Establishing Legacies Guarantees Opportunities in Education

**William and Mary Tomc Memorial Fund**

Like so many of their generation, Rich Tomc’s parents were born to immigrants. They were raised in a close-knit, working class neighborhood. The parish church was the heart of the community, and the families in those neighborhoods recognized the importance of family, hard work, and education.

Rich and his siblings were raised in a strong family with a deep religious faith and a profound belief that education was the gateway to endless opportunities. Rich and his wife Joan carried that tradition with them. They found a strong community in Middletown and a positive educational grounding for their two daughters, Jamie and Dana, at Mercy High School.

To honor his parents’ commitment to family and the opportunities afforded their daughters at Mercy High School, Rich and Joan established the William and Mary Tomc Memorial Fund at the Community Foundation. The William and Mary Tomc Memorial Fund supports a tuition assistance award for an incoming freshman at Mercy High School which will renew annually to support her education each year for four years.

Establishing the William and Mary Tomc Memorial Fund at the Community Foundation was a family decision. Rich and Joan wanted to give back in a way that allowed their daughters to

**Colter Abely Achievement Fund**

A great attitude. A friend to everyone. An infectious smile. An excellent athlete whose passion was wrestling. A mentor and leader to those around him. These are just a few of the things people knew and admired about Colter Abely.

Colter grew up in Middletown and graduated from Xavier High School. He was surrounded by friends, neighbors, and teachers who looked forward to his smile, his positive attitude about life, and his willingness to help everyone.

Unfortunately tragedy struck in August 2012 when Colter was killed in an automobile accident on the Massachusetts Turnpike. While life for his family and friends changed in an instant, Colter’s influence on others continued in the days, weeks, and months after his passing. Friends still post on his Facebook page, and his family still vividly remembers his passion for helping others.

Colter’s parents, Brian and Chaleen, wanted to find a way to honor their son’s life that would support the community he deeply cared for – now and forever. Deciding how best to do this can often be challenging, especially with the profound loss of someone you love. Working with their attorney, Edward Lang, Brian and Chaleen were introduced to the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and realized there were many ways to carry on Colter’s legacy.

Brian and Chaleen thought about Colter’s passion for wrestling, about how it went beyond the competition and the matches to supporting his teammates and the Xavier program which meant so

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We love working with donors, and we are honored to work with so many of you who wish to help, give back, and have a positive impact on Middlesex County. The size of the gift doesn’t matter nor does the reason it was given. We believe that everyone is a philanthropist. We believe that giving through the Community Foundation leverages all gifts and that lives are changed because of those donations from the heart. It’s neighbor helping neighbor, one gift at a time.

This winter we received a very special gift which reminded all of us at the Community Foundation why we do the work we do. A letter arrived during the holidays with a very simple, special message:

Dear Team Avery,

This year for Christmas I wanted to donate the money that my parents would have spent on toys to help Avery, her family.

Since Avery lives in my area, I wanted to help research for CDKL5.

Sincerely,
Leah Wysocki
Age 10

Leah Wysocki is a 5th grader at Old Saybrook Middle School. Her favorite subject is science because she likes the experiments. Her favorite class project was creating fake beaks and using them to catch food - small marshmallows.

Avery Leopoldino also lives in Old Saybrook. Avery was diagnosed with CDKL5, a rare genetic disorder. Most of the children affected by CDKL5 suffer from seizures that begin in the first few months of life. Most cannot walk, talk or feed themselves, and many are confined to a wheelchair, dependent on others for everything. In 2010, Avery’s parents, Mark and Kristin Leopoldino decided to do something to help all with CDKL5. They established Avery’s Fund at the Community Foundation and launched a campaign to raise awareness about CDKL5 and raise funds to support research into this genetic disorder.

Leah didn’t know about Avery until her classmate, Mara Kelley, told her class that during the summer she had donated her birthday money to Avery’s Fund. Leah thought about her Christmas gifts and realized she didn’t need more toys. Instead, she wanted to give back and do something to help Avery and to help find a cure for CDKL5. The three girls met in January at the Old Saybrook Middle School and established a special bond – one made possible by the kind hearts of Leah and Mara. Two young girls who want to help. Two young girls who care.

Leah’s gift was a gift to so many children afflicted with CDKL5. Leah’s gift was from the heart, and her gift led to other gifts. So moved by her Christmas generosity, many donors stepped forward and each matched her gift to Avery’s Fund.

Leah’s actions are like so many who choose to work through the Community Foundation. It is not the amount that matters, but the fact that people want to help, want to improve the lives of others and support their neighbors. Donors like Leah and Mara make life better for us all. Leah gave more than a donation. She gave us a piece of her heart.

We have so many Leahs in our county, and we are truly thankful to work with all of you to improve the quality of life today and build a strong community for years to come.

Best Regards,

John Biddiscombe, Chairman
Cynthia Clegg, President & CEO

Avery Leopoldino visited Mara Kelley (l) and Leah Wysocki (r) at Old Saybrook Middle School

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**John Biddiscombe elected Chairman of the CFMC Board of Directors**

John Biddiscombe set an example of organizational excellence during his tenure as Director of Athletics at Wesleyan University. He is now steering the Community Foundation’s Board of Directors with that same standard. Elected Chair at the Community Foundation’s annual meeting, John is no stranger to the work of the Community Foundation and has been a member of the Board since 2006. He served as the Grants Committee Chair for four years, overseeing the rigorous process of evaluating the Community Foundation’s competitive grants applications. He also served as Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee.

The Community Foundation is grateful for John’s dedication and commitment. We know that under his leadership and with his passion for helping the community grow and prosper, 2013 will be a remarkable year of “Helping Good People Do Great Things.”
CFMC WELCOMES TWO COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Community Foundation’s Board of Directors welcomes two new Directors, Marc Levin of Haddam and Middletown and Anna Wasescha of Middletown.

Marc Levin has long been active in Middlesex County. The owner of Malloves Jewelers of Middletown, Marc is a founding member of the Council of Business Partners at the Community Foundation. Marc and his fellow business leaders on the Council of Business Partners have been instrumental in the development and implementation of the “No Bully Zone” program at Keigwin and Woodrow Wilson Schools in Middletown. The anti-bullying program principles were integrated into Oddfellow’s production “Snow Angel” in 2012. Prior to his election to CFMC’s Board of Directors, Marc was involved in many professional and community activities, including serving on the Board of Directors of the Xavier High School Alumni Association, the Connecticut Jewelers Business District Association, and Rushford, a Hartford Healthcare Partner. Marc will continue to serve on the Council of Business Partners and will also serve on the Community Foundation’s Development Committee.

Anna Wasescha has had a varied and interesting career that has taken her all around the world, from St. Paul, Minnesota to Beijing, China. In 2011, she made Connecticut her home to serve as president of Middlesex Community College. Prior to this appointment, she served as Special Assistant to the President of the Minnesota State Community and Technical College System at Fergus Falls. Anna has always been dedicated to serving her community. She was the Founder and Director of Farm in the City in St. Paul, a garden-based educational and cultural program for children and a supplemental English language program for new Americans. Anna will continue to serve on the Community Foundation’s Development Committee.

CFMC RECOGNIZES JANICE ATKESON FOR HER SERVICE

After seven years of dedicated service, Janice Atkeson stepped down from the Board of Directors in December 2012. While on the Board, Janice brought her financial expertise and management experience to the committees she served on and provided important insights as the Community Foundation continued to grow and expand its services. She chaired the Strategic Planning Committee, developing a five-year strategic plan. The Community Foundation implemented and has worked diligently to achieve the goals set forth in that plan. Janice also chaired the Organizational and Nominating Committee, providing exceptional oversight with fellow volunteers and identifying community members for Board and Committee service.

Though Janice will be sorely missed, the Community Foundation is grateful for her dedication to the Community Foundation, her commitment to Middlesex County, and her willingness to share her time and talent on behalf of so many.

A LOVE OF MUSIC AND A LEGACY CARRIED ON

Carolyn Greenleaf knew that music was magic, that music captured our hearts and fed our souls. Her friends felt that she was magical and unique, and when she passed away in 2008, they established the Carolyn Greenleaf Memorial Fund to honor her dedication to music education and to young people.

An award is given each semester to a high school junior or senior who demonstrates exceptional musical ability and motivation, and the award provides a semester of private lessons at the Community Music School in Centerbrook. The selection committee is pleased to announce that violinist Jenna Wilson is the recipient of the Spring 2013 Carolyn Greenleaf Music Award.

Jenna is a student of Martha Herrle, violin teacher and concertmaster of the CMS String Ensemble. A senior at East Lyme High School, Jenna plays in the school orchestra. She also performs as a volunteer for various nursing homes and senior centers. She has received several awards for her musical achievement, both at East Lyme High School and the Community Music School.

The Carolyn Greenleaf Memorial Music Award is open to students of Middlesex County and the Lymes and is awarded each semester. It is entirely based on merit and is the only such award at the Community Music School. The application may be downloaded from the websites of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County (www.middlesexcountycf.org) and the Community Music School (www.community-music-school.org).
The Board of Directors, 15th Anniversary Committee, and staff of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who made our anniversary celebration truly a night to remember. We are grateful for the generous support of our sponsors, patrons, benefactors, and friends – you are all “Good People Doing Great Things for Middlesex County.”

**CFMC philanthropy award**

Herb and Sherry Clark were honored at the Community Foundation’s 15th Anniversary Celebration with the first CFMC philanthropy award. Herb and Sherry were recognized for their longstanding spirit of giving, their extraordinary commitment to helping others throughout Middlesex County, and their leadership in promoting philanthropy each and every day. In further recognition of their lifelong commitment to Middlesex County and the Community Foundation, the award hereafter will be known as the Herb and Sherry Clark Philanthropy Award at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County.
Marcia Kalayjian – Leading with Passion. Leading with Impeccable Style.

Marcia Kalayjian epitomizes “Good People Doing Great Things.” With boundless energy, enthusiasm, and charm, Marcia led the Community Foundation for two years as Board Chairman, capping off her chairmanship with the Community Foundation's 15th anniversary year. Marcia, as everyone knows, has a heart of gold and a depth of commitment to Middlesex County which cannot be measured. Thanks to her vision, the Community Foundation entered its 15th anniversary year with plans to build the endowment through a “Grow the Foundation” campaign along with an initiative to rebrand the Community Foundation which included establishing a new logo, new name, new website, and new outreach collateral. Marcia achieved every goal she set with her unfailing energy and effervescent smile.

We are indeed grateful for her leadership as chairman and for her continued guidance as chair of the Community Foundation’s Governance Committee. A simple and hearty “THANK YOU,” Marcia. You inspire us all. You truly are a “GREAT Person Doing Great Things.”
William and Mary Tomc Memorial Fund  Continued From Page 1

participate in the whole process, from the idea through to the implementation of the fund. Together the family chose to support the organization that helped Rich and Joan carry on a family tradition of a faith-based education and provided a strong foundation for Dana and Jamie to build on for the future.

“My parents taught us many life lessons—close family ties, the value of education, saving for the future—but perhaps the most enduring is to be generous and to give help where help is needed,” Rich Tomc explained. “The Memorial Fund established in my parents’ honor anchors that value in our community. By providing continuity, structure and the assistance of a dedicated staff, the Community Foundation ensures that the Fund will carry my parents’ legacy far into the future.”

Family. Education. Hard Work. Giving Back. William and Mary Tomc would, indeed, be proud that their lessons were learned, their legacy continues.
much to him. Because Colter loved wrestling, his parents wanted other wrestlers to have all the benefits of the program possible.

Working with the Community Foundation, the Abelys established the Colter Abely Achievement Fund to support the wrestling programs at Middletown High School and Xavier High School, enhancing and supplementing the efforts of the wrestlers and coaches. The Fund will also provide an educational assistance award to a wrestler at each school for study at a college or university.

Colter cared deeply for his friends, his family and his fellow wrestlers. The extent of his influence on those around him continues today, as read in notes and remembrances his parents still receive. Colter’s legacy - mentoring, friendship, teamwork - will continue through Colter's Fund, and Colter’s life lessons will continue at Middletown High School and Xavier High School for years to come.

“We knew we wanted to do something. We knew we wanted to continue the positive impact Colter had on so many kids. We also knew we wanted to touch as many people as possible. We just didn’t know how to do that. Ed Lang listened to what we wanted and immediately connected us with the Community Foundation. He reassured us that this organization would understand what we wanted to do, the legacy we wanted to create, and help us do so much for the people and the school Colter loved so deeply.”

-- Brian and Chaleen Abely

**INVESTING IN THE COMMUNITY**

Thanks to our donors, CFMC reaches new goal in grant awards in 2012

Thanks to your generosity, the Community Foundation of Middlesex County approved over $530,000 in grants in 2012, including thirty-four (34) grants awarded through the 2012-2013 competitive cycle.

Your commitment to the quality of life in Middlesex County ensures that good things continue to happen in our region through our nonprofit organizations: libraries offer improved services to the community; our youth have access to peer meditation training; community gardens grow healthy and organic foods for our food pantries; historical societies preserve our towns’ past for the future; families receive professional services supporting mental and educational services for children with autism; and so much more.

You, our donors, working with our grant making partners - River View Cemetery, the Ann T. D’Addario Family Foundation, and Connecticut Humanities, provide the necessary funding to “Help Good People Do Great Things.” We - and the entire community - are grateful for your support.

Organizations awarded funding through the 2012-2013 competitive grants cycle:

- Adelbrook Behavioral and Development Services
- Bushy Hill Nature Center
- Chester Historical Society
- Columbus House, Inc
- Community Music School
- Common Good Gardens, Inc.
- Connecticut Land Conservation Council
- Connecticut River Museum
- Durham Middlefield Youth and Family Services
- Durham Public Library
- Essex Historical Society
- Essex Land Trust
- Greater Middletown Chorale
- High Hopes Therapeutic Riding
- Henry Carter Hull Library
- Kiwanis Foundation of Middletown, Inc.
- MARC Community Resources
- Mattabesett Audubon Society
- Middletown Public Schools
- Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation
- Mount Saint John
- Middlesex Coalition for Children
- Middlesex Habitat for Humanity of Connecticut
- Middlesex Hospital, Family Advocacy Program
- Middlesex County Coalition on Housing and Homelessness
- NEAR, Inc.
- Buttonwood Tree
- Rushford Center
- Russell Library
- Ryan Woods Autism Foundation Center, Inc.
- Sail Connecticut Access Program
- Salt Marsh Opera
- Valley Shore YMCA
- Wesleyan University
- YMCA of Northern Middlesex County
The charitable organizations you support touch the future. They will be creating your vision for a better world long after your lifetime. Make a plan today so their work, and the lives they touch, can be your legacy.

Prepare a will, and include a gift for the charities that have made a difference in your life or the life of someone you love.

Donate a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your assets, including stocks, bonds, CDs, or other property.

Name your favorite charity as the beneficiary of your IRA, pension plan, or insurance policy.

Honor deserving friends and remember loved ones with memorial gifts.

Community Foundation of Middlesex Foundation welcomes conversations with good people who want to leave a legacy. Call us at 860.347.0025.

There’s no end to the good YOU can do.

Thank You

Together we improve the arts; cultural and heritage programs; educational activities; environmental conditions; and health and human services.

Together we make a stronger, healthier, more vibrant Middlesex County.

Together we Live Local ... Give Local ... together we are Community Philanthropy.

The Live Local Give Local Fund at the Community Foundation has a tremendous impact in our community every year - 100% of the proceeds donated annually to this fund are awarded to area nonprofits.

The Community Foundation has a safe, easy way for you to donate by credit card.

Visit us at
www.MiddlesexCountyCF.org