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## UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB 4 | 10:00 - 11:00 am [Webinar] **CT Paid Leave: What you Need to Know**

FEB 18 | 8:30 - 9:30 am | **Virtual Business Breakfast: U.S. Senator Blumenthal**

# 5 Ways to Maximize Your Membership Now

1.

### Member discounts benefit you 3 times

**Promotion:** Offer a discount to other members and we will share it!

**Employee benefit:** All your employees are Chamber members, too, and they can enjoy discounts on prescriptions, at Foxwoods, or any other member promotions. They just need to login at ChamberECT.com

**Savings:** A good deal is a great thing anytime, but finding savings now is particularly important. Members save on services and products with UPS, Constant Contact, Lenovo, Avis and Budget rental cars. We even have a health insurance option that saves businesses 15 to 35% on healthcare premiums.

2.

### Business highlights share your business story

Right now you may not be meeting people in person, but you can introduce yourself through our popular blog, distributed to our entire membership and contact list through eNews and featured on our website. Visit ChamberECT.com/business-highlight to learn more.

3.

### eNews gets the word out

Sent to 8,000 inboxes our weekly newsletter connects your news with business professionals. Members enjoy 2 for 1 ad buys right now at ChamberECT.com/advertise. Share new services, introduce staff, or tout accolades by logging into the member portal to add your news release.

4.

### Social media events celebrate your successes

Our giant scissors are still sharp and ready to announce grand openings, re-openings, and anniversaries. We host Facebook Live events so celebrations are COVID compliant, but we offer the same promotion and outreach.

5.

### Webinars and networking events keep you connected

Chamber events may have changed platforms, but we are still connecting you to the information you need from influential speakers. Workshops with knowledgeable members give you the chance to build relationships with local experts you can count on. Gathering in a Zoom room with new faces is a great break in your remote day. Visit ChamberECT.com/events to see our full calendar and register. If you missed an informative event, register to access the recording!



**Too much news, not enough room.** We pack as much as we can into these pages, but there are up-to-date resources, news, events, blogs, and membership benefits at [ChamberECT.com](http://ChamberECT.com)

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



# New Roles, New Focus

## Chamber staff share new approaches to serving members



**Tony Sheridan**  
President & CEO

This past year we all experienced significant changes in how we do business. Each day as I reach out to learn how we can best serve our members and the community, I am impressed with the resilience, innovation, and generosity I have seen in eastern Connecticut.

The Chamber staff has also pivoted with creative approaches, taken on new roles, and shifted their focus to meet members' needs during this very different year.

Megan Gilbert, who has been with the Chamber for eight years, accepted the position of Vice President in March. A challenging time to assume a new role, her in-depth knowledge of the Chamber has been invaluable.

Courtney Assad, another of the Chamber's long-serving staff with six years, filled the newly designed role Director of Administrative Partnerships as her responsibilities serving outside agencies expanded to include our partnership with the Eastern Regional Tourism District.

Our new Program and Event Manager Stacy Herr comes to us with extensive event planning experience, working 18 years in the industry—the last four at her family's business On the Spot Catering. Her knowledge of the region was further expanded in her role as co-president of the Leadership Class of 2021.

In their own words, Chamber staff share how we are working every day to help members now.

### New Focus



**Jane Davis**  
Membership Manager

I have served in this role for over four years with great pride and enthusiasm for our Chamber and our region! Certainly, this year required reevaluating what is most important to our many members and the community as a whole. I miss meeting with members as often, but I have uncovered ways to do what I love most—serving as a guide and connector to the many resources and supports that the Chamber has to offer. I have worn many hats over the course of my career, both entrepreneurial and traditional, and this unique experiential perspective has been key to tailoring solutions and opportunities to the organizations in the region.



**Gary Rogers**  
Membership Manager

I'm spending more and more of my time reaching out to members just to see how they are doing and how we can help. Businesses are working hard to adapt and need to find new ways to promote their businesses, products, and services; so, I'm helping them leverage the many marketing resources the Chamber offers. I also spend a lot of time making business connections and introductions to link members with other members and resources in the region.



**Gina Mello**  
Administrative Assistant

While I miss greeting members at events, I continue to work closely with both current and prospective members as their first point of contact to assist them with their needs. Members connect with me as I update their records, create their directory listings for our website, and reserve advertising space in our weekly eNews. I really enjoy learning about all of our unique members and meeting new people in the community through this process. Our Service Person of the Month program moved to virtual events, which I coordinated with local community service clubs.

**New Roles**



**Megan Gilbert**  
Vice President

Transitioning into the role of Vice President just at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has certainly not been easy, pivoting all of our traditional events and offerings to a suddenly virtual, economically-challenged world. I've been humbled spending much of my time connecting with members to learn about their difficulties, and, though less frequent lately, their successes. My role is dedicated to supporting a wonderful team of colleagues, adding value to our membership offerings, and helping to navigate a sustainable path forward for the organization. I am passionate about supporting the Chamber's future as a key regional institution for building networks, gathering resources, and rebuilding our resilient economy.



**Courtney Assad**  
Director of Administrative Partnerships

I am excited to be serving the Chamber in this new role that brings together my previous work for the Southeast CT World Affairs Council, the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Eastern CT and our new administrative partnership with the Eastern Regional Tourism District together. Additionally, I provide staff support for the Chamber's Legislative Council, Metro Chamber Group, and the Board of Directors. These mutually beneficial partnerships support important organizations while facilitating collaboration across the region.

**New Staff**



**Stacy Herr**  
Program and Event Manager

I am pleased to have joined the Chamber in this role, planning and implementing new and existing Chamber programs and events, such as the Leadership Program, Business Breakfasts, Young Professionals networking, workshops, webinars, and more. Translating existing events to a virtual platform while maintaining valuable, engaging, and rich content during this time has been an exciting challenge. I look forward to the day when we are celebrating and gathering in person again, but until then, the Chamber is creating unique opportunities for our members virtually.



**Lori Thompson**  
Office Manager

While the part of my job managing member accounts means I am often working behind the scenes, I also enjoy opportunities to connect with members on the phone, in the office, or at events. I can be a resource to members needing assistance with their billing, account set up, event registrations, referrals, or any questions they may have.



**Tracy Tremblay**  
Business Services Representative

Working with the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board through a partnership with the Chamber, I can help members with their hiring needs and share information about hiring incentive funding when available. I can also refer businesses to other resources as well. One focus is working with local manufacturers to connect them with recent graduates of EWIB's training programs, but I am available to assist all types of industries and businesses, large and small, to help meet workforce needs.



**Colleen Gresh**  
Communications Specialist

Our communications during the pandemic have been focused on two things: getting important safety and funding information to members and promoting our businesses and organizations hardest hit by COVID restrictions. We are always looking for stories to share so reach out and let me know about your organization. We encourage all our members to visit the Chamber blog and member news for the latest on local businesses, restaurants, and other venues in order to learn ways to shop local and support our community.



**Emily Brannigan**  
Web and Graphic Designer

I work with members and Chamber staff to keep our website informative and easy to navigate. As everyone has moved to more digital platforms, I helped rethink some of our events for an online approach. This year we moved the Holiday Shopping Trail from a passport to an interactive website to shoppers with local businesses. We also honored our Eastern CT Regional Chamber Award winners in a new print and digital campaign. I am available to help members design ads for our website, publications, and digital newsletter.

## BENEFACTOR NEWS

## Pfizer CT Announces Beginning of 2021 Community Grants Campaign

Local non-profit organizations are invited to apply for Pfizer Connecticut's 2021/2022 competitive grants.

Applications from organizations serving communities in Southeastern Connecticut, the greater New Haven area, and southern Rhode Island will be considered.

Priority will be given to programs that bring STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) to students from elementary through high school. Additional grants will be made to programs that provide for the underserved or to support local civic and cultural institutions.

Grants will range from \$1,000 and will not exceed \$5,000. The Pfizer CT community grants program does not fund access to healthcare or special events such as fundraising dinners, charity sporting events, galas and award ceremonies, or capital improvements.

Organizations or groups interested being considered for a community grant for programs supported from July 2021 through June 2022 can apply through our NEW CyberGrants portal at: [www.cybergrants.com/pfizer\\_usrd/communitygiving](http://www.cybergrants.com/pfizer_usrd/communitygiving)

Invitation Code: Groton2021

The deadline for applications is March 31, 2021.

For more information, please email [PfizerConnecticutLabs@Pfizer.com](mailto:PfizerConnecticutLabs@Pfizer.com).

## Dominion Foundation Grant Allows The Arc ECT to Help People with IDD Stay Connected

An innovative program seeking to prevent isolation of people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the statewide initiative helps people with disabilities stay electronically connected to families, caregivers, medical professionals, and support staff. The Dominion Grant will allow The Arc ECT to identify and assess the communications needs of people with IDD. Equipment, training and services will keep people online at a time when social distancing could further isolate an already marginalized group of people.

To learn more about The Arc Eastern Connecticut and its programs throughout the region, visit [TheArcECT.org](http://TheArcECT.org) or contact Denise Tift at (860) 889-4435, ext. 116.

## Eversource works with UConn to reduce energy use and advance overall sustainability

As part of its long-term partnership with UConn, Eversource has worked with the university to reduce energy use, cut operational expenses, and advance its overall sustainability and carbon neutrality goals.

Most recently, several energy efficiency upgrades were completed in the Marine Sciences Building at UConn's Avery Point campus, such as optimizing air changes in labs, installing exhaust controls on three boilers to maximize their efficiency, adjusting controls and schedules in the building management system, and installing LED lighting.

These improvements are helping the Avery Point campus reduce natural gas use by more than 50,000 cubic feet per year and cut carbon emissions by more than 300 tons – the equivalent of planting 355 acres of forests.

## Holiday Shopping Trail's Successful Pivot



Traveling the trail—exploring eastern CT and discovering downtowns and businesses—was the concept that launched the Chamber's annual shop local promotion three years ago. In 2020, customers felt more inclined to shop from home, and the Holiday Shopping Trail responded by moving online. Getting local businesses in front of stay-at-home shoppers helped sales in a tough season.

The Holiday Shopping Trail promotion was made possible through the generous sponsorship of Comcast, The Day, Community Health Centers, Inc., and Hall Communications.

The website that replaced printed passports provided advantages that make the platform a great choice going forward. Going digital increased measurable participation 300% with active users engaging multiple times, resulting in over 800 entries. The entry structure incentivized purchases, social media connections, in-person shopping, and following links to online stores and videos. A far-reaching campaign, we achieved over 20,000 impressions on social media. Collected data includes an email list, perfect for future shop local promotions and a benefit for participating stores.

Our \$500 grand prize winner is Laura Asbury, and Tricia Cunningham and Maria Rougeot won \$250 and \$100 in gift cards, respectively. Ten other winners enjoy gift cards and gifts from participating businesses, connecting shoppers with businesses they may not have experienced before.

*Photo:* Grand prize winner, Laura Asbury, sent in a shopping selfie in front of Holdridge Home and Garden as part of the contest.



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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### **2 Wives Brick Oven Pizza**

New owners Kelly and Kristin welcome guests for award-winning brick oven Neapolitan style pizza, salads, sandwiches and more.  
45 Huntington Street, New London | 860.447.9337 | [2wivesbrickovenpizza.com](http://2wivesbrickovenpizza.com)

### **Assured Quality Homecare, LLC**

An award-winning homecare agency and leader in CT providing the gold standard in homecare services and solutions.  
228 Franklin Street, Norwich | 860.373.0428 | [asqhomecare.com](http://asqhomecare.com)

### **Bank Square Books**

Independent bookstore featuring new books for adults and children, gifts and greeting cards, and host to book signings, book clubs, and events.  
53 West Main Street, Mystic | 860.536.3795 | [banksquarebooks.com](http://banksquarebooks.com)

### **Connecticut Creative Arts LLC**

Documentarian style filmmaker, Roland Fahnbulleh, produces highly creative content with over ten years in advertising productions.  
Gales Ferry | 860.389.0148 | [creativearts68.wixsite.com](http://creativearts68.wixsite.com)

### **CR Premier Properties, LLC**

In buying and selling properties, the primary focus is to provide excellent service to clients.  
214 Flanders Road, Suite A, East Lyme 860.451.8067 | [crepremier.com](http://crepremier.com)

### **Custom Marine Canvas**

Custom designed and handcrafted canvas-based products for boats and waterfront properties  
71 Marsh Road, Noank | 860.572.9547 | [custommarinecanvas.com](http://custommarinecanvas.com)

### **Eighty Six Media**

A full service digital marketing agency with a primary focus on content creation and social media marketing.  
New London | 860.460.6017 | [eightysixmedia.com](http://eightysixmedia.com)

### **FIDUCIAM Global Consulting**

Management consulting providers, combining classic management consulting with outstanding technological expertise.  
Easy Lyme | 860.908.9170 | [fiduciamglobal.me](http://fiduciamglobal.me)

### **HR Masterpiece, LLC**

A boutique human resources firm helping small businesses build their HR from the ground up and helping aspiring HR professionals build their career from the ground-up.  
225 Hamburg Road, Suite 6, Old Lyme | 860.608.5076 | [hrmasterpiece.net](http://hrmasterpiece.net)

### **Law Offices of Susan B. Carr LLC**

Attorney Susan B. Carr has been practicing at her Waterford office for almost 20 years and offers clients her wealth of knowledge and experience.  
728 Broad Street Ext., Waterford | 860.701.15135

### **National Alliance for Mental Illness, Southeast CT**

A non-profit, volunteer program that provides support, education and advocacy for Connecticut's citizens affected by mental illness.  
401 West Thames Street, Norwich | 860.930.8283 | [namisoutheastct.org](http://namisoutheastct.org)

### **Norwich Arts Center**

Cultivating the region's appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the arts by providing affordable cultural enrichment through its diverse programs and events.  
62 Broadway, Norwich | 860.887.2789 | [norwicharts.org](http://norwicharts.org)

### **Operation Fresh Start**

Starting with a luggage drive for foster children that gathered 600 suitcases, duffle bags, backpacks, and 300 toiletry bags, they support many organizations and projects in the community.  
Pawcatuck | 860.460.8502

### **Orchid Maids, LLC**

A team of passionate, enthusiastic professionals who love cleaning and, most importantly, care for their clients for the ultimate cleaning and customer experience.  
172 Summit Street, Norwich | 860.800.5958 | [orchidmaids.com](http://orchidmaids.com)

### **Phoenix Dining and Entertainment**

Offering a unique dining experience, exceptional service, and exhilarating culinary creations combined with top-notch entertainment.  
215 Liberty Street, Pawcatuck | 860.346.3888 | [phoenixdande.com](http://phoenixdande.com)

### **SARAH Inc.**

Serving children, adults, and families across Connecticut to enhance and enrich the lives of those with Differing Abilities.  
1620 Boston Post Road, Westbrook | 860.399.1888 | [sarah-inc.org](http://sarah-inc.org)

### **Skips Wastewater Services**

Specializing in septic tank pumping, repairs, real estate inspections and septic installations.  
123 Cross Road C-1, Waterford | 860.405.7625 | [skipswastewater.com](http://skipswastewater.com)

### **Spicer's Marinas, LLC**

Accommodating 140 boats and offering a full range of support services including hauling, launching, bottom painting, full fiberglass and mechanical repairs.  
93 Marsh Road, Noank | 860.536.4978 | [spicersmarina.com](http://spicersmarina.com)

### **Synodi & Videll, LLC**

Providing quality legal services in the areas of real estate, wills and estates, personal injury, employment, business and probate.  
65 Boston Post Road, Waterford | 860.447.3220 | [attorneynewlondonct.com](http://attorneynewlondonct.com)

### **The Eugene Atwood Fund**

Established in September of 1916 with a mission to aid deserving industrious young people who are making an honest effort to accomplish the best results in life.  
107 Water Street, Suite 2s, Stonington | 860.535.0005 | [eugeneatwoodfund.org](http://eugeneatwoodfund.org)

### **The Pallet Guy**

Our company provides wooden pallets to companies in need, and we also pick up any excess pallets the company wants to get rid of.  
73 Lincoln Avenue, New London | 860.625.6864

### **The Tin Peddler**

Locally owned and operated, The Tin Peddler offers carefully selected locally sourced produce, meats, dry goods and grocery.  
230 Norwich Westerly Road, North Stonington | 860.245.4249 | [thetinpeddler.com](http://thetinpeddler.com)

### **Toosie Slide LLC**

Offering party rentals such as water slides, bouncy houses, cotton candy machines and more.  
Gales Ferry | 860.47SLIDE | [toosieslidellc.com](http://toosieslidellc.com)

## MEMBER NEWS

## Eastern Regional Tourism District Announces Final Awardees for 2020 Regional Marketing Partnership Program

Over \$200,000 in grant funding has been allocated to market eastern Connecticut tourism

The Eastern Regional Tourism District (ERTD) today announced the final funding recipients for the 2020 Regional Marketing Partnership Program. 9 additional programs were approved for marketing grants to promote tourism and hospitality opportunities in Eastern Connecticut. The total funding of all projects, including the initial projects announced in September totaled \$202,267 in matching grant funding to support local businesses and eastern Connecticut's tourism economy.

"Tourism is a major economic driver in eastern Connecticut that generates billions in business sales and tax revenues every year and supports thousands of jobs," said Governor Ned Lamont. "I applaud this program's efforts to bolster eastern Connecticut's crucial tourism industry by further raising the visibility of the state's tourism opportunities, which are as diverse as the grant recipients."

The additional 9 programs include marketing initiatives to raise the visibility of tourism opportunities in eastern Connecticut towns and improve access and information regarding Connecticut's trails and state parks, raise the visibility of tourism opportunities and attractions in eastern Connecticut towns and support the promotion of eastern Connecticut's diverse artistic community. The nine programs come from throughout eastern Connecticut, from the quiet corner to the southeastern shoreline, and are designed to elevate and grow the tourism potential of each region's vast diversity of towns, trails and tourism businesses. The nine programs include:

- Where Art Lives, a collaboration between the Florence Griswold Museum and the Lyme Art Association to market eastern Connecticut's arts scene to day-trippers and local tourism.
- The New London Tourism Unity Initiative, a strategy to develop useful marketing and tourism-related tools to consolidate information regarding New London's tourism attractions.
- Town of Windham Marketing Campaign, a program to enhance ongoing communications strategies and strengthen unrealized aspects of their 5-year marketing strategy.
- Voluntown Tourism Campaign, a collaboration between the Voluntown Economic Development Commission and Friends of Pachaug Forest to support the promotion and distribution of the Pachaug State Forest trails map.
- Air Line Trail Brochure Marketing Campaign, a project to increase access to information regarding the Air Line Trail and promote the trail's access to neighboring tourism opportunities and venues.
- Windham Region Chamber of Commerce Regional Marketing Project, an initiative to develop four video itineraries that promote tourism opportunities throughout Windham County.
- Partners in History, a collaboration between the Thames River Heritage Park and eight partner sites to create a series of short videos that promote the history and tourism opportunities of the Thames River.
- So Good to See You in Mystic, a campaign through the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce that models the ongoing "So Good to See You, Connecticut" campaign to promote hospitality, aquatic recreation and dining opportunities in southeastern Connecticut.
- Passport to Norwich, a program to leverage the city's diverse dining culture and heritage to food-oriented travelers and tourists.

"This program was an incredible opportunity for the District and the Office of Tourism to come together and market the vitality of our

region's diverse tourism opportunities," said Jim Bellano, chairman of the ERTD. "We received so many creative strategies for supporting our tourism businesses. Given the pace at which the U.S. is developing a vaccine, we are excited to see these programs move forward to market Connecticut's spring and summer tourism seasons."

The ERTD originally allocated \$180,000 for the 2020 Regional Marketing Partnership Program by the Connecticut Office of Tourism. After overwhelming support for the program, funding was raised to \$202,267 to support a total of 11 projects throughout eastern Connecticut. Proposals selected for the 2020 program must be completed by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2021.


"It was a rigorous process to select these 11 applications, and I feel that the selected programs will have a positive impact on our tourism businesses throughout eastern Connecticut," said Chris Regan, chairman of the ERTD Marketing Committee. "The significant collective impact of these marketing programs will generate additional visitation and economic activity for our region while working to support the state's broader marketing initiatives. We hope to see this program grow in 2021."

## New Exhibit at La Grua Center: Artists Respond to Crisis (ARCLove)

In January and February, La Grua Center hosts Artists Respond to Crisis (ARC), a collective group of artists united in their unique mission to raise money for relevant and important charities. Currently, the collective has chosen Feeding America's Response Covid-19 Fund as the main beneficiary of their donation efforts.

Visit [lagruacenter.org](http://lagruacenter.org) or call (860) 535-2300 for more information.


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