

theSteward

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50 Years of Building Strong Communities, *Together*

This November, the Community Foundation begins its 50th year of inspiring local giving—making improvements in education, arts and culture, healthcare, human services, conservation, environmental causes, civic initiatives, animal welfare, and more.

The Community Foundation began simply. In early 1969 members of The Torrington Club, a local business club, had recently sold their headquarters building on Prospect St. in Torrington and remodeled a new meeting space.



The Torrington Club Building on Prospect St.

With \$15,000 remaining after renovation, Torrington Club members saw an opportunity to support local nonprofits. By the fall of 2019, they had established a trust managed by several local banks. A volunteer grants committee was formed. The Torrington Area Foundation for Public Giving was born.

Torrington Savings Bank donated to the Foundation, followed by a bequest from prominent Torrington residents Edwin M. and Edith H. Stone, and in 1977 a gift from John H. Brooks, the president of Brooks Bank and Trust Company, and chair of the Torrington Savings Bank. That same year, Robert Venn Carr, founder of the Litchfield County Insurance and Travel Agency, made a sizeable donation.

Those gifts made possible the first grants awarded in 1972, \$1,000 in support of emergency homeless shelter FISH of Northwestern Connecticut, and \$1,200 in support of the Community Council of Northwest Connecticut.

In the decades that followed, hundreds of funds were established through bequests, including a large gift from the Estate of Carlton D. and Jenny R. Fyler. Carlton worked as a chauffeur and a gardener and Jenny as a Torrington Public school teacher. They wanted to support the children of the community they loved, preferring that their gift be used to “support the moral, artistic, intellectual, and physical development of children.”

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Edward W. Diskavich Fund Helps Public Works Staff Fight Invasive Species

Throughout Northwest Connecticut, a dense plant with large flat leaves and thin spindles of white flowers is blanketing the edges of rivers, climbing into roads and winding through stone fences. It's called Japanese Knotweed, and its thick quick-spreading root system is pushing through concrete foundations and asphalt roadways. Its dense thickets are suffocating indigenous flora.

Through a grant from the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation **Edward W. Diskavich Fund**, work crews from Falls Village, North Canaan, Cornwall, and Salisbury as well as staff from local land trusts, including Aton Forest, Sharon Land Trust, and Kent Land Trust, and students from Housatonic Valley Regional High School attended an all-day educational event organized by Tom Zetterstrom with help from the Housatonic Valley Association to learn how to stop the spread of the destructive weed.



Tom Zetterstrom explains herbicide application techniques before hands-on training begins.

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Phyllis Dower Joins the Legacy Society – sets a plan in motion to care for her community

Winsted resident Phyllis Dower grew up in the hills of North Canaan, surrounded by family who believed in giving back to others. Her mother was a school teacher and her aunts were school teachers and registered nurses—women who made it their life's work to serve others. Phyllis followed their path.

Phyllis attended Housatonic Valley Regional High School in Falls Village. After graduating, she moved to New York City, where she resided for twenty years, completing a Bachelor of Science degree at Columbia University with a major in nursing. Later, she completed a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in English Literature at New York University.

Phyllis worked as a registered nurse in New York City in various clinical and administrative positions. She enjoyed the culture and arts offered by the City, in particular the ballet and art museums.

Interested in seeking more education and experience in public health administration, Phyllis completed a Master's in Public Health degree from Yale University and went on to pursue a career in public health administration at the New Jersey Department of Public Health and at the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Her public health experience focused on cardiovascular health and disease prevention.



Phyllis Dower established the Phyllis Pitcher Dower Fund.

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MacCallum Family Fund for Animal Welfare Helps Animals in Need

During their 35-year marriage, Shirley and Toby MacCallum shared many things, an antique business, three children and a strong sense of connection and responsibility to animals in their community. A deep respect for animals was instilled in Shirley at a young age. Growing up on a farm in Massachusetts, Shirley had plenty of opportunities to befriend animals of all kinds. "We had rabbits, chickens, cows, horses and cats, you name it," said Shirley. "I wanted to bring all of the animals inside. Dad was not happy about that."

Over the years, Shirley and Toby welcomed many canine companions into their family and made regular donations to local animal welfare organizations in their community. But when they were forced to put down their longtime companion, Smokey, a mixed-breed shelter dog and member of the family for more than 18 years, Shirley was so heartbroken that she decided she would never adopt another dog. Instead, she doubled the couple's efforts to support local animal welfare organizations.

"I gave to everything," said Shirley, "any animal organization that needed help. I didn't care if it was a skunk who needed help. I sent money to help."

Then in 2003, Toby was diagnosed with cancer and given a year to live. He had one request of Shirley: "I want a dog," he said. Days later, the couple ran into a colleague who was returning from his veterinarian's office with a litter of yellow labs. Toby scooped a wiggling puppy into his arms. He looked at Shirley, and they both knew that Esmerelda "Little Molly" had found a home.



Shirley MacCallum and Molly

To the surprise of doctors, Toby lived for more than eight years, fighting for his life with Molly by his side.

"She never left him," said Shirley. "They were always cuddled up together. Molly would lay in the bed with him with her head on his leg. She slept with us."

They soon discovered that Molly was fighting a battle of her own. Molly was diagnosed with Lymphoma.

"Whatever happens," Toby said to Shirley, "When I'm gone, take care of Molly."

Toby passed away in 2012. Soon after, Molly became extremely ill. After seven months of dialysis, with Shirley a constant by her side, Molly too passed away.

Shortly after Molly's death, Shirley MacCallum established the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation **MacCallum Family Fund for Animal Welfare**, a field-of-interest fund that helps sick animals regardless of their owners' ability to pay for their care.

"I always wanted to do something for animals," said Shirley. "This fund will continue to help them long after I'm gone."

The Fund accepts donations from the community to provide medical care for sick and suffering animals who require extensive and costly treatments that are often unexpected and necessary to alleviate pain and extend pets' lives.

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Donors Help Students Stay in School and on Track

Northwestern Connecticut Community College (NCCC) welcomes about 1,400 students a year working to improve their lives by gaining career training and technical certificates or laying a foundation for a bachelor's degree.

Many students qualify for student aid based on their income, but struggle to balance work, school and other responsibilities.

An Unexpected Bill Can Derail a Good Education

"A growing number of our students are finding it difficult to pay for college without having to work more hours that interfere with their ability to take classes," said Dr. Michael A. Rooke of NCCC.

To help these students stay on track, NCCC maintains a student emergency fund that assists students with basic expenses that could potentially derail their education, such as rent, utilities or unexpected car repairs. About 40-50 students per year receive help from the fund.

A grant from the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation **Northwest Connecticut Philanthropy Fund** made these emergency funds available for the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters.

"Every student who receives assistance from the emergency fund is asked to eventually 'pay it forward' once they are able to, and just about every student enthusiastically embraces that idea," said Dr. Rooke.

Explore Community Foundation Scholarships at northwestcf.org/scholarships

Support local students with a gift to a Community Foundation scholarship fund, visit northwestcf.org/donate

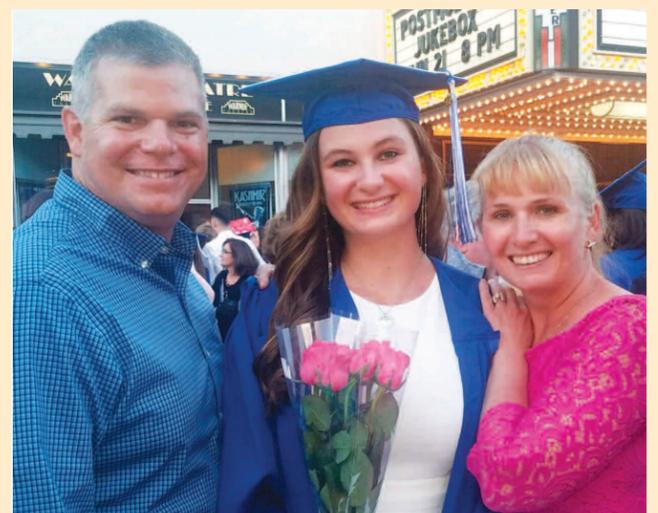
Learn more about supporting education in your community by establishing a Scholarship Fund with the Community Foundation, visit northwestcf.org/funds

2019-2020 Scholarships Awarded to Local Students

More than 214 local students were awarded more than \$162,000 in scholarships for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Northwest Connecticut students received scholarships for undergraduate studies in mechanical engineering, nursing, psychology, education, political science, and performing arts, and graduate studies in law, early childhood education, medicine and pharmacy.

Students were awarded scholarships based on parameters set by donors, many of which include financial need, academic performance, community participation, extra-curricular activities, work experience and essays.



Coral Gorack, a Harwinton graduate of Lewis Mills High School, received the Jack and Ruth Calder Scholarship and the Apolonia Stanulis Scholarship. She is pursuing a degree in nursing at Quinnipiac University.

What matters to you? Tell us at northwestcf.org/contact

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MacCallum Family Fund

"I spent so much time at the veterinarian's office, meeting sick animals and their caregivers," said Shirley.

"There is a real need in our community to reach out to sick animals whose caregivers don't have the means to provide them with life-sustaining medical care."

Donate to the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation MacCallum Family Fund for Animal Welfare online at northwestcf.org/donate

Grants from the MacCallum Family Fund for Animal Welfare

The **MacCallum Family Fund for Animal Welfare**, established in 2013, has provided for the emergency medical care and alleviation of suffering for dogs and cats in Northwest Connecticut, including:

Delta, a young Terrier, who needed multiple surgeries and medications after having been hit by a car;

Floyd, a homeless kitten with a broken leg who had taken shelter in a local barn; and

Honey, a four-year-old orange tabby kitty in need of monthly diabetic care.

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Phyllis Dower Joins the Legacy Society

In anticipation of retiring and returning to the Northwest Corner, Phyllis purchased an antique home in Winsted, where she currently resides. She retired from the New Jersey Department of Public Health and moved to Winsted, working for the Connecticut Department of Public Health for six years.

Having retired from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, Phyllis volunteers for many activities with Trinity Episcopal Church in Torrington, and serves as a Trustee for the Friends of the Library, a fundraising organization that provides supplemental funding to Beardsley & Memorial Library.

Seeking to leave her estate to address the needs of low-income residents in North Canaan, Phyllis reached out to her attorney and to the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation for their assistance in establishing the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation **Phyllis Frances Pitcher Dower Fund**, which will be funded by her estate.

"It has always been my desire to be of assistance to others, which is reflected in a lifetime of service to others," said Phyllis. "The Phyllis Frances Pitcher Dower Fund will ensure the continuation of that desire."

The Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation **Phyllis Frances Pitcher Dower Fund** will provide financial assistance to low-income residents of North Canaan, including assistance with rent, food, clothing, heat, utilities, disaster assistance, elderly care, child care, and medical expenses.

Fleet General Fund Helps Litchfield Celebrate 300 Years



In September, hundreds of local residents and visitors came to the historic Litchfield Green to celebrate Litchfield's 300th birthday. The free daylong event was organized by the all-volunteer Litchfield Patriots.

A grant from the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation **Fleet General Fund** helped make the event possible.

"Without the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation Fleet General Fund this celebration for Litchfield's anniversary would not have been possible," said Rosemarie Greco, Litchfield Patriots member.

An 18th century village set up on the green encouraged visitors to learn about early village life, such as medical treatments, apocathy and musket safety. The Sons of the American Revolution established a military camp, complete with a revolutionary war recruitment officer. The Daughters of the American Revolution shared tools to help visitors research their genealogy.

View photos of Litchfield's 300th anniversary celebration at northwestcf.org/litchfield

Be What's Possible — Join the Legacy Society

You can Fight Disease
Inspire Children
Promote the Arts
Preserve the Environment
Feed the Hungry
Shelter the Homeless



LEGACY
SOCIETY

You can make things better, now.
You can make things better, forever.

Working with your advisor and the Community Foundation, you can include language in your will or trust specifying that a gift be made to the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation as part of your estate plan.

If you have left a gift in your will to the Community Foundation, you are a member of the Legacy Society. Being a member of the Legacy Society gives you the opportunity to participate in **special gatherings** and **educational programs** with like-minded people who are committed to supporting the needs of our communities through the Community Foundation.

Other benefits include:

- networking opportunities to learn what others are planning in order to create good in an everlasting and meaningful way
- opportunities to meet and discuss charitable giving with the individuals who provide stewardship for your philanthropy
- complete flexibility in designing how you want your philanthropy to be distributed; we assiduously carry out your charitable intentions
- the comfort of knowing that your fund and its grants are guaranteed to stay local, with fiduciary oversight
- special recognition in newsletters and annual reports, unless anonymity is desired; and
- the peace of mind knowing that your fund's principal is invested wisely and safeguarded

If you have included the Community Foundation in your estate planning or would like more information about the Legacy Society, please contact Bradford Hoar at 860.626.1245 or bhoar@northwestcf.org.

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50 Years of Building Strong Communities, Together



Carlton D. and Jenny R. Fyler

By 1997, many of those who had provided the gifts that created the Foundation had passed away, but what they had created, a Community Foundation providing grants in support of the arts, education, basic human needs, animal care and protection, and conservation in Northwest Connecticut, was already having a positive long-lasting impact, and growing quickly.

In 1999 and again in 2005, the Community Foundation expanded its service within Northwest Connecticut, and became known as the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation.

Through the vision of local citizens—their gifts of time and talent, annual financial contributions, and bequests from their estates, the Community Foundation has grown from its initial assets of \$15,000 to almost \$102 million—from supporting Torrington area nonprofits with grants to working with hundreds of nonprofits throughout Northwest Connecticut, to provide educational resources, as well as opportunities to convene and collaborate.

Learn more about Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation history at northwestcf.org/history

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Edward W. Diskavich Fund Helps Public Works Staff Fight Invasive Species

Japanese Knotweed can be spread by mowing devices and is most effectively treated early on. It's important to keep it away from rivers, where it moves downstream and begins to spread on riverbanks.

Event attendees learned the appropriate mix of herbicide to kill the weed without damaging nearby plants as well as injection techniques, whereby herbicide is injected directly into weed stems. Hands-on demonstrations prepared the crews to effectively eradicate Japanese Knotweed in their towns.

"We are grateful to the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation **Edward W. Diskavich Fund** for providing us with the grant to fund this, the first regional invasive plant management effort in the state of Connecticut," said Tom Zetterstrom event organizer.

View videos of the Japanese Knotweed workshop at northwestcf.org/knotweed



Local public works staff learn how to treat invasive Japanese Knotweed.

Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation 2018 At-A-Glance

Founded | 1969
 Assets | more than \$101 million
 Geographic Area | 20 towns in Northwest Connecticut
 Funds under management | 286
 Scholarships Awarded | \$158,500
 Grants Awarded | \$3.9 million
 Gifts Received | \$2.3 million

Also Online...

Community Foundation Accredited with National Standards

The Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation was recently accredited with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations®—the highest standards for philanthropic excellence.

Learn more at northwestcf.org/standards

Year-End Giving Guide

The 2019 year-end giving guide is available on the Community Foundation website. The Guide includes instructions and deadlines for year-end gifts to your fund and grants/disbursements from your fund that support the communities you love and the causes that matter.

Learn more at northwestcf.org/year-end

2018 Community Report is Online

People for People highlights the more than \$2 million in gifts and more than \$4 million in grants and scholarships that helped shape our Northwest Connecticut communities in 2018—gifts and grants that worked toward the challenges we face together: outmigration, gender equity, social justice, opioid addiction, food security, and access to education, among many others—and the collaborative efforts of nonprofits crafting solutions that benefit all of us.

Learn more at northwestcf.org/publications

Women & Girls Fund Accepting Grant Applications

The Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation Women & Girls Fund will be accepting grant applications in January 2020 in support of programs that serve women and girls in the development of economic self-sufficiency by means of education, financial literacy and social services.

Learn more at northwestcf.org/womenandgirls



33 East Main Street P.O. Box 1144 Torrington, CT 06790
www.northwestcf.org T 860.626.1245 F 860.489.7517
info@northwestcf.org

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Questions or comments?

Contact *theSteward* editor Nicole Carlson Easley at neasley@northwestcf.org or 860.626.1245

Explore the benefits of a donor advised fund at northwestcf.org/donor-advised