Courage to Create Change: Celebrating 20 Years of Empowering Women & Girls

Keynote was trailblazer Billie Jean King, who inspired our guests with her enthusiastic activism for women’s equality. The event benefits our Family Economic Security Program (FESP), which provides wraparound support to help vulnerable, low-income students overcome challenges and earn degrees leading to family-sustaining careers.

When transformed from one community college to another, I had no expectation of success,” recalls Ferryman. “The Family Economic Security Program gave me the support I needed and has motivated many other women to stay the course, no matter how rough or long. Today, I get to pay it forward with a career that allows me to guide and empower people.”

GIVING DAY: 5 YEARS OF REMARKABLE GENEROSITY, POWERED BY YOU!

Giving Day, our annual 24-hour giving day to benefit the Fairfield County Community Foundation’s (FCCF) programs and initiatives, delivered over $2.9 million to 324 nonprofits in 2018. Thanks to over 13,000 donors, Giving Day has supported our local nonprofits for five consecutive years.

The program has made all the difference for over 2,000 students, more than 500 in full scholarship, since 2008. The program is now a Support Services Program, of which $1.7 million in scholarship funds were distributed in 2018. A $700,000 gift for the Family Economic Security Program at Housatonic Community College.

On March 1st, 13,137 community members made over 24,000 gifts totaling $1.4 million for 415 nonprofits. Over the past five years, the collective impact of Giving Day donations have helped build theaters, enabled preschoolers to get a vital head start in school, filled backpacks with food to ensure students don’t go hungry and so much more.

“Courage to Create” Luncheon Luncheon, celebrating 20 years of impact in Fairfield County. Powered by YOU!

Luncheon, celebrating 20 years of impact in Fairfield County.
Incoming Board Chair Martha Olson led a team of board members (pictured) and staff in developing a strategic plan that focuses FCCF’s Community Impact efforts.

As Fairfield County’s Community Foundation rolls out a new strategic plan to guide our Community Impact work for the next three years, President & CEO Juanita James and incoming Board Chair Martha Olson share their thoughts on why it matters.

What is the main goal of the new 2021-2023 Strategic Plan?

Our goal is to focus on Fairfield County to be an inclusive place where everyone has opportunity to thrive.

We want everyone to be able to contribute to the community by being physically, economically and socially healthy. That’s a lofty and long-term goal, but it’s critical to the overall health of Fairfield County.

What does “inclusion” mean to us?

Inclusion means that women and girls are economically empowered, that older youth and young adults have meaningful careers through access to post-secondary education and a high school degree and are prepared for the workforce.

Our vision is to create an environment where there are opportunities for all and where individuals have the chance to use their talents.

How can we work more effectively across sectors to effect change in our region?

That’s the question Fairfield County’s Community Foundation explores in a new series of cross-sector conversations. On April 25th, FCCF hosted the Western Massachusetts Development Foundation in a focus research on cross-sector collaborations.

What are the desired outcomes?

We want to see a more diverse pipeline of leaders and a focus on equity. More people need to get involved in those conversations. We also want to promote partnerships and greater alignment with results.

How can this work?

By leveraging partnerships with impacted sectors – public, private, nonprofit – for lasting change.

We will work to maximize impact by aligning actions with results and sharing best practices.

We also want to work to influence policies that affect our target populations.

Who is involved in the strategic plan?

We invite you, and everyone that cares about the people and places we work in, to join us in this important work.

You can learn more at FCCFoundation.org to see how you can contribute to the conversation on how we can work together to create sustainable solutions for opportunity gaps.

Join us at the Foundation to shape the future.

For Connecticut lawmaker Julia Wasserman, hard at work as State Representative for the 106th District, now and forever, Betsy’s gift will make an impact for the region’s leading health care organization.
Closing Fairfield County’s Opportunity Gap: A Strategic Focus on Our Community Impact Work

As Fairfield County’s Community Foundation rolls out a new strategic plan to guide Community Impact work for the next three years, President & CEO Juanita James and incoming Board Chair Martha Olson share their vision on why it matters.

What is the main goal of the new 2019-21 Strategic Plan?

Our goal is to be successful in closing the opportunity gap where every individual has the opportunity to thrive. To achieve that, we aim to close the opportunity gap in Fairfield County by eliminating disparities in income, education, health, and opportunity in major metropolitan areas of the state (Fairfield, Stamford, and Bridgeport). The objective is less risk and more opportunity. And we will also align our action with the results and help to create change by connecting our donors to the causes they care about.

What are the desired results identified in the new plan?

First, we aim to close the income opportunity gap in Fairfield County by eliminating disparities in income, education, health, and opportunity in major metropolitan areas of the state. The objective is less risk and more opportunity. And we will also align our action with the results and help to create change by connecting our donors to the causes they care about.

How can we work more effectively across sectors to effect change in our region?

The question that Fairfield County’s Community Foundation explores in the new strategic plan is: How can we work more effectively across sectors to effect change in our region? On April 24th, FCCF hosted the Western Foundations Dialogue, a focused research on cross-sector collaborations.

Scholarships Enable Youth in Fairfield County to Thrive

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Courage to Create Change: Celebrating 20 Years of Empowering Women & Girls

King, who inspired our guests with her enthusiastic activism for women's equality, has been a trailblazer for women both on and off the court. From her work with the King Foundation to her advocacy on behalf of women's rights, she continues to work tirelessly to empower women around the world. King's speech at our luncheon echoed this sense of determination and dedication, inspiring our guests to continue supporting the Fund for Women & Girls as we work towards our vision of a future where every woman in Fairfield County has the opportunity to thrive.

With your support, the Fund for Women & Girls has raised over $700,000 at our annual luncheon. This year's Courage to Create luncheon was a huge success, with over 800 supporters coming together to support the Fund for Women & Girls. Our annual luncheon is the Fund's largest fundraiser of the year, and allows us to continue our work of improving the lives of women and girls throughout our county.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, donors, and volunteers who made this year's luncheon possible. Together, we have come together to create change and improve the lives of women and girls in Fairfield County. With your continued support, we will continue to work towards our vision of a future where every woman in Fairfield County has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your support!

The Fund for Women & Girls Foundation Team
Incoming Board Chair Martha Olson led a team of board members (pictured) and staff in developing a strategic plan that focuses FCCF’s Community Impact efforts.

What populations will FCCF serve around the region, we can create a guiding light and leveraging inequality in major metropolitan areas requires the public, private and nonprofit sectors to work together. We aim to simplify the visions of community leaders and work to influence policies that affect our target populations. Because we know lasting change requires the public, private and nonprofit sectors to work together, we will identify the visions of community leaders and work to influence policies that affect our target populations. We invite you, and everyone that shares a vision for Fairfield County, to join the conversation on how we can work together to create sustainable solutions.

For current gifts to reduce taxable income, for guidance on how best to preserve your estate, for questions on how to ensure that grants are awarded to Fairfield County’s evolving needs now & forever. Thank you for supporting the Center for Nonprofit Excellence.

You are creating a more equitable and inclusive community. Thank you for supporting the Center for Nonprofit Excellence.
Courage to Create Change: Celebrating 20 Years of Empowering Women & Girls

Keynote was trailblazer Billie Jean

At this year’s annual luncheon, our what’s possible and improving the Fund for Women & Girls is rewriting to invest in scalable, proven models, the healthy women and girls in Fairfield to economically secure, safe and throughout our county.

To change the lives of women and girls played over the last 20 years. And we the Fund for Women & Girls has boldly to raise over $700,000 at our annual than 800 supporters came together to celebrate 20 years of Empowering Women & Girls. Fairfield County’s Giving Day was the Champion Sponsor for the 2018 Fund for Women & Girls Luncheon, which raised $700,000 for the Family Economic Security Program at Housatonic Community College.

The program has made all the difference for participants like Kashaine Ferryman, who bravely shared her story as economic security kids. Today, I get to pay it rough or long. Today, I get to pay it. No idea it would be so hard," recalls how rough or long. Today, I get to pay it.

"When I transferred from one college to another, I had no idea I wouldn’t be able to,” recalls Ferryman. “The Family Economic Security Program gave me the support I need and has motivated many other women to stay the course, no matter how rough or long. Today, I get to pay it forward with a career that allows me to guide and empower people.

Community Members Increase Their Impact Through Donor Advised Funds

When Rob Fried and his partners at Band Together CT were looking for a way to provide mission and impact to the Fairfield community, a donor advised fund was the answer. “Doing philanthropy effectively can be confusing as there are so many causes, nonprofits and considerations,” says Fried. “The Community Foundation makes themself available to us, all the way from the President to subject matter experts.”

Through the Community Foundation, Fried and partners, Andy Kaduri and Larry Zagoria, learn about new causes, connect with nonprofit leaders and maximize their giving. The guidance is valued by Fried, who works with musicians and produces to host benefit performances for nonprofits that serve family, children and youth in need throughout Fairfield County.

“In making it easy for the family to stay involved in giving, Band Together CT was looking for a way to provide mission and impact to the local community. A donor advised fund was the answer,” says Fried. “The Community Foundation makes themselves available to us, all the way from the President to subject matter experts.”

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“The Community Foundation is dedicated to understanding the opportunities given to us and coming up with solutions,” says Fried. “They help us make giving really cool.”

That sentiment is echoed by Bruce Gellar and his family, who set up The Gellar Family Fund at the Community Foundation to honor departed loved ones. “Great work can be achieved by banding together,” adds Gellar, “You can solve big problems, bring together diverse perspectives and fund the work that needs doing.”