

LET'S TALK UNITED

19th Annual
Community Builders' Reception

A Virtual Presentation

June 22, 2021 6:30 pm

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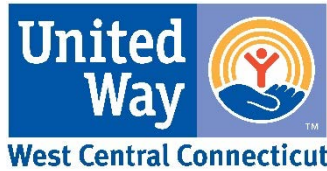


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19th Annual Community Builders' Reception

***Celebrating those individuals and organizations
who have what it takes to Live United!***

Change Maker Award

*Senior Centers of
Bristol, Burlington and Plainville*

Collaborative Excellence Award

Farmers to Families Food Distribution

Rising Star Award

ShopRite of Bristol

Youth Live United Awards

Azelia Sigmund – Chippens Hill Middle School, Bristol
Victoria Kosciukiewicz – Bristol Eastern High School
Danny Schnaars – Eli Terry Jr. Middle School, Plymouth
James Watson – Lewis S. Mills High School, Burlington

**United Way of West Central Connecticut Mission:
Together we inspire and empower our community;
creating long-lasting impact**

June 2021

Dear Friends,

Thank you for tuning in and attending United Way of West Central Connecticut's 19th Annual Community Builders' Reception. Although this is the second year we are broadcasting virtually, we felt it in the best interest of our honorees, guests, families and staff to remain socially distant this spring. With high hopes, we plan to return to an in-person celebration next year to recognize our 100th anniversary.

During the past fifteen months, we have adjusted our daily lives to new ways of shopping, working, learning and communicating. While we searched for disinfectant, food and eventually vaccinations, there were groups and organizations blazing the trail to be sure those needs were met for people who were struggling.

The theme of our 2021 event is "Caring for our Community." During the course of the program, we will showcase members of our community, some young and some who care for the elderly, some who have withstood extreme weather conditions and some who reinvented the shopping experience. What they have in common is compassion for their community.

This broadcast is designed to honor our supporters who truly Live United by giving, advocating and volunteering. We also hope to showcase the impact we are having on the lives of everyone in Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth and Terryville. As you watch, please consider joining our family of hand raisers by donating your time or money. Who knows, you or your organization could be one of our honorees next year.

In our unique way, we recognize and offer our congratulations to this year's award winners. United Way is proud to honor these individuals and organizations who have worked together to improve the circumstances for everyone in our community. These people truly exemplify going above and beyond and demonstrate what it means to Live United! Additionally, we also want to thank all of our generous sponsors and supporters who always "Live United" throughout the year!

Sincerely,



Patricia Tomlinson
Board Chair



Donna Osuch
President & CPO

Congratulations to all of tonight's award recipients



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CONGRATULATIONS

to the 2021 Honorees!

Thank you for creating lasting changes to improve lives in our community.

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Blues See you at Muzzy!

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
W01					1 AWAY GAME BLUES VS OCEAN STATE	2 HOME GAME BLUES VS NEWPORT	3 AWAY GAME BLUES VS VALLEY
W02	4 HOME GAME BLUES VS VALLEY	5 AWAY GAME BLUES VS NEWPORT	6	7	8 AWAY GAME BLUES VS DANBURY	9	10 HOME GAME BLUES VS MARTHA'S VINEYARD
W03	11 AWAY GAME BLUES VS MYSTIC	12	13 AWAY GAME BLUES VS MARTHA'S VINEYARD	14	15 HOME GAME BLUES VS MYSTIC	16 AWAY GAME BLUES VS MYSTIC	17 AWAY GAME BLUES VS VALLEY
W04	18	19	20 HOME GAME BLUES VS MARTHA'S VINEYARD	21 HOME GAME BLUES VS DANBURY	22	23 AWAY GAME BLUES VS MARTHA'S VINEYARD	24 HOME GAME BLUES VS NEWPORT
W05	25	26 HOME GAME BLUES VS MYSTIC	27 HOME GAME BLUES VS VALLEY	28 AWAY GAME BLUES VS NEWPORT	29 AWAY GAME BLUES VS OCEAN STATE	30	31 AWAY GAME BLUES VS OCEAN STATE



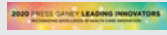
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Special Thanks

Community Builders' Reception Committee

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Design

Lindsey Rivers
City of Bristol

Trish Tomlinson
Thomaston Savings
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Jena Doolittle
Cigna HealthCare

Mike Rivers
Tracy-Driscoll
Insurance

David Van Allen
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Tom Mazzarella
MazzMedia

Cindy Shi
Barnes Group, Inc.

And the United Way
Staff

An additional thank you to Kevin Rapony for his introduction and inspirational story.

Behind the Scenes Spotlight

MazzMedia / Productions for Change

Videos are the most effective means of reaching the general public, and the Productions for Change Initiative helps nonprofit organizations harness that power. Productions for Change (PFC) is spearheaded by Tom and Tony Mazzarella of MazzMedia and delivers a range of services: interactive video content, communications strategy and social media delivery that even small organizations can implement, and education for nonprofits on how to implement their own content. MazzMedia has been recognized by the Cinema in Industry Awards, National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, Oppenheim Best Toy Award, Parent's Choice Gold Award, Teachers' Choice Award, the Telly Awards and others.

Viewing Dessert Boxes:

These sweet treats are sponsored by Mizzy Construction of Plainville, a long-time supporter and friend of United Way's Community Builders' Reception. Founded in 1988 with eight employees and a vision, they quickly grew their client base both in and outside of Connecticut. Now with over 90 employees, owner Stanley Mierzejewski believes in quality craftsmanship and outstanding customer service. Their commitment to their business and the community is strong and demonstrates how they LIVE UNITED!

Confections by Café Real, 156 School Street in Bristol, offers scones, Danish, muffins, biscotti and unique chocolate creations. Best known for their fresh Columbian coffee beans, espressos and lattes, the quaint café also offers locally produced honey, soaps, syrup and other products. They are open Monday through Thursday 6:00 am – 3:00 pm and Saturday and Sunday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm for take-out or dine in. Enjoy their patio area overlooking the Pequabuck River.

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www.uwestcentralct.org**

Let's Talk United Host



Jena Doolittle

Jena Doolittle has been volunteering in the greater Bristol community for most of her life. She has been involved with The Women and Girls Fund, was a mentor in the Bristol School System, and has been part of the Bristol Boys and Girls Club Annual OM Show as a performer, Assistant Director and Director since 1977. Jena has served on many local boards and committees including Century Nursery School, Bristol Civic Theater and Bristol Theatre Arts, Terryville Athletic Association, Terryville Friends of Music and is currently serving on the Executive Board for The Bristol Chorale.

Jena has been volunteering with The United Way of West Central CT for over 20 years. She is currently serving as the secretary of the Board of Directors and is on The Community Builders Reception, Day of Caring and Golf and Personnel committees. She is probably best known as a performer singing at local community events and venues such as The OM Show, Illuminations, The ACE Awards, The Imagine Nation Museum and the Webster Bank Carol Sing. Jena works in the National Marketing Segment at Cigna. As part of her 30+ year career at Cigna, she has been a speaker at several regional client and health related events as well as featured in podcasts and educational videos. Jena has also led a Cigna team for the United Way Day of Caring for over 20 years. In her leisure time Jena loves the beach, reading and gardening. She has been married to her husband Kenny for 39 years, has 3 grown children and 5 grandchildren.

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By following United Way online, you can help us spread our message and find new donors & volunteers. Please also take a moment to invite your friends to follow us!



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Update your status with something fun about United Way or post a picture. Just remember to tag us in your posts! Or share one of our status updates with your friends.



Handle: @UnitedWayWCCT
Talk about your experience with United Way or post pictures! Use the hashtag #LIVEUNITED and put our handle in your post.



Username: @Uwwestcentralct
Post pictures from our events or show how you are Living United! Use the hashtag #LIVEUNITED and put our username

Rising Star Award

The United Way of West Central Connecticut Rising Star Award recognizes an individual, company or community collaboration that demonstrates accelerating impact in the community. The impact can be shown through an enhanced United Way campaign, increased volunteerism and/or improved community or program outcomes.

ShopRite of Bristol

Partners in Caring truly can be defined by the actions ShopRite of Bristol took during the pandemic over the past fifteen months. Although the grocer has always supported community projects from Little League teams to school plays and more, it was their willingness to expand their services and create alternatives to serve their customers and community that makes the ShopRite of Bristol team a Rising Star.

Even as owner Paul Tornaquindici had to reduce store hours during the early months of the pandemic, he recognized the importance of getting food to area residents. ShopRite of Bristol recognized the tremendous increase in food insecurity due to company layoffs and shutdowns and worked tirelessly to help people in need. Their already well-established *shop at home* service exploded, and time slots were sold out days in advance. He recognized that not everyone, especially the elderly, was capable of ordering groceries online and sought out a solution.

With the assistance of their Community Coordinator and Registered Dietician Jessica Dorner, they reached out to the senior centers and local nonprofit organizations to assess their needs and offered special hours for their clients to shop or assisted in deliveries. Additionally, they established house accounts for some organizations so they could purchase food for individuals, many of whom were homebound or without the assistance of a caregiver. Individuals then reimbursed the organizations upon delivery.

An employee for over 20 years, Store Manager Krystle Laprise made sure departments were able to fill orders as best they could or find substitutes for the nonprofit organizations and customers as needed. The entire teams' efforts paid off and, within weeks of Connecticut's "shut down" date, ShopRite of Bristol was able to offer the extra hand up in a desperate time.

Their efforts to help the community will have a positive long-term impact, and the community is forever grateful. Thank you to ShopRite of Bristol for going above and beyond for our residents! They truly are a Rising Star.

Change Maker Award

The United Way of West Central of Connecticut Change Maker Award recognizes an individual, company or community collaboration that demonstrates the ability to create, catapult and/or implement positive change. The recipient of this award has transformed community conditions or improved program outcomes.

Senior Centers of Bristol, Burlington and Plainville

When you think of a Senior Center, you may picture a small meeting hall, perhaps with a gymnasium, and usually hosting Bingo. However, our local centers usually have multiple rooms full of seniors playing pickle ball or pool, using woodworking equipment and computers, playing various card games, enjoying dance and exercise classes and sharing meals. This vibrant comradery is typical for visitors each day. But that was pre-pandemic.

Once the state closed down last March, the Senior Centers also had to close their doors to the community they serve. The staff knew that without any programs to attend or a place to access lunch, it would have a negative impact on the seniors.

After recognizing issues related to isolation and food insecurity, Senior Center leadership and social workers quickly began to find alternative ways to reach out to their community. They transitioned their social and in-person gatherings to virtual, chat discussions and drive-through events, such as drive-through ice cream and themed dinners for Thanksgiving and St. Patrick's Day to keep seniors engaged.

The local Senior Centers are being recognized for their outstanding work helping seniors get tested for COVID-19, access the Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS) and schedule vaccine appointments when the first rollout occurred. The ability to access VAMS and work with local health districts and hospitals was a relief to so many people. Additionally, the staff sanitized and readied their buildings to be used for clinics.

Especially in the early months, for members who do not drive, acquiring groceries was an increased challenge. Many could not order groceries online, and with resources like Dial-a-Ride and Meals on Wheels at a standstill, the problem only worsened. Senior Center staff reached out to town leadership, local grocery stores and food partners to help those in need. These actions demonstrated their commitment to ensure their seniors were cared for and had reliable food resources.

Accepting the Change Maker Award for Bristol are Director Patty Tomascak and Assistant Director Jason Krueger; for Burlington are Director Tricia Twomey, Eileen Rubino and volunteer Art Murelli; and for Plainville are Director Shawn Cohen, Assistant Director Ronda Guberman and Social Worker Stephanie Soucy.

Youth Live United Awards

Presented by Barnes Group, Inc. and Webster Bank

The Youth Live United Award recognizes middle and high school students with a connection to United Way who have given back to their community through volunteerism. Living United is more than volunteering. It is a reminder that when we think about beyond ourselves, we have the power to facilitate change. This special recognition serves as a powerful example to all students that hard work and volunteerism can make a difference.



*Victoria Kosciukiewicz
Bristol Eastern High School*



*Azelia Sigmund
Chippens Hill Middle School*



*James Watson
Lewis S. Mills High School*



*Danny Schnaars
Eli Terry Jr. Middle School*

To learn more about our United Way Youth Board or Kids in the Middle, contact Nancy Micloskey at 860-582-9559, ext. 402 or nmicloskey@uwwestcentralct.org

Collaborative Excellence Award

The United Way of West Central Connecticut Collaborative Excellence Award recognizes the collective impact of a special collaboration in our community. The recipient of this award demonstrates exemplary partnership and collaboration.

Farmers to Families Food Box Distribution

United Way of West Central Connecticut was invited to participate in the USDA's Farmers to Families Program that redirected produce destined for restaurants, colleges and other businesses not operating at full capacity due to the Coronavirus pandemic. United Way partnered with the City of Bristol, and the Mayor offered significant resources and support from her office, the Department of Public Works and the Police Department. The Fire Department and Marketing have been involved, while Bristol's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and all City Counselors are also integral partners.

United Way organizes groups of volunteers to distribute the boxes through contactless delivery, usually into the trunks of people's cars. The distributions also provided opportunities to share information with residents, such as reminders to respond to the Census, information about COVID testing and vaccination sites, and United Way's Resource Guide. In addition, United Way invites local nonprofit organizations to pick up boxes for their clients who are unable to participate in the distribution events.

Here are some fun facts as of June 2021:

- Volunteers have distributed 28,505 boxes of food at 20 distribution events.
- Volunteers gave away produce boxes during the first events, and each box held 25 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables. During the fall and winter, boxes had 40 pounds of fruit, vegetables, meat and dairy including a gallon of milk.
- We estimate that each produce box would have cost approximately \$20, and the larger food boxes would have cost approximately \$45. Through June 2021, the program saved local residents more than \$1 million overall.
- We have 132 unique volunteers (some of whom were at many of the distributions) who donated more than 1,000 hours.
- Many local businesses and organizations have allowed their employees to help. Volunteers also include student athletes, civic groups and individuals.
- Bristol's Mayor, Police Chief, Emergency Management Director and Director of Public Works have volunteered at nearly every distribution event.
- In October 2020, we gave away 6,912 food boxes on three dates in torrential rain, beautiful sunshine and an early snowstorm. Our volunteers have worked during all weather conditions!

We need significant numbers of volunteers for each event, and those volunteers always reflect about how much they enjoyed distributing the food boxes. As one of our committee members stated, any event that draws more than a thousand residents, while also requiring a private/public collaboration, deserves to be recognized for the Collaborative Excellence Award.

Award Winners from Past Years

Change Maker

Rising Star

2018	Town of Plainville	2018	Young Professionals for United Way/ PYVOT
2019	For Goodness Sake	2019	Productions for Change
2020	Plymouth Keys for Kindness	2020	The Agape House

Collaborative Excellence

2018	Connecticut 211
2019	Stock our Shelters
2020	Bristol Sports Hall of Fame

**Caring for our
Community**



SAVE THE DATES – 2021

Please check our Facebook page and website www.uwestcentralct.org for updates.

July 20 Senior Wellness Fair, Plainville Senior Center, 200 East Street, 9:30am-12:00pm

Must register in advance, call 860-584-7895, bag lunch provided

July 20 United Way Community Day at Bristol Blues, Muzzy Field, 6:30 pm game

Children's Book Drive: Please bring gently used children's books

Aug. 10 The 13th Annual Adopt-A-Child Backpack supplies collection

Sept. 14 The 47th Annual United Way Golf tournament.

November 5 The 12th Annual Fall Wine Tasting Fundraiser. DoubleTree by Hilton, Bristol

Please consider being a part of our 2021 challenge! Looking for 2100 people to donate \$21.00 by December 1, 2021. Go to our website and click the donate tab for information, open 24/7.

HEALTH



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HOW UNITED WAY IS WINNING:

Supporting 2-1-1, a free, confidential information and referral service connecting people to essential health and human services 24 hours a day.

Providing FamilyWise Prescription Discount Cards to the community, saving local residents an average of 40% on prescription drug costs.

Coordinating the West Central Connecticut TRIAD Program, which strives to improve the quality of life for older residents.

FINANCIAL STABILITY



FIGHTING FOR FAMILIES TO BECOME FINANCIALLY STABLE & INDEPENDENT

HOW UNITED WAY IS WINNING:

Providing a backpack, school supplies and outfit to less fortunate children.

Offering Financial Education Classes on pertinent topics, such as budgeting, credit, and debt management.

Providing food and holiday gifts to struggling families.

Running a free tax preparation site that helps low and moderate income families get their taxes done for free while ensuring all tax credits are claimed.

EDUCATION



FIGHTING TO
HELP CHILDREN &
YOUTH ACHIEVE
THEIR POTENTIAL

HOW UNITED WAY IS WINNING:

- Providing free books for children from low-income families.
- Helping to ensure that all children enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- Helping middle school students transition to high school and young adulthood.
- Encouraging high school students to become leaders and address issues important to their peers.
- Providing youth with paid summer work experiences and career development opportunities.

VOLUNTEER



RAISING OUR HANDS
TO CHANGE THE GAME
FOR EVERYONE

HOW UNITED WAY IS WINNING:

- Our 2018 Day of Caring had a record-breaking 600 volunteers, who completed projects at 39 sites at 25 non-profit organizations in the communities we serve.
- Our new Partners in Caring Initiative matches local business teams with non-profits in need of volunteers for small projects.
- Our online Volunteer Center links individuals interested in volunteering with area non-profits in need of support.

Congratulations to all of this year's award recipients.

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