



West Haven Community House

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www.whcommunityhouse.org

Community House Seeks Support

West Haven, CT—(December 10, 2020) For nearly 80 years, the Community House has been the cornerstone social service agency of West Haven with programs including Head Start quality school readiness program for children from income-eligible families; Children & Youth Services before and after-school program for school-aged children; and Community Connections day and residential program for people with intellectual disabilities.

Along with the entire country, 2020 was an extraordinary year of challenges, struggles, health, and economic concerns, as well as political and social issues for the Community House. Thanks to a dedicated board of directors and staff, the Community House rose to the challenges, adjusted program operations, and found innovative ways to provide uninterrupted and critically needed services that so many residents rely on.

The year started out strong with a very successful fundraising event and our largest Read Across America undertaking ever bringing in more than 100 volunteer readers. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit in the spring of 2020 and quickly turned into one of the most trying times that the world has ever experienced.

The Community Connections staff did an excellent job stretching their ability and working in overdrive to ensure day-to-day, 24/7 coverage at our seven residential sites keeping clients engaged and healthy day in and day out while they were unable to attend daily programs, enjoy outings or have family visits. The Day program reopened in early summer with safety measures in place for both staff and clients, and although the all-important community outings and day trips diminished, the opportunity for connection with their peers proved to be a true blessing for the participants and their families.

With nation-wide school closings in March, the preschool and afterschool programs came to a grinding halt, which disrupted learning and interrupted the essential supports that many children and families depend on such as school meals, the services of counselors, and access to safe places. However, during those many weeks, teachers and staff continued to keep in touch with families and children via phone calls, video chats and weekly online newsletters that included fun learning activities, family resources and links to reading videos.

Teachers and administrators had to adapt teaching strategies, maintain enrollment, and provide access to quality learning opportunities while constantly adjusting to new state, local, and federal guidelines, and safety requirements.

“Even though it feels like our world has been turned upside down, and we don’t yet know the full effects COVID-19 will have on all of us, you can be assured that we are steadfast in our commitment to serving the West Haven community, and will we always be a beacon of hope for individuals, children and families”, said Patty Stevens, West Haven Community House executive director. “Whether it’s giving working families peace of mind knowing that their children have a safe, affordable place to be while they are working, or providing opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities to improve daily living skills and increase independence; we could not have provided these vital services without supporters like you”, she continued.

The overwhelming generosity of friends and supporters played a critical role in improving the lives of thousands of residents and families throughout the year. With the inability to run fundraising events during this time, the Community House is asking city residents, friends and supporters to please consider donating today and help support the vital programs that they have been providing in the West Haven community for nearly 80 years. Donations can be mailed to WHCH, 227 Elm Street, West Haven, CT 06516 or can be made online at www.whcommunityhouse.org.

“Every person makes a difference and every gift counts, so please make your gift today. Together we can continue to provide the best possible enrichment, protection and compassionate care for adults with intellectual disabilities, children and families”, said Stevens.

About the West Haven Community House: *For nearly 80 years, the Community House has been the cornerstone social service agency of West Haven with programs including Head Start, a quality school readiness program for children from income-eligible families; Children & Youth Services, a before and after-school program for school-aged children; and Community Connections day and residential program for people with intellectual disabilities.*

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