

20
23

ANNUAL REPORT

Bridging the Community
by Providing Behavioral
Health Services



Sound
Community
Services

Sound Community Services operates programs that serve individuals who have experienced mental illness and substance abuse. These programs provide comprehensive and integrated services mainly using interdisciplinary teams of professionals representing at least six disciplines such as:

such as:

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CASE MANAGEMENT

CLINICAL SERVICES

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

SOCIAL REHAB

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

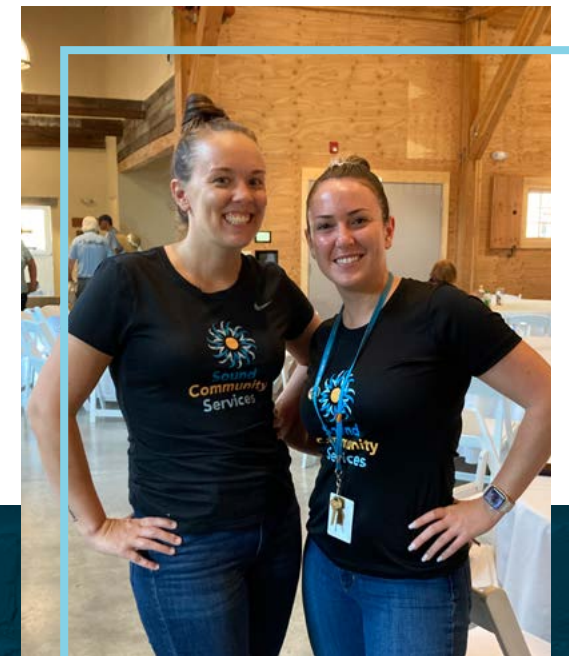
About

SOUND COMMUNITY SERVICES

We believe in the endless possibilities that can be harnessed simply by access to hope – hope in recovery, hope in progress, and hope in the future.

At Sound Community Services, we dedicate our days to providing a culture of compassion and human connection that fosters hope through support, education, and opportunity. And while the statistics inspire our mission, they do not define it. Ours is a mission defined by passion, intention, inclusion, diversity an enriched connection

to our community, those we serve and belief that any statistic can be overcome when you dare greatly from the heart.



Clinical Services

Sound's clinical division offers services that focus on individual therapy, group treatment, and prescribing psychiatric medications.

86%

IMPROVEMENT

94%

STABLE LIVING

99%

SERVICES RECEIVED

1,007

UNIQUE CLIENTS

October 2022: New Position within Sound Community Services

In October, we welcomed Kathleen Grega, Clinical Director of Community Programs. We are excited for this position because it directly addresses Sound's current strategic plan focus of Integration. Kathy comes to us with over 20 years of experience working in training, clinical, and leadership capacities. Her career has been spent working with young people experiencing, depression, anxiety, complex trauma, substance use, sexual trauma, people living in poverty, deteriorated family structures, and domestic violence dynamics. She has worked with the LGBTQ community, young people, adults, and families. Her expertise is training and development, strategic planning, community collaboration, crisis management and risk assessment.

will provide staff with the clinical support that is vital to their job performance, provides them with the tools to work effectively with various patient populations, and increase safety for staff and clients. Training programs have been created for our person served, that are relevant, and meet the ever-changing needs of our program populations. This new role will provide support and advocacy for referrals into programs and for current clients, with our funders/ stakeholders.



The Vision for this position: This role was created to provide a clinical resource and support to the Senior Director of Community Programs and all programs under their purview and to bridge the gap between the Clinic -based services and Community -based services. This additional clinical leadership position

Residential Services

Sound offers 59 beds to support our community. We staff our programs 24/7 with employees who deliver trauma-informed care while celebrating each person's uniqueness through creative programming.

Residents learn how to live independently by learning skills in conjunction with understanding how their illness has impacted their life.

COMPLETED TREATMENT

81%

SOCIAL SUPPORT

98%

UNIQUE RESIDENTIAL CLIENTS SERVED

100

September 28, 2022: Jason Hyatt Center Ribbon Cutting Event

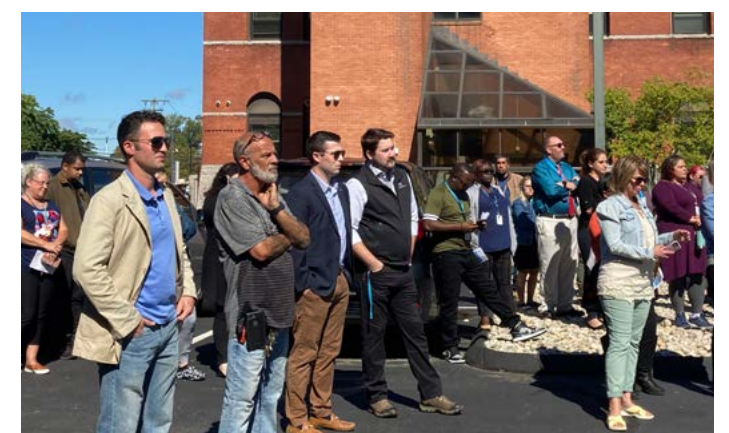
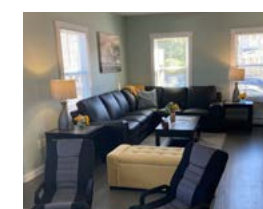
In September, we officially opened our newest residential program, Jason Hyatt Center, by hosting a ribbon cutting event at Sound Community Services. Jason Hyatt Center is in memory of Jason Hyatt, for his 17 years of service to Sound Community Services. Jason passed away in March of 2022, and his

legacy continues to serve our young adult population, a passion Jason shared with all of us!

Jason Hyatt Center is a 12-18 month program designed to support young adult 18-25 years of age who struggle with navigating a direct path transitioning to

adulthood, mental health challenges, and chronic homelessness.

A wonderful job well done to our team who transformed this residential into feeling like a home for our young adults to enjoy!



RESIDENTIAL SERVICES CONTINUED

June 2023: Fire Safety Training Saves Lives

On Saturday, June 3rd, the unthinkable happened....one of our Residential Programs had a fire! Thankfully, everyone got out safe and nobody was injured.

At Michael Kerr Transitional Program, a 30-day Residential Program, we are focused on providing a supportive environment for our residents where they can focus on their recovery and build their independent living skills before transitioning to more permanent housing through person-centered planning and goal setting.

A huge thank you to the Norwich Fire Department and Emergency Management for their quick response and containing the significant fire damage to the 2nd floor staff office. Thank you to the Norwich Police Department, Connecticut State Police, and to the Connecticut Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit. Thank you to the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), Southeastern Mental Health Authority (SMHA), and the Mobile Outreach Team (MOT) for their assistance. Thank you to our Community Partners, Doreen's Place and Reliance Health, Inc. for springing into action to help

our residents. Thank you to the Microtel Inn & Suites - Uncasville, CT, for assisting our agency on a busy weekend, to make sure our residents had a roof over their head and a safe place to sleep. Thank you to Chili's Grill & Bar, McDonald's, Jersey Mike's Subs, and Friendly Pizza & Restaurant all of Uncasville/Montville for feeding our residents. And thank you to Walmart Norwich, as our residents needed clothing and personal items.

But most of all THANK YOU to our staff at Sound Community Services, especially the Michael Kerr Transitional Program team. Staff recently performed safety drills with the residents, and all four residents knew what to do and got out safe. Our Sound Community Services team worked around the clock that weekend, and we're happy to report that all four residents were placed in a few of our residential programs we have until we determine next steps.

Errol Maurice, Senior Director of Residential and Community Programs at Sound, states "In life things happen, good and bad. The true prize is finding the teachable moment. The teachable

moment for me was gaining a full understanding of what community is truly about. Within minutes, decisions were made, help in many forms was provided and plans were developed. Thank you to our first responders from the City of Norwich, our friends at Reliance Health, the Southeastern Mental Health Authority and resilient team members at Sound Community who put our persons served first. Moments like this define who we are as people and a collective community."

Errol also quotes Stephen Vizinxzey, "When you close your eyes in tragedy, you close your eyes to greatness."



Community Services

Sound Community Services offers comprehensive community programs that focus on socialization, employment, and case management services. Like all aspects of Sound Community Services, each is a complimentary service with another.



34

HOUSED

75

AXS CLIENTS SERVED

220

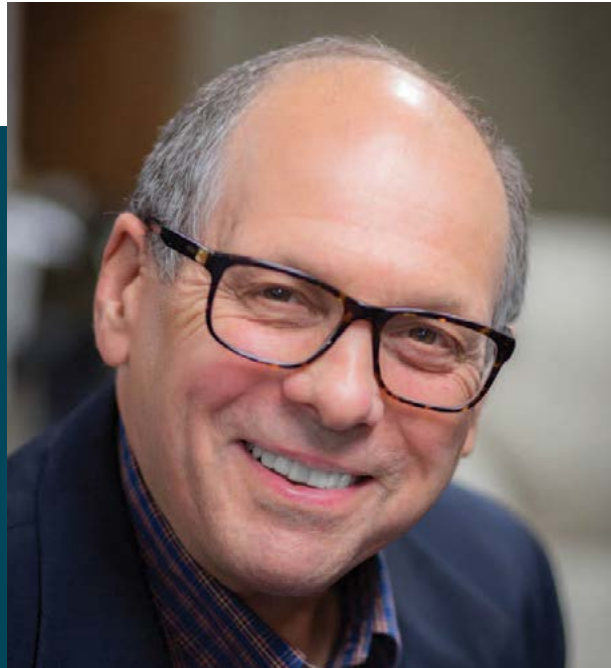
OASIS CLIENTS SERVED

246

CLIENTS SERVED BY CASE MANAGEMENT

Our Leaders

A LETTER FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESIDENT, ED BLONDER



I am honored to have served as Chair of the SCSJ Board of Directors for this past year. We are proud our agency is centrally located in what we consider to be the greatest small city, New London! It is rich in diversity from its population to its institutions which allows us to partner to expand and improve services to our clients.

A major new program approved by the Board is the new Young Adult Transitional Program at 39 Montauk Ave., next to our main headquarters. The Board named it the Jason Hyatt Center in memory of our former Chief Programs Officer Jason Hyatt, who passed away in March 2022 from a prolonged illness. A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held in September, attended by staff, clients, Mayor Passero of New London, and other dignitaries. Guests of honor were Jason's wife Lisa and their children Lilly, Ashton, and Elijah. The dedication was highlighted by Lisa's speech and the launching of a lantern, followed by tours of the new facility.

A highlight of our Board every year is choosing the winner(s) of the Donna Millette-Fridge Memorial Award. The award,

named after Donna, tragically murdered in 1998, reflects her ethics and values in the workplace. The award started out in 1999, with one recipient who attended a Board Luncheon from First Step Inc. It has grown now to include four distinct categories in which the staff sends in their choice of nominees and our Board members have the herculean task of choosing from close to forty entries. The Board certainly appreciates the staff's enthusiastic participation and a special thanks to Gino DeMaio for coordinating the event. The winners of the 2022 DMF Memorial Award, announced at the Annual Dinner are as follows:

- Direct Care (tie) – Jeffrey Martin and James Tatum
- Manager – Cassie Rice
- Board Goodwill Ambassador – Sally Chittenden
- Board Excellence – James DePasque

Our growing list of donors is outstanding. It is a positive sign of not only our improving financial standing, but also faith in our mission of mental health treatment. Another special thank you goes to Allison Keck, our Communications Manager, for coordinating our annual Giving Tuesday campaign. The funds raised, will fund additional projects not funded by the budget.

I would like to thank our Board members for their dedicated volunteer service over the past year. Everyone is excited about what our agency is capable of in the future. If you want to jump into our dream, we always welcome potential new members to apply!

Kindly Yours!

Ed Blonder

And

A LETTER FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, GINO DEMAIO

Dear friends of Sound Community Services, Inc.

The past year has been a testament to the unwavering dedication of the staff at Sound Community Services, who have changed lives through their commitment to providing service.

By recognizing the pressing need for Sound Community Services in Southeastern Connecticut, particularly for individuals coping with mental health and substance disorders, Sound has spearheaded a transformative movement that champions positive outcomes. Through tireless advocacy and innovative programs, we have ensured these vulnerable community members receive the support they deserve.

The impact is profound - from providing access to counseling and psychiatric services to promoting peer recovery support groups and respite care facilities - every aspect of Sound Community Services' meticulous strategy contributes to holistic healing. As a result, countless lives have witnessed remarkable transformations; hope has been restored where despair once prevailed.

As we strive to uplift our community, I do not doubt that this exceptional organization will continue to demonstrate meticulous attention and expertise, along with compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence, with each community member we serve.

Warmly,

Gino DeMaio



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ed Blonder (Chair)

Jan Blonder

Andrew Carnabuci

Daniel Lofgren (Co-Chair)

Nancy Harding

James DePasque

Jane Cable (Treasurer)

Stephen Pulaski

William Lofgren

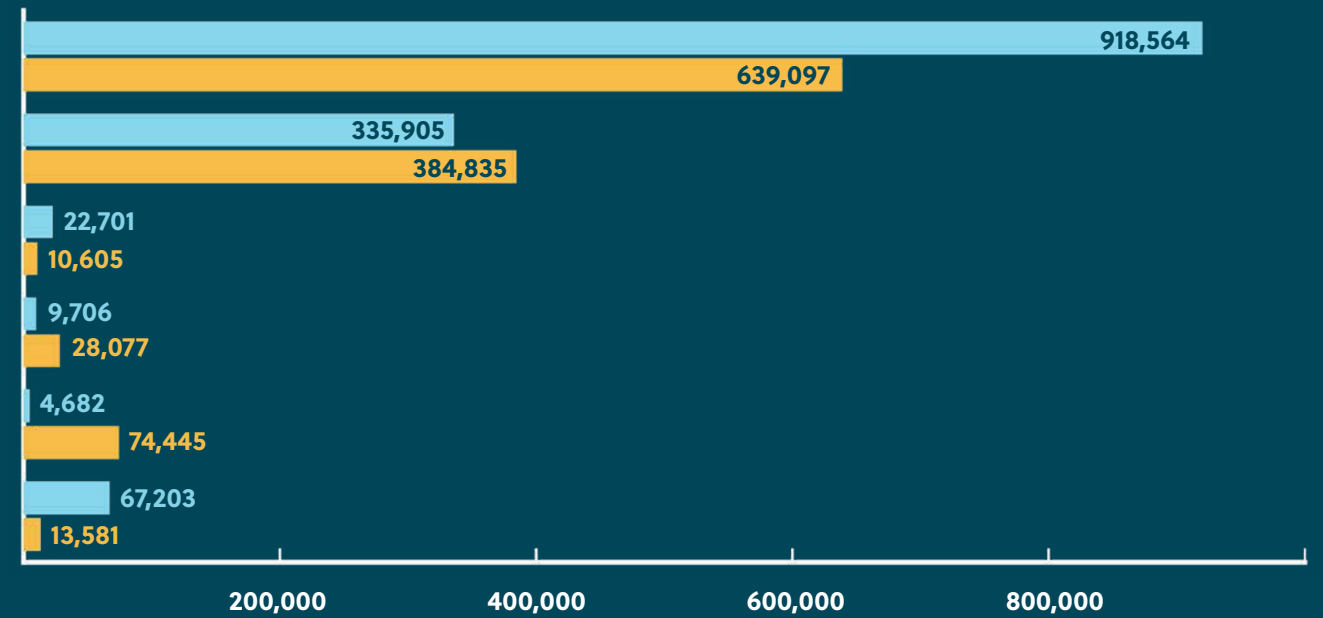
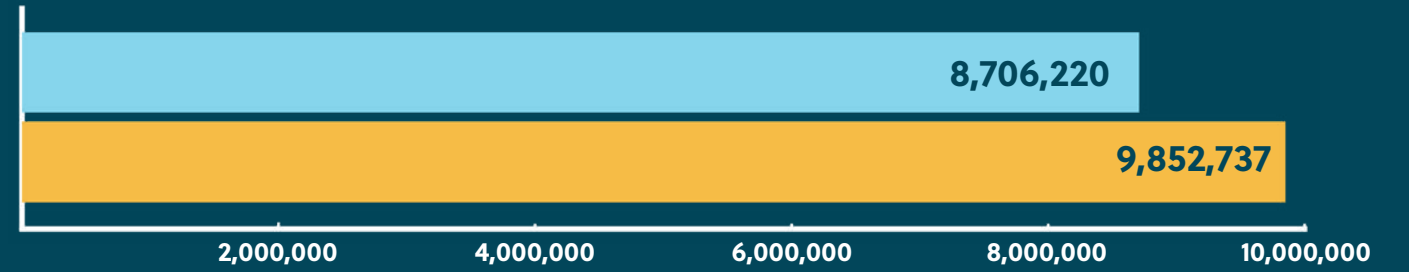
Rebecca Atkins (Secretary)

Rosemary Robertson

Fiscal Review

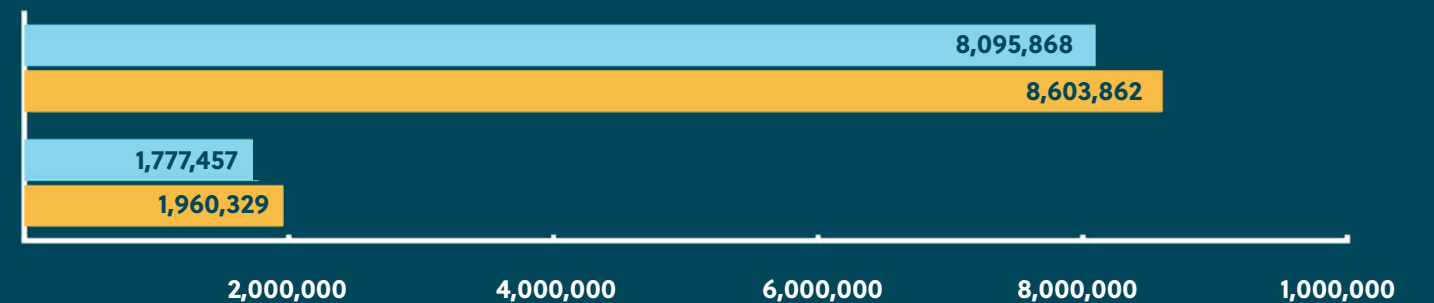
Revenue

	2022	2023
Government Grants	8,706,220	9,852,737
Patient Services	918,564	639,097
Program Fees	335,905	384,835
Rental Income	22,701	10,605
Donations	9,706	28,077
Gain on Investments	4,682	74,445
Other Income	67,203	13,581



Expenses

	2022	2023
Program Services	8,095,868	8,603,862
Management & General	1,777,457	1,960,329



The organization's Internal Revenue Service's Form 990 is publicly available in [guidestar.org](https://www.guidestar.org) and [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

Awards



August 2022: The Day Best of the Best Readers' Choice

We were voted #1 Home Care Services (Non-Medical) in the Health & Wellness category for the Readers' Choice Awards Best of the Best 2022 presented by The Day in Southeastern Connecticut! A huge THANK YOU to everyone who voted, we could not be any prouder!



November 2022: The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut 13th Annual Social Service Recognition Breakfast

In November, we attended The Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut 13th Annual Social Services Recognition Breakfast at the Holiday Inn. We were honored to have been selected along with our wonderful community partner, New London Adult and Continuing Education, for the "Collaboration of the Year" award. What a wonderful honor!

JANUARY 2023: 2022 DONNA MILLETTE-FRIDGE MEMORIAL AWARD

Each year the Board of Directors of Sound Community Services accepts nominations from employees for the Donna Millette-Fridge Memorial Award, the most important award that Sound Community Services gives out.

Donna Millette-Fridge exemplified excellence in the service of those who are challenged by mental illness. For those of you who did not know Donna, before her untimely death, she was a First Step employee for many years. Donna epitomized the values of social work! She always exhibited a very strong work ethic, strong leadership, and was an advocate for the First Step clients. She had dedicated her life to helping young adults who experienced behavioral health challenges, become productive members of the community. Each year the Board of Directors looks to find that special employee who has demonstrated the dedication and commitment that made Donna so special.

There's nothing more rewarding than being recognized by your peers, the ones that see what you do, and how you serve every day. It's our pleasure to announce our 2022 Donna Millette-Fridge Memorial Award recipients. We hosted a small in-person Award Ceremony at The Spa at Norwich Inn for our award recipients.



- The 2022 Donna Millette – Fridge Memorial Award for Direct Care is presented to **Jamese Tatum, Case Manager at Rite of Passage Program (ROPP)**
- The 2022 Donna Millette – Fridge Memorial Award for Direct Care is presented to **Jeffrey Martin, Residential Recovery Specialist at Rite of Passage Program (ROPP)**
- The 2022 Donna Millette – Fridge Memorial Award for Managers is presented to **Cassie Rice, Senior Director of Clinical Services**
- The 2022 Board Goodwill Ambassador Award is presented to **Sally Chittenden, Client Accounts Administrator in Rep Payee**

Donations



August 2022: Pebbles from Peb Talks Podcast

A huge THANK YOU to Pebbles from Peb Talks Podcast and her team for the generous donation of clothing to our "Jenn's Closet" which benefits our clients here at Sound Community Services! Pebbles has been keeping Jenn's Closet stocked with some fashionable clothing and is a wonderful supporter of our community, giving back whenever she can. Thank you Pebbles!



October 2022: Operation Fresh Start

In October we made an amazing partnership with Shannon DePerry, CEO & Founder of Operation Fresh Start. Shannon read about our newest residential program, Jason Hyatt Center, in The Day newspaper and reached out to our team to see how she could help. With a heart of gold, Shannon has been a truly wonderful supporter of our agency by giving back to our community by providing our residents at Jason Hyatt Center with what they need, and we cannot thank her enough.

November 2022: #GivingTuesday

Thank you to everyone who donated to our 2022 #GivingTuesday Campaign. Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and world. Funds raised help us to continue our mission to inspire HOPE by EMPOWERING our DIVERSE community to find HEALING and GROWTH! Thank You!



December 2022: Stop & Shop Community Bag Program

In December, we were selected as the beneficiary of the Stop & Shop Community Bag Program. Each time a \$2.50 reusable Community Bag was purchased at their Groton, Connecticut location during the month of April, we received a \$1 donation from each bag sold. Thank you to the Stop & Shop Community Bag Program!



November 2022: Power of Together 2, Southeastern Connecticut November Recipient

A huge thank you to Shannon DePerry, CEO & Founder of Operation Fresh Start, for nominating our Jason Hyatt Center as a recipient of a generous donation. The members of Power of Together 2, Southeastern Connecticut gather once a quarter and choose one cause that will receive all the chapter's donations for that quarter. We were honored to be their November recipient and as an agency we can't thank them enough for supporting our newest young adult program and its residents.

February 2023: Big Y Community Bag Program

In February, we were selected as the beneficiary of the Big Y Community Bag Program! Each time a \$2.50 reusable Community Bag was purchased at their Groton, Connecticut location during the month of February, we received a \$1 donation from each bag sold. Thank you to the Big Y Community Bag Program!

SOUND COMMUNITY SERVICES

In the Community



September 2022: The Day Job Fair
In September, we had a great turnout at a local Job Fair, hosted by The Day newspaper, at the Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa. Our Human Resources team met with many candidates looking for employment.



September 2022: New London Senior Center Life Enrichment Health Fair

In September, Marcia, and Alix from our Behavioral Health Homes (BHH) set up a table at the Life Enrichment Health Fair at the New London Senior Center.



September 2022: GNACC Healthy Living Festival 2022

In September, our Behavioral Health Homes (BHH) and Opioid Education Group attended the Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce Healthy Living Festival 2022 at Dodd Stadium.



October 2022: TBBCF Walk for a Cure

In October, we were a proud sponsor of a Pit Stop at the Terri Brodeur Breast Cancer Foundation Walk for a Cure. It's truly amazing to see how many people came together to raise awareness and money for this great cause.



October 2022: Safe Futures 4K Safe Walk

In October, we supported the Safe Futures annual 4K Safe Walk at Waterford High School. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Safe Futures is a key agency in Southeastern Connecticut who helps those impacted by domestic violence. We are proud to support them.



February 2023: Three Rivers Community College Resource Fair

In February, our AXS Center, Opioid Education Group, and a staff member from our Human Resources Department attended the Three Rivers Community College Resource Fair, a two-day event. We had a great time interacting with students, staff, and fellow community partners in the area.



April 2023: 16th Annual Walk to End Homelessness

In April, our Opioid Education Group enjoyed a wonderful afternoon at the 16th Annual Walk to End Homelessness hosted by New London Homeless Hospitality Center and Connecticut College with fellow community partners.

Giving Back to The Community



July 2022: Save a Suit

In July, our Communications Manager, Allison, added to the collection of business attire at Liberty Bank. Liberty Banks across Connecticut donated these items to Save a Suit, a nonprofit that collects business attire for veterans to wear during job interviews and professional business settings alike. Jenn's Closet at Sound Community Services had an abundance of men's business attire that they were happy to be able to donate to this worthy cause.



December 2022: Clinic Toy Drive

Our Clinic hosted a Toy Drive in December, in which staff came together and donated new and unwrapped toys to the New London Fire Department Toy Drive. A few New London firefighters stopped by to collect the toys in which they handed out to local children.



December 2023: Oasis Annual Pet Food & Supply Drive

Our Oasis Program hosted their Annual Pet Food & Supply Drive to benefit the City of New London Animal Control Department. They collected food, collars, leashes, bedding, toys, and much more for the animals in the shelter. Many of us have a soft spot in our hearts for animals, especially the ones that don't have a loving home yet. Staff at Animal Control were very appreciative of the donation, and we hope that the items donated will help keep these animals comfortable until they find their forever home!

SOUND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Events



2022-2023: AXS Gaming Tournaments

Our AXS Center continues to host monthly Gaming Tournament Socials, open to young adults in the community between the ages of 18-25. Each month they meet, play different games to see who is going to claim the title as Grand Prize Winner.



July 2022: AXS Outdoor Movie Night "Spider-Man No Way Home"

In July, it was a beautiful summer night for our AXS Center to host an outdoor movie for the community. Attendees enjoyed watching "Spider-Man No Way Home" on the big screen.



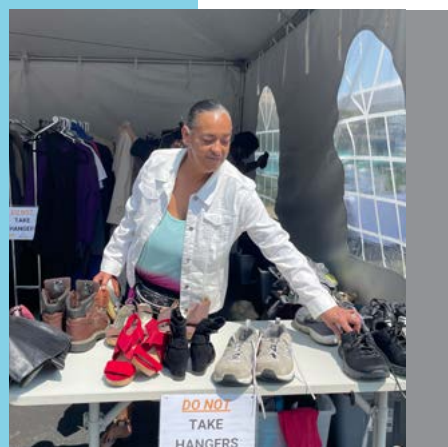
October 2022: Trunk or Treat

In October, our AXS Center hosted Trunk or Treat for the community to enjoy. Our staff designed some amazing trunks for the kids to enjoy and we enjoyed seeing all the kids and even the adults dressed up in their best Halloween costumes!



April 2023 AXS Easter Egg Hunt

In April, our AXS Center hosted their 2nd Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Sound Community Services. The Easter Bunny even paid a visit. This fantastic event was open to the community and was for children up to 10 years old or younger.



May 2023: AXS Jenn's Closet

In May, our AXS Center in collaboration with our Behavioral Health Homes, Jenn's Closet, and our Opioid Education Group hosted "Jenn's Closet". This wonderful event was not only for Sound Community Services, but also for local nonprofits that service young adults between the ages of 18-25 years old were invited to shop the racks and fill up a bag of FREE clothing! Everyone walked away with something "new", enjoyed pizza, music, dancing, games, and much more.

Thank you to our wonderful community who have kept our Jenn's Closet racks full of secondhand clothing, so that our community always has something "new" to wear!

A Few Highlights



July 2022: WNBA Connecticut Sun Basketball Game

Our Young Adult Programs teamed up for an outing to Mohegan Sun to watch the WNBA Connecticut Sun vs. New York Liberty game. Our young adults enjoy a good game of basketball, especially a professional game!



August 2022: Young Adult Services Enjoy a Trip to Lake Compounce

With the summer heatwave, our young adults and staff enjoyed a day trip to the oldest continuously operating amusement park in North America, Lake Compounce Theme Park. They enjoyed rides, park food, games, the water park, and much more!



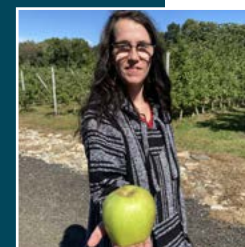
September 2022: Oasis visits B.F. Clyde's Cider Mill

Our Oasis Program enjoyed a fall outing by visiting the oldest steam powered cider mill in the United States, B.F. Clyde's Cider Mill. They enjoyed all the delicious treats, especially the fan favorite sweet cider and cider donuts.



September 2022: Young Adult Services attend The Big E

In September, our young adults enjoyed The Big E in West Springfield, Massachusetts. They enjoyed fair food, music, all the animals, shopping, the rides, and much more!



September 2022: Community Support Group & Supportive Housing Pick Apples at Holmberg Orchards

Our Community Support Program (CSP) and Supportive Housing teamed up and cohosted their monthly "Family Day" and "Tenant Meeting" together at Holmberg Orchards. They enjoyed the fall day picking apples to enjoy!



Spring 2023: Our Human Resources Department Gets a New Home

In honor of the 'excellence' core value, the agency used resources and grant money to create the HR Suite. Now located in its own wing at our main office building, employees have a private and functional space to meet their personal and professional needs. We are beyond excited to have created a space that reflects the value that is placed on our employees.



October 2022: AXS & ROPP attend a New York Yankees Baseball Game

Our AXS Center and Rite of Passage Program collaborated on a trip to New York City to watch the New York Yankees play. As watching a baseball game at the stadium was the highlight of the trip, the 10 young adults came away with far more than that. For many of these young adults, it was their first time on a train, in New York, and even out of the State of Connecticut. The trip presented the young adults with many skill building opportunities, such as following a train schedule, purchasing the correct tickets, and assuring that they got off at the correct stop near the stadium. The young adults learned how to locate their seats in the stadium and experience a much larger social setting than they'd been accustomed to. They had such a great time!



December 2022: AXS Participates in YASBIZ

Our AXS Center took part in YASBIZ, an organization within Street Smart Ventures, LLC. It stands for Young Adults Working, Learning, Teaching, Creating Small Business. YASBIZ is made up of multiple agencies within Connecticut that are funded by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

Young adults will make homemade crafts to sell to fellow peers and participants over the course of the day and visa versa. Because during the holiday season, many of the young adults created holiday themed items.

Prior to the event, our AXS team worked with their young adults on what product they'd like to sell and had price plans set for their sales. Day of, the young adults took the reins with a little guidance along the way and had a successful day!



December 2022: Our Human Resources Team spread "Sweet Holiday Cheer"

Our Human Resources Team spent a whole day baking cookies and brownies, making peppermint bark, and dipping pretzels in chocolate. And then they spent the next day visiting six different residentials and our main building during 1st, 2nd, and 3rd shifts spreading "Sweet Holiday Cheer" to our employees.

Client Spotlights

STRIVING TO CRUSH GOALS

Please say "hello" to Will. A year ago, Will came to Sound Community Services because of a court order. Our Oasis Program Coordinator contacted Will a few times, encouraging Will to check out our Oasis program. Since then, Will has been attending outings and participating in activities on a regular basis. Stephanie, Rehabilitation Specialist in Oasis, states, "I nominated Will for this spotlight because I'm very inspired by Will's motivation. It's his progress, he continually is progressing in all the things he's set out to do since day one. He's very inspirational."

Before attending Oasis, Will had nothing. Since then, on his very own, Will has been able to obtain employment as a dietary aide in a local nursing home. He has signed up with OIC (Opportunities Industrialization Center of New London) to take construction, culinary, and employment classes. He has paid off his car, fixed it up, and got it back on the road again. With a Driver's Ed refresher, Will has also been able to renew his driver's license. A former student of Three Rivers Community College, Will is also looking to resume taking classes to achieve his goal of earning his Associates Degree in General Studies. And he's even trained and ran a local 5K race!

Before getting his car back up on the road again, Will utilized Smart Ride and Seat Bus for transportation. It was challenging at first, but he taught himself and learned the system. Will was able to become an ambassador to his peers to help motivate and show other Oasis clients how to utilize Smart Ride and Seat Bus. With Will's guidance and using the trusted buddy system, they worked together to get home after their day at the Oasis Clubhouse.

Within Sound, Will not only has attended our Oasis program, but he also utilizes our Community Support Program (CSP) and New London Outpatient for therapy.

He has done so well, that he's been able to graduate from therapy. Will has goals, and he continues to crush the goals he sets for himself.

Will states, "I want to thank Oasis for giving me this chance to flourish and shine. It was an opportunity that I took full advantage of and I'm grateful. I'd like to continue moving forward with what I'm doing. I'm committed and I feel like I'm a part of the team."

We couldn't be prouder of you Will! Continue reaching for the stars and you will continue to shine on your journey!

Published: February 27, 2023



CLIENT SPOTLIGHTS CONTINUED

IT'S A NEW CHAPTER

This spotlight is a very special spotlight. Years ago, Sound Community Services Chief Executive Officer Gino DeMaio, asked Brenda if he could do a spotlight on her, at the time, Brenda wasn't ready. Today, on her actual birthday, Brenda is ready to share her journey!

So, without any further ado, please say "hello" to Brenda, more known at Sound as "Ms. Queen Bee". Brenda, who is a spiritual person, states, "My name is Brenda and I'm on my 61st chapter. I couldn't have done it without God, and I owe him all of this. Then I got on my feet through Sound while on my journey and I'm going to continue to be on my journey until my eyes close."

Brenda has been in recovery for 8 years. She was first introduced to Sound Community Services over 20 years ago when she first got out of rehab. Addicted to crack/cocaine, it took her several times

to get it right. She would fall and get right back up. She states, "I'm so glad that I got it out of my system, it was a struggle, but I have overcome my struggle. Being in recovery it has been a tremendous forward step for me and through the grace of God I do not want to go back."

In 2015, Brenda suffered a stroke, she had to retire early from work. Sound has helped her get out of her house, to interact with her peers, to participate in groups, and attend outings. A laugh that is contagious, you can't help to smile when you see Brenda. On most Friday's, you can find Brenda in our Oasis Clubhouse singing karaoke and dancing. She's always dressed to impress, a fashionista who is ready to strike a pose for a photo with some sass. She surrounds herself with like-minded people, winners in her eyes! A role model, someone who is respected not only by her peers, but also by staff. Brenda states, "I have a

good support group through Sound Community Services and with my family."

It's a new day, a new Brenda, and we're very proud of her achievements. Keep shining like a star Brenda and we wish you all the best in your new chapter! Happy Birthday!

Published: May 1, 2023
Brenda's Birthday



EXEMPLIFYING OUR CORE VALUES

Please say "hello" to Jeremie. Jeremie, who originated from Louisiana and Texas, settled in Southeastern Connecticut and has been utilizing Sound Community Services since 2002. On a good week, you will see Jeremie 2-3 times a week relaxing in our Oasis Clubhouse, one of our Social Rehab Programs. And quarterly, Jeremie checks in with our Medication Services located within our Clinic to discuss his mental health.

When you look at Jeremie, he may come across as someone you don't want to mess around with, but don't let that fool you, he's just a big teddy bear. He walks with a swagger dressed in an impressive streetwear style, has a bit of a quiet demeanor, speaks with a Louisiana accent with Southern manners, and a contagious giggle that makes you want to giggle as well.

Jeremie is one of our OG's, someone that has been with Sound for over twenty years and is highly respected by his peers. Like many of his peers, attending Oasis gets him out of his apartment for a little bit. Jeremie

states, "It's fun, I like coming here, it's 4 hours a day, it's cool" when you ask why he enjoys attending Oasis.

Jeremie has so much compassion towards others. For example, Jeremie helps his fellow peers who live in the same program as him to get safely to and from Sound Community Services. Arielle, one of our Rehabilitation Specialists in our Social Rehab Programs, states "I see that Jeremie really cares for his peers, their safety, those are the people he interacts with every day. It's nice for his peers to see." Arielle also commends Jeremie for being funny, for being a nice person, for making his peers feel welcomed, and for his positive personality. He even received an award for his positive way of interacting with his fellow peers. When we think of our Core Values, Jeremie exemplifies Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence; he truly CAREs.

When Jeremie isn't at Sound, he enjoys a nice long nap or enjoys watching a documentary on an iconic figure such as

Tupac with a soda in his hand.

Keep being a positive influence Jeremie, we're proud of you for being the role model you are to your peers and to staff guiding everyone on a successful path in life!

Published: June 12, 2023



Employee Spotlights



LEARNING THE TRADE

With the fall semester of college courses coming to an end this month, we'd like to thank our wonderful interns for all their help this past semester! We'd also like to thank their institutions, Southern Connecticut State University, Connecticut College, Mitchell College, and UConn.

We had interns from undergraduate and graduate levels who interned in our New London Outpatient Program, Social Rehab, Human Resources, and one of our Residential Programs. We wish them the best of luck and know they'll do amazing work once they graduate!

Published: December 5, 2022

THE DREAM TEAM



Please say hello to our Client Access Representative (CAR) Team at Sound Community Services. In a recent Front Desk Satisfaction Survey, our clients at Sound raved about this truly amazing team, here is what some had to say:

- I'm always greeted with kind words, friendly demeanor and smiles which makes the whole interaction pleasant.
- Love you guys, saved my life.
- I always look forward to coming in seeing the staff. They're really kind, and always put a smile on my face. Very supportive. They would get a rate of A+ from me.
- I'm grateful and thankful.
- Without further ado, let's introduce you to the CAR Team.

Jennifer has been with the agency for 5 years, starting as IOP Driver and transitioning to Employment Services, AXS Case Manager, and finally as our Greeter "wondah-ful Jenni-fun greet-ah." Her energy welcomes all who enter the building and greets you with a friendly smile, hello, and "how ah ya." She is also the founder and face of our very own Jenn's Closet.

Jessica has been with the agency since October 2021 as a Client Access Representative and works per diem with our Residentials. Jessica's "home" is the tropical climate "bubble" on the first floor and is the first person you see when entering the Clinic. Even though Jessica's tenure is not extensive, she is the go-to person for help in accessing services in the Clinic and has a knack for connecting with the young adults in the Residential Programs.

Karla, a Client Access Representative, recently had her one-year anniversary with us, and despite being here for a short time, it feels like she has been with the team forever. Karla can be found at the first main office window, walking the building or grounds, or teaching our ESA dog Ella Spanish commands. Karla has a smile for everyone, a listening ear for clients and staff, and kind words for all.

Angela is our newest Client Access Representative and completed the team we've been trying to put together for quite some time. She has two passions in life: her children and the TV show "Friends." Angela is the

quickest Spanish translator this side of the Mississippi, is a fast learner, and has a heart of gold.

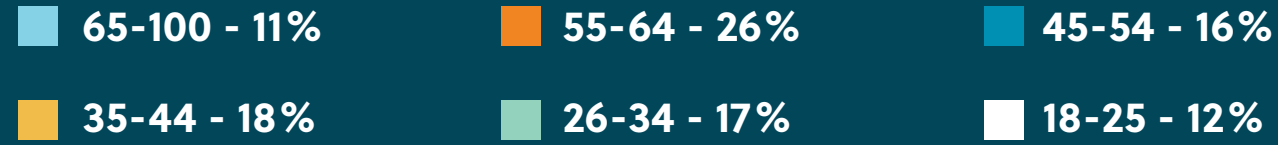
Karen is the Clinic Office Manager and fearless leader of this stellar team. She began with the agency first as a Client Access Representative and in her current position has morphed the Clinic into a tightly run ship. She tackles any project with fervor and speed and can be best described as a "Mama Bear."

Asateam each person has their unique strengths. Karla is the scheduling pro, Jessica knows how to manage the challenges of referrals, Angela is the go-to translator, and Jennifer is the client ID picture queen. Karen is the wrangler of it all, managing the referrals, client services, staff requests, and schedules so it all flows smoothly. Together they are the dream CAR Team, and we could not provide the premier services to our clients without them. Thank you for all you do!

Published: June 10, 2023

Program Numbers

CLIENT AGE RANGE



SERVICE HOURS PROVIDED

33,831

UNIQUE CLIENTS

1,291

TOTAL ADMISSIONS

613

Our Mission, Vision, & Core Values

MISSION

To inspire **HOPE** by **EMPOWERING** our **DIVERSE** community to find **HEALING** and **GROWTH**.

VISION

To be the **premier behavioral health** and wellness provider, building healthy communities where **every person's unique experience is valued without judgement**.

CORE VALUES

Compassion

- We practice compassion by understanding that our behaviors and actions are **contagious**
- We practice compassion by having **empathy** for others' feelings and experiences
- We practice compassion by embracing our community's **diversity**

Accountability

- We are accountable to each other by setting **clear expectations** through honest communication
- We are accountable to the people we serve by **honoring our promises**
- We are accountable to our community by developing programs and opportunities that **optimize resources**

Respect

- We respect our teammates by being mindful of our intentions, fostering a **culture of kindness**
- We respect our clients by **empowering** them to choose their own path to wellness
- We respect our community by **listening** to and acting upon its changing needs

Excellence

- We exhibit excellence to each other, always **leading by example**
- We exhibit excellence to our clients by **modeling** empathy, integrity, and dedication
- We exhibit excellence to our community by **continually improving** service quality and outcomes



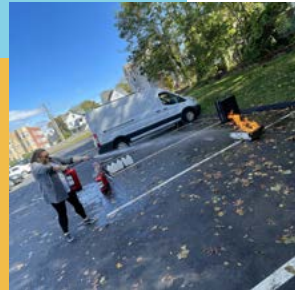
Community Partnerships



August 2022: The Light House Therapeutic Equine Services Homestead & Stables

A few of our young adults have participated in weekly horseback riding lessons at The Light House Therapeutic Equine Services Homestead & Stables. During this time, they have learned how to properly groom, lead, tack, mount, ride, and dismount a horse. Being around horses can be therapeutic and for our young adults it was just that. They look forward to being at the barn each week.

It's amazing to see the transformation that has happened. Not only are they smiling from ear to ear, but you see the trust, strength and confidence that has been built. The fear they once had has turned into an eagerness to learn something new. They know their weaknesses but are willing to work on them and achieve to be better. We're super proud of our young adults of the achievements they have made and the goals their crushing.



October 2022: MES Shipman's Fire Equipment Co.

The month of October is Fire Prevention Month, and our Safety Committee hosted a Fire Extinguisher Training for our staff. Erik, Service Technician – Suppression at MES Shipman's Fire Equipment Co. in Waterford, spent a few hours with our staff training everyone how to properly use a fire extinguisher and put out a fire.



February 2023: The Lefty Cycles Project

Dylan Howley of The Lefty Cycles Project spoke to one of our residential programs, Supervised Apartment Program, about the importance of journaling. Dylan provided each client with a journal and a pen. Many discussions were had, and wonderful ideas were shared!



February 2023: Safe Futures

Safe Futures did a training presentation on Domestic Violence and Trauma Informed Care for our staff. During this two-hour training, staff learned the dynamics of domestic violence, types of abuse, signs that someone is being abused, resources available to survivors, types of traumas, and much more.



February 2023: Fleet and Family Support Center

Our Chief Program Officer and Communications Manager met with Fleet and Family Support Center on the Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton to discuss in length what Sound Community Services offers as well as Fleet and Family Support Center. Much was learned on both ends.



May 2023: The Society for Financial Awareness

Sound Community Services and SOFA, The Society for Financial Awareness partnered and hosted a presentation on "Getting Fiscally Fit". This free educational workshop helped give the tools to meet staff's personal and professional goals/needs. Topics that were covered included:

- o Overcoming and understanding our financial challenges.
- o Why creating an emergency fund is so important?
- o Understanding the high cost of credit.
- o Gaining control through budgeting.

Thank you, Richard, and Rebecca, of Boundless Financial Solutions: Platinum Services in East Berlin, Connecticut for leading this well-presented workshop.



May 2023: New London Recreation Department

Sound Community Services participated in the New London Recreation Department's focus groups to gauge our community's needs and programing for the new Community Center that will be built in New London. We hosted two focus groups within our Sound community and received great feedback that we were able to share with New London Recreation.



May 2023: The Alliance: The Voice of Community Nonprofits

Sound Community Services rallied with The Alliance: The Voice of Community Nonprofits at the Connecticut State Capitol in Hartford. We rallied with fellow nonprofits, community partners, and supporters in the state for increased funding for nonprofits!



June 2023: Cultural Compassion and Inclusion Committee Juneteenth Presentation

Our Cultural Compassion and Inclusion Committee hosted a Juneteenth presentation with guest speaker Seanice Austin.

Tamra Rodriguez, Chief of Staff at Sound, states "I am so proud to work for an agency that values diversity. Presentations like these foster healthy conversations about the different cultures and communities that our employees and clients represent. Understanding the similarities and differences related to where we come from and how we think can only enhance how we treat each other. At the end of the day, we are all human beings worthy of compassion and respect."



June 2023: Reliance Health

Thank you to Reliance Health, Inc. for inviting us to your 21st annual Recovery Rocks event at Camp Harkness! Our clients and staff had a wonderful time.

Recovery Week: July 2022

Recovery Week is a week of celebration for our clients, and all the hard work they do to pour into their own recovery every single day. This is an opportunity to celebrate them, our courageous clients who fight battles every single day! They are the true heroes!

Day 1: BBQ & Talent Show



We kicked off day one of Recovery Week with a BBQ & Talent Show. Mother Nature may have brought us rain, but we worked as a team to improvise, adapt, and overcome to make for a successful day to celebrate our clients! We kicked off the day with our Guest Motivational Speaker, Dylan Howley, founder of The Lefty Cycles Project. Then clients and staff enjoyed a delicious BBQ for lunch, music, and an amazing talent show. Sound has talent!

Day 2: Health & Wellness Day

We celebrated day two of Recovery Week with Health & Wellness Day.

Thank you to the following people, businesses, municipals, and nonprofits for helping make today a huge success!

- Kelvin Young for demonstrating Sound Therapy.
- Bette and her Therapy Dog, Riley, who provided Pet Therapy.
- Town of Groton Police Department, Officer McClelland and K-9 Officer Chase, who provided comfort.
- Heather of Zen and Now Wellness Studio for demonstrating Chair Yoga.
- The Light House Therapeutic Equine Services, Craig, Kathryn, and Lulu for teaching us more about miniature horses.

For lunch, we enjoyed an amazing salad bar followed up with snow cones for dessert! Some of the clients and staff even enjoyed a relaxing chair massage. We'd say everyone had such a wonderful time.



We'd also like to thank our community supporters, Frito Lay Inc. for providing snacks, and Coca-Cola Beverages Northeast for providing beverages for Recovery Week.

Day 3: Jason Hyatt Day



Jason, who was our Chief Program Officer, passed away from cancer in March 2022. Jason Hyatt Day was in memory of Jason Hyatt for his 17 years of service to Sound Community Services. It was a day for clients and staff to celebrate Jason's life and the wonderful memories Jason left with so many of us. What made it even more special, Jason's family was in attendance, and we couldn't thank them enough for joining us on this special day. Jason's legacy lives on.

We enjoyed music, dancing, yard games, a softball game, lunch, ice cream, cake, and lots of raffles.

A huge thank you to Mitchell College for letting us use The Red Barn at Mitchell College for our main event and the softball field for our softball game. Thank you to Metz Culinary Management for catering our delicious lunch and thank you to Michael's Dairy at Mitchell College for providing the ice cream to cool everyone down on this hot day.



Testimonials

ANONYMOUS STAKEHOLDER TESTIMONIALS

"SCSI is active within the community and provides good care to those it serves."

"SCSI provides excellent clinical services and community groups that are a real asset to the surrounding community."

"SCSI is clearly committed to and passionate about finding and filling the behavioral health needs of our community."

"SCSI is dedicated to evidence-based practices, obtains genuine feedback from individuals served. The agency demonstrates a commitment to values of compassion and respect, staff development and accountability which supports quality service provision."

"Great job hiring from the community to serve individuals in the community!"

ANONYMOUS CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"I love CSP! I trusted my life with SCSI and you guys took care of me."

- A Community Support Program (CSP) Client

"I really appreciate all the help everyone has done for me. You guys have really turned my life around. So, thank you."

- A Supervised Apartment Program (CSP) Resident

"I love it the way the Hyatt House is already. Friendly staff and fun environment."

- A Jason Hyatt Center Resident

"I just want to say that I really appreciate all that has been done for me here at Bent. I couldn't have done all the growing I did if it wasn't for all of the workers here. From the bottom of my heart thank you."

- A Bent Crandall Program (BCP) Resident

1976 Society

The 1976 Society is a recognition and celebration of the Integrated Behavioral Health and First Step merging together as one to become Sound Community Services, Inc. in 1976. The 1976 Society recognizes donors who have a lifetime contribution of \$250.00 or more.


1976 SOCIETY MEMBERS

86 Media | A Beautiful Co. | Amalgamated Transit Union 1209 | Amazon Smile | Bartol Heating & Cooling, Inc. | Janet Beebe | Big Y Community Bag Program | Ed & Jan Blonder | Judith Booth | Nichole Burns | Robert Burnside | Jane Cable | Andrew Carnabuci | Frank Carnabuci | Victoria Christian | Coca-Cola Beverages, Northeast | ConnRI | Gino & Lisa DeMaio | Shannon DePerry (Operation Fresh Start) | Dime Bank Employees | The Ferrance Family | Jennifer Ferrigno | Jennifer Fournier | Frito Lay, Inc-Dayville | Geraghty & Bonnano | Dr. Luis Gonzalez | Thomas Gullotta | Spenser Horgan | Dylan Howley (Lefty Cycles Project, Inc) | Laura Hurlbirt-Brault | Jason Hyatt | Jacobs & Dow LLC | Lorie Jakubowski | The Keck Family | Chris & Susan Kobyluck | William Lofgren | MarCam Cleaning Service | Patricia Marrin | Errol Maurice | McCarter & English | Meg Property Services | Mitchell College | Lisa Moon | Mutual of America | Network for Good | OneDigital Insurance | Pebbles (Peb Talks Podcast) | Power of Together 2, Southeastern Connecticut | Qualifacts Systems | Renaissance Charitable | Rosemary Robertson | Tamra Rodriguez | Amy Roe | SKY Investment Group | SteadyCare | St. Joseph's | Stop & Shop Community Bag Program | SyncHR | Edwin Taetsch | Michael Talbot | The Union Baptist Church | Jaimi Vann | Corey Whiteside



2022-2023 Donors

Amazon Smile | Seanice Austin | Bartol Heating and Cooling, Inc | Betty Beaudette | Janet Beebe | Big Y Community Bag Program | Ed & Jan Blonder | Judith Booth | Nichole Burns | Robert Burnside | Jane Cable | Victoria Christian | Coca-Cola Beverages, Northeast | Creative Enclosures | Gino DeMaio | Dr. Nancy DePalma | James DePasque | Shannon DePerry (Operation Fresh Start) | Nathan Ferrance | Jennifer Ferrigno | Frito Lay, Inc-Dayville | Heather Garry (Zen and Now Wellness Studio) | Dr. Luis Gonzalez | Thomas Gullotta | Jeanne Hopkins | Dylan Howley (Lefty Cycles Project, Inc) | Ivy's Simply Homemade | Allison Keck | William Lofgren | Max Logan | Errol Maurice | Officer Heather McClelland (Town of Groton Police Department) | Mitchell College | Lisa Moon | Network for Good | Pebbles (Peb Talks Podcast) | Power of Together 2 Southeastern Connecticut | SKY Investment Group | Stop & Shop Community Bag Program | Robert Taitague | Walmart-Norwich | Corey Whiteside



**21 Montauk Ave.
New London, CT 06320
860.439.6400
soundcommunityservices.org**



@sound.community.s



@sound.community



soundcommunityservices



Sound Community Services, New London



Sound Community Service, Inc.

Written/Created by: Allison Keck,
SCSI Communications Manager

Designed by:
Innovast Digital Marketing