



Upcoming Event:

11th Annual Social Service Recognition Event | Dec. 16 | 8:30 - 10:30 AM

Join us virtually in honoring the valuable social service agencies of eastern Connecticut who work tirelessly to improve our region's quality of life.

Visit [ChamberECT.com/events](https://ChamberECT.com/events) to register



[ChamberECT.com/reopening](https://ChamberECT.com/reopening)  
Reopening CT guidelines, resources and more.

# Building for the Builders

Leadership Eastern CT community service supports Habitat for Humanity



Members of the Chamber's Leadership Class of 2021 present \$5,000 donation to Habitat for Humanity toward future beautification projects as part of their community service project. They are pictured on the rebuilt access ramp.

There's an old saying about the cobbler's children not having shoes. When your institution's mission is building homes for others, as is the case with Habitat for Humanity, all your energy goes into that mission, and there is not time or resources to devote to your own projects.

Since the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT is often in the background helping nonprofits so they can help others, Leadership Eastern CT stepped up to help Habitat make some needed improvements to their New London offices.

Leadership Eastern CT is two-year program for area professionals to explore Eastern Connecticut, learn about its leaders and challenges, and discover

how they can participate in its success. A community service project is part of the program each year.

This fall the Leadership Class of 2021 raised over \$11,000 and volunteered their time to improve the accessibility and appearance of Habitat's Victorian-era building at 337 Board Street. The Leadership team worked over several weekends on maintenance projects, including removing stumps and overgrown shrubs, replanting the landscaping, and sanding and painting railings as well as the Habitat sign.

A major component of the project was rebuilding the accessibility ramp. Dean Rowe, an operations manager at Dominion Energy and Leadership Class Participant, led the construction project,

dedicating hours and know-how to the essential improvement.

In addition to the completed work, the Class of 2021 donated \$5,000 toward future beautification efforts and \$400 in gift cards from local businesses to recognize the Habitat for Humanity staff.

The project not only benefits this local organization. As Leadership classes work together to guide the project, they develop relationships with each other, the community organizations they assist, and the donors who respond to their outreach for funds and materials.

Financial and in-kind donations for the Habitat project included Burnett's Country Garden, Chelsea Groton Bank, Dominion, Eversource, General Dynamics Electric Boat, Holdridge Home and Garden, Rings End, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, Lowe's, Norwich Public Utilities, and personal donations.

Completing this year's community service project included navigating COVID-19. While this introduced some delays, it did not dissuade the class from enthusiastically throwing themselves into the project. Typically culminating in a large celebration and ribbon cutting, this year's project was marked by a smaller ceremony on November 10.

While Leadership Eastern CT joined the rest of the world in pivoting last spring to an online model, the value of the program remained, as making connections felt more important than ever.

The program is structured to

introduce eastern CT professionals to the many facets of the local economy and community through thematic sessions. "My experience as a participant in the program was an eye-opening introduction to the region's healthcare, education, judicial, and economic strengths and challenges. It took me well beyond my day-to-day discipline. Each monthly session provided connections and thought-provoking discussion and reflection led by dynamic speakers," said Daniel Jahne, LEP, associate at Fuss & O'Neill, Inc., Class of 2021.

The Class of 2022 began their two-year program in person, but behind masks, this October, sponsored generously by Pat Munger Construction Company. The sessions continue to inspire and connect even as they have moved to a hybrid of virtual and in person activities that meet COVID safety measures. Members of the Class of 2021 take the leadership role and coordinate events for the new class.

Leadership Eastern CT has been building relationships in the community since 1987. With hundreds of alumni, the program represents a network of community members who have gained a deep appreciation of the region and continue to find ways to give back.

Learn more about the Chamber's Leadership program at [ChamberECT.com/leadership-program](https://ChamberECT.com/leadership-program) or call the Chamber at 860-701-9113. Applications open each summer for local professionals and this can be offered as an excellent development opportunity for employees.

# Think local

## Click Your Way to Community Businesses

Click and shop. With so much time in front of our screens, shopping virtually has become more of a habit at the same time that shopping locally has never been more important.

Hit hard by the pandemic, local businesses need our support, and the Chamber is working to keep them front of mind and a mouse click away. We set a goal to help businesses continue to create relationships and build their brand when foot traffic is down and web traffic is up.

Tapping into the trend, the Chamber brought the Holiday Shopping Trail online for 2020. This annual event for local retail, entertainment, restaurant, and services in its third year offers free promotion for local businesses, sponsored by Comcast Business, The Day, Hall Communications, and Community Health Center, Inc.

Shoppers earn chances to win great prizes with online challenges, such as sharing a shopping selfie, visiting a store virtually, or completing a purchase. Highlighting special services, safety protocols, and linking to online stores, the Chamber offers a much-needed boost during a challenging retail season, encouraging online as well as in-person experiences.

Link to local businesses on our blog and directory at [ChamberECT.com](https://ChamberECT.com) and through social media, @chamberect. The Chamber creates timely listicles and posts with places to shop, holiday meals to enjoy, things to do, and gift ideas.

Members are getting to know each other online as well, through webinars, recognition events, and sharing their stories on the blog. The Chamber celebrated the Eastern CT Regional Chamber Award honorees with videos on Facebook, providing the chance for other professionals to share congratulations. We invite area professionals to recognize Social Service agencies at our December 16 event, focused on giving these hardworking agencies a chance to connect and take a breath.

Sharing in our mission to support local businesses, Regional Benefactors and program sponsors demonstrate their commitment through these opportunities.

To learn more about Chamber programs, join the Holiday Shopping Trail, or connect with our membership managers, visit [ChamberECT.com](https://ChamberECT.com) or call 860-701-9113.

Keep clicking, and keep it local!



CHAMBER of COMMERCE  
EASTERN CONNECTICUT

# Holiday Shopping Trail & Challenge

NOV. 28 - DEC. 24

SHOP LOCAL. EARN POINTS. WIN PRIZES.



TRAVEL THE TRAIL BY  & 

NEW for 2020!

Begin your holiday shopping adventure at

[ChamberECT.com/trail](https://ChamberECT.com/trail)

COMCAST BUSINESS

The Day

Hall Communications | Community Health Center, Inc

SCAN ME



The Holiday Shopping Trail is online this year with challenges you can complete every day. The more you click, share, and shop, the more chances you have to win!

Play to win the **Grand Prize**—a **\$500 splurge** at the business of your choice—or one of many great prizes from shops, restaurants, and venues on the Trail, including gift cards, gift baskets, gadgets, home items, and more! *Terms apply.*

THANK YOU TO OUR REGIONAL BENEFACTORS

