

Annual Report

2024



Future 5



**Harvard
Business
School**

**Club of Connecticut
Community Partners**

Our Mission

Community Partner's ("CP") mission is to enable HBS alumni to promote excellence in nonprofit leadership in CT through pro bono consulting, education, grant awards, and related initiatives that provide a rewarding opportunity to work together to benefit our community. We recognize that our success depends on the efforts and contributions of our volunteers. We want to express our appreciation to the 55 volunteers who helped to make 2024 another successful year.



Alumni Volunteers

Apply your business skills and career experience to help local nonprofits tackle their management challenges and opportunities.

Nonprofit Partners

Explore our advisory offerings, both several month consulting projects and single evening brainstorming sessions, tailored to your organization's needs.

Letter from the Chair

As we reflect on 2024, we are struck by how much this year has been one of growth for Community Partners (CP) that wouldn't have been possible without our team of dedicated volunteers. We have expanded the number of projects we have taken on and the number of volunteers, with 16 new alums eager to contribute. Their enthusiasm and commitment have allowed us to increase our impact on the nonprofit community in Connecticut and strengthened our foundation for the future.

Looking forward to 2025, we are excited to celebrate the 20th anniversary of HBS CT Community Partners' founding. In preparation for this milestone, we embarked on our own Strategic Planning Project with the help of several alum volunteers. The results of this effort will soon be presented to the board and shared with our community. Still, the main focus is continuity, ensuring that the high-quality CP has exhibited continues with a new board and project leaders, fresh volunteers, and new kinds of clients and client challenges.

We are working to ensure that Community Partners continues to thrive as responsibility passes from the founders who built and grew CP to the next generation. We are:

- Engaging our volunteers in individual projects and other aspects of CP so they can take on leadership roles and help guide the organization forward.
- Deepening our relationships with the nonprofits we serve—not just completing a project and moving on but finding new ways to support them based on our understanding of their needs and the impact they seek to achieve.
- Being proactive about choosing the projects we work on, focusing our resources to have the most significant impact on the community, and seeking out opportunities where our involvement can make a meaningful difference.

Consulting Projects

Our projects in 2024 (Sep. 2023 – Aug. 2024) focused on empowering nonprofits to serve their communities better. Our consulting engagements supported agencies addressing needs in education, housing, health, and the arts. At the same time, our working sessions provided targeted assistance to organizations seeking to refine leadership models and develop strategic plans. We also facilitated brainstorming sessions for nonprofits exploring audience growth, revenue generation, and sustainable expansion. These engagements reflect our volunteers' incredible expertise and dedication, helping nonprofits overcome challenges and maximize their impact.

Case Method Initiative

A key highlight of the year was the launch of our Case Method initiative. Fifteen alum volunteers gathered to analyze and discuss a mental health service provider's business model, offering valuable insights captured in a write-up and video shared with the client. This innovative approach exemplifies our commitment to leveraging the collective experience of our volunteers in impactful ways.

cont.

Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management (SPNM) Award

The SPNM Award continues to be an important part of our work. This year, we awarded the 2023-4 Lee Barnes Memorial Scholarship to Nancy Coughlin, CEO of Person-to-Person, and Sarah Fox, CEO of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness in Hartford, for their dedication to leading impactful change in our community.

Operation Match

Operation Match, another cornerstone of our efforts, continues to connect HBS alumni with nonprofit boards, fostering long-term relationships that strengthen the sector. We encourage more alumni to join this program and bring their skills and expertise to the nonprofits that need them most.

Turbo Award

We are also proud of our grant-making efforts, notably the Turbo Award. We are pleased to announce that DR Bank, a Connecticut state-chartered and FDIC member bank, is the lead sponsor for the Turbo Award in 2024. Their generous support will enable us to make a \$20,000 grant before year-end. DR Bank's commitment to supporting local initiatives is evident through its dedication to enhancing artistic and community efforts. With branches in Darien and Rowayton, Connecticut, DR Bank is helping us take a significant step toward empowering nonprofits in our community, and we are grateful for their partnership.

Prospective Clients

If you are part of a nonprofit in Connecticut and are interested in how Community Partners might assist your organization, we encourage you to reach out. Our mission is to support nonprofit excellence, and we are always eager to collaborate with organizations dedicated to making a difference. Please contact Jeff Krulwich '67 (jeff.krulwich@hbscpconnecticut.org), Chair of our Projects Committee, to learn more.

To our volunteers and supporters: thank you. Your contributions are the foundation of our success. Together, we are making a significant impact on nonprofits across Connecticut.

Steven Phillips '83
sdphilli@gmail.com

Mary-Jane Wood '91
mjwood@optonline.net

Co-Chairs of the Board



**Harvard
Business
School**

**Club of Connecticut
Community Partners**

Our Impact in 2024

16

PROJECTS

Benefited from our pro bono consulting services.

100%

CLIENTS

Report Projects had impact with 66% reporting Significant and Highly Significant Impact

55

VOLUNTEERS

Participated in pro bono consulting projects.

5000

HOURS

Pro Bono consulting and brainstorming projects

Since 2004

\$30.6M

Dollar value of pro bono consulting services provided by HBS alumni to Connecticut nonprofits.

275+

Number of HBS alumni in Connecticut who have volunteered for consulting projects.

175+

Number of Connecticut nonprofits who have benefited from HBS Community Partners consulting services.

33+

Scholarships awarded to Connecticut nonprofit leaders to attend the Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management (SPNM) executive education program.

Consulting

The demand for CP consulting services throughout CT continued to be strong: we completed 10 projects. Clients included agencies focused on empowering those in need with nutrition, housing, mental health, immigration, and self-sufficiency; providing crisis and supportive services for victims of domestic violence; preserving endangered species; and delivering fresh meat, vegetables, bread, canned goods, and boxed foods to food pantries. 2025 begins with 8 projects either underway or about to begin.



Founded in 2004, Apple Blossom School and Family Center is an early childhood education program and parenting center using the Waldorf Method. The school has grown recently with 40 full-time students, 30 summer camp participants, and 20 adults in parenting classes. The board and a team of 11 full- and part-time teachers manage the organization. Their Wilton, CT building is leased with the desire to purchase.

Apple Blossom leadership asked Community Partners to help develop a 5-year strategic plan. The CP team worked with stakeholders (current board, faculty, staff, and parents) to understand and agree on the issues, develop an internal consensus on goals and objectives with a sustainable mix of resources, develop a high-level plan to put resources in place and help the key players agree how to assign responsibility for moving forward. In addition, the team benchmarked a handful of other successful comparable independent schools. The Apple Blossom Team is moving forward to implement the key priorities of the strategic plan.

Project Leader: Rodgers Harper '71
Volunteers: Lindsay Barth '07, Jeff Krulwich '67 Amy Lipper
McCauley OPM 15



**Avon
Theatre**

Deborah & Chuck Royce Cinema Arts Center

The Avon Theatre is an historic film theater in Stamford, CT. It was saved from being demolished in the early 2000's by generous benefactors and became successful presenting arts, independent films, and events for film aficionados. The pandemic challenged all theaters causing many to close, and the Avon has chosen to enlarge its theater, enrich and upgrade its offering of movies, events and presentations.

Avon asked HBS Community Partners to benchmark the experiences of other nonprofit theaters that have transitioned the pandemic to success. Our emphasis was on special programs, events, membership programs and strategies to compete successfully against for profit multiplexes.

We interviewed several such theaters and conducted internet research to recommend best practices and new ideas to succeed, and also to maintain audience support during a dark period when the Avon would be undergoing building construction and improvements. The Avon plans to use several of the practices we identified. We shared our finding with the theaters that shared their experience in our interviews.

Project Team: Carrie Hammond '92, Jeff Krulwich '67, Glenn Reicin '90, James Rulmyr '78



Barbara's House (formerly Community Centers, Inc. of Greenwich) is among the oldest independent nonprofit organizations in Greenwich, founded in 1955. Dedicated to building skills that empower clients of all ages, Barbara's House helps clients overcome educational, social, and economic barriers. Its programs reach the growing population of overlooked residents, aiming to address the root causes of community problems, such as lack of access, achievement gaps in learning, and financial instability. All Barbara's House programs are free of charge and include transportation.

In response to increasing community needs and limited resources, BH leadership asked Community Partners to help develop a framework for assessing its program portfolio and build efforts where they have the most significant impact.

The CP team, which included two first-time volunteers, surveyed the BH board and conducted numerous interviews within BH and with leaders of area nonprofit organizations. Working closely with BH leadership, the team developed a program portfolio matrix to assess relative program impact and resource requirements and to identify those programs where additional resources would benefit the community most. A draft strategic plan has been prepared and will be finalized in September/October.

Project Leaders: Lindsay Barth '07, Jeff Krulwich '67
Volunteers: Luke Syzmcrak '92, Buzz Thorman '83, Jill Vollmer '95



Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, Inc. (CCFC), based in Bridgeport, is one of Connecticut's largest private social service providers, generating \$15 million in annual revenue. Established in 1916, CCFC operates over 30 programs across nutrition, housing, mental health, adoption, immigration, and family support, impacting more than 20,000 people annually.

CCFC previously partnered with the Harvard Business School Club of Connecticut to develop a strategic plan focused on enhancing self-sufficiency for clients. A major outcome was a pilot family self-sufficiency program in Norwalk, which supports individuals and families striving for greater independence. Using CP's Self-Sufficiency Index, case workers evaluate progress across 17 key areas, from crisis to thriving, allowing for highly personalized plans toward long-term stability.

So far, the program has engaged 46 individuals in Norwalk, enabling tailored goals and effective partnerships that address immediate needs and foster sustained self-sufficiency.

Project Team: Robert Neiman '62, Angela Piscitello '95



The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), in partnership with more than 75 members (i.e., emergency shelter providers, transitional housing providers, community and business leaders, and strategic partners members and communities) seeks to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut through leadership, advocacy, and building the capacity of members and the field to respond to environmental challenges. Connecticut has been and continues to be a leader in the fight to end homelessness, but many challenges continue including setbacks of efforts during Covid.

CCEH has embarked on a major initiative in creating and leading a new collective impact group ("CT CAN End Homelessness"), engaging with others across the State to develop a comprehensive statewide plan with the stated goal to end and prevent homelessness within 5 years. CCEH asked HBS Community Partners to help define its role as leader, to develop a 3-year strategic plan to guide CCEH and the collective impact group it created.

Through interviews with numerous leaders of nonprofit and State organizations engaged in fighting homelessness, research, and in close coordination with CCEH leadership, the resulting CCEH strategic plan included mission and vision statements, 3-year goals, and five major objectives with articulated strategies, each with action initiatives, timing, and the parties responsible for achieving the desired results.

Project Leaders: Brendan Biggins '02, Jeff Krulwich '67.
Volunteers: Andrew Traub '78, Erv Shames '66





The Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies (CCFSA) is a statewide network of thirteen independent non-profit family service agencies that serve over 100,000 families annually across Connecticut. CCFSA's member agencies provide mental health, family support, health education, and youth development services. Community Partners assisted CCFSA in launching an initiative to improve information sharing among member agencies' behavioral health clinics and identify best practices. The longer-term goal is to have recurring meetings of behavioral health leads, create a shared information space, and establish a model for future collaborative efforts in other areas.

The CP team worked with a core committee to prepare for and facilitate the first meeting of behavioral health directors, focusing on staff training and clinical management. Community Partners helped identify relevant metrics, collect and analyze comparative data, and prepare the meeting agenda and materials, and facilitate the 1st meeting. The project established a foundation for continued collaboration and shared learning among CCFSA agencies.

Project Leader: Steve Phillips '83
Volunteers: Jeff Krulwich '67, Mary-Jane Wood '91



Future 5 helps motivated, under-resourced students in Stamford realize their potential by connecting them to resources and experiences that support their transition to post-secondary education and careers. Students self-select to join Future 5 as members, who – collectively -- become a special kind of community. Serving over 400 students annually, Future 5's programs help their members "land with a plan" for their next stage in life.

With a significant increase in student numbers since its last strategic plan, Future 5 asked Community Partners to help them craft a new plan to guide future growth and resource allocation. The CP team conducted a series of working sessions with Future 5's leadership, using research and stakeholder interviews to inform the strategic plan. The resulting plan outlines a roadmap for sustainable growth, including initiatives to increase member capacity incrementally, to capture and display data on their impact more effectively, to codify their processes to be repeatable, and to create a market study for new space. It also emphasizes a "pulse check" system to regularly assess capacity and make data-driven adjustments.

Since the plan's completion, Future 5 has moved forward in filling key management positions, codifying its processes, finding and beginning to prepare a new, larger location, launching a capital campaign, and developing new metrics of its impact.

Project Leaders: Steve Phillips '83, Vivek Ravishanker '12,
Volunteers: George Barsness '19, John Dexheimer '80, Rodgers Harper '71, Pranay Ranjan '19



Horizons National, in partnership with a decentralized network of educational institutions, builds outside-of-school programs to improve educational performance, focusing on underserved communities. The core Horizons program is a six-week summer program on the campuses of network members, which include high schools, prep schools, and colleges. Horizons programs, which include projects and other activities as well as classroom time, have a strong track record of success in improving academic performance.

Horizons National provides network members with a variety of services, including data, monthly calls, and fundraising support (Horizons Giving Day). It also hosts an annual conference (150-200 attendees), provides onboarding for schools, has consulting for members, and performs pre- post- testing for students (STAR). In 2022, Horizon programs were delivered with 43 network partners at 74 sites in 20 states, serving over 6700 students.

Horizons has an aggressive growth plan that requires additional partner institutions as well as funding support for both the partners and Horizons National. The organization asked Community Partners to help evaluate a specific option for attracting additional partners and generating revenue, a sliding scale tuition model based on ability to pay.

Community Partners interviewed a number of current and potential partner schools and conducted a review of other organizations' experiences with revenue models based on ability to pay. The research and interview findings indicated that a sliding scale revenue model was unlikely to have a material impact on Horizons' goals. Horizons is now examining other options to support its growth goals.

Project Leader: Charley Beever '78

Volunteers: Brendan Biggins '02, Russ Chapman '75, Rodgers Harper '71, Jeff Krulwich '67, Mo Punjani '17



Stamford Cradle to Career (SC2C) is a collective impact partnership that convenes all the key stakeholders in the city's education, such as the public schools, the nonprofit community, the city government, and religious groups, in order to set goals and strategies together which are guided by data and continuous improvement. SC2C also focuses on community engagement and equity. United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut serves as the backbone for Cradle to Career by providing management and fiscal support,

The project with Community Partners was focused on improving results for third grade ELL learners in Toquam Elementary School, which has the highest level of EEL learners among Stamford elementary schools at about 30%, and a highly committed principal who wishes to have her school become a model. The role for the CP team: develop a framework for the project including goals, metrics and calendars and to act as an advisor to the team of SC2C staff, Toquam staff, and other associated groups such as DomusKids and the Mayor's Office.

The Stamford School system faced a \$ 3 million gap which the Superintendent closed by restructuring the ELL program, which included the position of Coordinator of English Language Learners. The loss of the key member of our team prevented the CP project from going forward.

Project Leaders: Robert Neiman '62, Andrew Traub '78

Volunteer: Erv Shames '66



The Tiny Miracles Foundation is dedicated to helping families with premature babies, serving Fairfield and New Haven counties. The premature birth of a baby can be isolating, confusing, and frightening. Tiny Miracles' goal is to support and assist families during this challenging time, enhance hospital services, and improve the lives of babies born too early and those who love and care for them. Tiny Miracles provides on-site programs and services at six partner hospitals and community-based services for preemie parents in Fairfield and New Haven Counties.

Tiny Miracles expansion to serve Yale New Haven Hospital in 2021 doubled the number of families they were serving. They asked Community Partners to assist them in developing a new strategic plan to guide their growth over the next 3 years. The plan focused on refining the organization's mission, clarifying service populations, and improving the efficiency of its operations. Using a balanced scorecard approach, Community Partners facilitated a series of strategic planning meetings, interviewed stakeholders, and conducted research on best practices from similar organizations.

The resulting plan includes initiatives to allow them to focus on their core priorities – raising more money, more efficiently using the resources they have, finding ways to do more for the families they serve, and finding new ways to reach families in their service area who don't fully use their help. They have put in place a new approach to present their value to each hospital, resulting in increased funding from them.

Project Leader: Steve Phillips '83

Volunteers: Lindsay Barth '07, David Grasfield '93, Jim Locker '72, Antonio Mazzara TGMP 15, Ery Shames '66



Brainstorming

Brainstorming sessions are two hours long and designed to address a tactical challenge. Two agencies requested brainstorming sessions in 2024.



Center Stage Theatre is an inclusive and intergenerational community-based theatre, one in which the actors are unpaid, providing high quality and affordable performances, educational programming, volunteer opportunities and community collaborations. Located in Shelton, Connecticut, the theatre produces five full scale productions a year including its annual summer musical featuring high school and college aged actors, as well as year-round theatre education for students grades K-12, summer camps and limited-run special events.

Community Partners was asked to provide a brainstorming session to focus on audience development and how revenues might be raised without adding another show. The session focused on pricing, defining a target audience in nearby towns, the mix of productions presented, and the opportunity to attract corporate patrons and donors.

As a result, CST has selected a season of five musicals and a bonus Christmas production for its 20th Anniversary Season. CST is considering a small price increase for single ticket sales, as well as tiered ticket prices for selected performances and certain seats. CST has also dedicated resources to increasing revenue from both business sponsors and individual donations.

Project Leader: Andrew Traub '78

Volunteers: Chuck Chesler OMP 44, Caryn Kaftal '91, Jim Locker '72, Margaret Pederson '78, Jim Rulmyr '78, Buzz Thorman '83.



Wheel It Forward is essentially a lending library of durable medical equipment (DME), benefiting those needing the equipment and reducing the burden of used equipment on landfills. Founded in October 2020, Wheel it Forward secures the DME via donations and lends it free of charge to those in need. Operating initially out of Stamford, it has grown rapidly, recently adding an additional facility in Bridgeport, CT.

Company leadership has expressed a "simple dream" which is the basis for this brainstorming session: "One day every town in America will have two kinds of community libraries. One library that lends out books... and the second library, just as well known, built to scale, will lend out durable medical equipment."

WIF leadership engaged with CP to address how it should begin to bring to life the "simple dream". The HBS CP team prepared a briefing document and facilitated a 90-minute brainstorming session in which HBS alumni presented ideas, points of view, and options for expanding the WIF concept of a durable medical equipment lending library broadly across the country. The discussions led to several potential pathways to move forward; and WIF has already begun researching further and implementing some of the ideas that came out of the brainstorming session.

Project Leaders: Lindsay Barth '07, David Grasfield '93, Jeff Krulwich '67

Volunteers: Helen Lemberg '02, Harvey Heyman '77, Buzz Thorman '83, Glen Reicin '90, Russ Chapman '75, Doreen Collins '85

Working Sessions

In 2024, we held working sessions for three clients seeking to build board consensus on strategic issues, answer strategic questions on growth, identify how best to support and serve members and residents; and develop strategic plans.



The Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras offers one of the finest opportunities for young musicians in the area to develop their musical talents, fostering a sense of joy and pushing them to achieve beyond their perceived limits. With a range of twelve orchestras/ensembles, drawing members from over 40 communities in five CT counties through competitive auditions, GCTYO's program goes beyond just rehearsals and lessons. It includes multiple performances, retreats, social outings, international travel every two years, and outreach and collaboration with several other area music groups and professionals.

GCTYO leadership sought the expertise of Community Partners to enhance board effectiveness through a workshop for its Board of Directors, many of whom were new to board participation. The CP team began by reviewing the current strategic plan, conducting selected interviews, and a full board survey to gain a deep understanding of GCTYO, its needs, and the roles and responsibilities of board members. They then used these insights to customize a 2-hour Board workshop, ensuring it was tailored to the specific needs of GCTYO.

The client's feedback speaks volumes about the success of the collaboration, stating, "Our collaboration with Community Partners was exceptional. They took a true interest in our desire to become a better functioning Board for our organization. The team created a survey specifically for us and listened to our concerns. They tailored a presentation that addressed the important points from the survey results. During the final presentation, every board member present contributed to the conversation and/or asked questions. You immediately realized how comfortable everyone was and how engaged they were during the presentation. This experience was second to none".

Project Team: Rodgers Harper '71, Jeff Krulwich '67, Mary-Jane Wood '91



The Greenwich Symphony Orchestra (GSO), formed in 1940, is a fully professional orchestra featuring world-class soloists on five concert weekends annually. In the last two years, the board has focused on professionalizing the orchestra and hiring a new musical director and their first full-time executive director. To continue moving forward, they want to create their first Strategic Plan for GSO and are looking for help in educating the board on the strategic planning process.

Community Partners facilitated a planning session as part of the GSO's Board Retreat to help board members align on key strategic priorities. The strategic session focused on introducing frameworks like SWOT analysis and the Balanced Scorecard to assess GSO's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Community Partners guided board members in taking the 1st steps in identifying strategic issues, setting priorities, understanding the needs of key constituencies, and how to then move forward in the planning process. The session helped set a framework for their planned strategic planning effort aimed at determining how to achieve their mission and build sustainable growth.

Project Team: Steve Phillips '83, Rodgers Harper '71

TEEG

TEEG (Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group, Inc.) is a small grassroots non-profit social service agency in Northeast CT. TEEG was founded in 1985 to meet the growing social support needs of low-income families in nearby communities, where poverty is compounded by rural isolation. TEEG has grown to offer critical programs addressing food security, senior services, youth and family support, homelessness support, energy and fuel assistance, and others.

After many years of leadership stability, TEEG faced significant management departures in the next six months and asked CP to provide organizational assessment and support to ensure a successful transition to new leadership. The CP team assessed TEEG's current functional capabilities relative to its program needs; evaluated its current organizational culture, structure and leadership; envisioned an optimal structure to serve its constituents effectively and efficiently, and assessed its internal operating strengths and opportunities as well as its external challenges.

As the CP team dug into its assessment, TEEG's own initiatives resulted in hiring and re-alignment of functional responsibilities among staff. The CP team used a balance scorecard framework to highlight institutional priorities with a focus on organizational and program effectiveness, efficiency and advancement of its mission. Our resulting findings suggested opportunities and imperatives (regarding program impact, community outreach, operating effectiveness and KPIs, developing financial sustainability, and board development and governance) to be undertaken with a phased approach under new leadership. The client expressed a high degree of satisfaction and appreciation for our work and its usefulness as TEEG moves into a new chapter with new leadership. CP has indicated its willingness to be available for periodic "check-ins" on this plan.

Project Leader: Rodgers Harper '71 ,Lindsay Paul '85
Volunteers: Carla Haugen '80, Kevin Lewis '94



Case Method



Community Partners pioneered a new approach for our pro bono consulting that mirrors the case studies at the heart of the HBS pedagogy. Alumni volunteers were given a 6-page case document describing a management situation and asked to (1) submit a 1-3 page set of recommendations that they propose for the client and (2) participate in a 90-minute Zoom "classroom" discussion with the other alumni. Community Partners submitted all of the written recommendations and the video recording of the Zoom classroom discussion to the client; the project team also provided a recap for the client.

The client, Greenwich Center for Hope and Renewal, was founded in 2007 to provide high-quality mental health care through its participating therapists to all in need by offering individual, couples, and family therapy, both in person and virtually, to clientele of all ages and walks of life. The new GCHR leadership asked HBS Community Partners for assistance in reviewing its business model, particularly regarding eliminating impediments for less-affluent segments of the population.

Shortly after initial work began, the 3-person CP project team realized there was no single "right answer," that several different approaches might be valid, and that the client would benefit from hearing recommendations from many consultants. With client agreement, the team switched to this "case approach": it developed a 6-page case document and recruited alumni volunteers. The response was strong, and the limit of 15 Zoom participants was quickly met. The Zoom classroom session was held in late June.

Feedback from both the alum participants and the client after the session was overwhelmingly positive, and we plan to use this approach for other clients as appropriate. Alumni appreciated the opportunity to help the client with a much shorter time commitment than usual. The client appreciated the range of issues covered: "Our organization was challenged with the need for a sustainable business model. HBS CT Community Partners did a wonderful job in bringing a large team of volunteers and using the case method to help with multiple issues including: how to change the business model to cover most of the operating budget; defining and communicating the mission; dealing with a declining donor base; managing contractual issues; and how to have better community outreach and board governance. Thank you!"



Project Leaders: Lindsay Barth '07, David Grasfield '93, Jeff Krulwich '67

Volunteers: Anthony Hassan AMP 199, Craig Matthews '17, Glen Reicin '90, Helen Lemberg '02, Jamie Smith '98, Jim Locker '72, Mollie Hourihan '04, Scott Weiner AMP 193, Stephen Baum '65, Trevor Crow '94, Merideth Payne '12, Chuck Barton '75, Luke Syzmczak '92, Yves Moutran '00, Mary-Jane Wood '91.

Awards

Lee Barnes Memorial Scholarship for Nonprofit Leaders

For 20 years, CP has invited applications and granted scholarships to one or more CT nonprofit leaders to attend the Harvard Business School's Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management (SPNM) executive education program. This Executive Education course is an HBS Social Enterprise Initiative program that allows senior executives to examine their missions and develop strategies for the new global economy. It is an intensive six-day program taught by the HBS faculty. Over 150 nonprofit leaders worldwide, representing a wide range of nonprofit sectors, make up the student body. Over 33 of our state's recognized best nonprofit leaders have attended this program and unanimously report that SPNM was the most "outstanding executive education experience of their entire careers."

The 2024 Lee Barnes Memorial Scholarship for Nonprofit Leaders Recipients were Nancy Coughlin of Person to Person in lower Fairfield County, and Sarah Fox of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness in Hartford.

Person to Person (P2P), with a history of over 50 years, serves over 25,000 individuals annually with a range of programs including food, clothing, financial assistance and coaching, camping and scholarships. Nancy writes: "My mind is still on overdrive from my week in Boston. I am eager to put the skills I learned into use at P2P. There was a balance of peer and classroom learning. The HBS SPNM staff were outstanding. I feel grateful to have spent time and learned from them. Our living/learning groups may well be the greatest gifts of the program. I now have colleagues in Australia, Rwanda, Canada, the US and UK to call upon for their expertise."



The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) leads the charge in preventing and ending homelessness across Connecticut. Through strategic partnerships with local communities, advocacy efforts, and extensive support to our partners, CCEH is transforming the landscape for those experiencing homelessness. Sarah writes: "My experience at SPNM will have a lasting impact on our work at CCEH. Being able to step away, be surrounded by amazing leaders, and learn from HBS's frameworks and practical applications for nonprofits was an outstanding experience. What I learned during the program is influencing CCEH efforts to prevent and solve homelessness."

HBS Community Partners plans to invite scholarship applications for the 2025 SPNM program in February. Please direct your questions to our Awards Committee Chair, James Rulmyr '78 (jrulmyr@gmail.com).

Awards



2024 Robert Whitby Turbo Award

The 2024 Robert Whitby Turbo Award will be granted at the end of 2024, thanks to the generous support of DR Bank. DR Bank, a Connecticut state-chartered and FDIC member bank that offers a comprehensive suite of products and services, including fintech sponsor banking, commercial lending, commercial cash management, and digital banking throughout the region, is the lead sponsor for the Turbo Award in 2024. Their generous support will enable us to make a \$ 20,000 grant. The Turbo Award aims to catalyze or “turbocharge” a local nonprofit by launching a new initiative or improving an existing program. It is open to all Connecticut nonprofits.



Testimonials

"Our organization, a non-profit in the mental health space, was challenged with the need for a sustainable business model. HBS CT Community Partners did a wonderful job in bringing a large team of volunteers and using the case method to help with multiple issues including: how to change the business model to cover most of the operating budget; defining and communicating mission; dealing with a declining donor base; managing contractual issues; and how to have better community outreach and board governance. Thank you!"

**Sally Polak, Board Chair
Greenwich Center for Hope and Renewal**

"This is so exciting... It has been extraordinary working with you... I am grateful beyond words for your wisdom, insight, and guidance. I have already learned so much and started thinking in new directions. THANK YOU."

**Gaby Rattner, Executive Director
Barbara's House**

"The Harvard Business School Club of CT Community Partners' work for the Avon Theatre Film Center Inc. has been invaluable in every way. All of the research and the data was delivered to us in a comprehensive report that will be so helpful for our new strategic plan and will serve our organization for many years to come. Thank you!"

**Peter H. Gistelinck Executive Director
Avon Theater Film Center**



Testimonials



Community Partners did not feel like 'another' consulting group - they felt like partners at the table with the same amount of buy-in to the process and outcomes.

**Jennifer Paradis, Board Chair
Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH)**

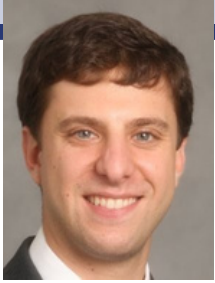
"Partnering with HBSCP was like finding a gold mine. I honestly can't believe the level of work they poured into our project. They were able to uncover some of the strengths of our organization that we didn't even realize we had. HBSCP has given our organization a gift. We could not have accomplished all that they did without making a major financial investment. Their project was thorough and it always felt like they understood our organization. We trust them immensely and would use them again in a heartbeat."

**Board Member
Apple Blossom Waldorf School & Family Center**

"Our collaboration with Community Partners was nothing short of exceptional. They took a true interest in our desire to become a better functioning Board for our organization. The team created a survey specifically for us, and listened to our concerns. They tailored a presentation specifically for us that addressed the important points from the results of the survey. During the final presentation, every board member present contributed to the conversation and/or asked questions. This experience was second to none, and met all of my expectations. I will be the first to contact CP again when we find the need for a consultant necessary to assist us in reaching our goals.

**Thomas Whitmoyer, Board President
GCTYO (Greater Connecticut Youth Orchestras)**

Volunteer Spotlight



Craig Matthews

As a newer member of the Community Partners team, I have enjoyed getting to meet and work with HBS alumni across Connecticut. The depth of experience and diversity of thought that the HBS CP team brings to bear is impressive. Across my first few projects, I have seen how rigorous "classic consulting" tools and a partner-first mentality deliver highly impactful results, quite quickly.

One highlight was a virtual 'case discussion' helping the Greenwich Center for Hope & Renewal rethink its mission, vision and business model. ~15 alumni read a case write-up (complete with exhibits!), drafted short memos and then joined a recorded Zoom call to discuss their views. It felt like being back in Aldrich Hall! I was quite impressed by analyses of fellow alumni and the willingness to explore competing views. The client shared feedback a month later that many of the recommendations outlined were being implemented.

I feel very fortunate to have joined this community of conscientious volunteers who deliver tangible, impactful results. I look forward to supporting many more projects in the coming years.

Amy Lipper McCauley



I have been honored to be a team member of Community Partners for over a decade. The various projects have exposed me to dedicated teams within Community Partners and the boards of many non-profit organizations. The projects I participated in involved developing marketing plans and future budgets and prioritizing and expanding services using the balanced scorecard method. The long-term strategies that Community Partners developed are still being implemented and we've received multiple messages celebrating our shared achievements.

Among the projects I worked on was URI or Urban Resource Initiative, which needed help marketing the availability of trees to plant in the city of New Haven. Our efforts not only created more green space but also generated employment opportunities, significantly impacting the community. Another organization, The Fellowship Place, fosters mental health by providing rehabilitation services and supplying housing and employment opportunities for adults with mental illness. Our team used the balanced scorecard method to develop a marketing plan and budget to expand the outreach of the nonprofit's services.

The last organization I would like to mention is The Center of Family Justice of Bridgeport, CT, which serves as a crisis center for domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. I attended their primary fundraising event and received an eye-opening education. The problems of domestic violence and abuse encompass all income levels in the state of CT. Our team assisted in the prioritization and expansion of services within an aligned budget.

Non-profits truly help to make the world a better place. My work with nonprofits, notably Community Partners, has been a profound learning experience. I've gained more from the work I've done than the knowledge I was able to contribute. I've developed a deep respect for the dedicated individuals who run non-profit boards and have a newfound appreciation for their challenges. Being part of an organization that works tirelessly to meet these challenges has been a privilege.

Volunteer Spotlight



Mo Punjani

After recently moving to Connecticut and seeking ways to contribute to the broader community, I was fortunate to connect with the HBS Community Partners Board. I participated in a project focused on supporting a non-profit organization dedicated to bridging the summer learning gap for underprivileged students through nationwide summer and after-school programs. Our team comprised several prominent members with diverse backgrounds in operations, consulting, and investing, bringing a wealth of perspectives and experiences to the table. Working with such a dynamic and insightful group was a pleasure, as we leveraged a variety of approaches, from utilizing practical applications of AI to drawing on past professional consulting experiences.

Our project centered on addressing critical issues of growth and sustainability for the organization. These challenges were particularly pressing as the COVID-19 pandemic had already exacerbated the summer learning gap for many communities. A unique aspect of this project was managing expectations from multiple stakeholders, including children, parents, partner schools, principals, and boards of partner organizations.

As the lead for comparables research, I analyzed similar summer learning programs and researched strategies to address the summer learning gap. We conducted extensive primary research, interviewing school principals across the country and examining other programs with similar missions. This research provided a solid foundation for our recommendations, ensuring they were tailored to the organization's specific needs and challenges.

Our team excelled in camaraderie, quick decision-making, and effective communication, producing comprehensive summaries and proposals. One of our major successes was our detailed and thoughtful analysis, which included financial analysis, sensitivity analysis, and strategic overviews. These insights resonated strongly with the client, leading to a set of highly actionable recommendations that aligned with the organization's objectives. Our recommendations included expanding the program's geographic reach, exploring partnerships with a broader range of educational institutions, and introducing shorter-form programs to attract a wider audience. The board appreciated the depth and quality of our work.

These experiences have reinforced my belief in the importance of strategic planning and sustainable growth in the non-profit sector. I look forward to continuing my involvement with HBS Community Partners and contributing to meaningful projects that make a real difference.



Volunteer Spotlight



Pranay Ranjan

I came to learn about Community Partners in September 2023 through one of the outreach emails. It seemed like an exciting opportunity to get involved with the community, contribute some of my time and experience to help add value and at the same time, get to know more alumni in the area. I was particularly intrigued by the opportunity to work with Future 5. Future 5 is a Stamford based organization helping under-resourced high-school students in the area achieve their full potential, focused not only on near-term high school graduation and college placement, but also long-term economic independence and productive citizenship.

This was my first time engaging with an organization of this nature. I came into the project with limited knowledge of the ecosystem and existing opportunities and challenges. The team of volunteers on the project proved to be a great resource in helping me ramp up the learning curve. I was pleasantly surprised by my team's welcoming and accommodating approach to having me as a rookie! Some of the volunteers on the team had worked with Future 5 on a previous CP project and the existing knowledge-base and relationships turned out to be quite helpful throughout the project.

We conducted several interviews with different stakeholders, did a benchmarking exercise with other similar organizations and undertook some financial and operational analyses to come up with a framework and guiding principles for Future 5's strategic plan over the next 3-5 years. We were able to identify some organizational, process and measurement gaps that Future 5 would need to address in order to achieve their long-term objectives. We focused on coming up with practical solutions that would balance available resources/talent and internal motivations while trying to maximize the value Future 5 could create for its target community. It was also essential for us to build buy-in from the Future 5 Strategic Committee and senior leadership.

Overall, I found the project to be extremely rewarding. I hope we were able to add value to Future 5 and am excited to see how the organization grows from here. I am also grateful to all my team members for making it an enriching and enjoyable experience for me and am encouraged to continue to engage with Community Partners in the future!



CP Salutes Our 2024 Volunteers

Christine Auh '08
George Barsness '19
Lindsay Barth '07
Chuck Barton '75
Stephen Baum '65
Charley Beever '78
Brendan Biggins '02
Mendi Blue-Paca '09
Russ Chapman '75
Chuck Chesler OPM 44
Roger Cole '85
Doreen Collins '85
Trevor Crow '94
John Dexheimer '80
David Grasfield '93
Carrie Hammond '92
Rodgers Harper '71
Anthony Hassan AMP 199
Carla Haugen '80
Tom Heckel '77
Harvey Heyman '77
Molli Hourihan '04
Caryn Kaftal '91
Amit Kapoor GMP 33
Jeff Krulwich '67
Helen Lemberg '02
Kevin Lewis '94
Jim Locker '72

Jim Locker '72
Craig Matthews '17
Antonio Mazzara TGMP 15
Amy Lipper McCauley OPM 15
Yves Moutran '00
Tom Mullaney '80
Robert Neiman '62
Lindsay Paul '85
Meredith Payne '12
Margaret Pederson '78
Steve Phillips '83
Angela Piscitello '95
Mo Punjani '17
Pranay Ranjan '19
Vivek Ravishanker '12
Glenn Reicin '90
James Rulmyr '78
Jackie Scott '86
Erv Shames '66
Luke Syzmcrak '92
Jaime Smith '98
Walter "Buzz" Thorman '83
Andrew Traub '78
Jill Vollmer '95
Scott Weiner AMP 193
Mary-Jane Wood '91
Kristen Woods '97

