



TRANSFORMING LIVES

Winter 2025 Newsletter

**Chrysalis Center**
A legacy of care: 50 years of transforming lives
Volume 50, Issue 4

50th Anniversary Butterfly Bash Raises Over \$206,000!

Over 260 guests gathered at the TPC River Highlands in Cromwell to celebrate 50 years of Chrysalis Center transforming lives. The evening was filled with inspiration, connection, and generosity. We were thrilled to welcome Conor Geary as our Master of Ceremonies, whose energy and storytelling brought the event to life. A special highlight of the evening was James, who recently graduated from our services, whose story of resilience and growth exemplifies the mission of Chrysalis Center. Guests were deeply moved hearing firsthand how our community support programs empower individuals and families in Hartford & beyond.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, sponsors, and supporters, this year’s event raised over \$206,000 to support Chrysalis Center programs. Your contributions make it possible for us to continue providing critical, life-changing services for those who need them most. We are deeply grateful to everyone who joined us in celebrating this milestone. Together, we are empowering individuals and families to transform their lives and strengthen our community.



James - Proud
Chrysalis Center Graduate



Board Member, Kimalee Williams & Guests



Butterfly Bash Committee Members & Friends



Sharon Castelli, CEO & Board
Vice Chair Carol Larco-Murzyn



Board Chair, Tom Kennedy & Family



Happy Guests

A Heart for Service: Meet Jill

Jill Levin has been volunteering with Chrysalis Center for just over a year, joining us in September 2024. She first learned about Chrysalis Center at a job fair while exploring case manager opportunities. Inspired by our mission and the work we do, she chose to become a volunteer and we're so grateful she did.

Jill primarily supports Freshplace, helping unload and organize food donations, but she has also lent her time and energy to special fundraising events like the Butterfly Bash and Empty Bowls.

Volunteering has always been important in Jill's family. During her full-time working years, she wasn't able to volunteer as much as she wished, but now that she's semi-retired, she's enjoying the chance to give back. In addition to Chrysalis Center, she volunteers at The Bushnell, Dog Star Rescue, and with the Town of West Hartford's Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.), as well as their food pantry when needed.

A lifelong learner, Jill enjoys playing tennis, pickleball, and golf, and loves travel and cultural activities. When asked about her experience at Chrysalis Center, Jill shared that she has "never volunteered anywhere run so well and with such helpful staff." ***Jill says everyone she meets is understanding and appreciative, and she loves that Chrysalis is a multiservice organization addressing many areas of need - from food insecurity and housing to mental health and beyond.***

According to Jill, "you don't see any gaps" in how clients are supported. Thank you, Jill, for your kindness, dedication, and volunteerism.



The Homestead Farmers Market may be closed for the season, but what a season it was!

Thanks to community members like you, this year's market was a huge success, providing fresh, healthy food and a gathering place for our neighborhood. We can't wait to see you back next season for more delicious produce directly from our Chrysalis Center gardens & Urban Roots Hydroponics Grow Center.



Scan here to explore how our Food Hub makes an impact:



40 Years of Combined Service: Tony Brown & Paul Narducci

Chrysalis Center proudly celebrates **Tony Brown** and **Paul Narducci** for their remarkable 40 years of combined service to our mission! Both have dedicated their careers to helping individuals overcome life's greatest challenges - from homelessness to mental health and recovery - embodying compassion, resilience, and hope every day.

For more than 31 years, **Anthony D. "Tony" Brown** has dedicated his life to helping others through his work in human services. As a Community Case Manager at Chrysalis Center for three decades, Tony has been a steadfast advocate for individuals experiencing homelessness and those living with HIV/AIDS. His efforts have been recognized with the Catherine Kennedy Award (2009) and the Carol E. Walter "Think, Be, Lead Change Award" (2024). Tony's compassion, leadership, and unwavering dedication truly embody the mission of Chrysalis Center - transforming lives and strengthening communities. We will miss Tony, enjoy your retirement!

For the past decade, **Paul Narducci** has been the heart of Chrysalis Center's operations as our Director of Maintenance, ensuring that our buildings and spaces remain safe, welcoming, and well cared for. This December, Paul will retire after 11 years of dedicated service to spend more time with his family - especially his brand new granddaughter! We are deeply grateful for Paul's hard work, steady leadership, and kindness over the years. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him all the best in this exciting new chapter!



Anthony D. Brown,
Community Case Manager,
Community Housing and
Health Services



Paul Narducci,
Director of Maintenance

Thousands of lives have been changed through housing, food support, and recovery programs. As we continue to celebrate 50 years of transforming lives, your support can make a lasting impact. **Please consider making a special gift of \$50.00** to honor this milestone and help Chrysalis Center continue empowering individuals and strengthening our community for years to come.

Chrysalis Center's Impact - By the Numbers:

- **1,082:** Individuals and Families Served
- **516:** Individuals and Families Received or Remained in a Place to Call Home
- **17,869:** Direct Services Provided to Individuals and Families
- **25,000:** Meals Provided Through Food Hub Programs

**Support Our
Mission:
Scan to Give!**



A DAY IN THE LIFE

A Community Case Manager's job is to help individuals or families access and coordinate essential services by acting as a liaison between the client and community resources like healthcare providers, social services, and housing programs. In our Winter Newsletter, we highlight **Shivaughn, a Community Case Manager at Woodland Springs** in Stafford Springs, Connecticut.

Take a look inside a typical day for Shivaughn:

- I like to arrive early each morning to ensure I'm settled and not rushing to begin my day. Having that quiet time before the office gets busy helps me organize my thoughts and review my priorities. By **8:00 AM**, I am typically signing off on any notes from the previous day and checking my emails. I take this time to respond to urgent messages before the day begins.
- Around **9:00 AM**, I start calling my morning clients to confirm our scheduled meetings. This step helps reduce last-minute cancellations and allows me to adjust my schedule if anyone needs to reschedule. Maintaining flexibility is key in this role - clients' needs and circumstances can change quickly, and it's important to be understanding and accommodating while still managing my time effectively.
- By **9:30 AM**, I am often meeting with clients. These sessions can vary widely - sometimes we discuss progress on treatment plans, other times I assist with financial assistance applications, socialization, or connecting them with other community resources. Each client comes with unique goals and challenges, and my role is to help guide them through barriers and empower them to take the next steps toward stability and independence.
- Around **12:30 PM**, I take my lunch break. I use this time to step away, recharge, and prepare mentally for the second half of the day. Having that dedicated break allows me to return refreshed and ready to focus fully on my clients. The afternoon typically continues with meeting clients for assessments, socialization, or linking them to community resources.
- By **3:30 PM**, I begin wrapping up for the day - updating case notes, logging services provided, and organizing follow-up tasks for the next day. Before leaving, I double-check that all my documentation is accurate and up to date and help prepare for the next day!

Chrysalis Center's Community Case Manager's support individuals facing challenges such as mental illness, homelessness, substance use, and re-entry after incarceration. Through our Community Support Services and Case Management programs, we help clients access education, healthcare, daily living skills, benefits, and community resources. These services provide guidance, stability, and hope as individuals work toward healthier, more independent lives.



Shivaughn with Client, Jesse

Juliana's Journey: Finding Light, Purpose & Empowerment



Juliana & Community Support Specialist, Jenny



Juliana first joined our Community Support Program (CSP) in 2014 and became a member of our Recovery and Empowerment Center (REC) the following year. Today, she radiates positivity, peace, and confidence - a reflection of the incredible transformation she has made on her journey toward well-being.

Before coming to Chrysalis Center, Juliana struggled with her mental health and staying focused on her goals. With the support of compassionate staff, she rebuilt her confidence and discovered her inner strength. Her first Community Support Specialist, Alice, helped her prepare for and pass her citizenship test - a milestone Juliana will never forget.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Juliana continued her progress with support from Jenny, her current Community Support Specialist, who encouraged her to prioritize self-care. She began exercising, spending time outdoors, and adopting healthy habits that grounded her through uncertain times.

When she returned to the REC, Juliana chose to give back. She now teaches an anger management class, using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and mindfulness techniques to inspire others through her lived experience.

Today, Juliana is studying regression therapy, training to become a Recovery Support Specialist, and exploring opportunities to move closer to nature - where she feels most at peace. Juliana's journey is a beautiful reminder that with hope, support, and determination, transformation is possible. **We are so proud to be part of her story.**

Share Your Talents at the REC! At Chrysalis Center's Recovery and Empowerment Center (REC), individuals have access to a variety of social, recreational, and wellness opportunities. We are always looking for volunteers who are willing to share their skills and lead classes that help clients build a better life in recovery. Classes are scheduled to fit the volunteer's availability and can cover a wide range of subjects, including:

- Reading Comprehension
- Cooking
- Health & Wellness
- Sewing
- Computer Literacy
- Recovery-focused Programming

For more information, please
contact Summer Sivetz at
ssivetz@chrysaliscenterct.org or
860.263.4425

If you have a talent or skill you'd like to share, consider volunteering at the REC - your time and expertise can make a lasting impact in someone's recovery journey.

Volunteers in Action at Cosgrove Commons

It was a beautiful October day at our Food Forest at Cosgrove Commons! A dedicated team of volunteers from Nassau Financial Group spent the morning weeding, mulching, edging beds, and completing other garden maintenance projects to keep the Food Forest thriving.

After their hard work, Nassau Financial Group generously hosted a delicious BBQ lunch for Cosgrove Commons residents, donating all the funds for the meal so everyone could enjoy this special outdoor gathering together. Chrysalis Center is deeply grateful to our friends at Nassau Financial Group for their time, energy, and compassion. **Your efforts make a real difference — not only in our gardens but in the lives of those we serve!**



Nassau Financial Group Volunteers



Celebrating Your Impact - Thank You, The Nutmeg Foundation

Thank you, **The Nutmeg Foundation**, for helping Chrysalis Center strengthen our food access and urban agriculture initiatives. Your support will allow us to access fresh produce more quickly for our catering program, promote our services through new La Cocina van wraps, build a greenhouse at Cosgrove Commons to expand year-round growing capacity, and replace outdated vegetable cases at our Freshplace food pantry to improve efficiency and reduce waste. **We are deeply grateful for your partnership in nourishing our community.**



Give the Gift of Warmth

As the holidays approach and cold weather sets in, many in our community face the harsh realities of homelessness and hunger. Winter is especially challenging for those without shelter, making warm clothing a true necessity. You can make a difference by donating **new winter coats, hats, scarves, and gloves** to help keep those in need warm.

This year, we're working to ensure no family goes without, but we need your support. Here's how you can help: **Donate online through our website, provide gift cards or organize drives.** Thank you for helping us make the holidays brighter for our community! To coordinate your donation, please contact Summer Sivetz at ssivetz@chrysaliscenterct.org.



Or, Scan Here!

Because of you - our donors, sponsors, and friends - 280+ families enjoyed a full Thanksgiving meal with turkey and all the fixin's. Thank you for making an impact when it mattered most.



Karen D'Arco

Thank you!

A special thank you to **Karen D'Arco**, whose service on our Board concluded on November 18th. We are profoundly grateful for her dedicated leadership, insight, and many contributions over the past nine years. Karen's commitment has made a lasting impact on Chrysalis Center and the individuals and families we serve.

Connect with Chrysalis Center!

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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.



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fundraiser event.

Transforming Lives, Chrysalis Center's Quarterly
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serving the Connecticut area.

For more information or to join our mailing list
please visit: 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 17th at 7:30 pm
- The Bushnell Performing Arts Center, Hartford



Scan below to learn more
about The Travelers Chorale:



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