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## Congratulations to the outstanding 2021 Celebration of Success honorees:

*Community Leader:* Jacque Williams, Jacque Williams  
Entertainment

*Business Leader:* Five Points Center for the Visual Arts, Inc.  
*Quality of Life:* Charlotte Hungerford Hospital a Hartford  
HealthCare Partner and Nuvance Health-  
Sharon Hospital



The honorees have touched thousands of people through their efforts to make this a greater place in which to live and work. In their own unique way, each has:

Strengthened our region  
Made us healthier in mind, body and soul  
Cared for others  
Provided the boost to  
keep us going  
Uplifted our spirit with art and music  
Answered a critical need during a  
critical period  
Rejected negativity  
Responded to the needs of the downtrodden  
Opened doors for new experiences  
Ensured the very best for the Northwest  
Connecticut corner and beyond  
Personified the essence of business giving back  
Developed new community partnerships  
Inspired us to become involved  
Lent a helping hand  
Created awareness of our neighbors in need  
Warmed our hearts and minds  
Displayed diplomacy, leadership and  
compassion  
Earned our respect and admiration  
Explored new opportunities and resources  
Generated brighter, happier and healthier  
neighborhoods  
Broadened our vision and horizons



Please join us in celebrating these worthy recipients during a special party at The Inn at Mount Pleasant on Wednesday, July 28th from 5pm to 7pm.

*Upcoming***CHAMBER ZOOM EVENTS**

June 1 Small Business Council- 8 AM  
 June 2 WOW Advisory Committee- 8:30 AM  
 June 3 Membership Services Committee- 8 AM  
 June 8 Leads IV \*NEW Leads Group\*- 8 AM (Contact  
 Lauren Zordan to Join)  
 June 9 Leads II- 8 AM  
 June 10 Government Relations Committee- 8 AM  
 June 10 Leads III- 9 AM

June 14 Leads I- 12 PM  
 June 15 Insurance Committee- 8 AM  
 June 16 Health Council- 8 AM  
 June 17 Restaurant & Retail Peer Group- 10 AM  
 June 22 Business w/ Breakfast- 8 AM  
 June 23 Leads II- 8 AM  
 June 24 Board of Directors Meeting- 8 AM  
 June 28 Leads I- 12 PM

*Save the Date*

**Celebration of Success** – Wednesday, July 28th,  
 5:00pm – 7:00pm | The Inn at Mount Pleasant


**25 Days of Hope for the Holidays**  
 FM 97.3 WZBG and the Chamber  
 December

**WOW Forum – Hybrid**  
 Friday, October 1st, 8 AM | The Warner Theatre

## We've Got Business Banking

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## CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS: ABOUT THE NOMINEES

Jacque Anthony Williams hails from Dayton, Ohio. He was born in Hamilton, Ohio. Jacque is the only child of Mary Lucinda Williams (Mai Mai) and U.S. Air Force Msgt Jimmie (J.J). Johnson. Jacque grew up in the Air Force at Wright Patterson Air Force Base and was educated in the Mad River School District. Jacque attended Walter E. Stebbins and graduated from Trotwood Madison High School.

Jacque attended Sinclair Community College and the University of Dayton where he majored in Business Education and minored in Music Theatre. Jacque was very active in Community theatre and landed roles in many college and community theatre productions. Jacque started his professional pursuits in a research project for the N.C.R. corporation called "Operation San Francisco" which was a test market program to evaluate the effectiveness of telemarketing to residential and commercial prospects. Jacque states that the experience prepared him appropriately on how to accept rejection. "At least on the telephone people couldn't see the look on my face when prospects told me 'NO!!'" Jacque started utilizing the communication skills he was learning and worked with the local Chamber in Dayton to build relationships, network and get a better understanding of how small business works. So Jacque decided to utilize what he learned and take his talents to the Big Apple to work with B.M.I. (Broadcast Music Inc) to start his music publishing company and continue networking with industry stakeholders. Around that time, there were conversations about New Haven and the music scene happening in the Yale creative community. Jacque relocated to New Haven and started performing, and producing with many of the artists in the community and started to get his name out in the Connecticut music scene as a singer/songwriter producer and performer. One of the artists Jacque worked with was a Hart School of Music graduate and invited Jacque to move to this milltown in the N.W. Hills of Connecticut that was transitioning into an arts & culture destination. It was a great move and allowed Jacque to continue his work in New York City being located in the "90 minute market" of the N.W. Hills of Torrington Connecticut.

Jacque was very heartened by the reception that he received when he relocated to Torrington. "I had to make a few changes in my business plan to adapt to the changes that



were taking place in the industry but, I did not plan on the warmth and friendliness that the Torrington Community demonstrated to me when I decided to make my home here." That was over 25 years ago. Since that time Jacque has volunteered countless hours in helping forge many of the initiatives that Torrington has created. In 2009 Jacque was asked to serve on the newly formed Torrington Arts & Culture Commission aka A.C.T. Jacque was instrumental in helping the arts & culture commission become relevant downtown and building the arts as an economic engine in Torrington and throughout N.W. Connecticut. Jacque

co-chaired the commission and also chaired the "Artspace Initiative" which is now Five Points Center For The Visual Arts. Jacque also coordinated the entertainment for Main Street Market Place which was recognized by the Connecticut Office of the Arts in 2012 as a "Main Street Project" award recipient. Jacque was also asked to serve on the "Superintendent's Curriculum Advisory Committee" under former school Superintendent Chris Leone. In 2016 Jacque was unanimously elected to serve on the N.W. Connecticut's area Chamber Of Commerce. In 2017 Jacque served as a

committee member on the "Working Cities Challenge." This exercise was developed by the Boston Federal Reserve as a way for cities to come up with innovative ways that included inclusion and diversification to meet and overcome demographic changes that are taking place in many cities across the country.

Jacque currently works as an on-air personality 3 days a week at local Torrington community radio station W.A.P.J. (105.1 89.9 streaming worldwide [wapj.org](http://wapj.org)) Jacque has been with the radio station for 10 years and his show the "Feel Good Show" airs Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am until noon. Jacque also hosts the 20 year long running cable access tv show "City Views" which airs on local cable access Altice channel 5 for those living in Torrington and Litchfield County. Jacque is the co-founder of "Culture 4 A Cause" a non-profit whose mission is to build community through music & the arts. Jacque's company Jacque Williams Entertainment specializes in weddings and special events. Jacque has been selected as the new chairman of the gov't relations committee. He is in the process of launching his new podcast "Jacque Williams is M.A.D....Making a Difference" on or around the 4th of July. The podcast will focus on the stakeholders in our region and selling the Torrington narrative to new audiences developed in the state and throughout the country!!

*(Continued on next page)*



## CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS: *(Continued)*

### Five Points Arts

**Mission:** to champion and nurture artists at all stages of their careers and to empower a diverse community through the presentation of inspiring exhibitions and educational initiatives.

#### The Gallery

Five Points grew out of the Torrington Arts and Culture Commission's 2012 initiative, Art Space Torrington, a temporary 840 square foot summer storefront gallery located in the heart of Torrington's historic downtown district. The success of the summer initiative led to the founding of Five Points Gallery, a permanent non-profit 501(c)(3) visual arts organization dedicated to the belief that contemporary art is a vital component of human understanding. In 2013, the new gallery, named after its location at the five-point intersection in the heart of downtown Torrington, expanded to an adjacent storefront creating a contiguous

3800 square foot space composed of three beautifully renovated galleries. The Gallery mounts new exhibits every six weeks showcasing professional regional, national and international visual artists. Since its opening, the Gallery has exhibited over 800 artists, and boasts artists' submissions from around the globe including China, Russia, Japan, Israel, Greece, England, Denmark, Germany, France, and

49 states in the US. The guest book is similarly impressive. Five Points Gallery's success has become symbolic of Torrington's rebirth as an arts destination. The innovative curatorial stance and commitment to excellence have made the Five Points Gallery one of Connecticut's most sought-after exhibition spaces. Art New England has lauded Five Points Gallery as "One of 4 New England Galleries Worth the Drive."

#### The Launchpad

In answer to the growing needs of art school graduates, and to encourage the cross pollination of ideas, The Launchpad, a strategic partnership with Hartford Art School, University of Hartford was formed in 2016. Emerging artists who have been severed from the umbilical connection of guidance, direction, community and art facilities found in a degree program, often face an uncertain future that, for the most part, has to be negotiated independently. Often working in their parents' basements or garages, many promising young artists find themselves isolated without intellectual and creative

stimulation. The Launchpad program offers participants access to affordable shared studio spaces above Five Points Gallery, a serious arts community, mentorship, exhibition and gallery management opportunities, as well as a biennial exhibition in Five Points Gallery.

#### The Annex

After a complete renovation, The Annex, a non-juried first come first served community pop-up gallery opened its doors in 2017. The Annex offers Launchpad artists the experience of managing a professional gallery space, adding business experience and community relations to their resumes. The Annex is available to regional artists and artisans and provides an affordable professional space to showcase their work. Since its opening, The Annex has exhibited more than 400 local and regional artists and artisans. The Annex hosts the annual Draw-A-Thon, juried shows, school groups and other organizations.



#### The Art Center

In June of 2020 after more than two years of negotiation, Five Points finalized the purchase of the former University of Connecticut Torrington Regional campus. Located 4 miles from downtown Torrington and two hours from New York and Boston, the property includes a 30,000 square foot building and 90 acres of land. When the campus opportunity came to Five Points' attention in 2018

– Judith McElhone acted. "This came out of left field and it was so right to continue our mission to support artists and the community, and to give artists and community members the equipment, facilities and support they need to make their art." Envisioned as a dynamic fulcrum for cutting edge exploration and community driven activity, Five Points is in the process of transforming the property into a world-class art center the likes of which have not been seen before in Northwest Connecticut. Connecting emerging artists with recognized established artists will be a crucial part of the new center, namely through the Lynchpin Program, a think tank through which artists can share ideas and create thought provoking innovative art. When the Center is fully operational artists will have access to workspaces equipped for Printmaking, Alternative Photograph Processing, Ceramics, Digital Art, Sculpture, Painting, Drawing and 3-D fabrication. The 245-seat auditorium will offer artist talks and documentaries. Visitors will be able to

*(Continued on next page)*

**CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS: (Continued)**

enroll in workshops, drop their kids off at the Children's Lab, enjoy a snack from the Café, explore the library with over 1000 publications, browse the gift shop, meditate in the Courtyard Sensory Garden, walk the Art Park's paths and trails (with four legged friends), create, explore, relax and learn!

**Five Points Arts** has significantly contributed to the revitalization of Torrington through the establishment of the Five Points Gallery as a premier art venue in Connecticut. Art enthusiasts are drawn to the region from all over the United States and nine countries. The Art Center is a transformative

multi-year project that will further the positive impact of the arts in this area. The initiative has already drawn collaborative interest from the University of Hartford, Parsons, Rhode Island School of Design and other colleges and universities, and organizations.

Supporting arts, culture and tourism is a cornerstone of Northwest Connecticut's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Art Center will attract young people to the region, create jobs, and strengthen Northwest Connecticut's identity as a center for arts innovation.

### This year's Celebration of Success Quality of Life Award recipient

Thank you to **Charlotte Hungerford Hospital a Hartford HealthCare Partner** and **Nuvance Health—Sharon Hospital** for all you have done in the past year.

#### CHH MOBILE VACCINE CLINIC

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS VACCINATION  
OUTREACH PROGRAM NW REGION – Hartford  
HealthCare and the NW Chamber of Commerce

A full economic recovery requires an immune workforce and consumer-base. To this end, and to continue increasing vaccine uptake, distribution and dispensing efforts must become more mobile and flexible, outreach and education efforts must be more tailored, and partnerships between and among employers and business organizations with health care providers must be taken to the next level.



By combining forces, Hartford HealthCare and the NW Chamber of Commerce has organized a membership vaccine outreach program. All Chamber members will be offered an opportunity to request vaccinations for their employees, and depending on demand, can arrange on-site vaccinations, participate in near-by mobile vaccination sites, or arrange clinic access with reserved appointment times for their workforce.

Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, a partner of Hartford HealthCare, has set up a mobile team of clinicians and have eliminated registration and appointment hassles many have

encountered to date. As requests from Chamber Members are received, we will schedule our mobile team with an emphasis on arranging as many on-site vaccinations as possible. Secondly, in some cases a near-by central mobile vaccine distribution site will be established to which several businesses can participate will be arranged such as in an industrial park. Finally, the option of priority appointments at fixed clinics sites in Torrington can be arranged.

For more information, and to schedule a clinic, please call Pam Tino at the CHH Business Vaccine Registration Line at 860-496-6725.

*Premier*

## MEMBERS

Brandywine Living at Litchfield  
Chatterley's Banquet Facility  
Commercial Sewing, Inc.  
Eversource Energy  
Keystone Place at Newbury Brook  
Litchfield Woods Health Care Center  
Seitz LLC  
Systems Support Group  
T&M Building Company, Inc.  
and Torrington Downtown Partners  
UCE Fine Builders  
Valerie Manor  
Webster Bank

## Corporate PARTNERS

### SHARON HOSPITAL EARNS PRIMARY STROKE CENTER CERTIFICATION FROM THE JOINT COMMISSION

SHARON, Connecticut — Sharon Hospital has earned its initial Primary Stroke Center Certification from The Joint Commission in collaboration with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. The Gold Seal of Approval® demonstrates Sharon Hospital's commitment to meeting rigorous standards of care for stroke patients.

During a thorough, virtual review, a Joint Commission certification team evaluated Sharon Hospital's stroke program including diagnostic and treatment protocols, support services for patients and caregivers, and continuous clinical performance improvement measures. The independent reviewers determined that Sharon Hospital consistently achieves standards of care — such as safety, time to treat and patient education upon discharge from hospital — resulting in improved outcomes for stroke patients.



“As a designated Primary Stroke Center, our community can rest-assured knowing Sharon Hospital is at the forefront of rapid and effective stroke care,” said Dr. Mark Hirko, president, Putnam Hospital and Sharon Hospital, part of Nuvance Health. “Our dedicated doctors, nurses, therapists and many more specialists and staff continually incorporate the latest treatments and care guidelines into our stroke program to optimize outcomes for patients.”

“Stroke is a leading cause of death in the United States and a major cause of serious disability for adults. Effectively and quickly treating stroke lowers the risk of someone



experiencing long-term disability or death,” said [Dr. Paul Wright](#), senior vice president and system chair of the Neuroscience Institute at Nuvance Health. “Primary Stroke Certification from The Joint Commission demonstrates how Sharon Hospital is well-equipped to provide specialized stroke care when time to treat is critical.”

#### B.E.F.A.S.T when it comes to stroke

The risk of brain damage or death increases the longer a stroke goes untreated. Stroke is more common in individuals age 65 and older, although anyone at any age can have a stroke. Sudden onset of any of these symptoms could mean stroke, so B.E.F.A.S.T and call 9-1-1 for help:

- Balance: Loss of balance or coordination, dizziness
- Eyes: Trouble seeing out of one or both eyes
- Face: Facial weakness, uneven smile
- Arms: Unable to lift both arms evenly, numbness, weakness
- Speech: Difficulty speaking, slurred speech
- Time: Call 9-1-1

Nuvance Health's Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital in Connecticut and Vassar Brothers Medical Center in New York have all earned Primary Stroke Center Certification from the Joint Commission. [Learn more about stroke services at Nuvance Health.](#)

Picture (attached) Left to Right: Dr. Mark K. Hirko, Sharon Hospital president; Jennifer Maranzano, quality coordinator; Dawn Woodruff, director of patient care services; Dr. Mark Marshall, vice president of medical affairs; Melissa Braislin, stroke coordinator and director, cardiac rehab and rehabilitation services; Dr. Jean-Carlos Jimenez, hospitalist

The Joint Commission aims to continuously improve healthcare for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating healthcare organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value.

#### CONTACT

Amy Forni, Manager, Public Relations  
(203) 739-7478 | [Amy.Forni@nuvancehealth.org](mailto:Amy.Forni@nuvancehealth.org)



## Corporate PARTNERS



**SALISBURY BANK**  
enriching.

### **AIDAN GILLIGAN OF SALISBURY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY IS SELECTED TO RECEIVE 2021 NEW LEADERS IN BANKING AWARD**

Lakeville, CT – Aidan Gilligan, Vice President, Commercial Loan Officer at Salisbury Bank and Trust Company has been selected to receive the New Leaders in Banking Award.

Over the last few months, the Connecticut Bankers Association (CBA) and Connecticut Banking magazine asked bankers throughout Connecticut to nominate their peers for the leadership award. Nominees must work at a CBA Member Bank, be an outstanding employee, manager, or business leader, and be making a notable impact within their bank and community.



*Aidan Gilligan*

The CBA received a number of nominations, which were vetted by an independent panel of judges, none of whom are active bankers or staff members of the Connecticut Bankers Association. Aidan, along with 13 other finalists, will be honored at the New Leaders In Banking Awards Banquet at Mohegan Sun on Thursday, June 10th.

“Congratulations to Aidan on winning this award!” said Richard J. Cantele, Jr., President and CEO. “His positive attitude, professionalism, customer service, and insatiable desire to learn have been identified as some of his strongest attributes, and he continues to make an impact within the bank and community.”

Salisbury Bank is a full-service community bank headquartered in Lakeville, Connecticut and presently operates full service branches in Canaan, Lakeville, Salisbury, and Sharon, Connecticut; Great Barrington, Sheffield, and

*Corporate*

## **PARTNERS**

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Thomaston Savings Bank  
Torrington Savings Bank  
Union Savings Bank

South Egremont, Massachusetts; as well as Dover Plains, Fishkill, Millerton, New Paltz, Newburgh, Poughkeepsie, and Red Oaks Mill, New York. The Bank has been serving families and businesses for over 170 years and offers a full range of consumer and business banking products and services as well as trust and investment services.

## Corporate PARTNERS

### CHH AND TORRINGTON LIONS CLUB LOW VISION CENTER NOW AT SKY TOP PLAZA OFFERS HELP TO PATIENTS WITH SIGHT LIMITATIONS

TORRINGTON, Conn. Are you or someone you know experiencing the challenges of low vision? Charlotte Hungerford Hospital and the Lions Club Low Vision Centers of Hartford and Litchfield counties partner together to help by provide free medical and financial support to those affected by assessing their sight limitations.

The Lions Low Vision Center is now located at the Hartford HealthCare Rehabilitation Network office at the Sky Top Plaza, 1012 East Main Street in Torrington. The service is provided by appointment by Registered Occupational Therapist, Michelle Whitford, who has extensive training in low vision diagnoses and treatment.



“Low vision affects over two thirds of adults over 65 years of age. It’s our goal to ensure that older adults with low vision are able to maintain their independence and experience quality of life.” Said Michelle Whitford.

Macular degeneration, glaucoma, history of stroke or Diabetes, are the most common medical conditions causing low vision. Simple tasks may become more difficult and frustration often occurs with low vision. Although low vision can’t be corrected, there are many ways to make daily tasks easier.

Low vision is a condition that can’t be corrected by medical, surgical intervention or by eyeglasses. It limits an individual’s ability to complete many daily

activities, which may include any of the following examples: reading and signing forms, reading the number on a clock, or difficulties location steps, curbs, or items within one’s home.

“Our hospital is pleased to partner with the Lions as we are inspired by them. The Center is really made possible by their resources and encouragement.” Said Brian Mattiello, VP of Strategy and Community Development at the Hartford HealthCare Northwest Region.

Patients begin with an assessment to determine their degree of vision loss and then an individualized plan is created with specific goals focused on providing assistance and improving their quality of life. Strategies are then developed to help people perform daily tasks, at home using tactile and talking products. Individuals are educated on availability of assistance technologies and learn to use their remaining vision effectively and live more safely and independently.

Call 860.496.0046 for more information and to schedule appointments.

The service is covered by most insurances which are billed for services provided. The Lions Low Vision Centers supplies any devices a patient may need free of charge and may also assist on the financial hardship situations. A physician referral for Occupational Therapy Low Vision is needed which can be faxed to 860.496.0036.

Tim LeBouthillier  
 Director of Communications and Community Development  
 Charlotte Hungerford Hospital  
 Hartford HealthCare, Northwest Region  
 Planning & Marketing  
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 P: 860.496.6544  
 F: 860.496.6477  
 E: [Tim.LeBouthillier@hhchealth.org](mailto:Tim.LeBouthillier@hhchealth.org)





## Summer Sizzlers!

Despite the upcoming, hopefully relaxing days of summer, be assured that we're still hard at work relieved that soon we all will be "Open for Business". Here are some suggestions to make your summer sizzle healthfully with the Chamber.

***Sell yourself*** and your business by surrounding yourselves with the very best new friends. Join us for the favorite networking events that you will find on our website calendar. It might be the Business After Hours, Leads Groups I, II, III and recently IV or Business With Breakfast. All will benefit you.

***Shape your future*** by getting involved in the coalitions that have been created with your business success in mind such as the Manufacturing Coalition, the Health Council and the Small Business Council. How do we find employees for fill our job openings? Do businesses expect growth? Tell us your story so that together we can make an impact.

***Savor the evening.*** Join us as we celebrate the success of the 2020 Celebration of Success honorees: Five Points – Business Leader; Jacque Williams – Community Leader; Charlotte Hungerford Hospital a Hartford HealthCare Partner and Sharon Hospital Nuvance Health – Quality of Life Award. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, July 28th from

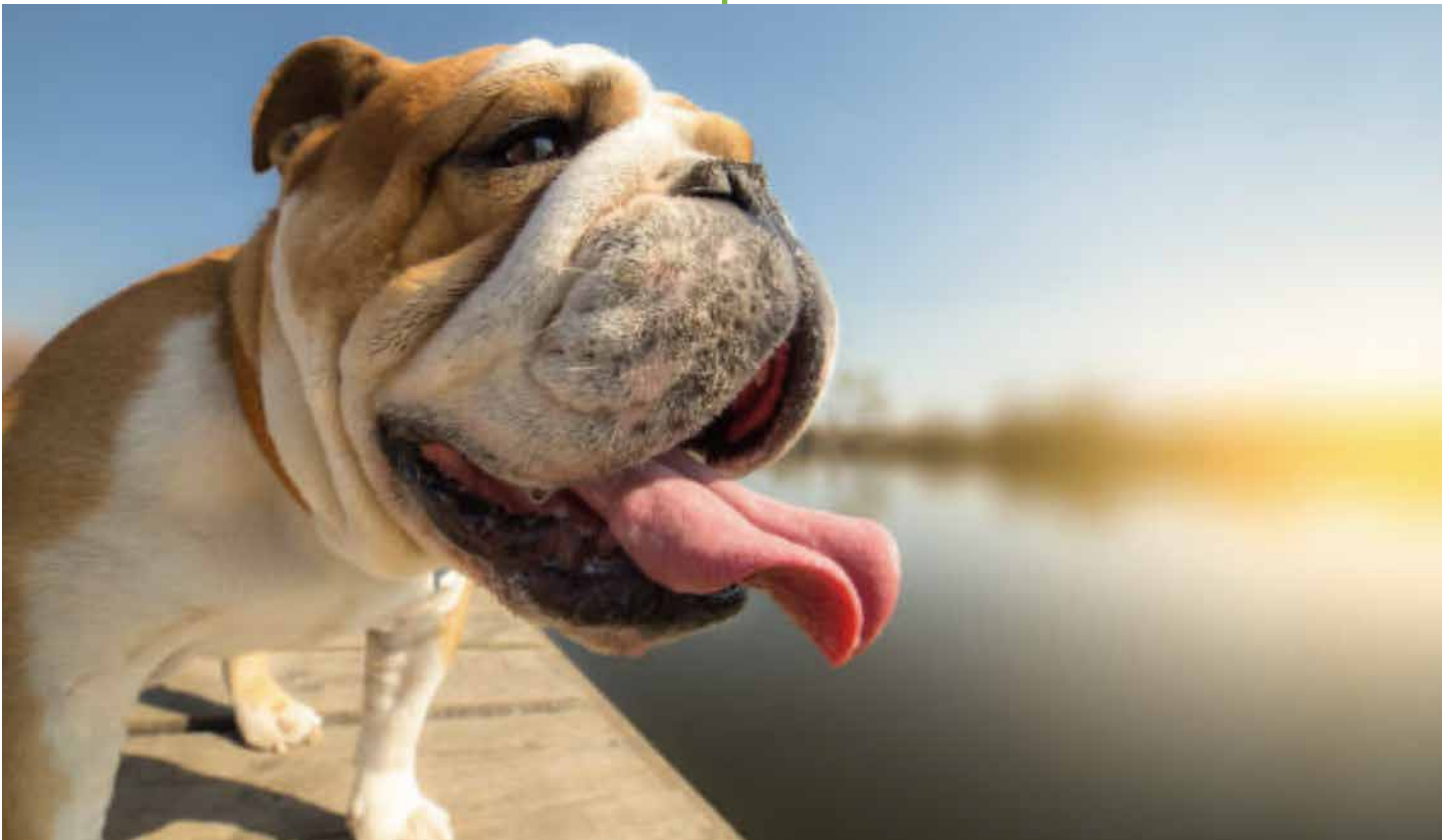
5:00pm – 7:00pm at the Inn at Mount Pleasant to thank these outstanding Leaders.

***Score*** by making an appointment with the outstanding SCORE representatives that volunteer their time and expertise to help you with your business plan and answer any questions you may have regarding your business. Whether it's a legal, financial or technical issue, they can direct you to the right place for assistance. Please take advantage of this resource.

***Stir the pot.*** Let your legislators know your feelings about the bills recently passed. The Government Relations Committee meets on June 10th at 8:00am at the Chamber. What affect do these bills have on your business? Tell them.

***Save the date.*** Register for the 17th Annual WOW! Forum highlighting a host of speakers addressing Mindfulness Matters. It's at the Carole & Ray Neag Performing Arts Center of The Warner Theatre on Friday, October 1st. More info to follow.

***Stick with us!*** Good things are in the works behind the scenes that will make you sizzle with success. You will be happy to know that we are opening our offices following suggested guidelines.



## Chamber Member **IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

### SALCAL REAL ESTATE CONNECTIONS



Charlotte Rossi is a Real Estate Advisor with expertise in the areas of marketing, staging/design, commercial and residential sales and real estate management since 2016.



*Charlotte Rossi*

Meghan McAfee is a Realtor who has the transactional and marketing skills required to succeed in a wide range of markets. Meghan has active real estate licenses and business experience in two states, Connecticut and Georgia, giving her the competitive edge since 2018.



*Meghan McAfee*

They are comfortable working with both buyers and sellers, specializing in the marketing and sales of commercial and residential real estate.

Charlotte has partnered with Meghan to cover the Northwest Corner of CT as representatives for SalCal Real Estate Connections, managing the new Torrington office." Charlotte

and Meghan's mission, as a team, is to develop a lasting relationship with their clients and to provide "white glove" service with their combined expertise.

Charlotte and Meghan will be co-chairs for Leads IV! If you want to join the newest Leads Group, please reach out to Lauren Zordan at [lauren@nwctchamberofcommerce.org](mailto:lauren@nwctchamberofcommerce.org).

### NCCC OFFERS ADVANCED MANUFACTURING SYSTEMS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Winsted – Northwestern Connecticut Community College will offer Advanced Manufacturing Systems training this fall, which will provide students with more than 100 hours of training toward a certified apprentice program. Although restrictions apply, businesses may qualify to receive free training for their employees.



"We are excited to offer this opportunity for students who are looking to further advance their education and training in the field of manufacturing," said Gary Carra, Interim Director of Business, Technology and Industry Training for Northwestern. "We understand the need for this training and are looking forward to working with Connecticut businesses to provide them with this opportunity as well."

Topics to be covered will include: Shop Math, Overview of Blueprint, Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing, Overview of Mechanical Maintenance, and Overview of Industrial Maintenance. Training will be one day a week for a duration of two semesters allowing training to be complete in less than a year. Students who complete the program will receive a certificate issued by Northwestern through the Connecticut College of Technology.

"Completion of the program will also qualify students to enroll in a certified state apprentice program, allowing for further training and advancement opportunities," said Carra.

For more information contact Gary Carra at [gcarra@asnuntuck.edu](mailto:gcarra@asnuntuck.edu).

## From the Desk of Our President & CEO JoAnn Ryan



### GRADUATION THOUGHTS



I had the privilege of representing the Board of Regents for the Connecticut State College and University System last week at the Northwestern Connecticut Community College Celebration. It was held at the Five Points Center for the Visual Arts on their beautiful campus on University Drive. With tears in my eyes, I helped to celebrate the outstanding students who have persevered during this challenging period. They overcame obstacles personally and professionally while continuing their education to reach their goal. Not sure if we could have imagined this unprecedented environment and this uplifting period as we recover. Despite it all, the guidelines for success for these exceptional students and you who reading this article are still relevant.

#### *Set your priorities.*

Education does not end with commencement; rather it is the beginning of a life-long journey that requires setting your goals.

*If you commit to something, complete the task despite the challenges.* Even if it's not your life dream, finish what you start and learn from it. Then move on without burning bridges.

#### *Do what you love, and love what you do.*

You bring to the table many talents from previous jobs and life experiences. Identify the skills and talents you possess and think about how you can transfer them to a job and career that you will love.

#### *Know that life is a roller coaster with highs and lows.*

Build on the positive rather than the negative. Although it is

sometimes hard to fathom, we will recover from this period. It will be a different world, but we will overcome the fear, anxiety, and sadness.

#### *Be persistent.*

Move forward despite challenges holding you back. See the possibilities in the good rather than fear of failure. There are options for all situations and predicaments.

#### *Surround yourselves with positive people.*

Positive relationships are most important in the realm of things. You will find mentors and new best friends along the way but always remember family and the community that guided you.

#### *Share your talents.*

The most precious gift you can give another is your time and attention. It does not matter whether you have little ability or great ability. What counts is what you do with what you have.

Remember that we walk this way only once. Do it with integrity, selflessness, good health, and belief in a higher power. Above all, do it with a sense of humor.

JoAnn Ryan is President & CEO of the NW CT Chamber of Commerce. You can reach her by email:

[joann@nwctchamberofcommerce.org](mailto:joann@nwctchamberofcommerce.org) or phone:  
860-482-6586







## *Upcoming* **CHAMBER ZOOM EVENTS**

- |         |  |         |                                       |
|---------|--|---------|---------------------------------------|
| June 1  | Small Business Council- 8 AM                                     | June 14 | Leads I- 12 PM                        |
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5:00pm – 7:00pm | The Inn at Mount Pleasant

**WOW Forum – Hybrid**  
Friday, October 1st, 8 AM | The Warner Theatre

**25 Days of Hope for the Holidays**  
FM 97.3 WZBG and the Chamber  
December