

2018-2019

Annual Report to the Community



United Way of Western Connecticut fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in Greater Danbury, Greater New Milford, and Stamford, with a focus on hard-working, struggling households that we call **ALICE®** (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed).

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.



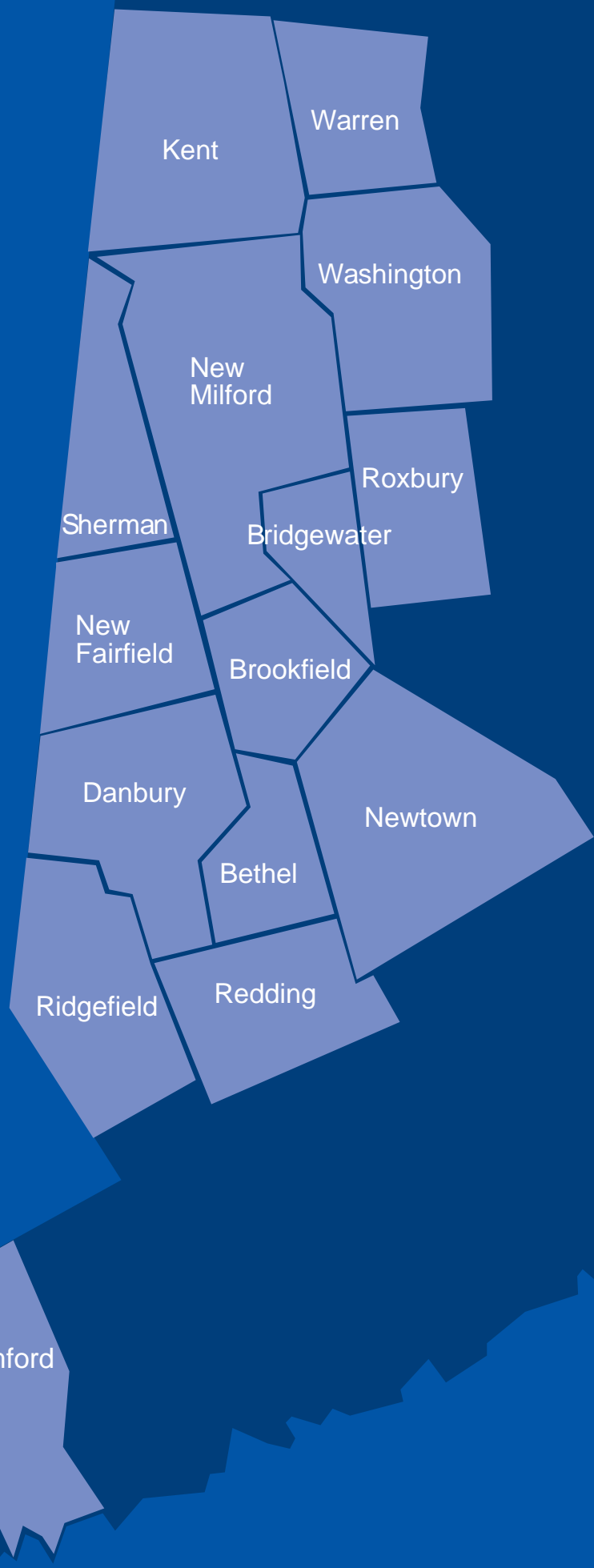
United Way
of Western Connecticut

OUR MISSION:

To Improve the Lives of
Hard-Working, Struggling
Households by Mobilizing
the Resources of Local
Communities to Create
Lasting Change.



United Way
of Western Connecticut





Kimberly A. Morgan

Helping ALICE Prosper: Listening, Learning & Seeing Progress Every Day

We'll be honest. Back in 2015, when we first decided to focus on the hard-working, struggling families we call **ALICE**[®] (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome, **C**onstrained, **E**mployed), we weren't exactly sure where to begin. The 30+ community conversations we conducted and 500+ surveys we collected pointed us in the right direction. We listened and learned. We considered what was most needed and what might be most possible. But we weren't sure at all what our first concrete steps would be.



Cynthia C. Merkle

Fast forward four years, and we have a full spectrum of successful programs in place that are making a difference in the lives of ALICE individuals and families every day.

By creating partnerships, exploring innovative programs, and—perhaps most important—listening to ALICE individuals and families, we have:

- Put **healthy food** on the plates of thousands of hard-working families.
- Made **safe, quality child care** more available at a reasonable cost, so parents can work and have peace of mind.
- Covered the cost for **enrichment activities** for children in hundreds of families.
- Made **saving for the future** a possibility for people who live paycheck to paycheck.

Everything we do at United Way of Western Connecticut is focused on making life better for people who work hard but still struggle to pay their bills. Some of our best programs—like the ALICE Enrichment Fund—have come from listening to ALICE. This year, we formalized the listening process by creating **ALICE Advisory Boards**, where 20+ ALICE individuals from across the region are informing us of the best way to support their families.

All this, while developing new ways for corporations to engage their employees in community giving and volunteering year-round through **Salesforce.org Philanthropy Cloud**, and introducing new volunteer opportunities, such as the **STEM Street Fair**.

Take the time to review this short summary of our accomplishments for 2018-2019. And if you have ideas for how we can help struggling families in our region, we're always listening!

Kimberly A. Morgan
Chief Executive Officer
United Way of Western Connecticut

Cynthia C. Merkle
President & CEO, Union Savings Bank
Board Chair, United Way of Western Connecticut

CHILDHOOD SUCCESS

Like you, we believe that all children should have safe, quality care and education so they can learn, grow, and thrive.

During the past year, United Way helped 3,000+ children have brighter futures through quality care and education programs.

All parents want the best for their children. But struggling parents often cannot afford the costs of quality care for their infants and toddlers. In fact, child care for infants at licensed centers surpasses the cost of tuition at a Connecticut public college, exceeding \$15,000 per year.

Once children are in school, safe, quality after-school care and enrichment activities can be financially out of reach for ALICE families. For example, only 44% of children in lower-income families participate in sports, compared to 69% for children whose parents make over \$100,000 per year.

We think all children deserve the care, education, and enrichment that lets them be the best they can be, from cradle to career.





Childhood Success by the numbers

2,200+

children receive more affordable early childhood care and after-school care through subsidies to licensed centers



13

new family child care providers are licensed in Danbury

through the Cora's Kids program—a 48% increase in licensed family child care spots in one year

820

children have after-school enrichment activities paid for through the **ALICE Enrichment Fund**, such as sports, music, theater, and art lessons



800+

children receive new backpacks and back to school supplies through our Back to School programs

FOOD SECURITY AND HEALTH

Like you, we believe that everyone should have access to fresh, healthy food, regardless of their income.

When United Way conducted community conversations and collected surveys back in 2015, we were surprised to find that more than **50% of the families we surveyed found it a challenge to pay for food.**

After paying for housing, transportation, and child care, many families have very little money left for healthy food. We all know that fruits and vegetables are often the most expensive food at the market. Because of their tight budgets, many hard-working families must resort to unhealthy options to feed their children and themselves, including high-carbohydrate, nutrient-poor foods.

We think that people who work hard should be able to put fresh, healthy food on the table. We're always exploring and implementing innovative ways to make healthy food more affordable and accessible to struggling individuals and families.





Food Security and Health by the numbers



250+

people signed up to save money on healthy food at the grocery store through the Healthy Savings program.

500+

families served per month through Mobile Food Pantries and GROW Trucks

40+

additional children in Stamford and Danbury receive weekend food packs

60+

food pantries and other food providers work together to alleviate food insecurity through Stamford and Danbury Food Collaboratives

\$1 million

in food rescued by the Danbury Food Collaborative

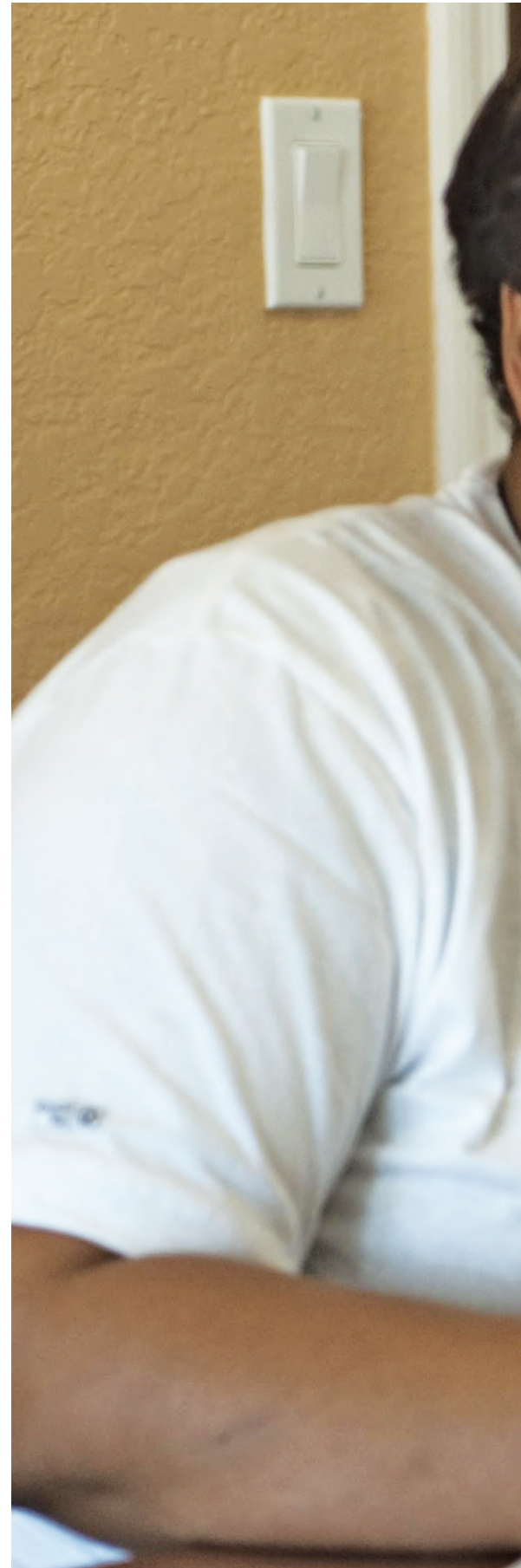
FINANCIAL STABILITY

Like you, we believe that struggling people who work hard should be able to keep more of what they earn and be able to start saving for a brighter future.

According to a 2018 report from the Federal Reserve Board, 40% of Americans can't cover a \$400 emergency expense. When an appliance breaks down or a car repair is needed, people are forced to go into credit card debt, often paying high interest rates.

Sometimes troubling or difficult domestic situations leave people in dire financial straits that are not their fault. A difficult divorce, a health crisis, or an unexpected job loss can be devastating to personal or family finances and leave credit scores in tatters.

At United Way, we understand that sometimes people face financial crises that are beyond their control. They are looking for a hand up, to get back on their feet, not a hand out. We focus on programs that put dollars back into the pockets of hard-working people, while helping them manage their money on a limited budget.





Financial Security by the numbers

525

people received free one-on-one budget coaching

\$2.94 million

in federal tax refunds were returned to low-income taxpayers in our region



193 savers across Connecticut have saved \$96,436 through the **ALICE Saves** program

1,800+

filers had their 2018 tax returns prepared for free



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

At United Way, we believe that complex community problems require broad-reaching partnerships that work collaboratively to achieve shared goals.

United Way of Western Connecticut provides backbone support to two major collective impact initiatives in the region we serve.



Stamford Cradle to Career (SC2C) is a citywide collective impact initiative that aligns community resources to ensure equity and excellence

in education for every child. Through partnerships and collaboration with corporations, civic organizations, healthcare providers, schools, and nonprofit agencies, SC2C strives to create an inclusive, cohesive and empowered community. By aligning resources, we can ensure that all children in Stamford have the support and opportunities to develop productive habits of mind, body, and heart and become contributing members of our society.



DanburyWORKS is a city-wide collaborative targeting the 50% of Danbury residents who live in poverty or struggle to make ends meet.

DanburyWORKS links services across the community to make it easier for households in need to access the tools necessary to build a better life for their families and be a stronger economic force for our city. The collaborative includes local organizations, businesses, social service agencies, government officials, educational institutions, and residents who recognize the barriers that limit the economic contributions of people of color and immigrants, and are committed to making a change. Together, they are using a network of services to move city residents into the workplace feeling connected, and prepared to learn and grow.





Collective Impact by the numbers

Stamford Cradle to Career

\$307,000
operating budget

60+ community organizations
working together to ensure student success

175 parents and caregivers were
reached through the Go Before You Show
initiative, to promote awareness of the
importance of proper health care and
nutrition in pregnancy

45 high school graduates enrolled
in Norwalk Community College as a
result of Stamford Cradle to Career's
Bridge to College Program

DanburyWORKS

\$450,000

awarded by the Boston Federal Reserve's
Working Cities grant over three years

19 organizations working together to
reduce poverty in Danbury

700 people attend events to
support low-income individuals and
families in Danbury



VOLUNTEERISM

Like you, we believe volunteers change lives and build happier, stronger communities.

This past year, United Way of Western Connecticut volunteers logged in more than 15,500 hours helping the communities we serve. Volunteers ranged in age from 11 to 93!

People volunteered in a variety of ways—from assembling backpacks, to reading to at-risk preschool children, to cleaning up local parks.

A highlight this year was the **STEM Street Fair** in June, with corporations providing fun, interactive science and math activities for students at Danbury’s South Street School. The volunteers had a blast, and the school principal reported that some students called it “the best day ever.”





Volunteerism by the numbers

1,600+

volunteers contributed 15,500 hours
to the community

140

Youth volunteers
assisted 30 local
agencies



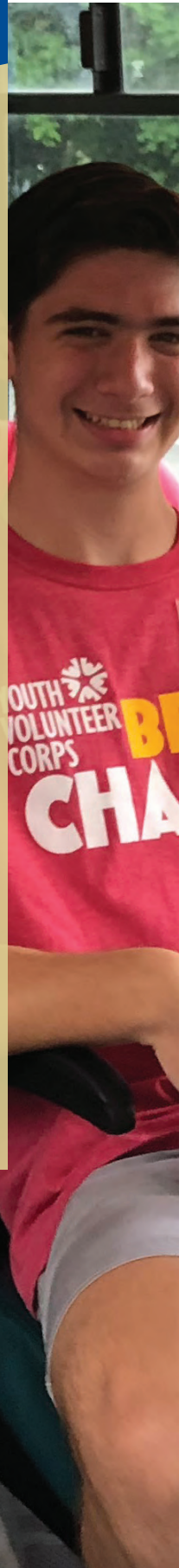
21

Ready,
Set, Let's Read
Volunteers read
to 600 preschool
children throughout
the year in Greater
Danbury



49

Danbury
seniors
received
property
tax credits through volunteering with
the Seniors Add Valuable Experience
(SAVE) program



KIYSHA'S CHILDREN LEARN TO SWIM, THANKS TO ALICE ENRICHMENT FUND



A busy, working Stamford mom with three children under the age of 12, Kiysha was concerned that her children had not had the opportunity to learn how to swim.

She considered swimming important for her children's safety. She also wanted them to be able to enjoy water activities throughout their lives.

The problem: how would she afford swimming lessons for three children on her salary?

Kiysha learned about swimming lessons available through the Stamford Italian Center, but she just didn't think she could cover the cost for a two-month session, which was more than \$100 per child.

After hearing about the ALICE Enrichment Fund, Kiysha immediately applied for funding for her three children. They were approved, and all three children were able to attend the lessons at the center.

"I was worried at first that they would be afraid of the water," Kiysha said. "But they learned a lot. I was really proud of them."

Now her children can join other children in water activities, and she can have peace of mind, thanks to the ALICE Enrichment Fund.

"United Way helped me so much. I'm so thankful, I can't express my gratitude," she says. "It definitely helped me. I wouldn't have been able to afford it otherwise."

Sharif had a tumultuous childhood in Morocco before arriving at Roxbury Elementary School in Stamford in third grade. Despite his difficult early years, he became fluent in English and was doing well academically by age 12.

WEEKEND FOOD CHANGES A CHILD'S OUTLOOK



But beneath the surface, Sharif was internalizing anxieties and worrying more than most children his age. The school social workers observed that food seemed to be at the center of both his anxiety and sense of security.

It was no surprise, then, that Sharif was the first to return his permission form for the Stamford Public Schools' weekend food program. He double and triple-checked that he was "on the list" before the first distribution. On the big day, he stopped by the office to ask what time "it was happening!" Sharif was not unlike the dozens of other students enrolled in the program. The school social workers report that each Friday brings the "thrill of a lifetime" to the students who benefit from Weekend Food.

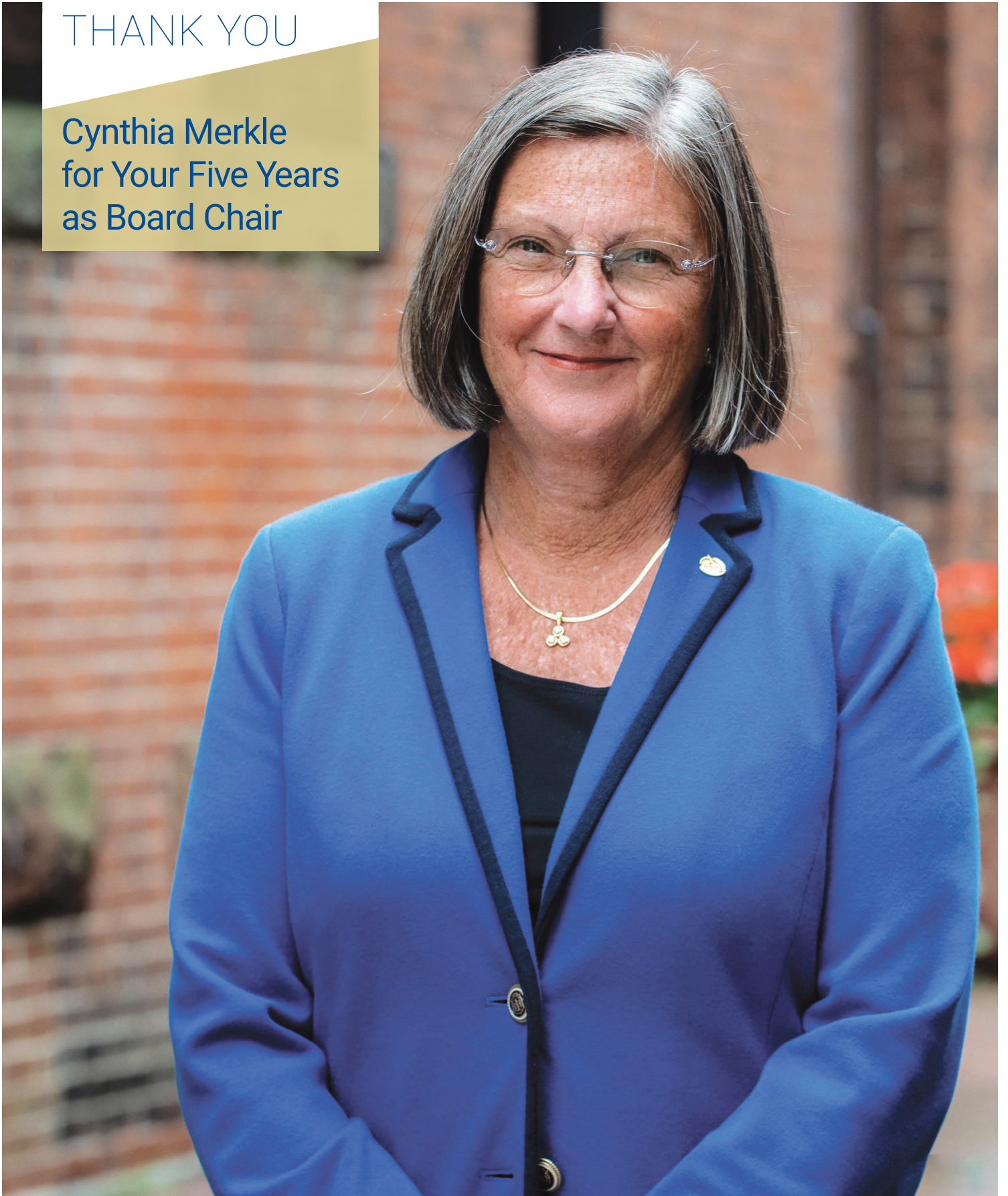
After several Fridays of taking home his very own bag of food and fresh fruit, Sharif became noticeably calmer. He stopped fretting about all kinds of things, from school to friends to his parents' health. He also stopped begging for food.

The weekend food was about so much more than food—it satisfied a deep psychological and emotional need in Sharif. Removing one major worry from a child's life has changed his entire outlook.

By working with the Stamford Public Schools, United Way and the Stamford Food Collaborative made weekend food distribution more efficient and were able to serve 40 additional children like Sharif.

THANK YOU

Cynthia Merkle
for Your Five Years
as Board Chair



Cynthia Merkle is President and Chief Executive Officer of Union Savings Bank, a bank whose mission is “to work for the benefit of the community, rather than for the benefit of shareholders.” United Way of Western Connecticut has been honored to have Cindy serve as our Board Chair for the past five years. We asked her to reflect on her years of service—years which saw dramatic change in the way United Way serves people in need who live in the communities in our footprint.

Looking back at the past five years as Chair of the Board of Directors at United Way of Western Connecticut, what are you most proud of?

The adoption of ALICE as our core purpose. Today, almost everything we support is related to ALICE—whether child care, the Enrichment Fund, financial literacy, food, and so much more. The hope of making a positive impact on so many households in our marketplace is really something I am proud of.

Is there anything you would do differently?

I wish I could have given more time to hands-on volunteering. Maybe now that my term is coming to an end I will be able to do so.

What is the one thing United Way offers that you don't see anywhere else?

I think the way in which we try to be the coordinating change agent for many nonprofits.

Looking to the future, what do you see happening in Western Connecticut that you are most excited about?

I think the creation of a marketplace for ALICE is the most exciting.* We are in the preliminary stages of doing so, but I think we are in the forefront of making services accessible to ALICE households at their convenience. I think if you look back a few years down the road we will have created a model here in Western Connecticut that will be used throughout the country.

What is the one thing you'll miss most about being Chair?

Most of all I will miss the collaboration with the Management Team at United Way as well as the comradery of the board. We have gone through a great deal over the last four to five years as we have seen some large employers leave the state, and therefore our funding methodology had to be transformed. We had lots of challenges related to this, but we worked together to mitigate the impact and reimagine ourselves to who we are today. I will certainly miss everyone.

*United Way of Western Connecticut recently announced that it is forming a nonprofit Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) to build an innovative digital platform to more effectively deliver services to the ALICE population.

Corporate Philanthropic Partners

THANK YOU to all our corporate partners who support United Way through a workplace campaign, special event, or corporate gift.

Listed below are our corporate partners in descending order of donation. **Bolded** corporations are those that generously made a corporate gift and/or matched their employees' contribution during the campaign year of 2018-19.

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Tocqueville Society



The Tocqueville Society recognizes Alexis de Tocqueville's admiration for our country's spirit of volunteer effort for the common good. Its members are recognized for the generous contribution of \$10,000 or more in a regional membership roster and in the annual national registry.

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\$50,000 – \$74,999
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Kimberly Greene

George Herring

Carmen Hughes

Jerred Jones

Sally Kelman

Valerie Lazzari

Kurosh L. Marjani

Laura Ozycz

Dave Pergola

JP Sebastian

George Schott

Dan Sheehan

Sandy Weinberg

Natasha Williams

Dudley Williams

Candy Yeager

Lisa Zana

COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cheryl Bakewell

Eric Duenwald

George Garrett

James Gareau

Frank Kelly

Cynthia Merkle

Bob E. Williams

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Martin Anderson

Cheryl Bakewell

Eric Duenwald

George Garrett

Cindy Merkle

Michael Shepherd

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Paige Brewer

Mariann Van Buren

Keegan Drenosky

Ann Durkin

Maureen Kwilosz

Michael L. Stern

Clarisse Thomas

Initiative Volunteers

BACK-TO-SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

NORTHERN FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Gigi Christel
Natalia Durante
Vanessa Freitas
Kim Karl
Greg Manning
Nicole Manning
Meghan McCurry
Diane Minck
Patty Moses
Dawn Reshen-Doty
Traci Scagnelli
Sara Shaldjian
Mercy Smith
Zechariah Smith

SOUTHERN LITCHFIELD COUNTY

Fotini Bass
Tammy Bass
Tina Bass
Joan Conn
Nancy Macklin
Christine Blonski
Jeanne Faure
Mike Scofield
Susan Denino
Lizz Czaika

STAMFORD

Women's Mentoring
Network Youth Group

BUSINESS TO BOOKS READERS

STAMFORD

** Denotes team contact for multiple volunteers from company.*

* Morgan Jensen
* Valerie Lazzari
* Polly Morrow
* Dawn Rudenko
* Lisa Zana
* Vicky Zhang

DAY OF ACTION COMMITTEE

NFC/SLC

Bob Brown
Dina Francisco-Pereira
Julie Poklemba
Norman Urquhart
William H. Valenti

EMERGENCY FOOD & SHELTER PROGRAM (EFSP)

DANBURY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Kandace Cook
Mary Ann Houser
Phil Kallinikos
Susanne Lehmann
Eliot Morrison
Patricia Sghia
Robert Young

STAMFORD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Patty Burke
Joe Hickey
Mark Lingle
Nancy Schiffman

READY, SET, LET'S READ VOLUNTEERS

Maryellen Baker
Martha Bishop
Deb Blanchard
Nancy Burger
Joan Bybee
Gigi Christel*
Arthur Cilley
Gail Doyle
Carol Elkin
Kim Green
Judy Haskins-Conde
Carol Hatzi
Sally Kile*
Ann McLellan*

Antoinette McNichol
Peter Mulready
Peter Phillip
Willa Philip
Sandy Rankin*
Karen Roszman*
Robert Taborsak
Amy Valentin
Guy Wasdo

** School Coordinators*

SAVE OFFICE VOLUNTEER

Eleanor Gianfortune

SOUTHERN LITCHFIELD MOBILE FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS

Gretchen Barbieri
Al Coelho
Cynthia Forbes
Nancy Macklin
Bob Macklin
Pete Bass
Mike Scofield
Karen Heyde
Evan Hack
Diane D'Isidori
Tammy Reardon
Steve Liker
Susan Liker
Andrea Rush
Bob Rush
Katherine Webster-O'Keefe
Robert O'Keefe
Joyce Collins
Elaine Donahue
Alice Miller
Stephanie Ansell
Victoria Scofield
Margaret Santos Arnold
Acyr Penna
Tiffany Waldron
Sarah Weber
Thomas Iskrzycki
Alex Rafoss

STUFF THE GAZEBO VOLUNTEERS

Mike Scofield
Pete Bass
Tammy Bass
Tia Bass
Nancy Macklin
Tricia Gregory
Susan Denino

YOUTH VOLUNTEER CORPS OF WESTERN CONNECTICUT

Alexis Johnson
Dominik A. Aguilar
Rohan Ahmed
Ritika Ahmed
Saumya Awasthi
Sarah Barta
Kay Bell
Rodney Benitez
Sarah Benson
Sara Bernardo
Megan Bhatti
Tarkeshwar Bhupal
Jordan Bido
Fayth Bodner
Richard Bomely
Carly Bonansinga
Jackson Breuel
Emma Bringman
Madeline Bringman
Abigail Calame
Audrey Calame
Ryan Caldwell
Julian Cano
Nicolas Cardenas
Rohan Carey
Eva Carey
Samantha Cavalea
Dylan Cavalier
Edwin Chacon
Ciara Chavana
Micah Chen
Timothy Chen
Karla Chilligalli
Molly Christel
Timothy Ciriello

Bridget Connolly
Linda Ann Connolly
Michael Cruz
Melina Cummings
Kendra Dascano
Manar Deggouj
Shaelyn Diamond
Charlie Doran
William Doran
Alexander Dzamko
Ella Egan
Ashley Escobar
David Evanson
Samuel Ferrier
Samuel Forfang
Ethan Garcia
Josue Daniel Garcia
Lucia Gorman
Nathan Gottwals
Gabrielle Grabowski
Jacob Greenblatt
Naomi Guzman Torres
Lauren Heller
Nina Hemsey
Julia Herbert
Olivia Herbert
Bhuvan Hospet
Chelsea James
Cheyanne James
Janiya Jones
Madison Katz
Peter Kavanaugh
Brendan Kelley
Emma Kiernan
Andie Kiernan
Ani Krolian
Reagan Lalor
Paloma Lenz
Faith Luckner
Joseph Mallozzi
Haleigh Martin
Johanse Martinez
Kamaal McLean-Felix
Zahir McLean-Felix
Ehlana McRanor
Christine Michael
Zoe Mistriel

continued on next page



Initiative Volunteers *continued*

YOUTH VOLUNTEER CORPS OF WESTERN CONNECTICUT *continued*

Kate Mitchell
Kayla Morais
Paz Moran
Manuela Moran
John Lumen Natal
Naha Nawaz
Nelson Pais
Connor Parille
Isha Patel
Lianna Perazzo
Lucas Pereira
Rohiny Perez
Olivia Peterson
Hannah Peterson
Arianna Petta
Richard Pierre
Idelis Pizarro

Matthew Pizzo
Ben Plaue
Michael Presti
Celia Preveza
Bridget Preveza
Natalie Preveza
RJ Pudelko
Nandika Puri
Michael Rentz
Luke Rigoglioso
John Rigoglioso
Lili Rodrigues
Jarlene Rodriguez
Madison Rooney
Devin Sara
Ryan Scappaticci
Caleb Schlissel
Alexandra Schulman
Emma Siber
Catarina Silva

Alexandria Silva
Kiera Sleigh
Charlie Solimine
Caroline Stanton
Grace Tolla
Danielle Tomasetti
Grace Tomasetti
Hannah Tomasetti
Chris Twombly
Michelle Vasquez
Faith Veras
Blessing Veras
Henri Vieltojarvi
Isabella Warren
Jean Pawel
Wawrzyniak
Anja Westenberg
Julia Wiblishauser
CJ Williams
Sarah Wolk

Claudia Wootton
Brianna Wright
Viktoria
Wulff-Anderson
Owen Wyman
Charlotte Wynne

SPECIAL EVENT VOLUNTEERS

2018 HEART OF GOLD COMMITTEE

Belinda
Basile-Wharmby
Eric Landskroner –
News 12
Polly O'Brien Morrow
Kathleen Ryan Mufson
Candy Yeager

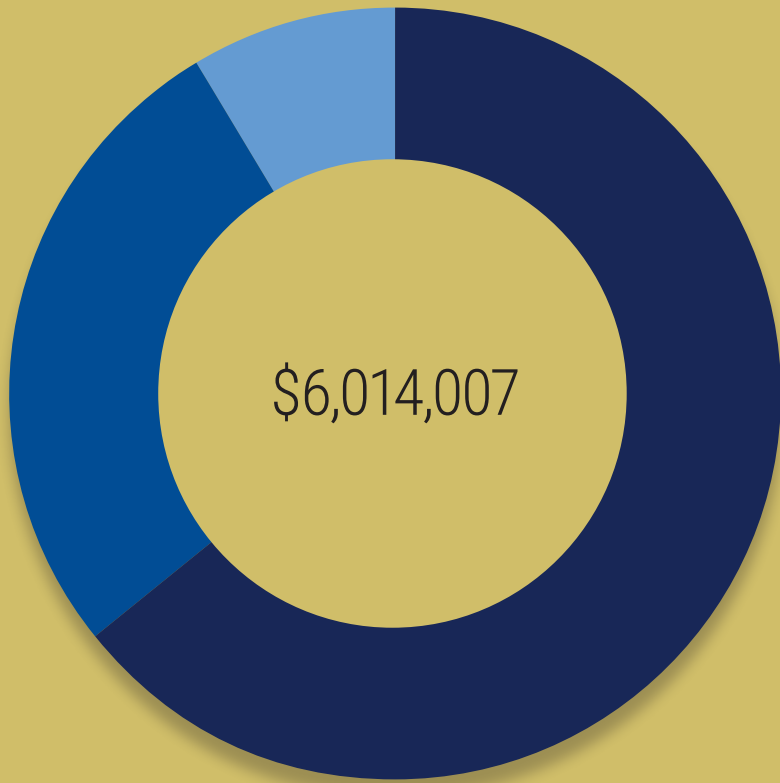
2018 ROBERTA K. EICHLER HEART OF GOLD SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION COMMITTEE

Luis Diez
Olga Dinova
Roberta Eichler
Sally Kelman
Valerie Lazzaki
David Pergola

2018 HOMETOWN HEROES

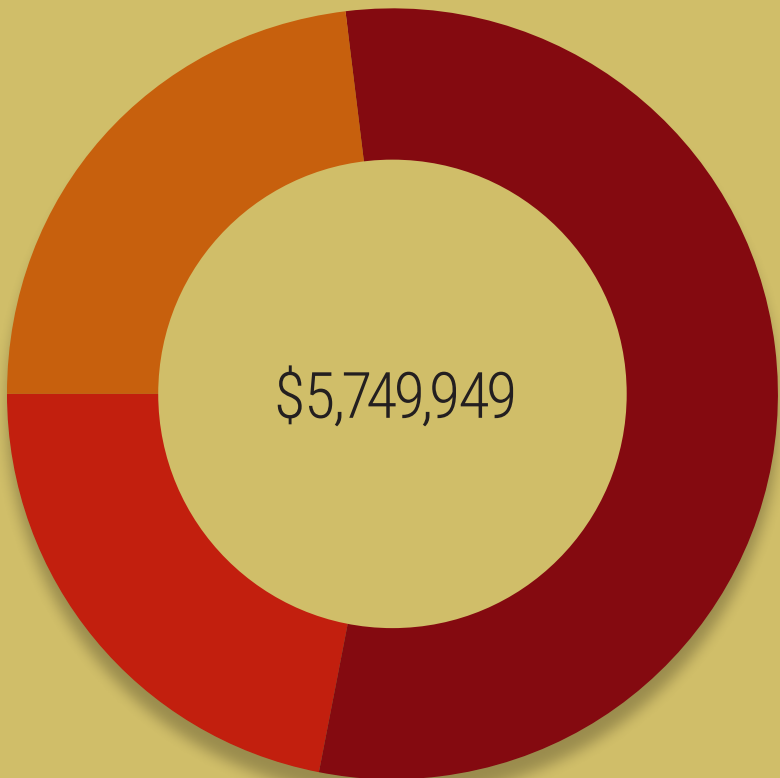
Gigi Christel
Waldemar Kostrzewa
MaryAnn Murtha

Financials



2018-2019 REVENUE

- CAMPAIGN REVENUE
- CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS
- INVESTMENTS, IN-KIND AND OTHER



2018-2019 EXPENSES

- COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS AND OTHER DISTRIBUTIONS
- COMMUNITY IMPACT PROGRAMS AND SHARED SERVICES
- SUPPORTING SERVICES

Fiscal year 2018-19.

For our complete audited financial statements and Form 990, please visit www.uwwesternct.org/financials.

Stewards

Our staff members take pride in making a difference in Western Connecticut every day. Below are the names of those staff who supported our work during the 2018-19 Campaign Year.

Kimberly Morgan
*Chief Executive
Officer*

Arlene Ajami
*Chief Financial
Officer*

Lisa Alexander
*Grant Resource
Development
Manager*

Isabel Almeida
*Chief Operating
Officer*

Megan Chrysler
*Director of
Early Childhood*

Tessa Coyne
*Resource
Development
Manager*

**Debora
Ducksworth**
*Administrative
Assistant*

Sofia Dupi
*Digital Services
Implementation,
Marketing &
Analysis*

Sandra Ferreira
*DanburyWorks
Initiative Director*

Bridget Fox
*President,
Stamford Cradle
to Career & Chief
Impact Officer*

Katy Francis
*Community
Impact
Coordinator*

Nicole Granskog
*Community
Impact
Coordinator*

Morgan Greening
*Special Projects
Coordinator*

Surline Jolicoeur
*Content Marketing
Coordinator*

Caroline LaFleur
*Associate Director,
Communications*

Casey Levene
*Vice President,
Community
Impact*

Cara Mitchell
*Food Policy
Manager*

Yvonne Mora
*Benefits
Specialist,
Cora's Kids &
Early Childhood
Initiatives*

**Elizabeth
Quiñonez**
*Community
Engagement
Coordinator*

Fran Santoro
Office Manager

Stacy Schulman
*Director, Corporate
Relations*

Victoria Scofield
*Community
Impact
Coordinator*

**Lauren
Scopaz-Daunais**
*Vice President
of Strategy &
Operations,
Stamford Cradle
to Career*

**Tashi-Iyana
Shuler-Drakes**
*Project Associate,
Stamford Cradle
to Career*

Jennifer Smith
*Accounting
Manager*

Barry Sobolewski
*Director, Data
Management and
IT Systems*



www.uwwesternct.org

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301 Main Street, Suite 2-5
Danbury, CT 06810
203-792-5330

SOUTHERN LITCHFIELD COUNTY
24 Bank Street, P.O. Box 29
New Milford, CT 06776
860-354-8800

STAMFORD
1150 Summer Street
Stamford, CT 06905
203-348-7711



United Way
of Western Connecticut