Massaro Community Farm - To sponsor Celebrate Spring. **\$250**

Master's Table Community Meals - To sponsor the annual Thanksgiving Meal. **\$1,000**

New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Inc.

- To sponsor New Haven Symphony Orchestra's Melodies & Mimosas Gala. **\$600**

- To sponsor the Holiday Extravaganza Pops Concert at Shelton High School. **\$1,000**

Oxford High School Booster Club - To sponsor the Senior Lock-In party. **\$750**

Seymour Historical Society - To sponsor the annual speaker series. **\$2,500**

Saint Martin de Porres Academy - To sponsor 20th Anniversary Spring Fling Gala. **\$1,000**

Seymour Pink Inc. - To sponsor the annual Pounding the Pavement 5K race. **\$2,500**

St. Mary-St. Michael School - To sponsor SM-SM's 80s Auction. **\$300**

Shelton Historical Society - To sponsor the Antique & Classic Car Show and Harvest Fun Fest. **\$1,000**

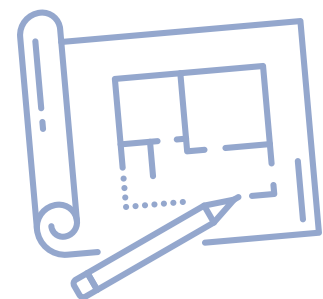
TEAM, Inc.

- To sponsor Men Who Cook. **\$1,000**

- To sponsor the 60th Anniversary celebration. **\$1,000**

Traveler on a Mission - To sponsor Christmas in July. **\$500**

Valley United Way - To sponsor its Annual Community Meeting. **\$2,500**



Recognition Grants

Each year, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) Board of Directors recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations that were acknowledged for their service to the community. In 2025, these local honorees received a grant from VCF to donate to a Valley nonprofit of their choice.

Dedication & Service - Valley Community Foundation

Valerie Knight-Di Gangi

Housatonic Council Good Scout Award

Bing Carbone

Raymond P. Laviertes Service to Youth Award - Boys and Girls Club Lower Naugatuck Valley

Thomas Baklik
David & Connie Condon
Samantha Heins
John Schaible

Dorothy Larson Award - Derby Historical Society

Thomas Baklik

Dr. John I Howe Award - Derby Historical Society

TEAM, Inc./David Morgan

David Humphreys Service Award - Derby Historical Society

Cynthia Poppa

Housatonic Council Valley Leadership Awards Gala

Marc Garofalo
William M. Miller, Jr.
Jeremy Radtke
Fred Stanek

Charles H. Flynn Humanitarian Award - Valley United Way

Thomas Haynes
Richard Knoll

Dedication & Service - Valley United Way

Mike Pacowta

Dedication & Service - TEAM, Inc.

David Morgan

Unrestricted and Preference

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

Central Connecticut Coast YMCA
City of Derby - 350th Anniversary Committee
Echo Hose Hook and Ladder Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc.
Griffin Hospital
Hope Counseling and Behavioral Health Center
Housatonic Council, Boy Scouts of America
Life Health and Wellness Center
Shelton Economic Development Corp
Storm Engine Company Ambulance Corps, Inc.
Valley Shakespeare Festival

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
Brown University
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
Griffin Hospital School of Allied Health Careers
Hamden High School
James Madison University

Johnson and Wales University
Oxford High School
Perry Hill School
Platt Technical High School
Sacred Heart University
Seymour High School
Shelton High School
Shelton Intermediate School
Southern Connecticut State University
Trumbull High School
University of Connecticut
University of Rhode Island
University of South Florida
University of Vermont
West Haven High School
Western Connecticut State University

Designated & Organizational

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
Assumption School
BHCare
Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley
Center Stage Theatre Inc.
Central Connecticut Coast YMCA
Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
Culinary Institute of America
Derby Historical Society
Derby Neck Library
Derby Public Library
Emmett O'Brien Regional Technical School
First Taxing District of the City of Norwalk-Water Department
George J. Hummel Little League
Great Hill Hose Company
Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce
Griffin Hospital
Griffin Hospital Development Fund
Housatonic Council, BSA
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
Rowland R. Strong &
Edith H. Strong Memorial
Scholarship Fund
Salvation Army, Eastern
Territorial Headquarters
Seymour Oxford Food Bank
Seymour Public Schools
Shelton High School
Shelton Historical Society
Shelton Public Schools
St. Joseph's Church
Storm Engine Company
Ambulance Corps, Inc.
TEAM, Inc.
Treasurer, City of Derby
Trinity Cemetery Association
Trinity Episcopal Church
Valley Discretionary Fund
Valley United Way
Valley YMCA
Woodbridge Town Library

Donor Advised

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.

Adam Wysota Foundation
Afrique Prospere Education Inc.
ALS Association,
Connecticut Chapter
American Farmland Trust
American Red Cross,
Connecticut Chapter

Ansonia Rescue Medical Services
Apostle Immigrant Services
Area Congregations Together, Inc.
Bethany Library Association
Beth-El Center Inc.
Bette Mae's Memorial Fund
BHcare
Boy Scout Troop 3 Derby
Boy Scouts of America,
Housatonic Council
Boys & Girls Club of the
Lower Naugatuck Valley
Capri Christian Church
Center for Family Justice
Center Stage Theatre
Children's Heart Foundation
Christ Episcopal Church
City of Ansonia
CitySeed, Inc.
Common Ground High School
Connecticut Burns Care
Foundation
Connecticut Farmland Trust
Connecticut Foodshare
Connecticut Forest & Park
Association
Connecticut Hospice
Cub Scout Pack 3
Derby Historical Society
Derby Little League
Echo Hose Hook and Ladder
Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc.
Fair Haven Community Health Care
Foundation School
Frances Perkins Center
Friends of Derby Public Library
Friends of the Ansonia
Nature Center FANCI
Girl Scouts of Connecticut Inc.
Greater Valley Chamber of
Commerce
Green Village Initiative
Griffin Hospital
Griffin Hospital Development Fund
Hockey Ministries International
Housatonic Council, BSA
Institute for American Indian Studies
Museum & Research Center
International Festival of
Arts & Ideas
International Myeloma Foundation
IRIS - Integrated Refugee &
Immigrant Services
Julia Day Nursery of Ansonia, Inc
Junior Achievement of
Greater Fairfield County
Literacy Volunteers of
Southern Connecticut

Lower Naugatuck Valley
Parent Child Resource Center
Master's Table Community Meals Inc.
Mishkan Israel Day Camp
National Right to Work Legal
Defense and Education Foundation
New Haven Promise
President's Fund of the Valley
Community Foundation
Project Purple
Read to Grow
Recreation Camp Inc.
Ronald McDonald House
of CT and Western MA
Rotary Club of Ansonia, Seymour,
and Oxford, CT
Salvation Army, Greater
Valley Corps
Save the Sound
Seymour Ambulance Association
Seymour High School
Seymour Oxford Food Bank
Seymour Pink, Inc.
Shelton High School
Shelton High School
Robotics Team
Shelton Historical Society, Inc.
Shelton Land Conservation Trust
St. Joseph's Church
St. Mary St. Michael School
St. Michael Church
St. Rita School
St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley
St. Vincent's Medical Center
Storm Engine Company
Ambulance Corps, Inc.
Susanna Wesley School
TEAM, Inc.
Traveler on a Mission
Turning Point USA
University of Connecticut
Foundation, Inc.
University of Nebraska
Foundation
University of New Hampshire
University of New
Hampshire Foundation
University of New Haven
Valley Council for Health and
Human Services
Valley Emergency Medical
Services
Valley United Way
Valley YMCA
Yale New Haven Center for EMS
Yale New Haven Hospital
Saint Raphael Campus

Stewardship of Charitable Assets

For more than two decades, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) has partnered with The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (CFGNH) to oversee the charitable assets entrusted to VCF are managed with care, discipline, and a long-term perspective. Through this affiliation, VCF funds are invested in CFGNH's Corporate Commingled Fund, providing access to a globally diversified endowment-style portfolio and more than 49 institutional investment managers across a wide range of asset classes and strategies. This approach allows VCF to benefit from professional oversight, scale, and risk management typically available only to large institutions -- while maintaining the liquidity required to support the charitable needs in the Valley.

The calendar year 2025 unfolded against a dynamic global backdrop. Volatility driven primarily by U.S. tariffs and trade policy uncertainty gave way to a strong finish, as global markets ended the year on solid footing. The Commingled Fund posted a net return of 2.9% in the fourth quarter, roughly in line with its policy benchmark. For the year, U.S. equities advanced approximately 18%, supported by optimism around artificial intelligence, resilient corporate earnings, and the Federal Reserve's decision to resume its easing cycle with 75 basis points of rate cuts. While equity

valuations remain elevated, earnings growth-- particularly among AI-driven companies -- helped justify higher prices.

Importantly, market leadership in the U.S. equity markets remained narrow, with the largest ten companies accounting for a record share of the S&P 500 Index performance. This concentration reinforced the value of diversification, a core principle of the Commingled Fund's strategy. In contrast to the domestic markets, the international equities delivered exceptional results in 2025. Developed international equities rose about 31%, while emerging markets gained nearly 34%. Europe benefited from increased defense spending and new policy initiatives, Japan advanced on the strength of corporate governance reforms and fiscal stimulus, and emerging markets -- led by China -- were buoyed by AI adoption and easing trade tensions.

Against this backdrop, the Commingled Fund remained focused on balance and discipline. Equity exposure is diversified across U.S., international developed, and select emerging markets, with a tilt toward mid- and smaller-capitalization companies to reduce reliance on mega-cap stocks. Fixed income played an increasingly important role as higher starting yields improved income generation and provided greater stability. The portfolio also



Tammy Burrell
VCF Treasurer

maintained measured allocations to strategies designed to help manage inflation and further diversify returns, all while preserving the liquidity needed to meet the charitable needs of the region.

We remain cautiously optimistic. Lower interest rates may gradually support housing, small businesses, and real estate, while continued investment in technology has the potential to enhance productivity over time. At the same time, risks remain -- from elevated equity valuations to shifting consumer, credit, and geopolitical conditions. The portfolio is intentionally designed to navigate these uncertainties through broad diversification, quality, and a steady rebalancing process that prioritizes long-term objectives over short-term headlines.

This disciplined stewardship supports VCF's mission: ensuring that charitable assets grow responsibly so they can make a lasting difference in the Valley -- today and for generations to come.

Investment Performance

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

Periods ended 31 December 2025	Trailing 1 Year	Trailing 5 Years	Trailing 10 Years	Since Inception ³
The Commingled Fund	13.1	5.6	7.9	8.4
Policy Benchmark¹	18.1	8.0	8.5	7.6
Absolute Benchmark²	8.3	10.2	8.9	8.1

* The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, Inc. has been a Connecticut registered investment adviser since 2014.
 ** Inception date is January 1, 1995.
¹ The Policy Benchmark is the Policy Benchmark and equal to the rate of return produced by specific market indices representing the asset classes contained in the long-term asset allocation model (Ividel), with such market indices weighted in accordance with that Model. The market benchmark for the Model is: 50% MSCI All Country World Index; 15% HFRI Fund of Funds; 12.5% Cambridge US PE/VC; 7.5% Cambridge US RA; and 15% Bloomberg US Aggregate.
² The Absolute Benchmark is equal to the annualized value of the Consumer Price Index, plus 5.5%.

Assets Growth



Fiscal 2025 In Review



FISCAL 2025 IN REVIEW

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2025	2024
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$691,172	\$700,327
Investments at market value - component funds	26,472,543	24,330,470
Investments at market value - organization funds	16,129,110	14,420,144
Total Investments	\$43,292,825	\$39,450,941
Contributions receivable	-	7,686
Other assets/Operating Lease	132,947	150,910
Furniture and equipment, net	9,840	14,143
Total Assets	\$43,435,612	\$39,623,680
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	60,673	59,637
Organization funds	16,129,110	14,420,144
Grants payable	20,000	216,000
Operating Lease Liability	133,597	152,410
Total Liabilities	\$16,343,380	\$14,848,191
Net assets without restriction	27,092,232	24,775,489
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$43,435,612	\$39,623,680

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES	2025	2024
REVENUE, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT		
Contributions	\$2,552,178	\$2,748,877
Less: transfers to organization funds	(526,304)	(704,705)
Net contributions	2,025,874	2,044,172
Investment gain (loss), net	3,131,076	2,390,551
Total revenue, gains, and other support	\$5,156,950	\$4,434,723
EXPENSES		
Grants and distributions approved, net	2,184,911	2,142,038
Less: grants from organization funds	(141,527)	(266,662)
Net grant expense	2,043,384	1,875,376
Grants for program management and direct charitable activities	517,934	541,917
Net grant and program expense	2,561,318	2,417,293
Development, donor services and fund stewardship	159,364	166,744
Financial management, leadership, and operations	119,525	125,055
Total administration expense	278,889	291,799
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$2,840,207	\$2,709,092
Increase (decrease) in net assets	2,316,743	1,725,631
Net assets - Beginning of year	24,775,489	23,049,858
Net assets - End of year	\$27,092,232	\$24,775,489

Great Give 2025: A Record-Setting Moment for Valley Generosity

The Valley once again proved that generosity is woven into its DNA during The Great Give 2025, a 36-hour giving event that set new records across the region. Overall, donors helped raise an unprecedented \$4.4 million for 544 nonprofits throughout the Valley and Greater New Haven.

Valley-based organizations benefited in a big way. A total of \$466,000 was raised for 61 nonprofits serving Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton -- an increase of more than 8 percent over the previous year and the largest Valley total in the event's history. Nearly 1,800 donations came from people who live or work in the Valley, reflecting a 21-percent jump in participation.

"The outpouring of support this year was nothing short of phenomenal," said Sharon Closius, President and CEO of the Valley Community Foundation. "To see our community come together and raise nearly

half a million dollars for Valley nonprofits, in just 36 hours is awe-inspiring. It speaks to the deep-rooted generosity and shared commitment we have to one another here in the Valley."

Four Valley nonprofits -- BHcare, TEAM, Inc., Griffin Hospital, and the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley -- ranked among the top 20 organizations overall, while the Shelton High School robotics team placed in the top 25. Created in 2010 by The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, The Great Give has raised more than \$32 million for nonprofits in the Valley and Greater New Haven region.



With renewed energy and purpose the BAC is poised to help define what comes next for the Valley.

In 2025, the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) took a fresh look at how its Board Advisory Council (BAC) could better serve the foundation and the community -- and reimagined it as a more active, forward-looking force aligned with VCF's five-year Strategic Plan.

For years, the BAC was made up of mostly former board members and functioned primarily as a traditional advisory body. But as VCF's role in the Valley has evolved -- particularly around community leadership, civic engagement, and the idea of "Valleyness" -- a new dimension was needed for a more hands-on, action-oriented volunteers beyond that of just former board members.

At its core, Valleyness reflects a deeply rooted sense of connection -- neighbors who show up, lend a hand, and care for one another. It's a defining quality of the Valley, but one that cannot be taken for granted. As new families move in and long-standing, multi-generational ties begin to shift, there is a growing question: how do you pass along something so personal and lived-in to those who haven't experienced it? Preserving Valleyness means being intentional -- creating opportunities for people to engage, connect, and become part of the fabric of the community in meaningful ways.

At VCF, the question was answered through the creation of new BAC "Pathways" -- focused groups designed to engage members directly in areas such as youth development, equity/belonging, and support for the next generation of Valley families. Each pathway provides a clear avenue for volunteers to contribute their time, expertise, and passion to issues that matter most to the Valley.

The reimagined BAC also positions members to play a hands-on role in major community milestones and initiatives, including planning for the nation's upcoming 250th Anniversary -- an opportunity to celebrate the Valley's history while inspiring its future.

"This is about building something lasting," said Sharon Closius, VCF's President and CEO. "We're creating pathways for people to connect, to lead, and to leave their mark on the Valley in ways that will be felt for generations, and we can't thank them enough for their leadership and participation."

(Editor's note: The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) wants to extend its thanks and deep appreciation also to the many committee members that volunteer their time and talent to be part of VCF and its work.)

"Valleyness reflects a deeply rooted sense of connection -- neighbors who show up, lend a hand, and care for one another."

2025 Staff, Councils, Committees, and Volunteers

Staff:

Sandra Arburr
Sharon Closius
Beth Colette
Marcie Monaco
David Rivera
Victoria Vilaysane

Board of Directors:

Nancy Valentine, *Chairwoman*
Aleta Miner, *Vice Chair*
Tammy Burrell, *Treasurer*
Patricia Tarasovic, *Secretary*
Karen DuBois-Walton
Mark Goumas
Christopher Grizzle
Terry Jones

Bevon McLean
Ned Miller
Raymond Oppel
Gregory Pepe

Development:

Mark Goumas
Bevon McLean
Ned Miller
Aleta Miner
Gregory Pepe
Nancy Valentine

Finance:

Tammy Burrell,
Chair, Treasurer
Aleta Miner
Gregory Pepe
Nancy Valentine

Governance:

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

Program:

Mark Goumas, *Co-Chair*
Aleta Miner, *Co-Chair*
Tammy Burrell
Ray Oppel
Nancy Valentine
Jack Walsh

Community Grants:

Martha Dulla, *Chair*
Beth Carson
Gail Catlin
Carolyn Cutaneo
Joan Kayser
Ed Conklin
Thomas Lenart
Cheryl McCollum
Fred Ortoli
Laurean Vazquez-Limauro
Zach Volo
Jack Walsh

Board Advisory Council Members:

Thomas M. Baklik
Joyce Barclay
William C. Bassett*
William H. Bassett
Tom Burden
Bing Carbone
Gail Catlin
James E. Cohen
David Condon
Edmund Conklin
Carolyn Cutaneo
Timothy Dillon
Rick Dunne
Robert Van Egghen
Karen Fisher

Marc J. Garofalo
Gregg Goumas
David Grant*
M. Elizabeth M. Kennard
Frederick L. King
Thomas Lenart
Robert Lesko
Ernestine Luise
Jennifer L. Magri
Michael Marcinek
Susan Mauriello
Kurt Miller
Judy Nicolari
William C. Nimons
Fred Ortoli

Joseph A. Pagliaro, Jr.
Silvia Paytas
Mary L. Pepe
Lynne Perry
Angela G. Powers
Kathleen Riddle
David M. Rifkin
Henry Rondon
James E. Ryan
Breon Sanders
Kenneth E. Schaible
Ed Sheehy
Janice Sheehy
Thomas Simonetti
Donald W. Smith, Jr.

Marianne Smythe
Greg Stamos
Frederick D. Stanek
Diane Stroman
Thomas M. Sutnik
Leon J. Sylvester
David Tuttle
Alan J. Tyma*
Zach Volo
John Walsh
Thomas J. Welch
John J. Zaprzalka

*These BAC members passed away in 2025.

Outgoing Board Members:

Everyone at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) sends their heartfelt appreciation to Christopher Grizzle and Terry Jones for their years of dedicated and skilled service to the Valley and VCF.



Christopher Grizzle



Terry Jones

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 twenty-town region in the heart of central Connecticut. VCF shares a CFO and uses TCF's investment expertise, programming, and development knowledge. This strong relationship provides VCF with an immediate support structure that allows its Board of Directors to focus on leadership and development. VCF wishes to thank TCF staff and all the volunteers for their time, contributions, and expertise.

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) thanks the following for helping create this annual report: Nicole Fitzgerald of iDesign-Studio for graphic art/design, and Keno Graphics for printing; the Boys and Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley for contributing photos; to the VCF staff for compiling, writing and creating its content; and to Kathie Vrlik for her writing contributions.



www.valleyfoundation.org

253-A ELIZABETH STREET

DERBY, CT 06418

PHONE: (203) 751-9162

For Good. For Ever. For the Valley.

