



# YouthContinuum

A Clifford Beers Community Health Partner

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

## A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TIM MAGUIRE

Dear Friends,

Your ongoing partnership in our work of preventing and addressing youth homelessness is imperative and appreciated! As we continue to provide shelter, food, and basic needs items to our youth, we pride ourselves on being responsive to new or increasing trends regarding the clients we serve. Your continued support enables YC to be effective. I am eager to share with you exciting updates regarding the dynamic youth we support, community engagement efforts and partnerships that continue to expand, and general YC information.



Up to 30 youth each day are visiting our Drop-In Center, requesting support to obtain employment & increase their income, access to educational services, and access to shelter & housing options, while also utilizing our resources to meet their basic needs of food, clothing & hygiene supplies. These young people are seeking stability while facing great challenges, such as the lack of affordable housing and limited opportunities to earn a livable wage. Professional YC staff help our often-discouraged youth sort their feelings, learn triggers and behaviors, and support the development of prosocial skills to rebuild relationships, maintain employment, and stabilize housing.

Additionally, the need for intensive mental health supports has never been greater, as our youth's presenting challenges continue to intensify and become more acute. Housing and shelter services do not come with dedicated mental health funds, leaving an extremely vulnerable population lacking important supportive services to ensure their housing can be stabilized.

Runaway and unaccompanied minors, including undocumented minors, are consistently utilizing YC's 24-hour text and call hotline for emergency situations from across the state and beyond our CT state lines. These calls involving minors often pose unique and complicated situations, such as a youth who hopped a bus to Bradley Airport and was trying to figure out his next steps or a youth in Georgia who was about to "walk the mountain trails to CT" to seek safety with her girlfriend. Our hotline connects young people *17 years old and younger* that are in crisis to staff members with the main goal of keeping the youth safe – whether that be through stabilizing them with family or accessing a

(cont. on back page)



## Youth Warming Center Opens January 6

For the second year in a row, YC will operate a youth-only Warming Center for young people aged 18-24 to escape cold winter nights. Operating out of the Drop-In Center, it will run from 7:00 PM - 7:00 AM, January 6 through April. Up to 12 youth (all genders) will have a safe warm place to receive vital connections to programs, resources, tools and services to support youth experiencing homelessness.

Donations of dinners, breakfasts and snacks are welcome.

Please contact Anna Elise at [aelise@youthcontinuum.org](mailto:aelise@youthcontinuum.org) for a list of needs and to arrange a drop-off.

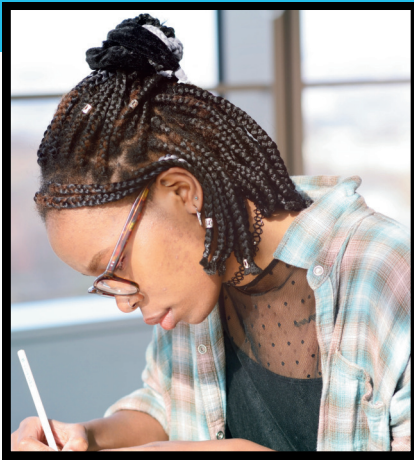


## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

## Drop-In Center at Grand Ave.

Progress is underway with the expanded Drop-In Center as we continue to work with The Glendower Group and Montagno Construction to attain permits for asbestos removal. Chris Williams, architect, is finalizing the design documents - updates include the addition of a ramp to the garden courtyard and slight redesign of office and communal spaces on the main and basement levels. YC applied for a Community Investment Fund (CIF) grant in early fall but was denied funding; we are reapplying for Round 6, due mid-December, with the CIF board meeting in March for a review. We look forward to keeping you posted on award announcements and construction progress.

## YOUTH UPDATE - Melissa\*



\*name changed to protect youth's identity

This time last year, you heard Melissa's story. After a life of abuse, she found herself living in a park, and when she got to a shelter, she was severely taken advantage of by the older residents. Melissa eventually came to YC, connected with a case manager who helped her move into an apartment through our *Rapid Re-Housing Program* and enroll at Southern CT State University.

For three years, Melissa's been working the third shift with the same employer and took advantage of their education program to help pay for classes. To save money, she transferred to the online University of Southern New Hampshire where she's been on the dean's list every semester. **On November 23, Melissa attended her graduation ceremony and she received her Baccalaureate in Business Administration!**

Melissa's accomplished all the goals she's set for herself so far but one – attaining her driver's license. It's her biggest fear, but she's determined, is saving for driving school, and already received her permit. She continues to work with her case manager to ensure she never returns to homelessness.

She said, “At this age, young people are supposed to be building themselves up and figuring out life, not feeling scared, looking for a place to sleep and for food. The best thing that happened to me was being connected to YC and my case manager. Without them, I wouldn't have survived.”

You make a positive impact on youth like Melissa.  
We are grateful for your partnership.

**Congratulations to the Youth Continuum Street Outreach Team who was recognized by Family Centered Services of CT with their "CHANGEMAKER AWARD," honoring their work in the pursuit to end domestic violence. We are so proud!**



## Transitional Living Program Successes!

This year, Transitional Living Program residents made great progress on the path to independence. Two youth were hired to work in a local public school system, four were accepted into college with room and board, one joined the armed forces, and another moved into their own apartment - no longer needing a rental subsidy and securing the lease on his own.

Your support makes this possible. Thank you!

# Welcome New Board Members!



**Steven Baker**

Steven brings to the Board 30+ years of experience in marketing and real estate management. Prior to his retiring, Steven managed real estate offices in Connecticut and on Cape Cod. Before transitioning to real estate, he worked for 20+ years in healthcare marketing and communications in Boston and Chicago. Steven also has extensive volunteer experience, having served on several local governance committees and boards.



Jillian Fernandes is an Associate Attorney with Wolf and Shore Law Group, a family law firm in West Haven, CT. She is an advocate for juvenile rights through her legal career and in her personal life. Growing up with an in-home daycare run by her mother, Jillian has always been involved with the caretaking of minor children and teenagers, and she hopes to continue these efforts in her legal career and her time with Youth Continuum.



**Jillian Fernandes**



**Steyfanie Hudgens**

As a dedicated advocate for individuals and families within the community, Steyfanie brings the message of One Mind, One Goal, No Limits. The work she has done and will continue to do centers on creating pathways for empowerment, unity, and resilience, supporting each person's potential to overcome obstacles and reach their goals. Through advocacy, she strives to foster a community where every individual has the resources, support, and encouragement they need to thrive without limits.



Jamar Mitchell is a seasoned sales leader with 16 years of experience at Verizon, where he held roles in sales, operations and training & development. Currently, he serves as VP of Sales at Cloudstaff. Jamar lives in Hamden, CT with his wife Monique and their two children, Savannah (6) and Spencer (4). During his free time he enjoys traveling, watching sports, running and spending time with his family.



**Jamar Mitchell**



**Eugene Reznitsky**

Eugene graduated from UCONN with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and a minor in Business. Eugene was born in Kiev, Ukraine and is fluent in Russian. He currently lives in Meriden with his wife, Melissa and their two sons, Jacen and Jakob and their goldendoodle, Mia. In his free time, Eugene enjoys spending time with his family and friends, collecting sports cards, and rooting for the New York Yankees. Eugene is licensed in Property & Casualty; Life, Accident & Health Insurance.



Eric Wolff is the founder of Wolff Consult, a consulting firm that focuses on organizational development, organizational effectiveness, conflict intervention and resolution, and in partnership and leadership coaching. Having recently retired, Eric is now a Music Major at SCSU. He has served on the boards of numerous non-profit organizations including Destination Imagination Inc., Workspace Education, and FUSE Theatre CT. He, with his wife and son, created the Wolff Family Foundation with The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. The foundation gives its grants to organizations that serve at risk youth. Youth Continuum is the current designated recipient of those grants.



**Eric Wolff**



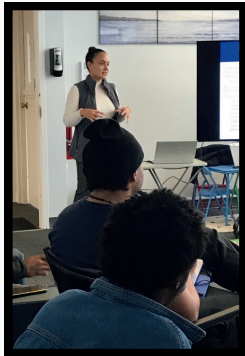
Thank You

Thank You

Thank You



YC is grateful to everyone who helps our youth!



(L-R) Silvia Herrera-Ocampo, Tony Rossley, Paula Caron with YC staff Glori Bowman and Catherine DiTuri

**Liberty Bank volunteers cooked a meal for the youth in our Crisis Housing program and provided two financial literacy sessions at The Drop-In Center.**



(L-R) Tony Sicignano, Peter Perkins, Jim & Terry Turcio



YC staff Damaris Ortiz-Lewis

**St. George Church in Guilford and their Men's Group donated basic essentials, hosted a BBQ and are providing Thanksgiving dinner for our youth.**



**BNI's Nutmeg State Division members help fulfill YC's Wish List on a weekly basis.**

(L-R) Corey Gore - Achieving Dreams; Nicole Cashman - Pulse IV Therapy; Tyler Kamens - SolarShip Corp; David MacNiven - Nutmeg Insurance Advisors; Shari Shore - Wolf and Shore Law Group; Joy Consiglio - Nolla Wellness



# Thank You

# Thank You

# Thank You

Featured are some partners who are making a positive difference.



Les and Charlie from Probus Club of Greater New Haven hand-deliver donations of underwear, socks, t-shirts and essential supplies for our young clients.



Girl Scout Troop 60444 made thoughtful contributions of vital supplies including housewares, feminine care, and of course, cookies.



The Epsilon Iota Iota Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. hosted a week-long coat drive and contributed a variety of health and hygiene products - over 2,000 items!



(L-R) Jamar Mitchell; YC's Catherine DiTuri; Ruel Dixon, Basileus; Giggy Martindale



Quinnipiac University's Division of Student Affairs is hosting monthly donations for hygiene products and basic supplies. Contributions were delivered by Vincent Contrucci, Director, Office of Community Engagement.

THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

**Quinnipiac**  
UNIVERSITY

**DONATION DRIVE**  
**CALENDAR**

OCT 2024	Toiletries
NOV 2024	Cleaning Supplies
DEC 2024	Bathroom Essentials
FEB 2025	Kitchen Utensils

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WALMART ESSENTIALS



You can make a difference!  
View our Wish Lists by scanning these QR codes!

AMAZON ESSENTIALS



YC shelter bed. YC prides itself that these calls are received by the attentive, caring, and well-trained ears of our team to deescalate and problem-solve the situation. Most calls are received after 10:00PM, and thankfully, the majority of these calls end with family reunification instead of a minor running away or needing a shelter placement.

The ongoing need for our youth-specific programs is real and we are dedicated to helping the disconnected young people in our community transition to independent adults. From meeting their most basic needs, to paying a bill that prevents their eviction, our services keep young people safe and on the path to independence. I'm proud to announce that for the second year in a row Youth Continuum will offer a winter Warming Center for young people aged 18-24, the only one in CT. This service is vital as it provides a warm safe space out of the winter elements just for youth, who frequently express their unease of being at warming centers utilized by older adults. The Warming Center will operate from 7:00 PM – 7:00 AM, providing dinner, snacks and breakfast, as well as connections to shelter and housing services. Like last year, it will run out of our temporary Drop-In Center location.

As many of you know, we announced the main Drop-In Center site expansion recommenced this fall after many pandemic-related delays. YC continues to meet weekly with Montagno Construction and The Glendower Group to facilitate the construction project. Pre-build tasks, such as securing permits to remove asbestos, are in progress and Christopher Williams Architects is finalizing the design drawings. The innovative new designs include a commercial kitchen, an internal 2-story open air garden space, and flexible enrichment and training areas. These final plans will be included in YC's grant application to the Community Investment Fund which will help close the current gap in funding needed to complete the building, which is estimated at around \$800K.



Lastly, I cannot understate how peer-to-peer support is essential for youth experiencing homelessness, and our partnership with Y2Y continues to enhance and evolve to meet that need. Engaging university students from Yale and the University of New Haven, with outreach to additional universities planned for 2025, students have been volunteering with youth in our Crisis Housing program since the 2018 academic year, continued to serve throughout the pandemic and are active today. On average, students' volunteer commitment lasts 2-3 years, and they have connected with almost 300 youth residents.

As we transition into winter and the holiday season when many youth in **our** communities prepare for frigid nights outside, seeking safe shelter from the elements, the connections between Youth Continuum and members of the community are vital. **Your partnership provides light and hope**, encouraging youth to continue making progress towards their goals of becoming independent, self-sufficient adults. Additionally, your support provides YC with important resources that enable us to offer youth-specific programming, supportive services, and safe, comfortable shelter and housing options, allowing YC to make a young person's homeless experience brief and one-time.

**Thank you for making a positive impact on the young people we serve, and for your continuing partnership.**

Tim Maguire, MS, MSW

**P.S. Please make a difference today - donate using the QR code below or the enclosed envelope. Thank You!**



**DONATE NOW!**



@youthcontinuum.org

