

the VOICE



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The Catalyst for Company Culture: Championing an Employee-First Approach

Discover how empowering your employees can elevate your business to new heights.

In today's evolving business landscape, the traditional ways of company management are being challenged and redefined. One of the most transformative concepts that has gained momentum is an emphasis on employee-first culture. This idea places the well-being, growth, and satisfaction of employees at the core of an organizational strategy. An employee-first approach isn't just about making the workplace more enjoyable; it's a strategic move that can revitalize standards, drive innovation, enhance productivity, and ultimately lead to a more successful company.

But what does an employee-first culture truly entail, and why is it becoming increasingly essential in modern business practices?

Chief People Officer of The Arc Eastern Connecticut and guest speaker for the Chamber's Human Resource

Council, Denisse Mateo, shares her insight.

"Ultimately, it is the role of leaders and managers to make employees feel valued," Mateo states.

Adopting an employee-first strategy can not only improve people's health but boost company morale and instill positive behaviors and enhanced loyalty, leading to greater retention.

Here are 6 ways your organization can put its employees first:

- Host Company Outings or Social Events (weekly, monthly, quarterly; it can be flexible!)
- Provide Resources (such as access to wellness classes and professional development)
- Maintain Equal Staff Treatment (a sometimes-forgotten practice that should be upheld)
 - Offer Incentives (like awards, employee appreciation breakfasts/lunches, bonuses)
 - Encourage Peer-to-Peer Recognition (to help bridge any gaps between departments)
 - Utilize Email Shout-Outs (to streamline company-wide communication)

In addition to these gestures, being open to feedback is beneficial to an employee-first culture.

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A Special Thank You | Through their commitment to the Chamber, these companies have demonstrated support for the many smaller businesses we serve.



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Leaders should encourage staff to voice their ideas and concerns in order to foster a thriving work environment.

“If your team runs across problems, they need to feel confident that they can express them to you without their competence being questioned,” notes Mateo.


Employees want to see that their bosses are leaders and mentors, not dictators. Leaders who invest time in their employees are investing in the success of their company.

Success for a company climate through its people can look like, “...74% less stress, 106% more energy at work, 50% higher

productivity, 13% fewer sick days, 76% more engagement, 29% more satisfaction with their lives, and 40% less burnout,” Mateo shares from a reliable source.

So, whether you’re a President or a new hire, we encourage you to take a page out of Mateo’s book and shift the way you think about your role and the connection you have not only to your clients, fellow business community, and the public, but your fellow staff.

Championing an employee-first approach can lead to significant benefits and is one of the greatest ROIs a company can have.



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Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT Welcomes Two New Hires

The power of women in business prevails at the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT.

Denise Desrochers, originally hailing from Biddeford, Maine, serves as the new Program and Event Manager. Desrochers holds a Bachelor of Arts in Classical Voice Performance from the University of Southern Maine and a Master of Arts in Translation Studies from the University of Portsmouth. She brings extensive knowledge of professional development and program coordination through her previous work and volunteer experiences. Prior to moving to Connecticut, she was an active member and served as Chair for the Heart of Biddeford main street organization, developing downtown programming with residents and local businesses to improve community quality of life. Desrochers worked for the international education and global exchange industry as the Council on International Education Exchange’s

(CIEE) former Exchange Foundations Senior Coordinator. She now calls Plainfield, CT home. Her day-to-day duties for the Chamber will include overseeing event logistics and program execution.

Julia Florence, a New London County native from Voluntown, CT, will serve as the new Communications Manager, overseeing internal and external public relations and marketing initiatives. Florence is an alum of Eastern Connecticut State University and holds a Bachelor of Science in Communication with degree concentrations in public relations, advertising, and leadership communication. Her top scholastic involvements included: TV 22 (college news station), Lambda Pi Eta, Omicron Delta Kappa, and the Public Relations Student Society of America.

Professionally, she brings a background in marketing, having previously worked for New London-based agency Quinn & Hary.

These two women are positive go-getters and eager professionals looking forward to engaging with our regional membership and local communities.

“We are pleased to welcome Desrochers and Florence to our team. They will be great assets for the Chamber and our Innovation/Co-Working Center, bringing their professional skills and experience to support our mission and the region’s business community.” states President and CEO Tony Sheridan.

The Chamber employs 11 professional staff at 92 Eugene O’Neill Drive, New London.

Welcome!

NEW MEMBERS!

Access Health CT

Connecticut's official health insurance marketplace, where you can compare and enroll in health and dental plans.
Hartford | accesshealthct.com
(855) 805-4325

AgroSci Inc.

Custom design and installation of green walls and plantscapes.
Colchester | agrosoci.com | (860) 603-6144

American Heart Association

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easterntheartwalk.org | (860) 916-2353

Ascendence Consulting

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ascendenceconsulting.com | (914) 496-7112

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Waterford | blastparties.com
(860) 705-3372

Chase Bank

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Groton | chase.com | (860) 326-3346

Cohen's Fashion Optical

Dedicated to delivering unforgettable eyewear experiences.
Waterford | cohensfashionoptical.com
(860) 444-7326

Connecticut Wind Collaborative

Propelling Connecticut and New England to a cleaner, sustainable future.
Groton | ctwindcollaborative.org
(860) 514-9023

Darsan Technologies, Inc

Delivering world-class IT solutions and IT recruitment across various industries.
Groton | darsantech.com
(860) 800-2246

ECHO Cancer Foundation, Inc.

A non-profit providing support services, guidance and education to cancer patients and their caregivers.
Norwich | echoassociates.org
(860) 420-9722

Harbor Village Rehabilitation & Nursing Center

Our residents are provided with a full range of skilled nursing and rehabilitative services in a safe and compassionate environment.
New London | harborvillage-health.com
(860) 447-1416

Health News, LLC

The premier source for news and career opportunities in the Connecticut healthcare industry.
West Hartford | cthealthnews.com
(860) 841-3921

Jim Bellano, Author

Writer of "Fond Memories From the Forgettable Decade: A Sports Fan's Attempt to Rehabilitate the 1970s," a nostalgic exploration of 1970s sports.

McLaughlin Research Corporation

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New London | mrcds.com | (860) 447-2298

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East Lyme | greenpayments.com
(860) 865-5162

Mission Possible Career Services LLC

Provides education and life skills support to individuals with barriers.
Niantic | (860) 319-4405
missionpossiblecareerservices.com

Mystic Coffee LLC

Mystic Coffee roasts, packages, and sells organic specialty coffee.
Waterford | (203) 751-3262

Open Concept Strategy and Innovation Consultants

Helping small businesses operate thoughtfully and purposefully by crafting innovative, empathetic, and strategic experiences.
Waterford | openconceptsi.com
(717) 856-8336

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Providing you with safe, easy-to-use storage options.
Waterford | rent-a-space.com
(860) 397-9562

Scandi Shoppe

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Broad Brook | Scandi-Shoppe.com
(860) 872-0273

Short Stuff Personalized Ink

Your one-stop resource for custom advertising products and clothing.
New London | ShortStuffpersonalized.net
(860) 574-9452

Simply Pharmacy

A trusted local pharmacy known for exceptional customer care and a wide range of prescription and over-the-counter medications.
Waterford | (860) 865-1303

SouthCoast Wind

Developing an offshore wind project off the coast of Massachusetts to generate over 2,400 megawatts, powering over a million homes and businesses.
Fall River | southcoastwind.com
(508) 974-3547

Southeastern CT Robotics, Inc.

Providing New London County youth access to technology in a safe place where dreams of careers in STEM fields can become a reality.
New London | southeasternctrobotics.com
(860) 876-2721

Town of Groton Parks and Recreation

Municipal park and recreation organization dedicated to "build(ing) up Groton, as a happy, healthy, more connected community."
Noank | groton-ct.gov | (860) 536-5680

Universal Strategies Limited

Supports company and government clients with trade and investment, and workforce development in the manufacturing, aviation and defense sectors.
East Hartford | universal-strategies.com
(860) 983-0524

Vineyard Offshore

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Boston | vineyardoffshore.com
(617) 362-3872

UNITED WAY OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT

United For Gemma Benefit Gala

Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center

110 PEQUOT TRAIL, MASHANTUCKET, CT 06338

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2024

5:30 PM TO 8:30 PM



Reserve Tickets & Sponsorships

The event benefits the **Gemma Legacy Fund** to create sustainable support for the ongoing operation of the Food Center program in order to eliminate food insecurity in New London County.

www.uwsect.org/unitedforgemma

Benefiting the Gemma Legacy Fund to create sustainable support for the ongoing operation of the Food Center program in order to eliminate food insecurity in New London County.

Chelsea Groton Bank Named to Forbes America's Best-In-State Banks 2024

Chelsea Groton Bank has been named #1 Bank in Connecticut on the Forbes list of America's Best-In-State Banks 2024. This prestigious award is presented by Forbes and Statista Inc., the world-leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider.

"It's an incredible honor to be named to the Forbes Best-In-State Banks list once again," shared Anthony A. Joyce, III, President and CEO of Chelsea Groton Bank. "The Chelsea Groton team works tirelessly to serve the needs of our customers, offering financial wellness programming, innovative consumer and business products, services, and digital tools, and an unwavering commitment to the community. Receiving recognition like this wouldn't be possible without the incredible efforts our team puts forth each day, and the mission we've held as a mutual bank – to answer to the needs of our local community – since our founding."

Financial institutions are the cornerstone of the financial world and play a central role in stabilizing global systems. America's Best-In-State Banks 2024 ranking lists the institutions that stood out for fulfilling the unique financial needs and expectations of their local communities thereby being most valued by residents of each state.

The ranking is based on two sources:

1. An Independent Survey: Approximately 26,000 U.S. residents were surveyed online. Participants were asked to name all banks where they have a checking/savings account and rate it in six different subdimensions: Trust, Terms & Conditions, Branch Services, Digital Services, Customer Services, and Financial Advice.
2. Publicly Available Reviews: For each bank, in each state, a sentiment analysis approach of publicly available online text reviews and ratings was applied.



Lawrence + Memorial Hospital Awarded Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery from The Joint Commission

Lawrence + Memorial (L+M) Hospital has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery (ACSS) by demonstrating continuous compliance with its performance standards. The Gold Seal is a symbol of quality that reflects a healthcare organization's commitment to providing safe and quality patient care.

L+M is the second Yale New Haven Health hospital to receive this designation. Along with Yale New Haven Hospital – Saint Raphael Campus, they are among only 25 hospitals across the country to receive the Advanced Spine Surgery certification.

"This national certification underscores our commitment to ensure we provide high quality and safe patient care for our spine surgery patients in a compassionate and supportive environment," said Patrick Doherty, MD, chief of Neurosurgery at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital; associate professor of clinical Neurosurgery at Yale School of Medicine. "This designation celebrates and recognizes Lawrence + Memorial Hospital as a center of excellence for spine surgery and is a true testament to the commitment of our physician assistants, our nurses, therapists, coordinators and physician colleagues."

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, more than 1.2 million spinal surgeries are performed nationally each year. Joint Commission Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery (ACSS) helps elevate the services we provide with the evidence-based proof of clinical quality sought by patients and payers alike.



Revolution Wind Hosted 3rd Annual International Coastal Cleanup Day Event

Revolution Wind partnered with Quinn & Hary Marketing, the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT, and the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce to host the "Mystic & New London Cleanup" in honor of International Coastal Cleanup Day.



General Dynamics Electric Boat Proudly Sponsors Chamber's 13th Annual Military Appreciation Breakfast

As the presenting sponsor, General Dynamics Electric Boat supported the Chamber in honoring Habitat for Humanity of Eastern Connecticut and Ocean Beach Park with the 2024 Military Community Support Award, and Musician First Class Robert Durie of the U.S. Coast Guard Band as Service Person of the Year. Attendees received updates from Captain Todd Moore, Chief of Staff of the Undersea Warfighting Development Center; Brigadier General Ralph F. Hedenberg, Assistant Adjutant General, Connecticut National Guard; and Rear Admiral Michael J. Johnston, Superintendent of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

NESS Awarded Grant from Wireless Zone Foundation to Enhance Ocean Ed Programming

The New England Science & Sailing Foundation (NESS) is excited to announce that it has been awarded a generous grant from The Wireless Zone Foundation for Giving®. This funding will enable NESS to integrate cutting-edge technology into its classrooms, further expanding its commitment to experiential, hands-on learning opportunities for students.

With this support, NESS can elevate its educational programming by incorporating innovative tools and resources that foster student engagement and deepen their understanding of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) concepts.

“We are incredibly grateful to Neil Ryan and his Wireless Zone Foundation for Giving® team for their belief in our mission and their support in expanding our technological capabilities,” said Marcy Herlihy, NESS Managing Director of Advancement.

Creative Services, Inc. (CSI) Earns 2024 Great Place To Work Certification™

CSI, a preeminent provider of background screening and due diligence services, is proud to continue to be Certified™ by Great Place To Work® for the 4th year in a row. This prestigious award is based entirely on what current employees say about their experience working at CSI. This year, 94% of employees said it’s a great place to work standing higher than the average U.S. company. This esteemed designation runs from July 2024 through July 2025.

“We are thrilled to become Great Place To Work-Certified™ as we consider employee experience a top priority every day,” said President and CEO Alan Sklar. “We owe our continued success to our team of dedicated employees at Creative Services, Inc. We celebrate and thank them for all they do to earn this incredible recognition.”



Kawel LauBach

The Human Resource Consortium Announces Partnership, Expansion

The Human Resource Consortium, LLC. (“TheHRC”) announced it has finalized its agreement with human resource executive, Kawel LauBach, to become a partner in its Connecticut-based consultancy. Founder and Managing Partner, Regan MacBain Traub states, “It is my distinct honor and pleasure to announce that Kawel LauBach, M.S.O.D. has become a partner in TheHRC. He ‘gets’ the impact of creating outstanding employee experiences and integrated systems in HR & OD. Kawel is an exceptionally accomplished, emotionally intelligent, and humble executive with a longstanding track record of building engaging, high performance organizations. His strength as a strategic HR leader emerged from extensive operations expertise. He has been honored with numerous awards over his career including 40 Under Forty (The Times Leader, 2010) and Global CHRO of The Year (HRO Today, 2015) for his innovation in business, and Forbes America’s Best Employers.”

“I am deeply honored to be joining Regan and the amazing team of TheHRC. I am equally excited for the opportunity to help guide organizations with best-in-class strategic solutions to create highly valued employee and client experience,” LauBach said.



Bradley International Airport Named “Top 10 Best Airport in U.S.” by Condé Nast Traveler for Eighth Consecutive Year

The Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) is pleased to announce that Bradley International Airport (BDL) has received the Condé Nast Traveler’s 2024 Readers’ Choice Award – naming BDL as a “Top 10 Best Airport in the U.S.” This is the eighth consecutive year that BDL has received this recognition.

This year’s award comes as BDL grows its list of nonstop flights to more than 45 destinations on 12 different airlines. The airport has also made significant upgrades to several of its retail locations, which includes the introduction of two new concepts, Charter Oak Emporium and CT River Landing, as well as the renovation of its existing New England Travel Mart location with other upgrades on the way. The airport has also opened Beercode Kitchen & Bar, which is the first sit-down restaurant inside the gates 21-30 concourse, and has also introduced Sam Adams pre-TSA screening. BDL is also in the middle of two major construction projects that will greatly enhance the flow and functionality of the airport for arriving and departing passengers once complete in late 2025. Additionally, BDL has a new concierge service available for travelers in partnership with Travelers Aid International.

Everything we do is with the greatest of care.

Whatever the situation, and whoever the patient, all of our acclaimed doctors, nurses, and caregivers are committed to the same thing: doing their jobs with the greatest of care.

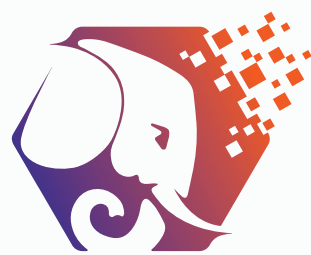
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