



## A Veteran's Journey: From Rock Bottom to Rebuilding with Purpose

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"Chrysalis Center didn't just help me survive; they transformed my life. Their compassionate, strengths-based care gave me the stability and support I needed to overcome addiction, earn my Bachelor's degree, rebuild my family, and begin giving back to the community. I am forever grateful for the opportunity to have been part of the Chrysalis family."

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*James outside his new apartment*

In 2016, James had his life in order - married with three kids, a home, and a sense of stability. A Marine Corps veteran who had served in Afghanistan, James never imagined how quickly things could unravel. "I didn't think anything could go wrong." But financial stress led to divorce, worsening PTSD, and alcoholism. He lost his family, home, and eventually ended up living in his car.

For four years, James battled addiction, trauma, and homelessness. After hitting rock bottom one day, with a friend by his side, he called the VA for help. The VA connected him with immediate resources and a place in a Veterans' shelter. James began attending AA and addiction therapy, as well as counseling for his PTSD and depression. Within six months, he had stopped drinking.

In 2021, James connected with Chrysalis Center and moved into Phelps Village, a supportive housing program for veterans in Vernon/Rockville. With stable housing, James was able to rebuild his relationship with his children, pursue therapy, and return to school. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Technology Management and became a key figure in the Phelps Village community. He developed meaningful relationships with his fellow Phelps Village residents and started looking for ways to give back and help others. According to the manager of Phelps Village,



*Phelps Mansion in Rockville*

**"James is the go-to guy here. He's always helping everyone."**

Now nearly five years sober, James has left Phelps Village and moved into his own apartment, just blocks from his children. He continues to prioritize his physical and mental health and is actively seeking employment through VA programs. James is building a future grounded in wellness, family, and purpose - a future he once thought was out of reach.

# Fighting Food Insecurity



## Donation Creation A Food Drive With A Twist!

A heartfelt thank you also goes out to everyone who organized food drives or participated in our Donation Creation contest. Your efforts brought in over 1,200 pounds of food for Freshplace! And a special shout-out to **Team Whittlesey**, the winner of this year's Donation Creation contest - congratulations! All of you have made a real impact on the lives of those we serve. A heartfelt thank you to our community partners, local businesses, and every private individual who donated. **Thank you!**

**Fresh Food, Fresh Start Success!** Thanks to your generosity, Chrysalis Center surpassed its goal for this year's Fresh Food, Fresh Start campaign - raising an incredible **\$23,658!** We set out to raise \$20,000, and you didn't just meet it - you exceeded it. Every gift, whether \$5 or \$5,000, makes a difference by helping provide fresh, nutritious food to Hartford residents facing food insecurity. We are deeply grateful for your support.

### Fresh Food, Fresh Start Supporters:

Crosskey Architects  
Ernst & Young  
First Church, West Hartford  
Hartford County Bar Foundation  
Harford Elks Lodge  
Mable F. Hoffman Charitable Trust,  
Bank of America, N.A., Trustee  
Max Cares Foundation  
Ocean State Job Lot  
Rotary Club of Farmington  
Shop Rite of Manchester, Waverly Markets & The Cohen Family  
University of St. Joseph, Black Student Union  
The Walker Group  
Whittlesey

## Volunteer Spotlight: Jay Brennan



Jay Brennan in the REC

While looking for ways to give back to his community, Jay came across Chrysalis Center - a name he recognized from a previous event he attended at the TCC (Training & Conference Center). Motivated by a strong commitment to service and a desire to set a positive example for his daughter, with whom he also volunteers at other local organizations, Jay began volunteering at our Recovery & Empowerment Center (REC) in November.

Jay leads "Finance with Jay," a class where he teaches REC members the fundamentals of financial planning. With 26 years of experience in banking, he brings a wealth of knowledge and practical insight to each session. Members consistently report that his classes have helped them better understand various financial systems. Jay ensures that each session is relevant and engaging by focusing on topics members have expressed interest in or by building lessons around their specific questions.

#### "Finance with Jay" Class Topics:

- Basic Budgeting
- Needs vs Wants Spending
- Savings Plans & Goals
- Understanding Credit
- Avoiding Fraud In The Digital World

Interested in teaching a class?  
Email Gabby at  
[gjacunski@chrysaliscenterct.org](mailto:gjacunski@chrysaliscenterct.org)



# Five Decades of Impact - One Night to Celebrate it All

Chrysalis Center is proud to celebrate its 50th Anniversary this year, marking five decades of helping individuals and families transform their lives. **Please join us on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at the TPC River Highlands in Cromwell for our annual Butterfly Bash.** This milestone event will celebrate Chrysalis' long-standing commitment to the community while raising critical funds to support our programs, including housing, food security, mental health, and job training services.

Your attendance and support will ensure that Chrysalis Center can continue providing life-changing services for years to come. **Together, we can make this evening one of gratitude, growth, and lasting impact.**



Scan the QR code or text  
butterflybash to 762-78

Can't attend? Celebrate 50 years of  
changing lives - make a gift today.

## In Their Own Words: Letters from the Heart

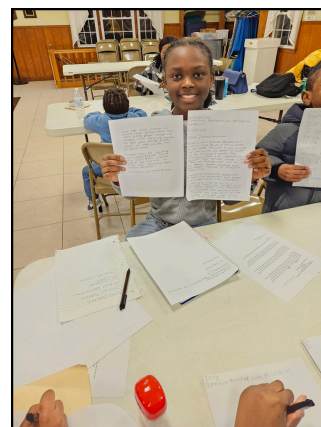
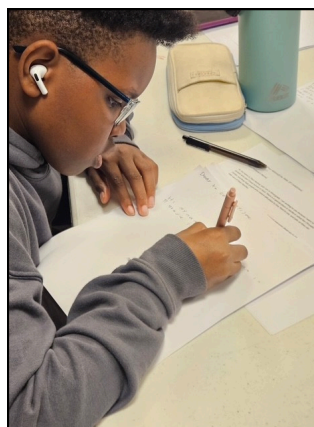
Dear Chrysalis Center,

*About 5 months ago, the youth of Dimension Abundant Life Ministries embarked on a task that at first, seemed impossible. We wanted to write 300 letters to politicians, influencers, celebrities, and more, pleading with them to help the Chrysalis Center. We wanted to make it clear that we support the Chrysalis Center and the vital work it does here in Hartford, Connecticut. **We are committed to the mission of assisting those who are unable to help themselves, and your organization represents that mission.** The 300 letters we wrote were our way of shining a light on the remarkable difference you make within the community, from the housing and employment training to the food and support services. In an era where so many necessary programs are being eliminated or closed, we wanted it known that we support you and want your necessary services available for the people who need them, no matter what. We wanted the decision makers and influential individuals to grasp the value of your work and be motivated to support it. **We understand that while these letters may not make a big difference, all they need to do is change one life. One life can change a community forever.***

Sincerely,

Dimension Abundant Life Ministries Church

Dimension Abundant Life Ministries Church has been a loyal supporter of Chrysalis Center for many years. Their commitment extends beyond leadership to the entire congregation, including their youth ministry. Together, their faith and dedication have strengthened Chrysalis Center in countless meaningful ways.



# Chrysalis Center Housing Development Corporation Expands Affordable Housing in New Britain

Chrysalis Center Housing Development Corporation (CCHDC) is proud to announce that its newest affordable housing project in New Britain will soon become the future home for 28 families! Thanks to generous funding from the State of Connecticut Department of Housing, construction began in July 2024 and is anticipated to be completed by January 2026.

This development reflects CCHDC's ongoing commitment to addressing the critical need for affordable housing in Connecticut. The new townhouse community will provide 28 quality affordable units to the New Britain community. Located adjacent to The Berkowitz - an existing 24-unit affordable housing complex - this new development will stand as a beacon of growth and stability in the heart of the Little Poland neighborhood.

Founded in 2020, CCHDC is a private 501(c)(3) housing development organization dedicated to transforming both urban and rural environments across Connecticut. The organization focuses on creating housing opportunities for underserved communities, ensuring that residents have access to safe, affordable, and high-quality homes. Beyond building housing, CCHDC fosters a sense of community, supporting healthy living environments where families can thrive. With this new project, CCHDC continues to provide hope, stability, and opportunity — **one home at a time**.



## Chrysalis Center Earns Prestigious Three-Year CARF® Accreditation

Chrysalis Center is delighted to announce that the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF®) International has awarded Chrysalis its highest recognition: a three-year accreditation. CARF is an independent accreditor that sets globally recognized standards of excellence for health and human service providers. The accreditation process was both rigorous and comprehensive.

Over the course of three days, a team of three CARF surveyors visited Chrysalis Center, meeting with staff, funders, board members, and participants. They carefully reviewed more than 1,500 CARF standards, each designed to ensure the highest levels of quality and accountability. These standards vary by program and service, ensuring that every aspect of operations is thoroughly evaluated against internationally recognized benchmarks.

This achievement affirms Chrysalis's commitment to excellence and reinforces our dedication to those we serve. Chrysalis Center is honored to receive CARF accreditation and remains steadfast in providing the highest quality services to our community.





# Volunteer Spotlight: Liberty Bank



This summer, Liberty Bank demonstrated its commitment to giving back by volunteering at two Chrysalis Center locations - truly embodying what it means to "Be Community Kind."

In August, Liberty Bank volunteers started their day in Freshplace, a client choice fresh food and case management food pantry, helping unload donations and restock shelves. With the school year fast approaching, volunteers got into the back-to-school spirit by organizing donated school supplies and stuffing backpacks for children of Chrysalis Center participants.

Most recently, Liberty Bank team members rolled up their sleeves at our North Village housing site in Middletown. Volunteers repainted interior hallways and stairwells, adding a fresh, welcoming touch to the space residents call home.

Chrysalis is deeply grateful for Liberty Bank's commitment to making their neighbors' lives a little better today, and for the future. Thank you Liberty Bank for your compassion and commitment. **We appreciate you!**



## REC Members Attend Wellness Day at Intercommunity Health

On August 8th, participants from Chrysalis Center's Recovery & Empowerment Center (REC) participated in a field trip to Intercommunity Health Care's newly renovated facility at 40 Coventry Street in Hartford. The visit was part of Wellness Day, a free event open to the public in celebration of National Health Care Week.

Stephen Maytan, Rehabilitation Specialist and Health & Wellness Coach at Chrysalis Center, accompanied the REC members to the event, where they had the opportunity to explore health and wellness resources available in the Hartford area. A highlight of the day included a chance to speak directly with U.S. Representative John Larson, who attended to engage with community members and hear about the challenges they face in accessing healthcare. This provided a valuable opportunity for REC members to practice advocating for their needs and articulating the challenges they encounter when trying to access healthcare.

Chrysalis Center's Recovery & Empowerment Center supports individuals living with mental illness, homelessness, substance use, HIV/AIDS, or those recently released from incarceration. Field trips like this give members the chance to practice social skills, connect with new supports, and engage more fully with the community.



Stephen Maytan (left) with Rep. Larson and REC members





# Our Unique Impact: Transforming Lives, Differently



Chrysalis Center's **Urban Roots Hydroponics Grow Center** produces fresh lettuce, basil, microgreens, tomatoes, peppers, squash, and cucumbers year-round. This harvest supports the **La Cocina Culinary Arts Training Program** and reaches the community through Freshplace food pantry and the Homestead Farmers' Market - providing healthy food to families living in Hartford's food desert.

Through **La Cocina Culinary Arts Training Program** and **La Cocina Catering**, marginalized individuals gain hands-on skills in the culinary and hospitality fields while preparing delicious meals with a purpose. Using produce from Urban Roots and our gardens, these programs are a social enterprise which provide real-world training, open doors to meaningful employment, and generate vital funds to support Chrysalis Center's mission.

*Chrysalis Center Urban Farmer, Sean*



*Railway Gardens*



*Graduate puts ServSafe skills to work in La Cocina*

## At Chrysalis Center, every event tells a bigger story.

When you book with **La Cocina Catering** and the **TCC (Training & Conference Center)**, you're not just planning a meeting, celebration, or community gathering - you're part of a journey that changes lives. In the kitchen, students of our Culinary Arts Training Program are learning hands-on skills to launch careers in the food industry.

At the TCC, a modern and welcoming space becomes the backdrop for connection, collaboration, and community. Guests enjoy an exceptional experience, while behind the scenes, your booking fuels programs that provide housing, food access, mental health services, and job training for those who need it most.

So when you host with us, it's more than an event. It's a ripple effect - reaching far beyond the room, far beyond the day, and into the lives of individuals and families who are building stability and independence.

**Every meal has meaning. Every event has impact. Every choice helps transform a life. Join us and let's create brighter futures, together.**

Booking Incentives for First-Time Clients:  
10% off Room Rental & Tech Package  
Book Today and Make a Difference!





# Bringing Joy To Those In Need: Holiday Food & Toy Drives

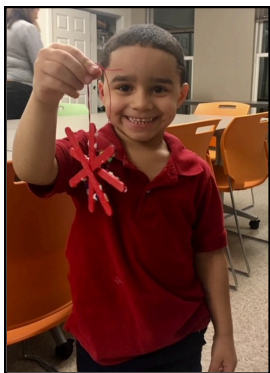
The November and December holiday season can be especially challenging for the many families Chrysalis Center supports who live at or below the poverty line. As they work to create meaningful holiday moments for their loved ones, the pressure of providing special meals and gifts adds extra stress. You can help bring joy and relief this season by donating to our Holiday Food & Toy Drives. Your generosity can make a real difference - and help make the holidays a little brighter for those who need it most. Thank you for sharing kindness and spreading holiday cheer!

## Thanksgiving and December Holiday Requests:

**Holiday Food Drive Requests:** Canned Fruit, Rice, Canned Vegetables (Corn, Yams, & Mixed Vegetables) Cooking Oil, Condiments, Seasonings, Canned Soup, Pasta & Sauce.

**Holiday Toy Drive Requests:** Gift Cards, Stockings, Arts & Craft Supplies, Legos, Learning & Developmental Toys, Basketballs, Footballs, Soccer Balls, Nail Polish, Lip Gloss and Makeup Sets.

*Donations of new, unwrapped gifts are being accepted now through December 12th.*



*A few of the many families Chrysalis Center touches.*

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For more information or to coordinate your donation, please contact Gabby Jacunski at [gjacunski@chrysaliscenterct.org](mailto:gjacunski@chrysaliscenterct.org) or 860.263.4419

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## The Homestead Farmers' Market Is Going Strong! Wednesdays, 12:00 - 2:00 pm | Chrysalis Upper Parking Lot

As we transition into fall, our Homestead Farmers' Market continues to thrive! We have harvested 3,023 pounds of fresh produce from our various growing locations thus far. Our summer harvest included a wide variety of greens, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, and squashes. Now we're turning to cool-weather crops and carrots, beets, turnips, and radishes are on the way. The Market runs through October 29th, so there's still plenty of time to support your favorite nonprofit and stock your kitchen with fresh, healthy produce!

## Connect with Chrysalis Center!

LEARN MORE



@ChrysalisHtfd



Chrysalis Center, Inc.



@ChrysalisCenterHTFD

The generosity of our donors and community partners makes our mission possible. Scan the QR code to visit our website. For more information on Chrysalis Center's programs and services or to be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact [mediacomms@chrysaliscenterct.org](mailto:mediacomms@chrysaliscenterct.org).



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Accredited by the Commission on  
Accreditation of Rehabilitation  
Facilities (CARF) for:  
Case Management / Service Coordination:  
Mental health (Adults)



Community Integration:  
Mental Health (Consumer-Run)

Chrysalis Center is an Affirmative  
Action Employer Committed to  
Fostering Diversity in the Workplace

Funded in part by: DMHAS, DOC, DOH,  
CT-NSP, HOPWA - City of Hartford  
and HUD

Chrysalis Center accepts MasterCard, Visa  
American Express and Discover. Please visit our website or scan  
below, to donate online, purchase event tickets, or sponsor a  
fundraiser event.

**Transforming Lives**, Chrysalis Center's Quarterly  
Newsletter, is a publication distributed by Chrysalis  
Center, Inc. a non-profit charitable organization  
serving the Connecticut area.

For more information or to join our mailing list  
please visit: [www.chrysaliscenterct.org](http://www.chrysaliscenterct.org)

## Save The Date: Travelers Chorale Winter Concert

Celebrate the holidays and support Chrysalis Center at the  
Annual Travelers Chorale Winter Concert!

Admission is **free** with the donation of a nonperishable food  
item at the door. All donations go to Chrysalis Center's  
Freshplace food pantry.

- Wednesday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm
- The Bushnell Performing Arts Center, Hartford



Scan below to learn more  
about The Travelers Chorale:



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