Leadership Eastern CT Program More Valuable Than Ever

Leadership’s essential role is amplified during a crisis. Business, government, and nonprofit leaders in eastern CT have stepped up to the challenges presented by COVID-19, navigating impacts across the community.

Learning about leadership at a time when it is being tested adds a new dimension to the Chamber’s Leadership Eastern Connecticut program. Rising leaders have tapped into this valued resource for professional growth and regional connections for 33 years, and while the format may be different, the timing couldn’t be better.

When events turned virtual this spring, area executives demonstrated their commitment to the program, and ability to pivot, by offering the same direct access to our Leadership participants via Zoom.

Class of 2021 participant Stacy Giacchi, director, On the Spot Catering, shared, “During COVID-19, I believe that these discussions were even more valuable as everyone was dealing with crisis. Discussing these uncertain times with our most respected leaders provided incredible insight to managing during financially and emotionally difficult times. To hear someone speak of their successes is motivational and encouraging, but to be able to share real concerns and vulnerabilities has been invaluable.”

When the Class of 2020 gathered for its graduation—with masks and without congratulatory handshakes—keynote speaker Ulysses Hammond recounted a difficult year in his life. Fulfilling obligations in leadership roles at work and community boards, including the Chamber, he was diagnosed with cancer. He is now cancer free, but he pulled a lesson from that experience that informs how we can look at crisis: “Whenever you have challenges and controversies, that’s when the growth takes place.”

Mr. Hammond encouraged the 28-member class to “treasure and cling to” the relationships they formed over two years in the program, “because they will sustain you in the low and lonely months.”

As the Class of 2020 made “pandemic adjustments,” he pointed to the leadership skills they gained: flexibility, vision, and creativity, and he encouraged them to take those qualities forward to promote equality, inclusivity, and civility as rising leaders in the region’s premier industries.

The Leadership Eastern CT Class of 2022 is forming now. Applications for the two-year program are available on ChamberECT.com/leadership-program through September 8.

“Discussing these uncertain times with our most respected leaders provided incredible insight to managing during financially and emotionally difficult times.”

Continued on page 2
Participants interact directly with top-tier executives in the region, and the wide-ranging curriculum highlights the interacting forces that affect the region. Participants study factors that may be impacting the success of their own organizations, helping them identify synergies to partner effectively. The emphasis on networking with the class and with presenters, as well as with alumni of the Leadership program, contributes to a powerful web in the region that benefits all involved.

Beginning in October, thematically organized sessions explore industry, government, services, and regional organizations. The group also exercises their skills with a capstone community service project, fully implemented by the participants. In the second year, participants coordinate sessions for the incoming class, advancing their networking and leadership execution.

Sponsorships to support the regional program are available for the 2020-21 year and include program tuition and long-term recognition opportunities. Chamber Vice President Megan Gilbert can share details at mgilbert@chamberect.com.

### LEADERSHIP EASTERN CT CLASS OF 2020 GRADUATES

- **Elier Alvarado**
  - Norwich Public Utilities
- **Steven Brabec**
  - Dominion Energy
- **Kate Caristo-Scalora**
  - Reliance Health
- **Brian Cournoyer**
  - Connecticut Hospital Association
- **Holly DePerry**
  - Charter Oak Federal Credit Union
- **Kristen Deveau**
  - Mystic Seaport Museum
- **Jennifer Flower**
  - Mystic Aquarium
- **Justin Gray**
  - Dime Bank
- **Erin Gizio**
  - People's United Bank
- **Chris Goias**
  - Norwich Public Utilities
- **Heather Harris**
  - Waterford Hotel Group
- **Robert Harris**
  - Norwich Public Utilities
- **Ann Marie Maffuid**
  - UCFS Healthcare
- **Meg Martellotta**
  - CorePlus Credit Union
- **Sarah McDermott**
  - Three Rivers Community College
- **Fikiri Newton**
  - Dominion Energy
- **Amy O’Day**
  - Reliance Health (Class President)
- **Samantha Powden**
  - Chelsea Groton Bank
- **Daniel Roberge**
  - Mohegan Sun
- **Janice Schneider**
  - General Dynamics Electric Boat
- **Mark Sciola**
  - Atlantic Broadband
- **Alexa Shelton**
  - Three Rivers Community College
- **Heidi Simmons**
  - UCFS Healthcare
- **Scott Smith**
  - Norwich Public Utilities
- **Bonnie Stanford**
  - Chelsea Groton Bank
- **Megan Susi**
  - Chelsea Groton Bank
- **Katherine Morano**
  - Dime Bank
- **Peter Robinson**
  - First Financial Advisory Services, LLC

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**SEPT 10, 17, 24**
- **Webinar Series: Maximizing Your Network**
  - 12:00 - 1:00 pm | Presented by Rob Thomas USA

**SEPT 15**
- **Webinar: CT-Required Sexual Harrassment Prevention Training**
  - 2:30 - 4:45 pm | Presented by Suisman Shapiro Attorneys-at-Law

**SEPT 23**
- **Webinar: Email Marketing 101**
  - 12:00 - 1:00 pm | Presented by Miranda Creative

**OCT 19**
- **32nd Annual Golf Tournament**
  - Fox Hopyard Golf Club
  - Sponsorships available! ChamberECT.com/golf

**FEB 6 + 7 2021**
- **RESCHEDULED EASTERN CT’S PREMIER HOME SHOW**
  - Foxwoods Resort Casino
  - Saturday 10 am - 7 pm | Sunday 10 am - 5pm

[Watch when you can! Past webinars are now available for download. Visit ChamberECT.com/downloads]
Bringing International Affairs to CT Residents

The Southeast Connecticut World Affairs Council (SECWAC) is a regional organization that aims to foster an understanding of international affairs, foreign policy, and diplomatic history by sponsoring a series of 10-15 meetings annually. It was started in 1999 by a group of former international business leaders and diplomats. SECWAC provides a forum for nonpartisan, non-advocacy dialogue between its members and experts on foreign relations, and is committed to hosting the widest possible range of views, while advocating none. Thus, by maintaining a reputation for impartiality, SECWAC facilitates serious and civil debate on issues bearing on America’s global interests.

SECWAC is an affiliate of the World Affairs Councils of America (WACA, https://www.worldaffairscouncils.org/) in Washington, D.C.; members of SECWAC are also members of the WACA and are entitled to WACA benefits and resources, including the opportunity to attend its annual conference. SECWAC is actively expanding its membership: we endeavor to keep the annual membership fee ($85; $25 for Young Professionals under 35 years; free for students and educators) as low as feasible in order to expand its membership: we endeavor to keep the annual membership fee ($85; $25 for Young Professionals under 35; Guests Welcome for $20/program; always Free for Students)

Members include a diverse group of regional residents, including individuals from the non-profit sector, media, humanitarian, government, military and civic organizations, as well as neighbors interested in the World.

Speakers have included current and former diplomats, international businesspeople, political scientists, journalists and independent scholars/authors. Topics have ranged from the migrations of humans across the face of the earth 30,000 years ago to recent developments on US-China-Russia relations, and political and humanitarian developments in Europe and around the world.

Before COVID, our meetings took place at the Old Lyme Congregational Church and at Connecticut College; recently, and in the immediate future, we use the ZOOM platform, hoping to return to in-person meetings when safe to do so.

“SECWAC continues to bring its membership timely and pertinent programs during these unsettled times. Accurate, informed dialogue remains the greatest driver of positive change.” Richard W. Stout III, Chairperson

Please check out our website at http://secwac.org/, or contact info@secwac.org for further information.

Chamber Foundation Awards Six Scholarships

During this difficult time that has impacted many families financially, the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Foundation increased the number of scholarships awarded to 2020 graduates. Granting a total of $7,500, the foundation recognized the achievements of six local students. These students have demonstrated a dedication to their education and to their community, which they hope to continue through their future work.

Cassandra Cannon, Angi Correa, and Sara Beth Bouchard graduated from the Science and Technology Magnet High School of Southeastern CT. Cannon will study nursing at Salve Regina University, Correa will study to become a physician assistant at the University of Saint Joseph, and Bouchard will study biology and genetics at Wesleyan University.

Stonington High School graduate Hope Sowle will attend Carnegie Mellon University to study neuropsychology.

Monn Pierre and Kali Whitford graduated from Norwich Free Academy. Pierre will study psychology at Three Rivers Community College, and Whitford will study architecture at Virginia Tech.
WE’RE COVERING ALL THE ANGLES

ELECTION 2020

Our journalists are in the community, investigating, analyzing, and seeking the information you need so you can make informed decisions for the Presidential and statewide races.

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The Day
Chamber Connects Businesses During COVID Crisis

Being here for businesses—large, medium, and especially small—has looked different over the past five months. Pivoting to the new model, Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT continues to do what we do best: convening, connecting, collaborating, and supporting.

The Chamber finds ways to keep organizations connected to essential guidance, elected officials, economic opportunities, and business to business:

- One of the Chamber’s most important functions is reaching out to businesses one-on-one. Our team has been answering questions, connecting businesses with resources, helping owners navigate the path forward, and supporting continued membership.
- ChamberECT.com links to reliable information and valuable resources. ChamberECT.com/Reopening connects to state guidelines and members with services and products needed to operate safely: PPE, cleaning services and supplies, construction materials and services, rental equipment, signage, and HVAC.
- During the initial shortage of PPE, we acquired and distributed free masks to help local businesses. Masks are still available at ChamberECT.com/masks.
- Elected officials share updates and answer questions in virtual events: Senator Richard Blumenthal, U.S. Congressman Joe Courtney, Governor Lamont, DECD Commissioner David Lehman, and regional state senators. Town Hall Updates beginning with New London, Town of Groton, City of Groton, East Lyme and Waterford are available on Facebook. Visit ChamberECT.com/events.
- President and CEO Tony Sheridan sat on the state’s Reopen Connecticut Small Business Implementation Task Force. He keeps eastern CT connected to state issues as chair of CT Airport Authority and CT Metro Chambers of Commerce.
- Roundtable events with restaurants, hospitality, and real estate professionals let us hear from business owners directly and convey their views to government officials.
- Timely workshops and blogs offer insights from experts in marketing, finance, industrial sanitation, human resources, insurance and more. We create platforms where our member professionals can educate, collaborate, and connect. Business After Hours events moved online, too.
- Promoting small businesses has been a focus in our blogs and communications. We joined with a team of local business to help launch the shop local #LetsGo860 campaign.
- The Chamber with the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce became the Eastern Regional Tourism District’s administrative partner. Working with the 41-town board, the Chambers are supporting tourism through its most challenging time.
- Work with the American Jobs Center and job training with the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board continues and expanded to meet needs of unemployed workers and employers’ changing business models.
- The Chamber Foundation shared generous donations from business leaders with local food banks to address immediate needs in the community.
- All the while, the Chamber is planning for the future. We are exploring economic development initiatives that will foster diverse industries and support growth in the region.

Let us know how we can help you. Connect with the Chamber at info@chamberect.com or call 860-701-9113.
Mitchell College Welcomes New President, Elects New Chair of Board of Trustees

Two changes in executive level leadership at Mitchell College took place on July 1. Dr. Tracy Y. Espy, who recently moved to New London, began her tenure as the college’s eighth president, and Rick D’Avino started his first term as the elected chair of the college’s Board of Trustees.

Espy, an accomplished college administrator, expert in human development and family therapy and the first African-American woman to lead Mitchell, most recently served as provost and vice president of academic affairs at Pfeiffer University in North Carolina.

D’Avino works as a managing director and chairman of Insourced Solutions for Tax at PricewaterhouseCoopers and as a lecturer at Columbia Law School. He also serves on the Penn Law Board of Overseers, is the chair of the Board of Directors of Stamford Academy, and is vice president of National Sawdust, a Brooklyn-based nonprofit that provides state of the art facilities and support to a wide range of composers, musicians, and artists.

Drawn to Mitchell for its supportive liberal arts environment, grounded in the Mitchell Ability Model, Espy has a passion for and deep experience with service learning – connecting students and the larger community for the mutual benefit of one another. With a strong commitment to social justice, she looks forward to exploring ways to expand Mitchell’s learning opportunities to reflect these values.

For more information about Mitchell College, visit www.mitchell.edu.

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The Inn At Mystic
Situated on 14 acres overlooking Fishers Island Sound and Mystic Harbor, The Inn at Mystic offers relaxing accommodations, including rooms with ocean views, Jacuzzis, and wood burning fireplaces.
3 Williams Avenue, Mystic | innatmystic.com | (860) 536-9604

Olde Mistick Village
Stroll beautiful paved walkways and enjoy shopping in distinctive buildings designed to represent a New England Village of about 1720. The picturesque settings of flowers, trees, and duck ponds features shops with some of the most interesting and unique items from Mystic and around the world.
27 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic | oldemistickvillage.com | (860) 536-4941

Rocks 21 Restaurant & Bar
Rocks 21 offers a menu of seafood classics, comfort foods, and signature dishes. Located at the Inn at Mystic, local fresh fish to brick oven flatbreads and extensive raw bar are served in the dining room or on the scenic deck.
3 Williams Avenue, Mystic | rocks21.com | (860) 536-8140

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Scranton Motors is a family owned dealer group that is growing, but still small enough to pay attention to the individual customer experience.
774 West Thames Street, Norwich | scrantonchevy.com | (860) 889-3333

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Non-profit organization that serves the Blind and Visually Impaired population of Southeastern CT.
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VINEYARD WIND
Vineyard Wind LLC, an offshore wind development company owned by funds of Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) and Avangrid Renewables, LLC, is currently in the permitting and financing process for the first large-scale offshore wind energy project in the United States.
vineyardwind.com

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Higher Edge Welcomes New Board Members
Sara Baker Bailey is an Assistant Professor in Communication, Media, & Screen Studies at Southern Connecticut State University. She has worked in higher education for over a decade teaching at public universities, many of which serve first in family and minority student populations. Prior to joining the academy, Sara worked in marketing, consulting, and non-profit administration.

John Bairos is a Financial Advisor for Edward Jones Investments in Waterford, CT. His past volunteer experience includes serving on the School Governance Committee at New Britain High School and the Greater Hartford Jaycees. In addition to his current volunteer activities with Waterford youth soccer and baseball, he is a member of the New London Elks Club and the Waterford Rotary Club.

Tashawn Ward is a Customer Solutions Associate at Chelsea Groton Bank. He has a BS degree in Business Management from Eastern Connecticut State University and an MBA. In addition to being selected by the American Bankers Association as an emerging bank leader, Tashawn has excelled at boxing, winning the Western New England Golden Gloves competition in 2019. He is the first Higher Edge student alumnus to be appointed to the board of directors.

The Last Green Valley Announces New Board Officers and Members
At its recent Annual Meeting, held at Creaser Park in Coventry, members of The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV) elected new officers and board members.

Joining Board Chairman Mike Nelson of Norwich, CT are Myra Ambrogi of Plainfield, CT as Vice Chairman; Lisa Hayden of Sturbridge, MA as Secretary, and Marty Nieski of Woodstock, CT as Treasurer of the Board of Directors. Current board members Karyn DiBonaventura of Pomfret, CT and Wayne Schmidt of Pomfret, CT were re-elected to a three-year term.

The TLGV Board also welcomes the following first-time board members for three-year terms: Ann-Marie Aubrey, Killingly, CT Director of Planning and Development; Kent Boudreau of Union, retired pilot; Sandra Gibson-Quigley of Sturbridge, MA, retired teacher; Christopher Hadis of Oxford, MA, Massachusetts Department of Agriculture; Courtney Squire of Pomfret, CT, owner of Unbound Glory Farm.

Joining the board for the first time and filling a two-year vacancy is Rick Canavan of Pomfret, CT, environmental scientist.

Joining the board for the first time and filling one-year vacancies are Kwasi Acheampong from Brimfield, MA, founder of Our Bright Future, Inc., and Nicholas Adamopoulos from Webster, MA, tax attorney.

Advanced Group Opens New Custom Cabinetry and Woodworking Shop
Advanced Group has opened a brand new woodworking workshop in New London to provide locally crafted custom cabinetry and woodworking opportunities to all of our clients and contracts. Equipped with state-of-the-art woodworking and cabinetry tools, our new woodworking workshop is equipped to bring any custom design our clients can imagine to life. Our master carpenters and woodworkers have been hard at work to create custom pieces to our clients living room walls, beautiful bathroom shower benches, stunning kitchen countertops and stunning cabinetry, all created locally in our community. E-mail us at support@advimpllc.com.

Chelsea Groton Bank Team Members Earn Degrees, Diplomas and Certifications
Chelsea Groton Bank team members recently earned bachelor degrees, financial diplomas and certifications in various banking specialties.

Two team members earned degrees from Southern New Hampshire University: Rebecca Dambach, Customer Solutions Specialist in Sprague, earned a Bachelor of Accounting and Marielle Winkelman, AS, Customer Solutions Manager in Waterford, earned a Bachelor of Business Administration with a concentration in Finance.

The Center For Financial Training (CFT), dedicated to providing professionally administered banker education and training that continually meets the educational needs of employees in the financial services industry throughout our geographic market, recognized three Chelsea Groton team members for earning diplomas: Chrissy Caplet, AVP, Regional Sales and Service Manager for the Inland Region, in General Financial Services, Advanced Financial Services, and Consumer Lending; Dorothy Houde, Customer Care Representative, studied Financial Services Operations and Consumer Lending; and Jennifer Seufferling, AS, Customer Solutions Manager of the North Stonington branch, earned a diploma in Financial Services Operations.

Professional certifications were also recently earned: Ruth Eckhoff, BSA Analyst, became a Certified AML Fraud Professional (CAFP); Miria Gray, AS, Community Education Officer is now a Certified Financial Educator Instructor (CFEI); Sara Lundy, AS, Compliance Administrator is a Certified Regulatory Compliance Manager (CRCM); and Alee Rogan, Financial Services Associate, passed the CT Insurance Exam.

Mystic Aquarium’s Annual Fun Run for Penguins goes Virtual
Mystic Aquarium annual Run/Walk for the Penguins fundraiser will go virtual in 2020. Not only will the new format allow the Aquarium’s community to continue its support of penguin conservation safely but also in fun and unique new ways. From adding a 10K option for running enthusiasts to a .5k waddle for the more sedentary, the goal remains to raise funds to benefit Mystic Aquarium’s mission programs including the conservation efforts of endangered African penguin populations now through October 10.

To learn more about the new 2020 options or to register visit MysticAquarium.org

Five Suisman Shapiro attorneys named to 2021 Best Lawyers® list
Suisman Shapiro Attorneys-at-Law is pleased to announce that 5 lawyers have been included in the 2021 Edition of The Best Lawyers in America. Since it was first published in 1983, Best Lawyers has become universally regarded as the definitive guide to legal excellence.

Special Thanks to Our Regional Benefactors