21st Annual Training Institute

Elevating Foundations and Reimagining Our Impact

Wednesday, June 12, 2024 | Hartford, CT
**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS - JUNE 12, 2024**

**7:45 - 8:45**  
Check-in and Breakfast - *Ballroom Foyer*

**8:45 - 10:00**  
Workshop Session 1 - *See Descriptions for Locations*

**10:00 - 10:15**  
Coffee Break

**10:15 - 11:30**  
Workshop Session 2 - *See Descriptions for Locations*

**11:30 - 12:30**  
Plated Lunch - *Ballroom B*

**12:30 - 1:40**  
Afternoon Program - *Ballroom B*

_Awards Presentation_

Jennifer Paradis - *Executive Director*, Beth-El Center

Carol E. Walter Think, Be, Lead Change Award  
Anthony D. Brown, Chrysalis Center  
The Unhoused Activist Community Team (U-ACT)

Be Homeful Award for Innovative Work to End Family Homelessness  
First Congregational Church of Vernon United Church of Christ  
William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty

CCEH Community Champions Award  
Town of Westport, Westport Housing Authority, and Homes with Hope

Homelessness Social Justice Award  
Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno, *Connecticut Department of Housing*  
Commissioner Beth Bye, *Connecticut Office of Early Childhood*

_Introductions and Remarks_

Sarah Fox - *CEO*, The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness  
Chris Lyddy - *Director of Partnerships*, Dalio Education  
Brandon L. McGee, Jr. - *Deputy Commissioner*, CT Department of Housing

_Keenote Remarks_

Nichele Carver - *Senior Regional Advisor*, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness  
Ann Oliva - *Chief Executive Officer*, National Alliance to End Homelessness

**1:45 - 3:00**  
Workshop Session 3 - *See Descriptions for Locations*

**3:00 - 3:15**  
Break

**3:15 - 4:30**  
Workshop Session 4 - *See Descriptions for Locations*

**4:30 - 5:30**  
Networking Reception - *Ballroom Foyer*
### WORKSHOPS - Schedule and Locations

#### SESSION 1  
**8:45 - 10:00 AM**

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<td><strong>Outreach and Engagement 101</strong>: Supporting Cross Sector Collaborations</td>
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<td><strong>Housing First</strong>: From Policy to Practice</td>
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<td><strong>Building Our Community Framework</strong>: Incorporating Voices with Lived Experience Equitably</td>
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<td><strong>Keeping Our Front Door Open</strong>: Equitable Coordinated Entry</td>
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<td><strong>Housing Connections</strong>: Elevating Landlord Engagement</td>
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<td><strong>Evidence-Based Strategies for Eviction and Homelessness Prevention</strong></td>
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Dalio Education is proud to support the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness 21st Annual Training Institute.

Thank you for all that you do to help address CT’s Unspoken Crisis and to support the 119,000 young people experiencing or at-risk of experiencing disconnection.

The Team at Dalio Education
www.DalioEducation.org
Published by the Boston Consulting Group in October 2023, this report finds that approximately 1 in 5 young people in Connecticut between the ages of 14 and 26 are disconnected or at risk.

This report by MDRC published in 2024 reviews the programs, practices, and policies across the country that are facilitative of, or create barriers to, supporting our target population.

Community Science’s qualitative research report published in April 2024 expands our understanding of the lived experiences of young people who are disconnected from work and school in Connecticut.
**Housing First: From Policy to Practice**

Housing First is more than a slogan or an ideal; it is front and center in the work to end homelessness rooted in the philosophy that housing people quickly without pre-conditions ends homelessness. “Housing First” demands more than just agreement with that philosophy; it requires a broad shift at the system level, program level, and personal level. This session will discuss way system leaders and providers can intentionally demonstrate a housing first approach through a commitment to housing first strategies, practices, beliefs, and outcomes. **ROOM 23**

- Kay Moshier McDivitt, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- diiv Sternman, National Alliance to End Homelessness

**Building Our Community Framework: Incorporating Voices with Lived Experience Equitably**

This workshop will discuss how organizations can show value and incorporate individuals with lived experience into their everyday work. During this workshop tools will be provided to help build our community framework for incorporating voices with lived experience equitably. Guidance around governance, structure and journey map will be provided. **ROOM 24**

- Albert Townsend, National Alliance to End Homelessness

**Outreach and Engagement 101: Supporting Cross Sector Collaborations**

Healthcare providers, municipalities, and program supervisors we invite you to join our Outreach and Engagement 101 conversation as we explore enhanced strategies towards equitable access to resources in our community. During our workshop you will hear from leaders including voices with lived experience who provide Outreach & Engagement services. This session will highlight strengths and areas of growth and bring awareness to collaborative work that is already being done in our communities. This session will also explore innovative strategies around elevating information from the field to influence programmatic decision-making to better serve our population. **ROOM 22**

- Stephanie Boyce, Hands on Hartford
- Evan Serio, Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen
- Mollie Machado, CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

**Keeping Our Front Door Open: Equitable Coordinated Entry**

Coordinated Entry is a process designed to quickly identify, assess, refer, and connect people in crisis to housing and assistance, no matter where they show up to ask for help. It can pave the way for more efficient homeless assistance systems. This workshop will highlight four major components of coordinated entry: shelter diversion, inclusive and equitable services, connection to resources and services, and streamlining rehousing efforts. **ROOM 25**

- Melanie Alvarez, Friendship Service Center
- Diana Berube, Salvation Army Marshall House
- Kelly Craft, New Opportunities
Session 1 (Cont.)

**Housing Connections: Elevating Landlord Engagement**

Let’s work together to enhance our work by connecting the dots between staff, our clients, and our partnerships with landlords. In this workshop we will be discussing how you can creatively elevate the work that you are already doing in your housing focused conversations, deepen our understanding of the core principles of Housing First, and receive tangible tools to ensure that we are providing equitable and sustainable housing resources to our community. During our workshop you will receive support that will encourage positive relationships with landlords and receive tips on how to prep your community for tenant residency. When communities come together, we create housing stability and strengthen our ability to ensure that someone’s homeless experience rare, brief, and onetime. 

**Room 26**
- **Samm Williams**, The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness
- **Adriana Negron**, Journey Home
- **Fateria Sheats**, United Way of Greater New Haven

**Evidence-Based Strategies for Eviction and Homelessness Prevention**

From short-term rental assistance and legal aid to shelter diversion programs to using predictive modeling for targeting, there are several promising and innovative approaches to eviction and homelessness prevention that expanded in use during the pandemic. In the coming years, data-driven research can evaluate these or other innovative programs to help understand what approaches work for whom. In this session, we will discuss the value of using data to evaluate and finetune prevention strategies. Attendees will be encouraged to give researchers input into which research gaps are the most important to address to help inform future policy and practice. 

**Room 27**
- **Dr. Winnie van Dijk**, Yale Tobin Center for Economic Policy

Session 2

**Navigating Substance Use Disorders and Women’s Services**

This workshop is dedicated to exploring the unique experiences and challenges faced by women seeking treatment for substance use disorders. This comprehensive session will delve into the specific needs and obstacles that women encounter in their recovery journeys, offering a deep understanding of how gender-sensitive approaches can make a significant difference. Learn about the specialized supports and services provided by DMHAS tailored to meet the needs of women and their children. This workshop is designed to provide participants with practical knowledge and resources to effectively support women in their path to recovery.

**Room 21**
- **Jennifer Lombardi**, DMHAS - Women’s Services

**Transformation Talks**

Join us for an hour of shorter, single-topic presentations given by our system’s dynamic emerging leaders. Topics include: Voluntary Conservatorship, Voucher Mobility, Leveraging Data, and Lived Experience to Policy.

**Room 22**
- **Robert Lockhart**, Pacific House
- **Anthony Guerrera**, Friendship Service Center
- **Anderson Curtis**, ACLU of CT
- **Erin Boggs, Esq. and Margaret Middleton**, Open Communities Alliance

**Housing Problem Solving at Every Step of the Way!**

With limited housing resources across CT, it is important to understand that housing problem solving and self-resolution is at the core of ending homelessness. Problem solving does not end at diversion but is an ongoing client centered strategy that is adopted across the system with problem-solving conversations continuing until someone is housed. Come talk about how you can implement housing problem solving into your daily work, and build messaging that acknowledges the role everyone plays as housing problem solvers.

**Room 23**
- **Kay Moshier McDivitt**, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- **diiv Sternman**, National Alliance to End Homelessness
**Health and Homelessness: Frameworks for Collaboration**
Health and homelessness are inextricably linked. We’ll explore what partnerships between health and homelessness organizations look like nationwide and provide a framework to explore and expand collaboration opportunities in your community. Community Solutions, Inc. (CSI) is a nonprofit organization that promotes self-reliance, responsibility and accountability for at-risk and disadvantaged youth and adults. Since 1962, Community Solutions, Inc. (CSI) has specialized in reintegrating clients into the community. **ROOM 24**

- **Ben Bradley, Community Solutions, Inc.**
- **Taj Brown, Community Solutions, Inc.**

**Shaping the Agenda: Elevating Homelessness as a Legislative Priority**
In a panel moderated by Zach Dendas of Sullivan & LeShane, state legislators will share their perspectives on the recent 2024 legislative session, and on the outlook for future sessions. Drawing on their years of experience in their communities and in the Connecticut General Assembly, they will offer insight into how to build political will, what makes an effective outreach strategy, and how to bring stakeholders with diverse viewpoints into the work to solve homelessness. **ROOM 25**

- **Zach Dendas, Sullivan & LeShane**
- **Eleni Kavros-DeGraw, State Representative, House District 17**
- **Saud Anwar, State Senator, Senate District 3**
- **Tony Scott, State Representative, House District 112**
- **Jillian Gilchrest, State Representative, House District 18**

**How Master Leasing Can Help the Affordable Housing Crisis**
This workshop will provide an overview of Master Leasing and the benefits of Master Leasing for both rental property owners and nonprofit affordable housing providers. Allowing a space for both parties to get the information and reassurance of stability with dedicated cash flow and tenant additional protections. **ROOM 26**

- **Suzanne Wagner, Housing Innovations**

**CT CAN Collaborate: Empowering the Frontline with Purpose-Built Tech**
Civic Roundtable is building a dynamic statewide hub for practitioners across Connecticut to access mission-critical support from your peers and partners. During this session, we will listen to your biggest coordination challenges and goals for stronger collaboration across CT CANs. We will also invite attendees to join our inaugural statewide community for training and resources, hosted by CCEH. Together, we are working towards a future where no one needs to tackle homelessness alone. **ROOM 27**

- **Emily Benz, Civic Roundtable**
- **Madeleine Smith, Civic Roundtable**
- **Leonardo Ghio, Northwest Hills Council of Governments**

**Open to All: Low Barrier Shelters and Services**
This workshop will address misconceptions about low-barrier shelters, clarifying what being truly low-barrier entails. Providers will share best practices and expertise on creating inclusive environments that support individuals in shelter. We will explore the principles of equal access to shelter and discuss how to implement low-barrier strategies effectively. Join us to gain a deeper understanding of low-barrier approaches and learn how to foster a supportive and accessible shelter space. **ROOM 21**

- **Sabina Cordosa, Alpha Community Services YMCA**
- **Mario Ramirez, Alpha Community Services YMCA**
- **Barbara Montrose, New London Hospitality Center**

**Equity in Action: Operationalizing DEI in the Workplace**
Join us for a thoughtful session on putting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) into practice at your organization. This session will provide practical strategies and tools for centering DEI principles.
Beyond Advocacy: Organizing in Local Communities to Solve Homelessness

Movement-building and deep roots organizing drive sustainable change, and homeless response systems often lack the capacity and resources to see it through. Mobilizing and organizing in your local community is possible, but requires sustained, collective community effort. This workshop provides the background, skills, and guidance we need to build collective power.

ROOM 25

- Albert Townsend, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- Jenn Paradis, Beth-El Center
- Alex Kolokotronis, Naugatuck Valley Project
- Vanessa Liles, PT Partners
- Billy Bromage, Unhoused Activists Community Team
- Roosevelt Watkins, Unhoused Activists Community Team

Sleeping Outside Is Not a Crime: Decriminalizing Homelessness

Blending thoughts and insights on the growing topic of Decriminalizing Homelessness. Unsheltered Individuals and Families still have rights; Human Rights and should not have to suffer more consequences than homelessness itself. Collaborating as a system to inform government officials to remove additional variables from an already complex equation; Ending Homelessness.

ROOM 26

- Ann Oliva, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- Nichele Carver, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

Fair Rent Commissions: Ensuring Equity in Housing Accessibility

Join the Connecticut Fair Housing Center for an insightful workshop on understanding fair rent commissions and supporting tenants statewide. These commissions are vital in maintaining fairness and preventing homelessness in rental housing, yet their functions may be unclear to many. Our session will explore their importance in upholding tenants’ rights, clarifying their powers under Connecticut law (CGS § 7-148b). Experts will detail how commissions handle rent complaints, conduct hearings, and enforce health and safety standards. Real-life examples will aid attendees in knowing when to engage a commission, empowering them against unfair rental practices.

Direct Cash Transfer

This workshop will be an introduction to the basics of Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) to young people, which is now being piloted by cities across the country. DCT can be paired with services and offered as a resource to youth and young adults to prevent the loss of housing or as a re-housing resource, giving them unconditional support to make decisions on their own terms and resource housing pathways they identify. Panelists will guide participants through program basics, the Connecticut context, the youth perspective on DCT, and frequently asked questions from providers.

ROOM 23

- Lauren Wilkie, Point Source Youth
- Angel Cotto, Youth Action Hub
- John Lawlor, The Connection

Making Our System Flow

Many times, those experiencing homelessness get “stuck” in our Homeless Response System. It is not enough having the “right” interventions to end homelessness; instead, effective system flow depends on every intervention and provider to align practices and truly partner to make sure the experience of homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. This workshop will focus on the critical role that each provider plays across interventions to not only house people quickly, but to ensure housing stability to avoid returns to homelessness.

ROOM 24

- Kay Moshier McDivitt, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- diiv Sternman, National Alliance to End Homelessness
Session 3 (Cont.)

We’ll also discuss commissions’ role in preventing retaliation against complaining tenants. Whether you’re a tenant, advocate, or housing professional, gain invaluable insights to navigate fair rent commissions effectively and promote equitable treatment. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn and empower your community! ROOM 27

- Rashida Rattray-Reid, CT Fair Housing Center
- Dahlia Romanow, CT Fair Housing Center
- Wildaliz Bermudez, Fair Rent Commission, City of New Haven
- Sharon Cowan, City of Stamford

Session 4

Rapid and Effective Exits: Moving Clients Into Housing with Supports
Exiting shelter has always been a significant challenge, particularly in today’s housing market. This workshop will explore innovative strategies for moving individuals out of shelters and into stable housing. We will discuss various support systems that can be implemented to prevent individuals from returning to shelters, ensuring a sustainable transition. Join us to learn about creative solutions and effective practices that address this critical issue. ROOM 21

- Hannah Smith, Beth El Center
- Ewa Grochowska, St. Vincent De Paul of Bristol
- Lisa Joseph, Open Doors

Housing: A Basic Human Right for Everyone!
Exploring Services, Barriers and Partnerships
Impacting a Person’s Reentry Process
Working TOGETHER to enhance equitable access to resources for people impacted by the justice system. Actively participate in a discussion designed to bring awareness to barriers faced by people returning home to their communities and statewide collaborations that are addressing these barriers. Safe affordable housing, successful connections to community-based resources, and strong advocacy initiatives are vital to successful reentry into our communities. Our interactive workshop will explore existing statewide collaborations, resources assisting people returning home from prison, advocacy efforts that are changing discriminatory practices, and preventative strategies; decreasing the number of people experiencing homelessness as they reenter the community. We will also explore positive impacts of Restorative Justice Practices, address stigma and stereotypes that exist for people impacted by the justice system and examine the importance of person-first language. ROOM 22

- Susan Gunderman, Community Partners in Action
- Deborah Rogala, Community Partners in Action
- Luis Mattei, Formerly Incarcerated College Graduates Network

Let’s Talk About Client Choice
People experiencing homelessness deserve options and autonomy as they make decisions about what housing solutions will work for them, within the realm of the available options and resources. Service providers have a responsibility to people across their whole systems to balance the choices of individuals with the reality of eligibility and availability. Come have a deep and nuanced conversation about client choice as a complex practice of individualizing services and encouraging social responsibility. ROOM 23

- Kay Moshier McDivitt, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- diiv Sternman, National Alliance to End Homelessness

Building Healthy Communities: The Role of Neighborhood Health Teams
People experiencing homelessness deserve options Homelessness negatively impacts personal and community health status. Being a rough sleeper or in crowded shelters can be physically and emotionally stressful especially when exposed to various communicable diseases, environmental exposure, hunger, substance use, and violence. The Neighborhood Health team through Hartford HealthCare is working toward improving the lives of our most vulnerable community members. This workshop will introduce the mission of Neighborhood Health, review the services offered and care delivery model as well as discuss the challenges this healthcare team is facing while trying to care for the unhoused. How can we collectively address barriers such as access to care, establish meaningful guidelines for higher level of care needs, and set up a liaison type relationship between healthcare and the rest of the
homeless response system? This will be an interactive brainstorming workshop focusing on the hot topics in healthcare for the homeless. **ROOM 24**

- **Kelly Toth**, Hartford Healthcare Medical Group
- **Dawn Filippa**, Hartford Healthcare Medical Group
- **Melinda Lodge**, Hartford Healthcare Medical Group

**CT’s Unspoken Crisis: A Look at the Data and a Call to Action!**

In October 2023, Dalio Education released a report by Boston Consulting Group revealing a crisis in Connecticut, with 119,000 young people aged 14 to 26 at risk of disconnection from education and the workforce. The report used data from various agencies, including the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness. In spring 2024, two more reports were released: a national scan by MDRC on re-engagement practices and a qualitative study by Community Science on the lived experiences of disconnected youth. This session, led by Portfolio Directors from the Connecticut Opportunity Project, will discuss these findings and ongoing efforts to re-engage young people in Connecticut. **ROOM 25**

- **Adhlere Coffy**, CT Opportunity Project
- **Amanda Olberg**, CT Opportunity Project
- **Samantha Miller**, CT Opportunity Project

**Welcome Home Neighbor – Padmission Initiative**

This workshop will provide an overview of the Welcome Home Neighbor/Padmission initiative as a solution to build relationships with landlords and service providers, involving discussion on how to effectively house the homeless populations we serve, while improving outcomes for all stakeholders involved. Learning together how our system can make a significant impact on ending homelessness by creating a more sustainable and supportive housing engagement process. **ROOM 26**

- **Pleshaun Bing**, The Housing Collective

**Developing Housing Focused Encampment Strategies**

This session will provide an overview of a new model for meaningfully responding to unsheltered homelessness that allows communities to address concerns around public safety and connect people experiencing homelessness to housing. The model is anchored in high-level collaboration and coordination between Continuum of Care organizations and local government and emphasizes innovative, fast, and nimble service delivery. Rather than the temporary use of shelters or navigation centers, this model prioritizes the direct provision of housing by accessing rental units, paired with supportive services, via the private market. Learn about this model and how it has been locally tested in in the Greater Hartford and Central regions. Evaluation tools will also be shared to assess your own community’s current unsheltered response system. **ROOM 27**

- **Sarah Pavone**, Journey Home
- **Morgan Smith**, Community Solutions, Inc.
- **Tammy McGhee**, CLUTCH Consulting Group

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The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

**Proudly Presents**

The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness' 21st Annual Training Institute.
Carol E. Walter Think, Be, Lead Change Award

Recognizing exceptional achievement in housing and homeless services, this award is named after Carol Walter for her pragmatic approach to ending homelessness. It honors those who drive the mission of ending homelessness within their agency or through coalition work.

Anthony D. Brown
Community Case Manager
Chrysalis Center, Inc.

Anthony D. Brown, affectionately known as “Tony,” has dedicated his life to championing those in need through his work in human services. His colleagues praise him as an inspiring leader who embodies integrity, empathy, and resilience.

Tony's 30-year career spans significant roles, including 11 years in the Emergency Shelter System and over 28 years with Chrysalis Center, Inc. as a Community Case Manager. He has made a lasting impact in these roles, particularly during Chrysalis Center's involvement in the State of Connecticut’s Supportive Housing Demonstration Program in 1995. Tony provided outreach and case management for homeless individuals and helped transition low-income families into Hudson View Commons. In 1997, under the Chrysalis Center's HUD/HOPWA contract, Tony assisted individuals living with HIV/AIDS, aiding their transition to independent living.

Tony's commitment extends to his board service. In 1994, he joined the Save Our Homeless People Association's Board, advocating for homeless individuals. By 1996, he was serving on the Board of Directors of The Open Hearth, a men's shelter and transitional facility in Hartford, CT. His dedication was recognized in 2009 with the Catherine Kennedy Award from the Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition for his work on behalf of housing needs for people living with HIV/AIDS.

As a valued mentor, Tony continues to inspire and guide the next generation of advocates, promoting empathetic and culturally sensitive services.

The Unhoused Activist Community Team

We are excited to highlight the exceptional efforts of the Unhoused Activist Community Team (U-ACT) in promoting dignity and addressing the needs of the unhoused in Greater New Haven.

U-ACT strongly advocates for ending the criminalization of homelessness locally and statewide. Their key demands include halting the destruction of encampments and tiny home communities, designating public land for safe encampments, providing 24-hour clean bathrooms in downtown New Haven and other populated areas, ensuring access to free shower facilities throughout the day and evening, and offering free storage for personal belongings.

Beyond advocacy, U-ACT focuses on community building and expanding their membership. They organize a weekly lunch on the New Haven Green and a weekly meeting at the downtown library, open to all. Additionally, they advise homeless service providers on improving their support for those living on the streets. U-ACT's unwavering commitment to addressing the urgent needs of the unhoused is driven by the belief that for unhoused individuals, THE EMERGENCY IS TONIGHT.

We are inspired by U-ACT's dedication and relentless pursuit of justice and dignity for the unhoused community. Join us in celebrating their significant contributions and the positive impact they are making in Greater New Haven.
**Be Homeful Award for Innovative Work to End Family Homelessness**

Part of CCEH's be homeful project, this award celebrates individuals or groups pioneering effective methods to end family homelessness in their communities.

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**First Congregational Church of Vernon United Church of Christ**

The First Congregational Church of Vernon United Church of Christ extends an extravagant welcome to all into a vibrant community of faith. As an Open & Affirming congregation, FCCV welcomes all persons of every race, age, gender, family structure, physical or mental ability, economic status, faith background, nationality, sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity into the full life and ministry of this faith community.

Committed to active participation in the community and supporting neighbors in need, FCCV members, under the leadership of The Rev. Robin Bird, former Senior Pastor, and Cindy Dubuque of the Missions Group, took a significant step to end homelessness in Connecticut by creating a guaranteed security deposit program. Gratitude is extended to the partner organization, My Sister’s Place, which manages the program funds and works tirelessly to provide housing support and resources to the community.

In 2022, FCCV embarked on this mission to address housing insecurity by establishing a security deposit guarantee program for low-income individuals and families. The church initially donated $20,000 from its capital campaign to launch this mission project. Members of the church are also steadfast donors to the annual “be homeful for the holidays” campaign, further supporting the mission and extending hope and stability to the community.

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**William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty**

Since the inception of the “be homeful for the holidays” campaign in 2016, William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty, and in particular their Litchfield Hills Brokerage, have been strong supporters of the campaign.

Just a few examples of their dedication to finding creative ways to raise funds and awareness about the program aimed at solving family homelessness before it begins include:

- Staffing tables at local annual events such as the Litchfield Holiday Stroll, Washington Christmas in the Depot, Kent Parade of Lights and Salisbury Holiday Fest.
- Providing informational/fundraising materials via holiday wreaths and trees to numerous local libraries throughout Litchfield County at their own expense.
- Held a Paddington book reading event with Representative Maria Horn as their guest reader.
- Promoted the campaign company-wide to approximately 700 agents at company meetings and events.
- Created gummy bear jars/tags to give out at all these events at their own expense.

In addition to the awareness building and education, the culmination of their efforts has resulted in more than $50,000 raised by William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty in just the last 4 years.
The Town of Westport with Homes with Hope and the Westport Housing Authority

The Town of Westport, alongside the Westport Housing Authority and Homes with Hope, exemplifies the spirit of the Community Champions Award through innovative practices, broad collaboration, and creative solutions to homelessness. Their collective efforts have not only transformed the lives of homeless individuals but also set a commendable example for affluent suburban communities nationwide. Together, they have successfully housed hundreds of homeless families, providing ongoing case management and residential support to ensure permanent housing stability.

Over the past 40 years, Westport has become a leader in addressing homelessness and housing insecurity in Fairfield County. The town was the first municipality to secure HUD Diversion funding for the Coordinated Access System. Additionally, Westport secured funding to renovate the Gillespie Center’s Emergency Homeless Shelter and food pantry, and developed a single-room occupancy (SRO) model prioritizing 18 to 24-year-old homeless women. During renovations, the Town of Westport and the Westport Housing Authority provided temporary shelter and a food pantry free of charge.

Once families are housed, the three agencies provide comprehensive support, helping them adjust and thrive in the community. For over 40 years, Westport has led the way in using municipal resources to support the homeless, setting a model for other small affluent towns.

The Department of Housing and the Office of Early Childhood

This award celebrates Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno and the Department of Housing (DOH) and Commissioner Beth Bye and the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) for their cross-agency collaboration, Head Start on Housing, to expedite access to permanent housing subsidies for Head Start households, increase the pool of landlords renting to young families, and enhance the educational performance of homeless and precariously housed children.

This innovative model is two-generational, focusing on both the parent and the child, and brings both agencies together to wrap vital services around the whole family. Providing safe and stable housing is a foundation for family well-being and brings consistency in the life of a young child, which is so critical to their overall health and development.

People throughout Connecticut can be proud of their leaders for embracing a unique and expedited solution to the affordable housing issues that have acted as a burden on the educational and economic prospects of America’s youngest children and their families. Through this groundbreaking partnership, Connecticut is eliminating unnecessary barriers to family success and leading the nation forward towards an end to homelessness.
Ann Oliva
Chief Executive Officer
National Alliance to End Homelessness

Ann Oliva is CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, a public education, advocacy, and capacity building organization dedicated to ending homelessness in the United States. A career veteran of homelessness and housing policy, she is recognized as one of the foremost experts on homelessness in the nation. In her role, Ms. Oliva works closely with members of Congress and the Administration, as well as with officials and advocates at the state and local levels. As part of that role, she also collaborates closely with Alliance partners to educate the public on the real nature of homelessness and its solutions, and to advance known best practices within the homeless services sector.

Ms. Oliva previously served as Vice President for Housing Policy for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and as a Senior Policy Advisor at the Corporation for Supportive Housing. Her distinguished career is also marked by a decade of federal service at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

During her 10-year tenure at HUD, Ms. Oliva successfully designed and implemented a variety of initiatives and programs, including homelessness prevention, supportive housing, and rapid re-housing programs, as well as a demonstration to end youth homelessness.

In 2015, Ms. Oliva was named one of the 50 Most Influential Leaders in the department’s first 50 years, and was honored with the True Colors Fund’s True Leader Award. She was a finalist for a Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal (Sammie) in management excellence in 2011, and was part of an inter-agency team that won a Sammie for the team’s work on reducing Veteran homelessness in 2012.

Nichele Carver
Senior Regional Advisor
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness

Nichele has 25 years of experience leading teams in the mental health and homeless services sector. She led Virginia’s homeless services system through the COVID-19 pandemic and ensured access to safe shelter for people experiencing homelessness during the implementation of stay-at-home orders. During her tenure, Virginia decreased overall homelessness by 34% and was the first state to functionally end veteran’s homelessness. Nichele previously served as the co-chair of the Council of State Community Development Agencies’ national homeless committee, is a nationally recognized speaker on racial equity, and is committed to uplifting the voices of people with lived expertise. She was named one of the Virginia housing field’s top 40 under 40. She has a bachelor’s in psychology from Virginia State University and a master’s in rehabilitation counseling from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Congratulations

Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno, Commissioner Beth Bye and their HEAD START ON HOUSING team at the Connecticut Department of Housing, the Office of Early Childhood, the Head Start Collaboration Office, the Connecticut Head Start Association and 18 Connecticut Head Start and Early Head Start programs for receipt of the

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You are champions in innovative practice and have demonstrated a most successful partnership, creating a national model for permanent housing solutions for families.

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- Building and preserving affordable housing
- Investing in neighborhoods and people
- Ending homelessness
- Promoting economic growth
- Enhancing Connecticut’s quality of life

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https://portal.ct.gov/doh
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All Connecticut schools support students and families who don’t have a steady housing situation or are experiencing homelessness. Get connected to confidential help.

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Coalition Members are the individuals, organizations, corporations, and government agencies dedicated to ending homelessness in Connecticut. Members make our work possible.
The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, in partnership with members and communities throughout the state, creates change through leadership, advocacy, and building the capacity of members and the field to respond to environmental challenges.

Our collective mission is to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut.