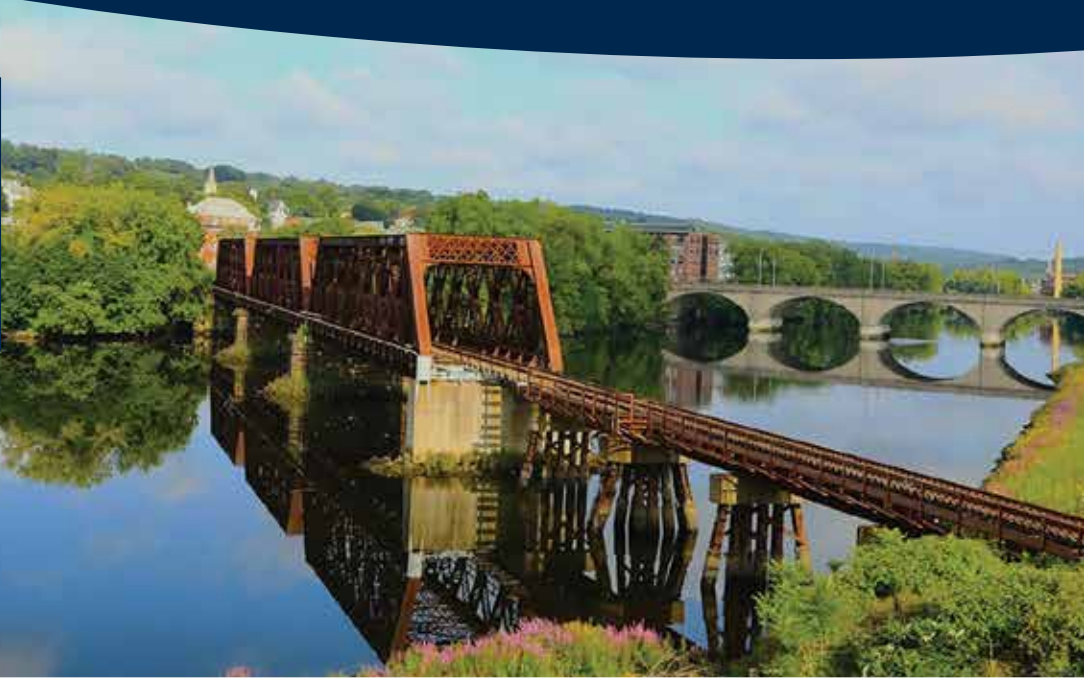


VALLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Legacy *Matters*



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Valley Community Index 2025
Set for Public Launch July 18
in Shelton

FOR GOOD FOR EVER FOR THE VALLEY

Events in the Valley:

July 18

2025 Valley Community Index Launch

8:15am-10:30am

RD Scinto Auditorium

3 Corporate Drive, Shelton, CT

Kayleigh.Mihalko@VCHHS.org

July 21-25

Free Crew Lessons for Middle School Students

8am-12pm for both sessions

Gilder Boathouse

280 Roosevelt Drive, Derby CT

tanya.colon@yale.edu

July 21

Valley Chamber

29th Annual Golf Classic

8am Check-in/Breakfast

9am Shotgun Start

Race Brook Country Club

246 Derby Ave, Orange CT

nancie@greatervalleychamber.com

July 25: 5pm-9:30pm

July 26: 11am-6pm

Downtown Sounds

Summer Concerts

Veterans Memorial Park,

Shelton CT

www.CelebrateShelton.Com

September 20

Taste of Derby

Feature food from

Derby restaurants

Warsaw Park, Ansonia CT

requests@derbyct.gov

Smart Investment

Anniversary Campaign to Ensure
Endowment and Valley Legacies Endure

“25 for the Next 25” celebrates community legacies and invests in tomorrow’s needs

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) is widely recognized as a cornerstone of philanthropy in the Lower Naugatuck Valley. Each year, VCF distributes more than \$2 million in grants to local nonprofits and causes and now manages nearly \$40 million in charitable assets.

VCF’s work is not just about making grants -- it’s about preserving legacies. Through the funds it stewards, VCF honors the names, values, and life stories of generations of Valley residents who have made a lasting impact on their community. It is -- in every sense -- a living archive of the community’s past and a promise for its future.

To carry that mission forward, VCF is preparing to launch the “25 for the Next 25” -- an anniversary campaign focused on raising \$25 million in endowment funds and increase membership in The

Gates Society. The Gates Society is VCF’s planned giving community and is comprised of people that have decided to leave gifts to VCF through estate planning, such as life insurance, stock holdings, real estate and other assets.

This initiative is not an appeal that would compete with local nonprofits’ annual fundraising campaigns. The new campaign will solely focus on getting commitments to build the Valley’s permanent philanthropic assets for the future.

Permanent endowment funds allows VCF to prioritize and allocate resources based on what the community needs most at any given time. They also ensure VCF can carry forward the names and values of donors who have entrusted us to steward their legacies.



Smart Investment

Anniversary Campaign to Ensure Endowment and Valley Legacies Endure

For more than 20 years, people have established funds at VCF -- donor advised, unrestricted, donor designated or scholarships -- to support causes and organizations. Some also establish funds to make sure their family name remains in the Valley long after they are gone.

"Open up any of our annual reports and you will see a Who's Who of iconic Valley names," said Sharon Closius, VCF's President and CEO. "This campaign will build on those names and build our Gates Society that will help support the Valley long into the future."



Raymond P. Mackowski is one of those Valley icons. In 2016, VCF received a generous -- and totally unexpected -- bequest from Mr. Mackowski when he passed away. The Ansonia native and former real estate broker -- who volunteered for decades at Yale-New Haven Hospital and quietly helped his neighbors in need -- left the bulk of his estate to create an unrestricted fund at VCF in honor of his parents: John and Amelia Mackowski. Since then, the Raymond P. Mackowski Fund has distributed more than \$427,000 in

grants supporting everything from fire and ambulance services, senior service programs, local journalism, and the arts.

"That's the true power of unrestricted funds at VCF," said Ned Miller, a member of VCF's Board of Directors and Gates Society member. "Not only did Mr. Mackowski make a positive impact in his community when he was alive, but his legacy of kindness and generosity lives on through that planned gift he made. God bless him."

"Every time someone establishes a fund at VCF -- whether during their lifetime or through a bequest -- they're doing more than giving back."

Other families, like the Vartelas and Stamos families, created donor advised funds in memory of their Greek immigrant forbearers who overcame adversity. Their contributions -- now from 10 separate family funds -- support a myriad of causes, from helping newly arrived immigrants as well as supporting libraries, educational programs and school sports throughout the Valley.

John and Laura Zaprzalka launched their philanthropic journey at VCF in 2014 with the John and Laura Zaprzalka Family Fund, reflecting their desire to give back to the community they call home. The following year, John and his siblings created the Joe and Judy Zaprzalka



Family Fund in memory of their parents, who modeled volunteerism and civic involvement. In 2016, the couple established the Katarzyna and Ludwik Zaprzalka Fund to honor John's immigrant grandparents and most recently, they created the Ralph, Thelma, and Paul Davis Fund to commemorate generous and loving relatives who owned and operated the Davis Oil Company in Derby. Their legacy is both philanthropic and symbolic, showing how intentional giving can secure a family's place in Valley history.

Some of those donor funds, like others at VCF, may become unrestricted some day when the fund advisors no longer want to, or cannot, take on that advisory role.

"You know what you never behind a hearse in a funeral procession? You never see a U-Haul," said Terry Jones, a VCF Board member and patriarch of the five-generation run Jones Family Farm in Shelton. "You can't take it with you! The Valley and its people mean a lot to many of us. Why not give back after you're gone."

Featured Fund

Valley's First Responders Fund

Created to Support Local Heroes

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) announced the creation of the Valley's First Responders Fund, a new permanent endowment fund that will provide long-term financial support to volunteer first-responders organizations throughout the Valley.

The Valley's First Responders Fund will eventually offer grants for critical needs such as new equipment, training, certifications, and capital expenses that fall outside the scope of always-lean volunteer organization budgets and municipal funds. The fund was created as a response to conversations with volunteer first responder organizations who voiced a need for reliable, long-term financial support that could help them better serve their communities and build up recruitment.

The focus of the campaign is on long-term philanthropy -- planned gifts through wills, trusts, or retirement accounts, not day-to-day fundraising. So, eventually, once those planned gifts start to come into the fund, it can support building up the ranks through recruitment initiatives, pay for training for volunteers, and even replace worn and out-of-date equipment like radios and gear, items sometimes not funded by municipal budgets. This fund will complement, in many ways, VCF's new "25 for the Next 25" campaign that is geared at boosting Gates Society membership and increase the Valley's permanent endowment.



Members of the Valley's First Responders Fund advisory committee meet at VCF recently to discuss the new fund.

The new fund will be overseen by an advisory committee comprised of representatives from the Valley's volunteer emergency service groups with expertise in public safety, like Tom Lenart, Chief of Derby's Storm Engine Ambulance Corps.

"Many community members want to leave a legacy for their local first responders."

"Our volunteers put their hearts into serving their neighbors," Lenart said. "But we're constantly worried about how to afford what we need. This fund offers hope. It's the first time we've had a Valley-wide effort that focuses on sustaining us over the long term and we're incredibly grateful and excited to see what the future holds."

In the past, some donors who wish to leave a legacy gift to support

their volunteer first responders have expressed a desire for added reassurance -- particularly when it comes to ensuring their contributions are used exactly as intended. There's sometimes a concern that gifts made through municipalities might be redirected to broader town budgets rather than directly benefiting the volunteer first responder organizations they were meant to support.

That's why those establishing the new Valley's First Responders Fund turned to VCF, as it guarantees 100-percent donor intent, offering peace of mind that a bequest or planned gift will be carefully managed and used exactly as the donor envisioned -- to support and sustain the first responder organizations that are so vital to our communities.

Patricia Tarasovic, a VCF Board Member, said the advisory group is keen on getting started and getting the word out to the community.

"I've never seen a group of first responders so enthusiastic," Tarasovic said. "The advisory group so excited already because they see this as a real chance to make progress, not just to keep up, but to truly grow and recruit the next generation of volunteers too."

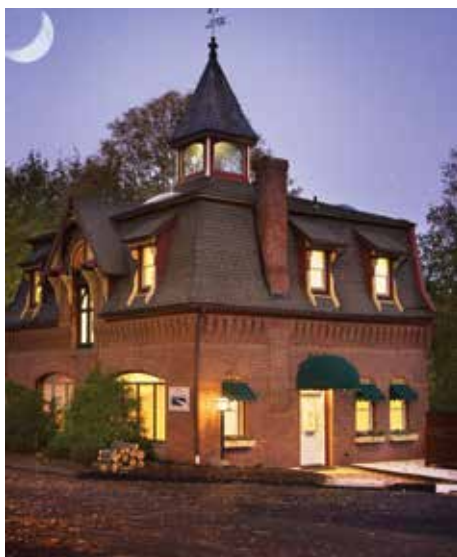


Planned Giving

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) welcomes Arthur C. Martin to The Gates Society, VCF's planned giving community. Your planned gift will impact the charities and causes you're passionate about forever, regardless of the amount. Call us at 203-751-9162 or learn more at ValleyFoundation.org

Community Investment

Many Ways to Leave a Legacy: Fund Options Make Giving Easy and Personal



There's no one-size-fits-all approach to giving back -- and that's the beauty of establishing a fund at the Valley Community Foundation (VCF). Whether you want to support a favorite nonprofit, help students reach their goals, or leave behind a flexible gift that responds to future challenges, VCF offers five unique types of funds to help you do just that.

From its earliest days, VCF has believed that philanthropy should reflect the personal values and intentions of its donors. Today, VCF stewards more than 270 funds -- each one as unique as the person or organization that created it. Nancy Valentine, current Board Chair and long-time VCF fundholder, knows that first-hand. In 2009, she established the Nancy Valentine Fund, a Donor Advised Fund that allows her to support causes she's passionate about year after year.

"I've always believed in giving back," Valentine said. "VCF made it so simple to establish a fund that fits me. The flexibility, guidance, and professionalism have been remarkable -- and I love that I can see the impact during my lifetime."

Donors like Nancy can choose from five fund types at VCF:

- Unrestricted Funds allow VCF to be flexible in terms of its giving to address current and unforeseen needs -- both now and in the future.

- Preference Funds offer the same flexibility but are guided by the donor's areas of personal interests such as early childhood literacy and education to food security providers and veterans services, to name a few.
- Designated Funds provide long-term support to a specific nonprofit organization(s).
- Donor Advised Funds empower individuals and families to recommend grants over time.
- Scholarship Funds provide financial support to help students pursue their educational goals, often established in honor of a loved one.

"Some people want to support the same cause forever and others want their gift to evolve with time," Valentine said. "You don't have to choose between simplicity and impact because you get both. Establishing a fund is easy, meaningful, and built to last just like the Valley itself."

2025 Community Grantees:

Annual Thanksgiving Basket Committee	\$2,500
Audrey Dreyer Food Bank	\$2,500
Boy Scout Troop 3 Derby	\$2,000
Friends of the Library in Oxford.....	\$2,000
Our Lady Queen of the Apostles Parish.....	\$1,500
/St. Mary's Church	
Oxford Housing Authority.....	\$2,000
Oxford Neighbor to Neighbor Pantry	\$2,488
Southford Falls Quilt Guild.....	\$2,500
The Table.....	\$2,500
Valley Community Gardens Collective.....	\$1,462

VCF's Community Grants is an annual program and option for smaller community volunteer and or nonprofit groups serving Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour and Shelton with less than 2 full-time or less than 4 part-time staff. Grants can be for new or recurring programs and projects that support civic and community engagement efforts. Grants range from \$250 to \$2,500 and up to \$30,000 is budgeted for this grant program.



Good News About the Valley

Valley Community Index 2025 Set for Public Launch July 18 in Shelton

The Valley Council for Health and Human Services (the Valley Council) invites you to the public launch of the 2025 Valley Community Index on Friday, July 18, from 8:15 to 10:30 a.m. at the RD Scinto Auditorium, 3 Corporate Drive, Shelton.

This free event will spotlight the key trends, challenges, and opportunities shaping life across Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. Pre-registration is required. Scan the QR code below to register online.

The Valley Community Index is a triennial, data-driven profile of the region, created in collaboration with community partners and informed by both local data and the lived experiences of Valley residents.

The program will feature insights from a panel of leaders including Patrick Charmel of Griffin Hospital, David Morgan of TEAM, Inc., Jess Kristy of the Naugatuck Valley Health District, Joseph DiBacco of Ansonia Public Schools, and Mark Abraham of DataHaven. Printed copies of the report will be available at the event.



Scan the QR
to register:

