



On Trend: Home Show Experts Offer Products and Advice



Eastern CT's Premier Home Show is the perfect chance to discover new trends in building, decorating and landscaping, and find the right professionals to make your dream home come true. We spoke to just a few of the exhibitors who will be at the Home Show and asked them share what they will have on display at the ECT Home Show on March 14-15 at Foxwoods Resort Casino's Premier Ballroom.

Bringing the outdoors in is a major trend in home design. "We're seeing a lot of interest in big doors that give floor-to-ceiling and wall-to-wall views and open an entire living space to the outdoors," said Mike Saccoccia, New England sales manager for Riverhead Building Supply. He noted that black interior and exterior finishes are the trend in windows, "not just for contemporary architecture, but also to give an updated look to more traditional styles of homes." Riverhead offers Andersen Windows for new construction or remodeling for all projects and budgets.

Riverhead's Cabinet Sales Manager Todd Morgan sees homeowners choosing colors that embrace coastal living, with painted cabinets in white, soft grays and blues, often with an island in a contrasting color. Cabinet

trends include floating shelves and glass doors. Transitional design, a popular trend, "takes traditional elements and presents them in a contemporary way, creating cabinetry that bridges the gap between old-world style and modern minimalism."

Riverhead will be at the Home Show and you can find them in Quaker Hill, Niantic and Westerly.

Ready to make the outdoors pop, Shari Hewes, president of the family-owned Holdridge Home and Garden, will be there to discuss the best plants to bring color to your garden. "What we are finding is people are looking for instant color," said Hewes. Holdridge carries larger annuals and perennials in bloom that are grown and zoned for this area. Not all retailers cultivate a collection designed to thrive and winter over in New England.

The Holdridge display will include information about the importance of fertilizers and samples of container gardening options. Patio planters are a popular option for gardeners who want to enjoy fresh tomatoes but have a

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And the ECTy goes to...

Read the full list of 2019 Regional Chamber Award winners on page 5.



The Chamber's 70th Citizen of the Year: Michael Rauh

Read the full announcement on page 2

A SPECIAL THANK YOU | Through their commitment to the Chamber, these companies have demonstrated support for the many smaller businesses we serve.



Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Announces Michael Rauh as Citizen of the Year



The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT is pleased to announce that Michael Rauh, President/CEO of Chelsea Groton Bank, has been named Citizen of the Year. He will be honored at a dinner celebration on May 28, 2020, 6 p.m. at Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa.

The Citizen of the Year award is presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding contributions on behalf of the civic and business community. Recipients are nominated for positive impacts made within their organization, through outreach to the community and in service to nonprofits in the region.

Michael Rauh has brought his genuine and intense passion for service to many community boards and committees. He currently serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors for L&M Healthcare and 2019 Chair of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT. He is a past Chairman of the Connecticut Bankers Association and is on the boards of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, The Yale New Haven Health System, the Norwich Free Academy Foundation, the Norwich Community Development Corporation, URI Harrington School of Communication and Media, and the Providence Mutual Insurance Company, in addition to the Chelsea Groton Bank board and Chelsea Groton Bank Foundation board.

"Michael brings energy, thoughtful engagement, and a positive outlook to every endeavor."

A strong believer in nurturing growth in individuals and communities, he focuses his efforts on fostering learning, sharing knowledge, collaborating to forward important causes, and reinvesting in the local community in meaningful ways.

Demonstrating the intersection of these values, the Chelsea Groton Foundation made grants totaling \$300,000 to the Norwich Community Development Fund for the Global City initiative in downtown Norwich for innovative multicultural programming and assistance to multicultural entrepreneurs and small business owners interested in occupying downtown Norwich storefronts. This collaborative approach characterizes Rauh's leadership in supporting thoughtful, impactful solutions for economic and community development.

Dedicated to nurturing talented leaders, Rauh and his leadership team launched Chelsea Groton's Circle of Excellence program in 2019. Available to every bank team member, the program develops the next generation of leaders, instilling in them the bank's extraordinary culture of promoting high-quality service, trust, collaboration, innovation, and positive contributions. He encourages staff to participate throughout the region in leadership positions and programs that develop leaders of self, leaders of others, and leaders of leaders.

In accepting the nomination, Rauh said, "I am honored and humbled to be considered for this award. I have been blessed to work with extraordinary people throughout our region, each doing their own part to make this special place we call home even better. My professional career has been all about helping people achieve their dreams and I've also had the opportunity to spend time on causes that help strengthen our region. I really feel like I've gotten so much back personally from the things I've learned and the people I've met that this award seems like icing on the cake."

"Michael brings energy, thoughtful engagement, and a positive outlook to every endeavor," said Tony Sheridan, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT. "His knowledge, gained through years of professional experience as a community banker, enables him to think creatively and collaboratively about regional issues and assess ways to derive the greatest benefits for all involved."

Past Citizens of the Year include Rodney Butler, of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, Louis Ziegler of the Mohegan Tribal Housing Authority, Mary Lenzini of the Visiting Nurse Association of Southeastern CT, Neil Ryan and Scott Gladstone of Wireless Zone, Mitchell Etes of the Mohegan Tribal Gaming Authority, Maria Miranda of Miranda Creative, Alice Fitzpatrick of the Community Foundation of Eastern CT, and Dr. Grace S. Jones of Three Rivers Community College.

For information about event sponsorships and tickets, contact the Chamber at admin@chamberect.com or 860-701-9113.

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Vitale Aquatic & Tennis

The new home of the Thames Aquatic Club in Ledyard, Vitale Aquatics & Tennis is also home to the Top Dogs juniors tennis team. The facility offers programs in swim, tennis and yoga.

14 Iron Street, Ledyard | thevat.org | (860) 230-7294

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR 18	Business After Hours & YPsocial: One-Year Anniversary of Cafe Otis 5:00 - 7:00 pm 80 Broadway, Norwich
MAR 20	Grand Opening: Century 21 Shutters & Sails 4:00 - 6:00 pm 377 Main Street, Niantic
MAR 25	Conversations and Contacts at Flanagan's 4:00 - 6:00 pm 360 Route 12, Groton
MAR 27	Business Breakfast: The Science and Industry of Wind Energy 7:45 - 9:00 am Three Rivers Community College 574 New London Turnpike, Norwich
MAR 28	Let's Go Local: Night Out in New London 5:00 - 10:00 PM RD86, Garde Arts Center
MAR 31	110th Anniversary Celebration & Annual Meeting 5:30 - 8:00 pm Foxwoods Celebrity Ballroom

Pre-registration is suggested for most events. Call (860) 701-9113 or visit ChamberECT.com to learn more about any event. Cancellation Policy: Notice must be given at least three business days prior to event. No-shows or those unable to cancel in time will be billed.

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small space.

Learn more about your outdoor space at the Home Show's Saturday noon seminar, Creating Backyard Habitats. Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center will share insights about the environment and how to cultivate a space that promotes a healthy ecosystem in your own yard.

When it's time to shut the windows and pull the curtains, a new high-tech solution is available. Marvel Home will be showcasing Hunter Douglas shades that work with any smart home assistant, such as Google Home. Remotely control your shades from the comfort of your chair, while you are away using your smart phone, or with a programmed timer. Gail Grillo, owner and designer, will help you see how these shades can work in your home with direct wiring or battery operation so they are easy to install anywhere. Marvel Home, working with Preston Trading Post, will have a fully furnished living room at the Eastern CT Premier Home Show, so you can see the shades fully functional and beautiful.

Browse nearly 150 booths featuring the latest trends and practical solutions to home renovation at the show hosted by Foxwoods Resort Casino and organized by the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT and the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Eastern CT. The new partnership with Foxwoods Resort Casino means visitors can make a day—and night—of it in a venue that offers world-class dining and entertainment.

Seminars "Financing the Construction of a New Home" from Chelsea Groton Bank and "Prepare Your Home for Sale" by Coldwell Bankers'



Lisa Bernard will be free with your admission on Saturday and Sunday 1p.m., respectively. More seminars are being scheduled.

Eastern CT Premier Home Show brings together a wide range of top-notch local professionals and national brands including builders, landscapers, energy solution providers, utilities, HVAC, pavers, playscapes, interior designers, and the list goes on. Both days are filled with opportunities to learn about products, time to speak directly with contractors, and lots of giveaways from participating vendors and Foxwoods—like overnight stays, golf outings and spa packages.

More details are available now at ECTHomeShow.com. Adults are just \$5 and children under 13 are free.

Eastern CT's Premier Home Show is presented by Riverhead Building Supply and supported by A Beautiful Company.

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10:35 AM

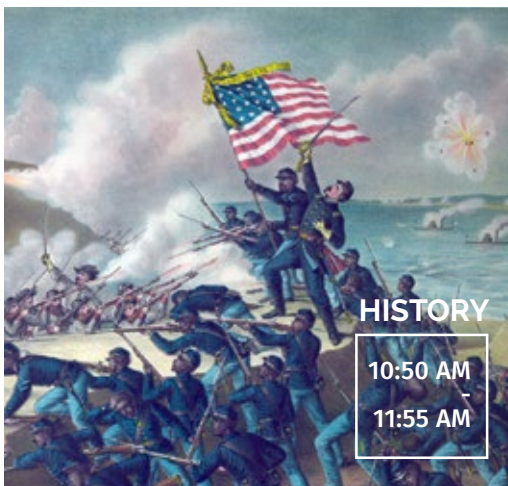
CLASS 1:

Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness

PROFESSOR:

Catherine Sanderson
Amherst College

Princeton Review's Best 300 Professors



HISTORY

10:50 AM
11:55 AM

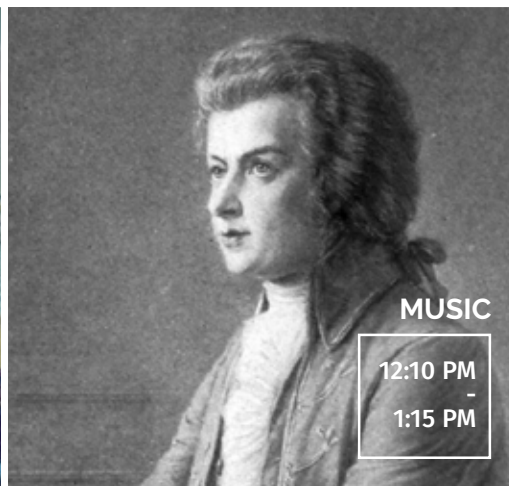
CLASS 2:

Turning Points that Changed American History

PROFESSOR:

Edward O'Donnell
Holy Cross College

Presidential Award for Outstanding Teaching



MUSIC

12:10 PM
1:15 PM

CLASS 3:

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Chamber Honors the Stars of Eastern CT with the ECTys



The glamour of the night, the roaring crowd, the recognition for all the hard work...It's the ECTys!

And it's time for our partners, honorees, and boards to shine. The Chamber celebrates its 110th Anniversary and Annual Meeting on March 31, 5:30-8:00 pm, at Foxwoods' Celebrity Ballroom. We will acknowledge the accomplishments of businesses, individuals, innovators, nonprofits and leaders with our Regional Chamber Awards—the ECTys.

Sponsorships for the Chamber's 110th Anniversary and Annual Meeting are available by contacting your membership manager, Jane Davis (jdavis@chamberect.com) or Gary Rogers (grogers@chamberect.com) or calling 860-701-9113. Tickets are available at ChamberECT.com/events for \$100 before March 24, \$110 after.

Join us for this special evening where we celebrate our longevity, share our accomplishments, honor our partners, and look forward with our strategic plan for the future.

Join us to celebrate the successes of this year's winners:

Small Business of the Year:
Dunklee, Inc. Cooling & Heating

Business of the Year:
Pfizer

Community Revitalization Leader:
A.R. Building Company

New Business Award:
Café Otis

Nonprofit of the Year:
Public Library of New London

Best Place to Work:
Chelsea Groton Bank

Industry Innovator:
Mohegan Sun

Tourism Leader of the Year:
Bill Furgueson and Mystic Museum of Art

Board of Directors Special Award:
Jack Malone, SCADD

Young Professional of the Year:
Matt Spring, Stifel

Volunteer of the Year:
Gail Weber, Minuteman Press

We are joined by our ongoing collaborative partner the Southeastern CT Cultural Coalition, who will also present their annual awards at this event. Our congratulations to the winners:

Outstanding Arts & Cultural Organizations
Mystic Seaport Museum and Eugene O'Neill Theater Center

Outstanding Business Supporter of Arts & Culture
Atlantic Broadband

MEMBER NEWS

Access Health CT Offers Group Health Plans That Work for Your Business

Access Health CT Small Business was established to help small business owners in Connecticut with 50 or fewer employees provide affordable healthcare coverage to their employees. Providing customers with two carriers that currently participate on the exchange—Anthem and ConnectiCare—Access Health CT offers multiple plan options to employers, recognizing that one plan does not meet everyone's needs.

Access Health CT provides for-profit small business employers with tax credits of up to 50% based on eligibility, and not-for-profits may be eligible for a tax credit of up to 35%. They offers brokers, employers and employees with a one-stop shopping experience with all of the tools needed to quote, compare plans, explore contribution structures, itemize billing and quickly enroll in insurance options.

To learn more visit Access Health CT at accesshealthctsmallbiz.com.

S.T.E.P.S Second Annual Collaborative Bowl-A-Thon

Save the date for S.T.E.P.S second annual collaborative Bow-A-Thon taking place on Sunday, May 3, 2020 at Groton Bowling Center in Groton, CT. This is a family-friendly event that includes food specials as well as basket raffles. Bring your friends! Teams of 6-8 for \$200 includes shoe rental and two hours of bowling. <https://2020-Bowl-A-Thon.Eventbrite.com/>

NESS Founder Spike Lobdell Receives US Sailing's Martin Luray Award

The New England Science & Sailing Foundation is proud to announce that CEO and Founder of NESS, Michael "Spike" Lobdell, has been awarded the prestigious US Sailing Martin A. Luray Award. The award recognizes Lobdell's outstanding and unselfish contributions to further public access sailing.

Known popularly as "The Marty," the award is the highest honor bestowed by US Sailing, the sport's governing body, for community sailing programs.

According to US Sailing, Lobdell, "has been responsible for guiding NESS's vision, directing the execution of its strategy, organizing its governance, overseeing its staffing, managing the facility, directing community relations, and driving growth." They add, "Lobdell has shared his wealth of knowledge, his program resources, and his support with countless sailing centers and individuals across the country, and has grown community sailing immensely. These efforts, along with his direct work with NESS, reflect Lobdell's vision, leadership, and, importantly, belief in water as a platform for learning."

Lobdell founded NESS in 2002 and has been energetically working to build the nonprofit's capacity to provide access to sailing and the water for all—especially underserved youth and persons with disabilities.

Business Breakfast Speakers Emphasize Public-Private Partnerships in Successful Economic Development



Peter Denious, Advance CT; Tony Sheridan, Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT; Michael Passaro, Mayor of New London; Glendowyn Thames, CT Department of Economic and Community Development

The overarching message from CT Department of Economic and Community Development's Glendowyn Thames and AdvanceCT's Peter Denious is that we don't give ourselves enough credit in Connecticut. Speaking at the Chamber's February 20 Business Breakfast, they shared the optimistic perspective that is shaping an upcoming economic development strategy.

"We don't really focus on the good and how we take that good and those opportunities and leverage that to lead with our strengths," said Thames. She highlighted some statistics. Connecticut is ranked fifth in the nation for quality K-12 education; comes in as the seventh safest state; and holds the rank of third best overall healthcare in the nation. For workforce talent, the state ranks as the sixth best for women, the fourth most educated workforce, and the third state with the most advanced degrees. Connecticut, situated along the northeast corridor, is located within 500 miles of 30% of the nation's GDP and jobs.

Partnering with the private sector on a new approach to business recruitment and retention is a priority. "Our business leaders are our best ambassadors and advocates for growing our economy," said Thames.

Building on this foundation, Thames outlined five pillars of the current administration's approach, beginning with fiscal stability, spurring businesses' confidence in predictability and tax certainty as well state reinvestment in infrastructure while controlling debt. The pillars include using technology to streamline government, addressing workforce needs, and implementing a comprehensive transportation plan. Finally, a comprehensive growth strategy will be unveiled soon, informed by all stakeholders through a public private partnership with AdvanceCT.

Denious echoed Thames' heralding of Connecticut's strong assets, saying its largely a matter of communicating those advantages. Through convening business leaders, AdvanceCT is looking to discover opportunities and implement solutions to challenges encountered in the state.

According to Denious, the economic action plan employs effective strategies from other states and best practices to lay out a road map for Connecticut's economic development. Principle themes include supporting technological innovation; developing vibrant, livable communities; and reviewing regulations to be more business friendly.

"We need to send a signal to other states that we are looking out for businesses, particularly small businesses," said Denious. "What can we do, what lever can we pull to address either our regulatory framework or any other parts of the friction that businesses face here in Connecticut? Then we need to get out there and broadcast it."

Initiatives like the "digital front door" that allows businesses to conduct more of their interaction with the state electronically are part of improving the experience in the state.

Connecticut is ranked as one of the least business-friendly states, but Denious pointed to some misperceptions that lead to that characterization. For example, the state's corporate income taxes—perceived as high—are average compared to other states. Changing those perceptions will be essential to recruitment and retention.

"We have to market it to ourselves first," said Denious. "I'm not sure if we polled the room there would be wide agreement on what we are selling as a state. What is our value proposition? Then we need to get out and talk about that much more aggressively."

Thames shared information on legislative priorities in line with the changing approach to supporting business development. The administration is advocating for shifting the economic incentives performance-based system, which Thames noted would be low risk for taxpayers and businesses. The administration is putting forward a 25% rebate on payroll withholding costs for companies adding 25 jobs.

The Small Business Express program is shifting as well, moving away from lending to a loan guarantee program in a partnership with private lenders. "We shouldn't be in a position where we're competing with the private, but partnering better with them," said Thames. The DECD can focus limited resources on market gaps in traditionally underserved communities and distressed areas where entrepreneurs do not have the same access to capital.



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BENEFACTOR NEWS

Liberty Bank Academy for Small Business Begins March 26

Liberty Bank's tuition-free Academy for Small Business is a comprehensive training program that provides education and guidance to small business owners on successfully operating a business.

Willimantic Academy for Small Business in partnership with Women's Business Development Council will be held on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 6 to 8 p.m., from March 26-April 28, 202 at Windham Hospital, 112 Mansfield Ave., Willimantic.

Using course material primarily from the FDIC's Money Smart for Small Businesses, the ten-week academy covers topics including Banking Services & Credit Reporting; Organizational Types; Time Management; Financial Management & Record Keeping; Planning for a Healthy Business; Risk Management; Insurance; and Tax Planning.

Following the successful completion of the program, participating business owners can apply for a \$5,000 business line of credit from Liberty Bank (certain conditions apply).

To learn more, contact Pam Days-Luketich at (860) 704-2489 or visit liberty-bank.com/ASB.



Comcast Expands Service to Town of East Lyme, CT

Comcast announced it is expanding its network to the Town of East Lyme, giving residents and businesses a new choice for TV, internet, voice, home security/automation and mobile services.

Comcast's buildout in East Lyme, including the villages of Niantic and Flanders, will benefit the community's residents and businesses. Located within New London County, East Lyme is a coastal community located on Long Island Sound with a seaside village center along Route 156, a busy commercial corridor along Route 161 and quiet residential neighborhoods.



U.S Coast Guard Academy Celebrates Completion of Major Energy Management Project

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) and partners Eversource and Ameresco recently celebrated the completion of a holistic energy management project that brought \$39 million in capital improvements to the United States Coast Guard Academy. Local, state and federal officials last week toured several academy buildings to see the improvements implemented over the past two years to deliver infrastructure improvements, energy efficiency, resiliency, and sustainability across the 87-year-old campus.

Energy cost savings will pay for this \$72.6 million Utility Energy Service Contract (UESC) – the largest ever awarded by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security – over the term of the project's performance period.

Eversource helped the academy secure the contract and, in partnership with Ameresco, led the implementation of the improvements, which will reduce the site's energy consumption by 48 percent and water consumption by more than 15 percent, while saving the academy more than \$2 million in annual energy costs (an 80 percent reduction). The project will reduce the academy's carbon emissions by around 7,800 metric tons of CO2 per year, equivalent to taking more than 1,600 cars off the road.

The project substantively modernized the academy's infrastructure and enhanced resiliency and efficiency, from the barracks to academic laboratories. A vital contributor to the project's success was the strength of the partnership between the academy, Eversource, and Ameresco, as well as the project team's innovative vision for improving the academy's energy management.

Sun Shines on Mystic Aquarium's Seal Splash Fundraiser

After reaching and exceeding their \$25,000 individual challenge goals, Rodney Butler and Rob Valenti joined a large contingent of Mystic Aquarium supporters who plunged into the surf at Eastern Point Beach in Groton for the seventh annual Seal Splash in support of the Aquarium's Animal Rescue program. With several days still left to fundraise, the event has raised nearly \$70,000 for Mystic Aquarium's mission programs including its Animal Rescue Program - a new record for the event.

With an air temperature of 42 degrees and the water at a chilly 29 degrees, Butler, Chairman of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, and Valenti, President/General Manager of the Valenti Family of Dealerships, were among the over 65 hale and hardy participants. 'Splashers' included staff, volunteers, program First Responders and more.

Mystic Aquarium's dedicated Animal Rescue Team provides specialized and compassionate care for the rehabilitation of stranded and rescued animals with the goal of releasing them back into their natural habitat.



ConnectiCare Presents \$4,000 Donation to St. Vincent de Paul Place in Norwich

On January 30, ConnectiCare presented a \$4,234.43 donation to the St. Vincent de Paul Place in collaboration with the Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) tax credit program. The donation will support energy efficient upgrades to their facility. The donation offers organizations the opportunity to continue the great work they do in our communities.

The Connecticut NAA program provides tax credits to local businesses who support municipal and tax-exempt organizations. Through this program, ConnectiCare has been able to donate to 36 of their neighboring non-profits.



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