



Chamber is Open for Business Thanks to Support of Benefactors

Benefactors offer essential support throughout the community, especially during COVID-19

In a bright display of logos, the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT regularly acknowledges our benefactors—the over 30 organizations that contribute above and beyond their Chamber membership to support the work we do in the business community.

Their support is vital for our programs that benefit small businesses and the community as a whole, such as workforce development, economic growth, support for nonprofits, promotion of tourism, and representation of the region's interests in Hartford. Benefactors support events that bring government officials to speak, gather professionals for networking, and inform business owners on prescient topics.

Benefactors are the backbone of the Chamber, and now under the extreme pressures of the COVID-19 crisis, we see how they are the backbone of our community.

The medical professionals in our region have been quick to respond to this crisis, making preparations by setting up drive-up testing sites and educating the public about the best way

to stop the spread of the virus. A special thank you to our frontline healthcare workers at our hospitals, Lawrence + Memorial in New London and Backus in Norwich.

Pfizer committed its resources to fight COVID-19 by sharing tools and insights, marshalling its people, and offering drug development expertise and manufacturing capabilities. Pfizer shared in mid-March that they are working with BioNTech SE on a potential COVID-19 vaccine. Pfizer medical professionals may volunteer as healthcare workers and maintain their full pay, benefits, and position through the company's Global COVID-19 Medical Service Program.

Local newspapers, The Day and The Bulletin, are working under difficult circumstances to keep us informed in a fast-moving news cycle. It is at these times we are heartily reminded of the value of strong local news sources.

Our other benefactors offer expert knowledge to businesses. Suisman Shapiro Attorneys-at-Law worked with the Chamber for a seminar on the CARES Act. Professionals at Charter Oak Federal Credit Union, Chelsea Groton Bank, Dime Bank, Liberty Bank, People's United Bank, Putnam Bank, and Webster Bank are helping business

owners navigate the new federal and state programs to find the best solutions for economic assistance.

Benefactors Atlantic Broadband and Comcast have stepped up to keep us connected to our jobs, community and families. They have put measures in place to keep their networks up and running, and they are working with individuals and businesses to weather these tough times. The utility companies we rely on as communities are making sure the power stays on and the supply is steady: CMEEC, Dominion Energy, Eversource, Groton Utilities, and Hocon Gas.

Thanks to our benefactors and members, the Chamber is able to provide resources to small businesses in this difficult time, including information on economic assistance programs, regular teleconferences with government officials, workshops, and opportunities to connect. ChamberECT.com offers links to resources, an informational blog, and promotion of businesses operating in this new climate.

For many of our benefactors in the tourism and entertainment business, this is a time of sacrifice and upheaval. The Mohegan Tribe and the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation have worked cooperatively with the state government

at great cost, making drastic efforts to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Mystic Aquarium and travel partners Aer Lingus and Cross Sound Ferry are feeling the impacts of the shutdown. We appreciate all that these benefactors have done to support us in the past and invite the region to offer their support in the future when eastern CT returns to being the state's favorite tourist destination.

We deeply appreciate the exemplary work being done by these organizations and businesses and the contributions they have made that enable the Chamber to serve the business community.

Our strength in eastern CT has always been our sense of community and willingness to pull together in tough times. While these times are unprecedented, the powerful resolve of our community and country is not. We have a history of uniting to overcome tragedy, and working together, we will soon return to a vibrant, strong economy.

Learn more about Chamber of Commerce Eastern CT benefactors at ChamberECT.com/benefactors. Visit ChamberECT.com/coronavirus-updates for links to resources or reach out at info@chamberect.com or 860-701-9113 to connect with Chamber staff.

Thank you to our Regional Benefactors



Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Foundation Awards Over \$94,000 to 39 Local Organizations

Eastern CT – The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Foundation awarded grants in excess of \$94,000 in support of 39 programs that benefit children and families in the region on March 24, 2020.

“At this critical time for many nonprofits, the Foundation worked to swiftly disburse funds to the recipients,” said Tony Sheridan, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT. “The Board members did a wonderful job of making ready the grants to support these important programs.”

The Foundation, a 501(c)3 overseen by a volunteer board with support from the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT, fulfills its mission to enhance and enrich education and economic opportunities for children and families through generous donations from the business community.

Major fundraisers in 2019 were the 36th Holiday Gala hosted by Mohegan Sun in December and the 8th Annual Bowl-a-Thon at High Rollers Luxury Lanes at Foxwoods Resort Casino last April.

“The Foundation relies on a dedicated team of volunteers and the support of local businesses, who year after year donate generously toward our efforts,” said Louis Ziegler, Chair of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Foundation's Board of Directors. “These events are special because they bring together so many people in a common cause to improve the quality of life for everyone in our region. For hosting a beautiful gala that draws hundreds of people annually, I want to especially thank the Mohegan Tribe and Mohegan Sun. They consistently go above and beyond to make sure the event is successful in its mission to raise much needed funds in support of children and families.”

“I cannot offer enough thanks to our sponsors, committee members, volunteers, Foundation board members, and staff at the Chamber. The success of these events is built on the contributions of so many people,” said Ziegler.

Since 2002, the Chamber Foundation has donated nearly \$1.4 million to numerous local organizations that serve the needs of children. The Foundation's goal is to support projects and programs that enhance and enrich education and economic opportunities for children and families in the Chamber's service area.

This year's recipients will be able to use funding to provide participation in regional activities, toys and books, school supplies, healthy nutrition, winter clothing, intervention for at-risk children, and food pantry items, among many others.

The 2020 Chamber Foundation grant recipients are:

Always Home, Inc., Catholic Charities Diocese of Norwich, Inc., Channel 3 Kids Camp, Children's Museum of SECT, City of Norwich Human Services, Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, Eastern CT Community Gardens Association, Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board, FRESH New London, High Hopes Therapeutic Riding, Inc., Higher Edge, Inc., Hygienic Art, Inc., Immigration Advocacy & Support Center, Madonna Place, Inc, Montville Little League, New England Science & Sailing, New London Homeless Hospitality Center, Norwich Community Backpack Program, Norwich Historical Society, Norwich Rotary Foundation, Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center, Inc., Riverfront Children's Center, S.T.E.P.S., Inc., Safe Futures, Inc., Sea Research Foundation, Shiloh Development Corporation, St. Vincent de Paul Place, Norwich, Inc., Stonington Historical Society, Thames River Community Service, Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc., The Arc Eastern Connecticut, The Lighthouse Voc-Ed Center, Tommy Toy Fund, United Cerebral Palsy of Eastern CT, United Community and Family Services, Inc (UCFS), United Way of Southeastern Connecticut, and Waterford Country School.



Chamber Foundation Offers Four Scholarships

The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Foundation opened its application for four \$1,250 scholarship opportunities for high school seniors in Eastern CT. Students who are planning to attend college or a technical, vocational or apprenticeship program are eligible to apply by the May 15 deadline. Learn more at ChamberECT.com/Chamber-Foundation.



Shop and Dine Local

Visit ChamberECT.com/Chamber-blog for information about our members' services during coronavirus measures. We highlight restaurants offering takeout, curbside and delivery services as well as updates on how you can connect with educational partners to learn and have fun. We have articles on services and shops available now. Join us on the blog for regular articles or follow ChamberECT on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or Instagram for stories, shares and information on our local businesses.

We're always here for small business.

The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT has been a resource for our community for 110 years, and we are keeping the business community connected now. Connected to reliable information on economic assistance. Connected with government. Connected with each other.

Connect with us at ChamberECT.com, info@chamberect.com or call 860-701-9113.