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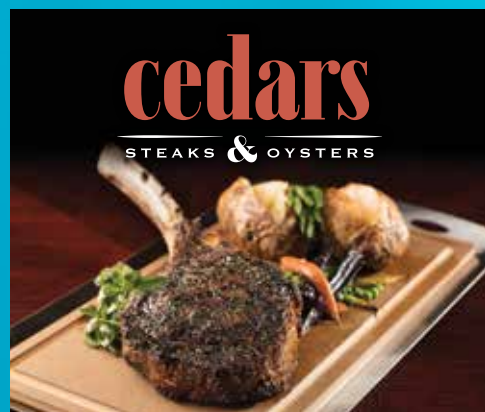
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WELCOME

EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to the final *Seasons of New Haven* of 2019!

In this issue, we examine the holiday season from a point of view many of us don't often get – that of interfaith families. In numerous households throughout our region, and beyond, families are preparing to celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah, for instance, creating their own traditions and memories along the way.

We also take a look at one of the sports of the season – football – with a feature on the Walter Camp Football Foundation. Formed in honor of “the father of American football,” the foundation is preparing for its annual awards weekend in January, but makes a lasting impact in various ways year-round.

You'll also find suggestions for great ways to warm up this winter, with three great steaks and three great soups to try. We take you on a visit to a New Haven tiny home, and also shine a spotlight on an inspiring breast cancer survivor in Madison who has used her experience as a launching pad to help others.

As always, I invite you to join the conversation by connecting with us on social media.

Happy reading,

Cara

Cara Rosner, Editor
cara@seasonsofnewhaven.com

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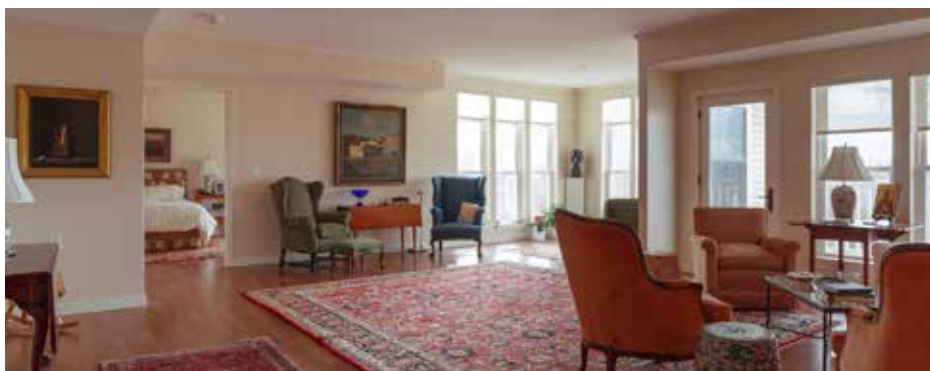
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WINTER 2019 – 2020

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On the cusp of the year 2020, we've come a long way over the past decade - or have we?



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Fitstyle founder
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OUT & ABOUT IN



Holiday Fun for the Family Dec. 14 and 15

A family-friendly holiday classic comes to life when the students of the New Haven Ballet present *The Nutcracker* at 1 and 5 p.m. on Dec. 14 and 15 at the Shubert. Experience Clara's dream world brought to life - the Mouse King, the Kingdom of Sweets, and more - in this holiday favorite. Tickets range from \$25-\$73. **shubert.com**; 247 College St., New Haven.

Photo courtesy of the Shubert Theater, New Haven.

New Haven Tree Lighting

Dec. 5

Ring in the holiday season with the annual Christmas tree lighting on the New Haven Green, which will take place Dec. 5. The event features musical performances, activities for the whole family, and an appearance by Santa Claus.

Fantasy of Lights

Nov. 15 through Dec. 31

A local holiday favorite, Fantasy of Lights presented by Goodwill of Southern New England, will run nightly from Nov. 15 through Dec. 31 at Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven. Hours are 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

GREATER NEW HAVEN

Deck the Halls

Dec. 7 - 15

The Ronald McDonald House of Connecticut will present the 30th Annual Trees of Hope at the Maritime Center in New Haven Dec. 7-15. The event transforms the building's lobby and hallways with more than 140 adorned trees, festive baskets, gifts and table settings - all donated by community members to benefit the families and children of the Ronald McDonald house. The event will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and will extend its hours until 7 p.m. on Dec. 10 and Dec. 12. It also features a holiday boutique, as well as musical performances and visits from Santa. 555 Long Wharf Drive, New Haven; rmhc-ctma.org/event/trees-of-hope.

Get Ready to Laugh

Dec. 13

Comedian Maria Bamford brings her show to College Street Music Hall on Dec. 13. Bamford starred in and executive produced the semi-autobiographical Netflix series "Lady Dynamite," and also stars in the web series "The Maria Bamford Show." Tickets are \$35-40; doors open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 8 p.m. collegestreetmusichall.com; 238 College St., New Haven; 203-867-2000.

A Classic, Reimagined

Dec. 13 - 15

The New Haven Symphony Orchestra presents three performances of "A Christmas Carol in Concert" - Friday, Dec. 13 (7:30-9 p.m. at the John Lyman Center for the Performing Arts at Southern Connecticut State University), Saturday, Dec. 14 (7:30-9 p.m. at the First Congregational Church in Madison), and Sunday, Dec. 15 (3-4:30 p.m. at Chapel of the Holy Spirit, Sacred Heart University in Fairfield). This new and intimate reimagining of Charles Dickens's classic tale will feature Academy Award-nominee and Golden Globe-winner Kathleen Turner in the role of Ebenezer Scrooge, Tony Award-winner James Naughton in the roles of the narrator and three ghosts, and an original soundtrack performed by musicians from the New Haven Symphony Orchestra. Adult tickets start at \$15; kids under 18 are free with the purchase of an adult ticket; college students are \$10 with an ID. newhavensymphony.org.

on Fridays and Saturdays. Drive through beautiful displays that bring the holidays to life with more than 100,000 LED bulbs. The mile-long journey brings guests by 60 animated displays. Ticket proceeds benefit Goodwill of Southern New England. goodwillssne.org/event/fantasy-of-lights-2019.

Art on Display

Through Jan. 12, 2020

Artists Sheila Kaczmarek, Kathy Kane and Maria Morabito, who use different mediums and styles, bring their works together for the exhibit "INTERPLAY," on view through Jan. 12, 2020 at River Street Gallery at Fairhaven Furniture. December hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. fairhaven-furniture.com/riverstgallary; 72 Blatchley Ave., New Haven.

Celebrate the Season

Dec. 2 through Feb. 2, 2020

Embrace the spirit of the season with a visit to the Knights of Columbus Museum, which will exhibit more than 80 Nativity scenes or crèches, icons, and religious artwork through Feb. 2, 2020. The exhibit represents 30 countries across Europe, and includes a signature 120-square-foot crèche from Italy. From Dec. 7 through Feb. 2, the museum also will host its annual Christmas Tree Festival, which will showcase ornaments and decorations made by Connecticut Catholic schoolchildren. The museum is open daily, except Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and admission is free. kofcmuseum.org; One State St., New Haven; 203-865-0400.

Honoring "The King"

Jan. 12, 2020

Area musicians will pay tribute to the Elvis Presley by showcasing their interpretation of his songs on what would have been the singer's 85th birthday, Jan. 12, 2020, at Cafe Nine. The free event, presented by Drinkdeeply and Cygnus Radio, will take place at 3 p.m., as the venue's Sunday Buzz Matinee. cafenine.com; 250 State St., New Haven; 203-789-8281.

CURATING SUCCESS

Stephanie Wiles, the Henry J. Heinz II Director, in the American paintings and sculpture galleries, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven. Photo by Jessica Smolinski



Gender gap narrows as women take the helm at Connecticut art museums

By **AMY J. BARRY**

Until recently, few women were in museum leadership positions in this country, and their salaries lagged behind those of their male counterparts.

The first woman to direct a major art museum in the U.S. was Agnes Mongan, who served as curator and director for Harvard Art Museums from 1969 to 1971. Earlier this year, Kaywin Feldman became the first woman director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC and is only the second woman currently directing one of the nation's top art museums. The other is Anne Pasternak, director of the Brooklyn Museum since 2015.

According to the most recent demographic survey by the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), women in museum leadership positions in North America has increased from less than 50 percent in 2014 to 62 percent in 2018.

The survey also found that there is a preponderance of women in curatorial, conservation, and education roles with the potential of moving up to leadership positions.

Connecticut happily mirrors the national trend, with more women taking the helm of our major museums. Several of these dynamic museum directors spoke to us about how their female perspectives are enhancing and shaping the future of their art institutions.

STEPHANIE WILES YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY NEW HAVEN

In April of 2018, Stephanie Wiles took the reigns of YUAG, the oldest university art museum in the western hemisphere (founded in 1832) from Jock Reynolds, who had been the museum's director for 20 years. Wiles came to Yale with more than 20 years of experience leading college and university art museums, most recently Cornell. She was on the board of the AAMD during this growth period in which women were breaking the glass ceiling and moving into museum director roles.

Wiles, who describes herself as coming from a standard art history Ph.D. and curatorial work in one specific area of drawing and prints, says she's



Becky Beaulieu, director of Old Lyme's Florence Griswold Museum in the Florence Griswold House, built in 1817 as a boarding house for American Impressionist artists.

is interested in implementing and expanding intergenerational and elementary school programs, lectures, and opportunities for community conversations about exhibitions.

A priority for Wiles among the challenges and opportunities at YUAG is developing The Margaret and Angus Wurtele Study Center on Yale's West Campus – a new open-access storage facility containing tens of thousands of art objects – and expanding its access to the public.

She also wants to make sure exhibitions are balanced.

"We have 11 curatorial departments, including ancient and numismatic, so we're not a modern or contemporary or American museum of art," Wiles points out. "I'm excited and committed to expand the scope of exhibitions that reflect all the research we do and the nature of our collections to appeal to many people's interests."

REBEKAH BEAULIEU FLORENCE GRISWOLD MUSEUM OLD LYME

Rebekah Beaulieu became the new director of the Florence Griswold Museum in February 2018 after Jeffrey Anderson retired from the position he held for 40 years. Prior to this appointment, Beaulieu was associate director at Bowdoin College Museum of Art in Brunswick, Maine.

Beaulieu has an M.A. in Art History and Museum Studies, an M.A. in Arts Administration, and a Ph.D. in American and New England Studies.

"It was important to me to foster my knowledge from a scholarly perspective and also to foster tenets of strong leadership, management, strategic planning, and finance," she says. "I interned from age 16 on. I was passionate about being in museums and museum culture."

happy to see the new wave of museum leadership coming from a broad variety of backgrounds and education.

"It's incredibly exciting – not only that it expands the ecosystem of ideas but provides a strength for all of us to be coming to art expertise from different vantage points," she says.

Wiles stresses that in addition to more women coming on board, diversity of all kinds plays an important role in the future of museums. "Our efforts with the younger generation are going to be key to making museums look more like our communities down the line," she says.

One of the things she has found

in particular about women museum directors is that they are excited about mentoring other women.

"I'm proud of the fact that some of the women I've mentored have become museum directors and feel comfortable coming to me to draw on my experience," Wiles says.

Along these lines of expanding communications, she would like to see a network set up in Connecticut where staff can meet their colleagues in similar roles in other museums to talk, share ideas, and problem solve.

As well as interacting with the museum's built-in audience of Yale students and faculty, Wiles

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

WOMEN OF THE WADSWORTH



The historic building of Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art with the Nathan Hale statue in downtown Hartford, Connecticut.

Women play an integral role in the vision and operations of Hartford's Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. Founded in 1842, the Wadsworth is the oldest continuously operating public art museum in the U.S. and is home to a collection of almost 50,000 works of art, spanning 5,000 years. Here are some of the women in key curatorial positions who create and execute the museum's featured and permanent exhibitions.



BRANDY S. CULP

Brandy S. Culp was appointed Richard Koopman Curator of American Decorative Arts in 2017. Before joining the Wadsworth Atheneum, Culp served as curator of Historic Charleston Foundation and was the Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow in the Department of American Art at the Art Institute of Chicago. She has also held positions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Bard Graduate Center. Culp received her Master of Arts degree with an emphasis in American Decorative Arts from the Bard Graduate Center. At the Wadsworth, Culp is currently working on the American art galleries reinstallation, a permanent silver installation, and an exhibition on the material culture of sugar.

WOMEN OF THE WADSWORTH



PATRICIA HICKSON

Patricia Hickson has been the Emily Hall Tremain Curator of Contemporary Art since 2009. She oversees the contemporary art collection and acquisitions, organizes special exhibitions, and leads the MATRIX program – a series of changing contemporary art exhibitions. Hickson previously held curatorial positions at the Des Moines Art Center, Williams College Museum of Art, San Jose Museum of Art, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. She earned a B.A. in Art from Bates College and a M.A. in Art History from Williams College. At the Wadsworth, her exhibition Warhol & Mapplethorpe: Guise & Dolls received popular and critical acclaim.

ERIN MONROE

Erin Monroe joined the Wadsworth in 2007 and

today serves as the Robert H. Schutz, Jr. Associate Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture. She works with an extensive collection ranging from colonial portraiture to American modernism. Monroe was previously a curatorial assistant at the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University. She obtained a B.A. in Art History from Northwestern University and earned her master's degree from Hunter College (CUNY), with a concentration in Modern American Art. Since arriving at the museum, Monroe has curated and co-curated numerous exhibitions, including American Moderns on Paper: Masterworks from the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art (2010), Andrew Wyeth: Looking Beyond (2012), John Trumbull: Visualizing American Independence (2016), and Gorey's Worlds (2018).



LINDA HORVITZ ROTH

Linda Horvitz Roth is Senior Curator and Charles C. and Eleanor Lamont Cunningham Curator of European Decorative Arts. She attended Bowdoin College, earning a B.A. in Art History, and later an M.A. in Art History from University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Roth has been a member of the curatorial department of the Wadsworth since 1980. Since then, she has organized a number of exhibitions, including J. Pierpont Morgan, Collector: European Decorative Arts from the Wadsworth Atheneum (1987); Theater, Dance, and Porcelain in the Eighteenth Century (2004–2005); and Morgan: Mind of the Collector (2017). Roth co-curated the 2015 re-installation of European art at the museum.



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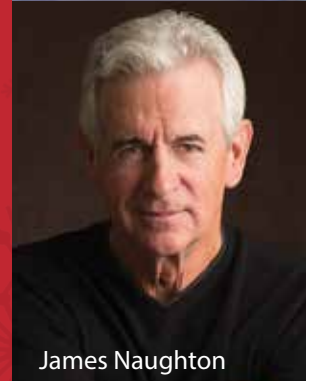
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Kathleen Turner



James Naughton

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Beaulieu says she finds it fascinating to see and be part of this tidal wave of female leadership unfolding in Connecticut museums.

“It’s an interesting combination we sometimes can’t acknowledge: youth and gender,” she says. “I’m 37 years old, which is impressive for a man and concerning for a woman. There are times as a woman that you have to prove yourself more than others. The way I look at it, Miss Florence was female. It’s one part of my character that’s important, but not wholly defining. And I’m lucky to have joined an organization that has a spectrum of ages and male and female representation.”

Thinking about her vision for the museum, Beaulieu says, “When a museum undergoes a leadership change, for the board, staff, and community, it’s an opportunity to reengage and reinvest in an institution. This museum has a strong reputation and relationship with the community and surrounding area.”

Finding new ways for the public to experience the museum’s landscape is high on Beaulieu’s list.

“We’ve always had plein air painting on site,” she says. “We have a whole new visitors’ guide and are looking at future collaborations with organizations focused on sciences and nature, and collaborations with schools to promote the arts with life sciences and the environment, from preschool through college through adult education.”

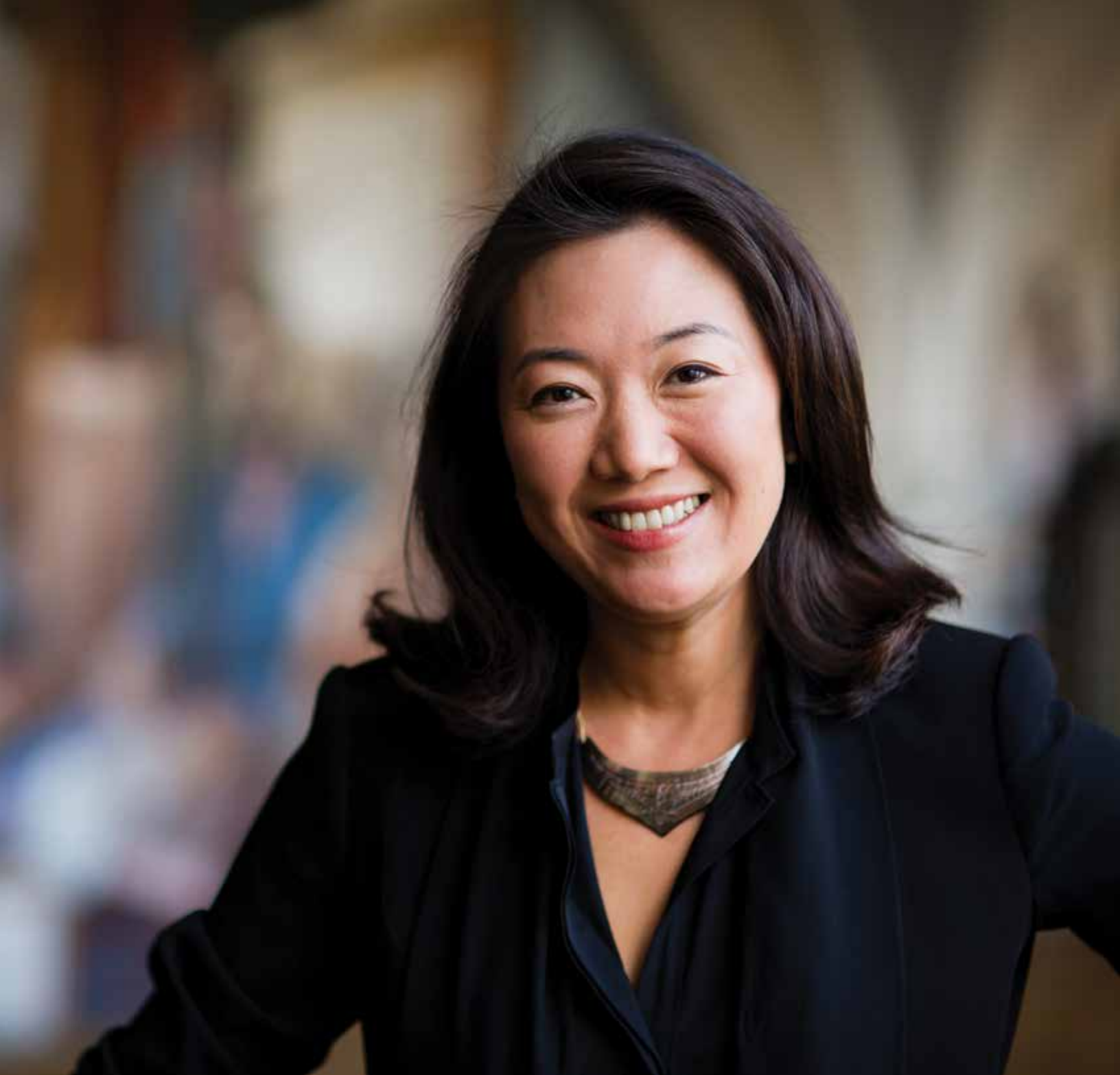
Looking at future exhibitions, she says, “We have a year of contemporary programming, which is unusual for the Florence Griswold. We’re finding ways to continue to hone the work of the Lyme Art Colony, as well as be a steward of contemporary art in Connecticut.

“I’m continuing to find new and exciting ways to use the resources here and find new ones,” Beaulieu says. “And as we transition into a new era here, it’s absolutely vital to the future of the museum.”

Kim
acknowledges
that it
takes both
supportive
women and
men for
women to
thrive in the
art world.



Min Jung Kim is the executive director of the New Britain Museum of American Art, New Britain, Connecticut. It is the oldest museum of American art in the country (founded in 1903). Photo courtesy of New Britain Museum of American Art.



MIN JUNG KIM
NEW BRITAIN MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
(NBMAA)

Min Jung Kim came to NBMAA in mid-2015, becoming the sixth director of the oldest museum of American art in the country (founded in 1903). Before that, she was deputy director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum of Michigan State. And for more than 12 years prior to that, she was program director at the Guggenheim Foundation in New York City.

Overall, Kim says, her personal experience moving through the ranks of the museum world has been very positive.

“I was born and raised in Seoul, South Korea and came to the U.S. to pursue a liberal arts education at Wheaton College,” she says. “As a result, I discovered art history as my major, which led me onto a career path I’ve undertaken for the last 25 years.”

She notes that her options to pursue a career as a woman in Korea were somewhat limited and says, “Coming to the U.S., I was presented with extraordinary opportunities, as



The Yale Center for British Art holds the largest and most comprehensive collection of British art outside the United Kingdom.



Courtney J. Martin (Yale class of '09 PhD.) was appointed director of the Yale Center for British Art in September, following Amy Meyers, who retired at the end of June after a 17-year tenure as director. Martin was previously deputy director and chief curator of New York's Dia Art Foundation. Photo by **Winnie Gier**

long as I remained curious, ambitious, and hardworking.”

Kim acknowledges that it takes both supportive women and men for women to thrive in the art world.

She feels very fortunate to have “amazing female colleagues,” including her deputy director, Michelle Hargrave, who came on board in 2017, and also “incredible men” on her team at NBMAA.

Kim has a crystal-clear vision of where she sees the future of the museum, which she says encompasses “a much more expanded definition of American art – a hemispheric view that includes the U.S., North America, Canada, as well as South America.”


She adds that the museum’s location in New Britain also plays an important role in how she’s developed programs

and exhibitions in the last few years.

“Nearly half of New Britain is comprised of Hispanic and Latinx [residents],” she says. “This kind of diversity is indeed part of the conversation about American art and so, too, is the immigrant experience. As an immigrant myself at the helm of an American art museum, I bring both personally and professionally relevant experience to this conversation.”

Although there are more women these days in high administrative positions, women artists continue to be underrepresented on museum walls, Kim points out, citing that in many permanent U.S. collections, only 23 percent of artists represented are women and only 27 percent of solo exhibitions are devoted to women artists.

Knowing this, and knowing that 2020 celebrates the 100th year of women’s right to vote, Kim is keen to have more women represented in the museum and is committed to showing women artists in all special exhibitions from January through December of 2021. Included will be contemporary American artists Kara Walker, silhouettist; Anni Albers, textile artist; Helen Frankenthaler, abstract expressionist painter; and Yoko Ono, Japanese-American multi-media artist.

“The work we will be exhibiting is by incredibly well-known artists,” Kim says, “showing great diversity of race and ethnicity, as well as in terms of age and medium.” 

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A photograph of a smiling couple standing in front of a blue wall. The woman on the left has dark curly hair and wears glasses and a green top. The man on the right has a beard, glasses, and wears a plaid shirt. Behind them is a large white porthole window showing a warm interior with a lamp. Above the window is a colorful sign that says 'SHALOM YALL' with a star. A string of lights is visible in the top left corner.

FAMILY

EMBRACING TRADITION

For interfaith families, the holiday season
brings many reasons to celebrate

By CARA MCDONOUGH / Photography by TONY BACEWICZ

The words that come to mind when we think of the holidays speak to the joy of the season – and the chaos, too. It's a celebratory, abundant, frantic, merry and, sometimes, stressful time of year.

For people who are religious, the holidays may also serve as a reminder to more deeply reconnect with their faith; there are special services to attend and traditions to honor.

No matter how you mark this time of year, it's safe to say that it's a busy time for most. And for interfaith couples, where each individual comes from a different religious background, the holidays can be a little more complicated as they navigate unfamiliar terrain and make sure all those traditions are equally represented. But the experience often makes this an especially meaningful season for those couples and their families.

A JOYFUL KIND OF BUSY

Alli and Adam Schaefer have been married 12 years and have three children aged 7, 4 and 2. He's Jewish, she's Christian – a Congregationalist – and they're raising their children Jewish. However, the Woodbridge couple agreed on something early on when it came to the winter holidays: celebrating both was important.

They revel in Christmas traditions, including presents under the tree and a visit from Santa, and light the menorah candles for each night of Hanukkah. They put a big emphasis on celebrating with family and attend a yearly lessons and carols service with her family at a church in Boston.

"We have these big extended families, so it gets incredibly busy, and every year we think we are going to streamline it and never do," Alli says. "It's hard to simplify when you celebrate both. Neither of us is willing to give up our portion of the season. We both want to pass on these things to our kids."

For this family, though, it's a joyful kind of busy, and their shared faiths have provided ample opportunities to grow more accepting, open and curious – in faith and beyond.

"I think when you're married outside of your faith, you have to be open to experiencing other traditions, and that makes you open to other people's traditions in general," Alli says.

While they do employ some tactics to quell the general overabundance (Hanukkah gifts are often small, or might be "experiences" rather than tangible presents) their family focuses more on the benefits of combined faiths than the complexities.

"I think for a lot of people, like our children, it gives them a very interesting and full experience," says Alli. "They are equally excited about all these traditions. To them, it's just normal."

They focus on the "giving" aspect of the holidays, including to charity, and on the fun of gathering with loved ones.

There are some practical benefits to their situation, too. For one thing, they don't have to decide whose extended family they're spending Christmas with every year, a decision that other couples might have to make. Plus, they bonded with other family members in similar situations when deciding how to manage the busy season.

"We're so lucky because in both of our families there were already interfaith couples," says Alli, referencing aunts and uncles in the same situation. "We had both grown up with some of the holidays that aren't part of our faith tradition. We've benefited from that because we're not trailblazing in our family and have looked at those couples as role models."

BRINGING FAMILY TOGETHER

For Steph and Brian Slattery, who live in Hamden, having understanding family members plays a big part in their holiday season as well. And being understanding to other family members is a role they both take seriously.

Steph was raised Jewish and still practices, while Brian was raised Catholic and hasn't been to church in decades, although the Catholic faith is incredibly important to his parents.

They're raising their 13-year-old son Jewish, because they agreed that raising him with a faith tradition was important. As far as the holidays are concerned, they celebrate Hanukkah at home, as well as host a Christmas gathering for extended family most years, complete with a Christmas tree.

For the Slatterys, the holidays aren't about perfection or getting the details just right, but instead about cultivating an appreciation of tradition – and throwing in a few new traditions of their own.

Let's take that Christmas tree, for instance. "We don't own any ornaments," says Steph. "So we grab stuff around the house and put it on the tree." The makeshift decorations often included crocheted items that she's crafted.

Like the Schaeferes, they offer small gifts for Hanukkah, making the season a little easier to manage, especially when it and Christmas are close together on the calendar. They don't do gifts from mom and dad under the Christmas tree, but their son gets plenty from relatives who celebrate.

The situation has given each member of the family opportunities to dive deeper, too, learning more about the two faiths practiced in their immediate and extended families. Brian says he's enjoyed getting to know more about Judaism, including during Hanukkah, and his parents invite their grandson to church at Christmas every year, although they never push the issue; his parents leave the decision of whether or not to go up to him.

"I love any holiday that has to do with food and family

Steph and Brian Slattery, who have chosen to follow Judaism, stand in a spot on their porch where their "Shalom Y'all" sign hangs.

together,” Steph says. Her husband wholeheartedly agrees, and they both point out that adopting two sets of traditions has never been a burden. Rather, it’s a reason to bring extra meaning to the season.

Brian says that although he’s “far away” from Catholicism from a spiritual standpoint, “it’s easy for me to see that celebrating the holiday in the proper style is really important to the people we’re inviting over, and therefore it’s important to me.”

He finds a lot that’s culturally similar in the two faiths, especially where the holidays are concerned: “It’s about food and getting together, and a shared sense of tradition and heritage that you identify with.”

Steph points out that, for her, embracing Christmas isn’t about “not being Jewish, it’s about being a good host.”

Plus, she has added reason to embrace a day that’s – simply put – a big deal in this country. “What I love is that it’s become a day that’s not religiously meaningful to me, but that I really look forward to,” she says. (She also points out a logistical benefit: as a pediatrician, it’s a day that she can freely offer to be “on call” in her practice, a gesture other Jewish doctors there happily offer as well).

Their son’s situation is, simply put, “awesome,” she says. “He gets to celebrate everything.”

EXPANDING THEIR HORIZONS

Michelle and Jonathan Helitzer, a couple from Simsbury, are Catholic and Jewish, respectively. They too celebrate the Christian and Jewish holidays together as a family, although in their case, family religion involves being members at a local Catholic Church, St. Catherine of Siena.

For their family, “most Jewish holidays are home-based rather than synagogue-centric,” says Michelle about the way the couple and their children adapt to a busy spiritual life, adding that Christmas and Easter “take center stage” when it comes to the Christian holidays.

Keeping with the theme of most interfaith couples, it seems, they, too, emphasize the cultural and food-centric parts of the season, including latkes at Hanukkah and a traditional Passover meal.

“We love being exposed to one another’s heritages and beliefs,” says Michelle. “It’s educational, affirming and enjoyable.”

LEARNING AND SHARING TRADITIONS

Nagu Kent is Hindu and her husband, Philip, is Jewish. For this Hamden-based couple, the winter holidays are a fairly relaxed affair. They celebrate Hanukkah at home and, when they visit her family in New York, do take time to celebrate a low-key Christmas, enjoying time with loved ones and the chance to give a few gifts, despite the fact that it’s not a holiday they are attached to through their faiths.

She says they concentrate on the Jewish and Hindu high holidays – Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and the Hindu festival of lights, Diwali, which is celebrated each autumn – and that their three sons have been or will be bar mitzvahed. But in general, when it comes to religion, “we just kind of

roll with it,” she says.

They’re in good company: Nagu has two older brothers, one who is married to a Catholic, and one who is married to an Indian woman. So learning and sharing new traditions is natural in this family.

As for the benefits of being an interfaith couple? She laughs, and says her children don’t seem particularly “spiritual,” even with so many faith-based traditions in their lives. They still wish they could get out of attending religious services on the holidays, like most kids.

But learning about one another’s faith is certainly interesting, she says, and she’s happy to live in a community where there are many interfaith couples, so it feels normal for her to attend temple with her husband. “People are very embracing,” she says.

She models that in her own family, too.

“It doesn’t matter what God you pray to,” she tells her children. “God is just there to teach you good things, to give you something to hope for.”

SEEKING SIMILARITIES

Father Michael Whyte, the pastor at St. Catherine of Siena in West Simsbury, says he has interacted with many new and established couples that come from two different faiths. He emphasizes how important it can be to embrace one another’s traditions not only at the holidays, but all throughout the year.


Having children can make this especially important, he says. When parents provide a “legacy of faith” – even when it’s two different faiths – it allows children to choose how they’d like to embrace spirituality in their own lives someday.

This means accepting a dual responsibility, Whyte says: being a proud and passionate representative of your individual faith, while embracing your partner’s fully.

“I’m not saying that you have to accept the beliefs of the other faith, but accept the traditions,” Whyte says.

Because whether it’s family gatherings, putting up a Christmas tree or menorah, or attending church, temple or a mosque, when it comes to religion the truth is, “there are far more similarities than there are differences,” he says. “We all look to a creator. We look to someone who is loving.”

He feels, “We need to focus on our common denominators and move forward from that. We spend so much time on the differences of everything, from the rituals to the theology of our faith, that we forget to see the mortar that puts it all together.”

Celebrating what we all have in common is particularly meaningful during the holidays, he says. It’s a time of year that is – yes – busy and buoyant, but also a period when people tend to look inward, becoming more charitable, generous, empathetic to those around them, and dialed in to what’s most important: “It’s when people try to be really focused on what really matters.” 

Making It Right

A new manufacturing jobs pipeline opens the door to well-paid careers in the industry

By **CAROL LATTER** / Photographed by **STAN GODLEWSKI**

Hassan Touil's journey to build a better life has brought him halfway around the world. He grew up in Morocco, graduating from high school there and studying law in college before suddenly getting the chance of a lifetime – he and his wife, Bouchra Abouzayd, were selected in the immigration lottery to move to the United States.

Touil, whose first language is Arabic and second language is French, had studied Italian in college but didn't speak a word of English. Unwilling to let that barrier stop them from pursuing their dreams, he and Abouzayd jumped at the chance to start a new life and in 2010 settled in central Connecticut, where Touil then 33, enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at Meriden Adult Education.

The following year, Touil landed a job at Radio Frequency Systems in Meriden, where he spent six years, working in assembly, WiFi quality control, and machine repair. But in 2017, the work performed by his department was outsourced to China, and he and his coworkers were laid off.

Undeterred, Touil – who now was the father of two young children under the age of 5 – returned to Meriden Adult Education with assistance from the Department of Labor to improve his English and get ready to return to employment. Hassan's ESL teachers encouraged him to enroll in a program called Transitions, a collaboration between Middlesex Community College and Meriden Adult Education designed to help motivated students prepare for credit or non-credit college studies. While fortifying his literacy and numeracy skills, Hassan was given information about an innovative new jobs training program called "Skill Up for Manufacturing," and applied.

For Touil, the free 5-week course represented yet another incredible opportunity. Students who were accepted into the program would be given the exact type of training requested by local manufacturers, along with direct introductions to those firms. Based on experience with the program, organizers explained that this would almost certainly lead

to a full-time job within a short time frame – all without incurring any student debt.

The manufacturing pipeline initiative or MPI, initially developed by the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board, is now also offered by its sister agency, New Haven-based Workforce Alliance. The goal of the program, dubbed "Skill Up" in New Haven and Middlesex Counties, is to help local manufacturers find skilled workers, and to provide lucrative career opportunities for students willing to undergo the customized training they need to be successful.

For Touil, this new chance to improve his life came with certain conditions. It required him to earn an American GED credential (his Moroccan high school diploma and college studies didn't count), pass an English test (he scored 74) and become even more proficient in math. He started the program this past summer and threw himself into his studies.

It wasn't easy. "You have to work a lot," he says. "You go in at 8 a.m. and you finish at 4 p.m. every single day, like you're working [full time] or training for a job." By day, the students take classes in everything from shop mathematics to metal cutting. At night, says Touil, "you have to go home to work online, [studying subjects] like intro assembly, intro to fasteners, torque, basic tolerance and trade inspections, because you have tests online every second day."

Before graduating from the program with a certificate in NIMS manufacturing (standards set by the National Institute for Metalworking Skills) in August, he and his classmates were given the chance to meet with several manufacturing companies in a job-fair type of setting at the college. Touil made a beeline for the table of Roto Frank of America, a Chester-based manufacturer of window and door hardware, and spoke with HR manager Sylviana Lopez.

"I asked her for [a job at] the company because it is not so far from my home. I was looking for a job that was 15 to 20 minutes from my home to work," he recalls. The interview went well and within a month of graduating, he was hired.

Lopez, who offered all of the students at the meet-and-greet a tour of her company and an opportunity to apply for

a job, says she recalls meeting Touil for the first time. “He was one of the first ones who came to my table and he said, ‘I’m looking for a job – anything that’s open. This is my resume and I would like to go for a tour.’ I remember giving him my card. I said, ‘Call me or send me an email and then we will get you in and at least show you around, until a job comes up.’”

She says Touil did everything right when it came to boosting his employment prospects.

“Of all the participants, he was the first one I received an email from, saying thank you,” she recalls. Although there weren’t any openings at Roto Frank by the time the “Skill Up” program ended, he asked for, and received, a tour and sent a thank you note afterwards. “He kept calling and saying, ‘Hey, I just want to know if there’s [a position] yet. He was very nice, very eager and very interested. I talked to the plant manager and said, ‘We need someone like that.’ And the manager said, ‘Yeah, let’s bring him over.’ And Hassan has been great.”

In fact, Touil was recently selected from among the company’s newest hires to receive forklift training. “We said, ‘Let’s give it to Hassan; he seems very eager to learn and he has very good attendance. He’s a very, very good person,” says Lopez. “He was thrilled when I told him, ‘They want you in this position now because they think that you have potential and that you’ll learn really fast.’ In the area where he works, they were telling me that he was really good from the day he started.”

TOO MANY JOBS, NOT ENOUGH WORKERS

Connecticut has long faced a shortage of qualified workers to fill positions in the state’s manufacturing industry. Four years ago, having realized that this situation would not improve without a targeted effort to address it, the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) applied for and received a three-year, \$6 million U.S. Department of Labor grant to identify unemployed and underemployed job candidates, and offer them specialized training for positions with manufacturers in the region. In return, the EWIB, led by president John Beauregard, promised to fill 400 jobs.

The board worked closely with educational institutions and area manufacturing firms to determine the exact type of training needed and then offer it at no cost to students. The results have exceeded all expectations. Since the pipeline program began, nearly 2,000 participants have been trained at local schools and colleges and placed in jobs. Roughly 200 manufacturers, both large and small, have been hiring through the program.

“That was the intent here – to make sure that not only large employers but smaller and medium employers had a place to turn to for the development of tomorrow’s manufacturing workforce,” Beauregard says.

Since the program started, eastern Connecticut has seen ongoing economic growth, much of it attributed

to an expansion in advanced manufacturing and eastern Connecticut’s “unique ability to find the workforce talent for that sector,” says economist Don Klepper-Smith. “The MPI program has provided a clear and dramatic boost to the economy.” He says in addition to putting more money in people’s pockets, the jobs pipeline has prompted more people to buy homes.

Meanwhile, applicants are streaming into the program, lured by the prospect of a lucrative and interesting career. Because the training curriculum and standards are designed and set by employers, students’ chances of being hired once they graduate are high, even though almost 80% have had no previous manufacturing experience.

With millions in additional funding provided by the state and private sources, the original timeline for the program has been extended. Over the next few years, Beauregard says, Electric Boat plans to spend more than \$800 million on construction projects related to the development of its new Columbia class submarine. “So, obviously, there will be a great need for construction workers.”

Hoping to see this successful model used elsewhere, the board shared its approach with its New Haven counterpart, which launched its first program this past February. New classes will begin in Middletown, New Haven, and Groton in early 2020. (See information box for more details.)

William P. Villano, president and CEO of Workforce Alliance for the south central region of Connecticut, says the “Skill Up” program, offering entry-level training, crams a lot of material into five weeks, noting, “this allows us to train a lot of people very quickly.” He says figures released by the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA), show that there are 8,000 to 10,000 manufacturing positions currently open in Connecticut, and 85% of employers are having a tough time finding the qualified workers they desperately need – or retaining the ones they have. While the sector is slowing down a bit due to concerns about international trade and tariffs, manufacturing led the state in jobs growth in 2018 and 2019.

Meanwhile, Eric Brown, CBIA’s vice president of manufacturing policy and outreach, has been working with his team over the past 18 months to create new initiatives aimed at shifting the already vigorous manufacturing sector into an even higher gear. For instance, a new Connecticut Manufacturers’ Collaborative has been formed to help manufacturers work together to drive positive change.

Brown says the state’s companies are in “a time of transition. It’s a challenge for manufacturers to gain awareness of technologies that might be helpful for them, and to keep up – not just in the state but globally – with the technology associated with manufacturing advancements.”

And he warned that the pace of change isn’t going to change any time soon, except to speed up. “Manufacturers tell us that over the next five years, the advancements are going to be rather dramatic. The industry is going to need higher skilled workers to not only use these technologies



Life has changed for Hassan Touil since he and his wife moved to Connecticut from Morocco in 2010. The couple has two children, aged 6 and 3, and Touil has a great new career, working at Roto Frank of America in Cheshire. He is grateful to the “Skill Up” program and to the team at Meriden Adult Education - Rich, Fred, Paula, Maureen and the office staff - for helping him to succeed.

but to create them, to build them, to service them. It’s going to be a continual upward trend.”

Although the eastern Connecticut pipeline program has been catering largely to Electric Boat and its supply chain, New Haven and Middlesex counties have “a little more diversity in terms of the types of manufacturing that goes on,” says Villano – producing everything from medical devices and aerospace components to specialty lighting and labels. He says the region “has a lot of little small shops but a significant number of them,” as well as larger players like Pratt & Whitney, Sikorsky, Sargent ASSA ABLOY, and Ulbrich.

Based on the latest data, he says, Rosa DeLauro’s Congressional district represents the second largest percentage of manufacturing jobs in the state (24%), second only to the Hartford region at 28%.

The number of available manufacturing jobs available

in Connecticut will only continue to grow as Baby Boomers in the sector retire, a phenomenon that Villano calls “the Silver Tsunami.” The state’s half-dozen manufacturing associations have been scrambling to find replacement workers, with older workers who delayed retirement when the Great Recession hit in 2008 now finally leaving their careers.

That spells fresh opportunity for a newer generation, he says.

Applicants for the “Skill Up” program must be at least 18 years old, reside in Connecticut, have a high school diploma or GED, and be eligible to work in the U.S. After applying online at www.workforcealliance.biz/skillup, applicants are contacted, undergo an orientation, and take a two- to three-hour test in subjects like shop math, spatial reasoning and measurement.

Roughly 60% of the people who apply to “Skill Up”

are in the 25 to 45 age range, with just 15% in 18 to 24 age range, although both young and middle-aged applicants are welcome.

“It’s surprising to see the number of people who are over 45 who are looking to get into this program, and there’s an increasing number of women,” Villano says. If applicants struggle with the math component, they can take a two-week boot camp “that hopefully brings people up to the speed that we need, and gives them another shot at the test.”

The core program, he says, is “very intensive. It covers blueprint reading, different types of manufacturing processes and safety.” Employees complete their training on the job once they are hired. He points out that this program can also benefit those people looking to use prior manufacturing experience and education in a new way.

Partnering with Gateway, Middlesex and now Three Rivers community colleges, the “Skill Up” program is open to anyone in Connecticut. When the next round of state funding comes through, the program will begin offering welding and design, which are already part of the curriculum in eastern Connecticut.

Plans are also in the works to branch out beyond manufacturing to healthcare, hospitality, transportation and logistics, which will provide even more opportunities for Connecticut residents to train – or retrain – for a well-paying career job.

EVER THOUGHT ABOUT A MANUFACTURING CAREER?

The “Skill Up for Manufacturing” program offers free training, funded by Workforce Alliance through the Apprenticeship CT Initiative. Trainees earn a stipend plus 250 pre-apprenticeship hours, Six Sigma certification and OSHA 10.

New classes start in 2020

Jan. 21 to Feb. 28, 2020

Middlesex Community College at
Vinal Technical High School, Middletown.

Jan. 28 to April 4, 2020.

Three Rivers Community College at Grasso Technical
High School, Groton. Includes additional 5 weeks
for plastics training.

March 2 to April 17, 2020.

Gateway Community College, New Haven. Includes
an additional 2 weeks for CNC training.

To apply, visit www.workforcealliance.biz/skillup/
or <http://ewib.org/pipeline>

“We’re showing an average starting salary of over \$16.30 and many manufacturers have 90-day or 6-month reviews and will add to that [rate]. One of our graduates with past experience landed a \$70-an-hour job as a plant manager.”


There are significant benefits for companies who hire from the program, too. Villano points to one company in Old Saybrook that had had no steady workforce, instead relying on temporary workers. “The president of the company was involved in the eastern program and has saved \$100,000 per year on temp labor costs. A successful grad brings a lot more to the table than someone hired off the street.”

Villano and his team are working hard to spread the word about the program – linking the application portal to social media, working with education partners to promote it, doing media relations, and talking about it at graduations. News is also spreading by word of mouth. In addition, Workforce Alliance operates several of the state’s American Job Centers (New Haven, Middletown, Hamden, Meriden), where unemployed or underemployed people come in for help to find a good job but may not know just what they’re looking for.

He feels that in today’s environment, where there is a lot of discussion about the value of an expensive college education and the burdens associated with significant student debt, people need to recognize – including students and their parents – that manufacturing is a good, steady career. “If Electric Boat never got another new contract, they would still have enough work until 2037. Pratt & Whitney has a backlog of engine work. Sikorsky has a backlog of heavy lift helicopter orders. There’s not a lot of other industries where you can go and have a job for the next 20 years,” he says.

He adds that the industry has evolved to an amazing extent. The idea that manufacturing is “dirty, dark and dangerous” couldn’t be further from the truth. “Manufacturing has become very technical,” says Villano. “You can eat off the floor in most places. The biggest issue is making people understand that manufacturing is alive and well in Connecticut, and convincing parents, students and school advisors that this is a great career.”

If there’s one person who needs no convincing, it’s Hassan Touil, who is happily ensconced in his job at Roto Frank of America. Touil, now 42, feels secure in his new position and loves the upbeat team atmosphere. “I’m very happy here,” he says. “Everybody helps each other. You can ask anything that you don’t know, and they will help you. They’re nice people.”

The feeling is mutual, according to Lopez: “We are very happy and very pleased with Hassan.” 



Collaborative
Engaging
Powerful
Rigorous
Transformational
Connected
Inspiring
Diverse
Impactful
Elevating
Fearless



ALBERTUS
MAGNUS
COLLEGE

We have faith in your future.

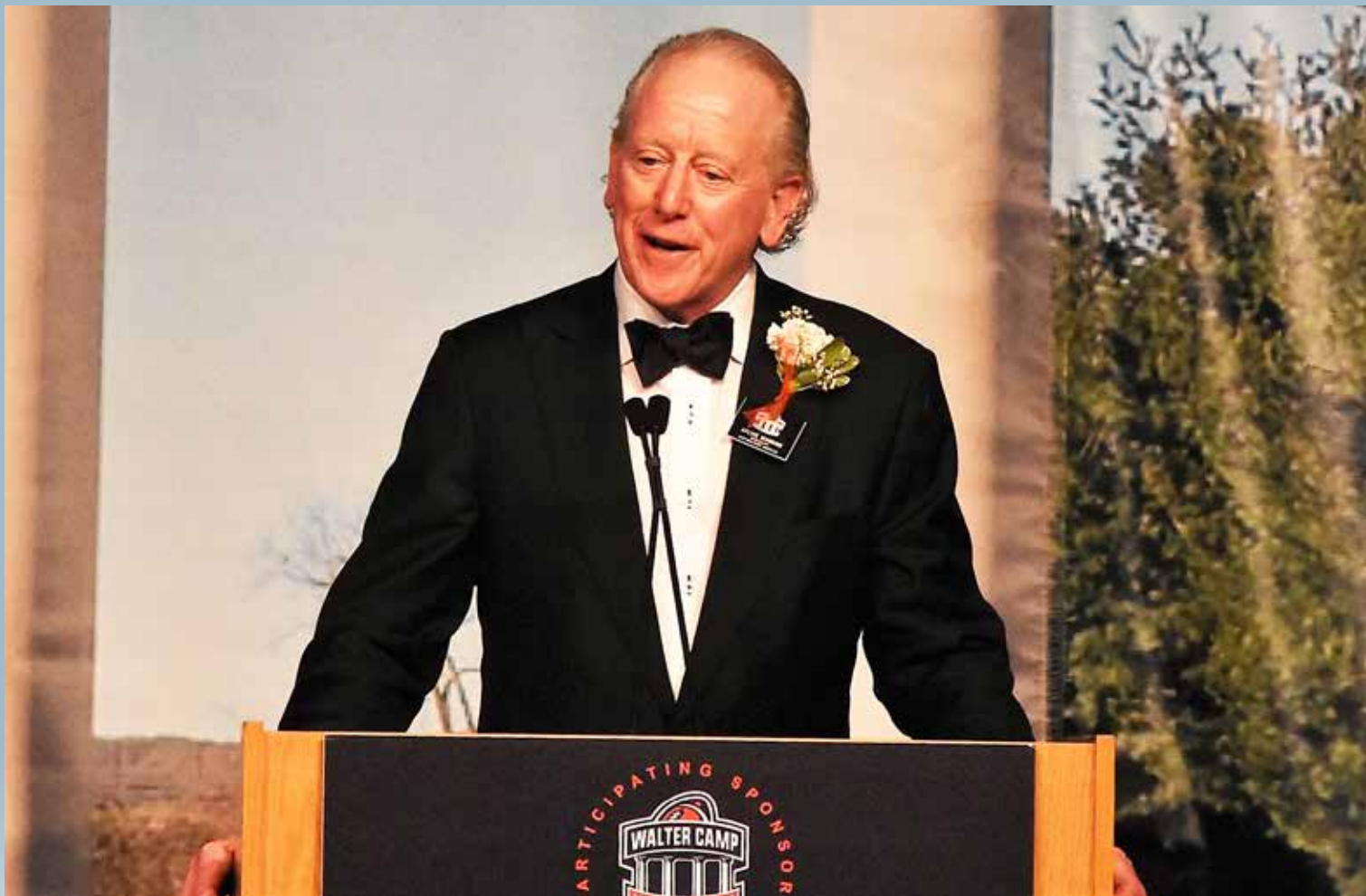
FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME

Foundation Honors the Legacy
and Values of Walter Camp

By JOHN TORSIELLO / *Photography* COURTESY OF
THE WALTER CAMP FOOTBALL FOUNDATION



Jake Olson accepts the 2018 Walter Camp Football Foundation Award of Perseverance at the foundation's annual black-tie dinner in January 2019.



Former NFL player Archie Manning - father of Eli and Peyton Manning - receives the 2018 Walter Camp Distinguished American Award at the January 2019 awards dinner.

Walter Camp was many things: a star athlete, Yale University's first football coach, a community leader, an early member of venerable New Haven Country Club, and an innovator who changed the way football was played.

But perhaps beyond all else, Camp was a man who embodied the spirit of sportsmanship, commitment to community and the welfare of others. A photo of a young, handsome, mustachioed Camp shows eyes that seem to gaze into the future – to a time when the Walter Camp Football Foundation (WCFF) would affect so many lives in a positive manner.

The foundation's community impact is evident throughout the year, but its profile is highest during the annual Walter Camp Weekend, which takes place each January. It's then when the foundation transforms New Haven into the college football capital of the world, with various events throughout the weekend intended to

shine a spotlight on players and former players, while also connecting them with the local community.

Over the years, the weekend has drawn many big-name players to the Elm City – including Heisman Trophy winners Eddie George, Tim Brown, Herschel Walker, Tony Dorsett and Baker Mayfield, just to name a few. At the weekend's cornerstone event – a black-tie National Awards Dinner that draws roughly 1,000 attendees – the foundation honors a Walter Camp All-America team, as well as a player of year and coach of the year.

"I am so proud of our foundation's many accomplishments," says the foundation's president, Mario Coppola. "The Walter Camp Football Foundation has both a local and national reputation. Our All-America team is the oldest and most prestigious in the nation. Every sport in every NCAA division has an All-American team and the concept started with the Walter Camp All-America team. During this, the 150th year of college football, we will be honoring the 130th Walter



Heisman Trophy winner Herschel Walker



Camp All-America team. Our Player of the Year award is considered second only in stature to the Heisman Trophy.”

The foundation’s Player of the Year award is the fourth-oldest college football award in the nation, he adds.

The 2020 Walter Camp Weekend will kick off Jan. 16 with the Stay in School Rally, sponsored by KeyBank. Typically, more than 2,000 middle school children from area communities participate in the special program, which takes place in the Floyd Little Athletic Center at New Haven’s James Hillhouse High School. During the event, well-known players and former players anchor a high-energy program to encourage, motivate and inspire the children. The weekend concludes on Jan. 18 with the annual National Awards Dinner.

So, who exactly was Walter Camp? He left a lasting imprint on football and the way it is played. He is credited with several key developments that transformed football from its origins into the fast-paced game it is today: the play from scrimmage, the numerical assessment of goals and tries, the restriction of play to 11 men per side, set plays, sequences, and other strategy features. He is also credited with choosing the first All-America team, served on the American Intercollegiate Football Rules Committee from his college days until his death in 1925, and helped establish the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

Back in 1906, it was a momentous and troubling time for American football. The game was under fire as detractors said it had a certain brutality, in which physical force was all-important and skill seemed to play a small role. As the leader of the American Intercollegiate Football Rules Committee, Camp played a crucial role in the adoption of significant changes that “opened up” the game, including introduction of the forward pass, that brought about a revolutionary change in the pattern of play. That not only added to the game’s popularity, but also saved it from some lawmakers’ efforts to ban the sport.

“Without him, the game of football, as we know it today, would not be the same,” says the foundation’s past president, Mike Madera.

These days, football is one of the most popular sports in America and the Walter Camp Football Foundation strives to honor the legacy and values of its namesake. While the foundation does draw celebrity athletes to the Elm City, its mission goes far beyond that.

Many charitable organizations benefit from the foundation, says Madera. The organization is a yearly sponsor of Special Olympics Connecticut and supports various organizations throughout the year with charitable donations.

Historical photo of Walter Camp

“The Walter Camp Football Foundation and its members make a positive and powerful impact on the lives of our athletes through their generous financial contributions and hours spent volunteering at our Summer Games every year,” says Special Olympics Connecticut President Beau Doherty. “As these great friends with the [foundation] know and demonstrate through their involvement with our athletes, sport has the power to bring out the greatness in people of all abilities and to inspire inclusion through teamwork. We are most grateful for all the support we receive from our friends with the Walter Camp Foundation and the opportunities and joy they bring to our athletes.”

The foundation also holds events throughout the year, including a golf tournament, a pig roast, and a Yale football tailgate party with a charitable component.

The broader community benefits from the foundation’s work as well, Madera says. “The foundation is particularly engaged during our national awards weekend when we work throughout the community, including numerous hospital and school visits,” he says.

Community efforts are the result of financial and “sweat equity” involvement by “extended members” of the foundation, says Past President Ernie Williams. “The



Tua Tagovailoa accepts the 2018 Walter Camp Player of the Year Award.



The signature event of Walter Camp Weekend is the Saturday night black-tie national awards dinner, which honors college players, NFL legends and other honorees.



Members of the 2018 Walter Camp All-America team, as well as award winners and honorees, attend the foundation's annual awards dinner in January 2019.

hospital visits, the school visits, etc. continue to bring great value to local youth.”

Past President Bill O’Brien recalls when players began visiting patients at area children’s hospitals as part of Walter Camp Weekend. “At the start, we had some athletes who were in town, and they and others visited one hospital,” he says. “Then another hospital contacted us and now, we go out to a number of facilities, signing autographs and footballs for the kids and even bringing a couple of team mascots with us. I believe that is one of our lasting legacies.”

Giving back to the community is a priority for the foundation, which has more than 1,000 paid members, and is run entirely by volunteers, with a core of about 75 people.

“Historically, our primary focus has been working with youth-oriented programs and organizations,” says Williams. “But in recent years, we’ve gotten more involved with worthy adult-focused and military veterans’ programs as well.”

And the foundation keeps extending its reach.

“The [foundation] has expanded its outreach throughout the state. We have been working on growing the foundation’s outreach in other states as well,” says Coppola. “Financially, through the hard work of our sponsorship

committee and our members, we have continued to grow. Being an all-volunteer foundation, it is imperative everyone contributes in helping the foundation attain its goals.”

Madera believes the foundation is highly regarded because of all that it does in the community, “and because of the foundation’s longevity and strong history.”

Walter Camp Weekend itself is full of events. In addition to the Stay-in-School Rally, National Awards Dinner and hospital visits, there’s a Walter Camp All-America Player Party, and an alumni brunch. There’s also the Walter Camp All-America Youth Football Clinic, at which Connecticut high school head coaches team up with select Walter Camp All-Americans and alumni to teach skills to local youths. (See sidebar for schedule of events.)

At the January 2019 National Awards Dinner, Jake Olson received the foundation’s Award for Perseverance for his remarkable efforts with the University of Southern California Trojans. Olson is the player who made national news when he got into a game as the long snapper (center) for an extra point attempt. No big deal, you might say – but Olson is blind and, with the help of the USC coaching staff and teammates, lived out a dream of being on the field at a meaningful moment.

“I was so humbled to receive the award, and I appreciate



Among the many events of Walter Camp Weekend are the Walter Camp All-America Youth Clinic (top left photo) and the visits that players and alumni make to area children's hospitals.

the Walter Camp Football Foundation recognizing my journey," Olson says. "The whole weekend was amazing, and I hope to stay involved with the foundation in the years to come."

Gus Lindine, athletic director at Greenwich High School, fondly recalls when his school's football team was honored with the foundation's Joseph W. Kelly Award, which recognizes the top football team in the state.

"The fall of 2018 was quite an exciting time for our school and community. An undefeated season, Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference and state champions, and for the first time ever, being recognized as the number one football team in Connecticut," he says. "We were extremely proud and honored to be named the Joseph W. Kelly Award winner, [an honor] that was presented to Coach Marinelli and the Greenwich Cardinals Football Team at the [Walter Camp] Breakfast of Champions. I have to send out a very special thanks to the Walter Camp Football Foundation for providing such a wonderful experience for high school football teams, players and coaches."

The foundation resonates strongly with the college players it honors, too.



2020 WALTER CAMP WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS

THURSDAY, JAN. 16

Welcome Reception and Dinner, where guests can meet and greet the early arrivals for the weekend, including honorees, alumni and many former NFL players. Anthony's Ocean View, 450 Lighthouse Rd., New Haven.

FRIDAY, JAN. 17

Walter Camp All-America Youth Clinic, open to children ages 7 to 14. Pre-registration required. Floyd Little Athletic Center, 480 Sherman Pkwy., New Haven.

All-America Player Party, where guests can mingle with players, alumni and former NFL players. BAR, 254 Crown St., New Haven.

SATURDAY, JAN. 18

Annual National Awards Dinner, a black-tie event honoring the Walter Camp All-America team and award winners. The Lanman Center at Yale University's Payne Whitney Gym, 70 Tower Pkwy., New Haven.

This is a partial list of Walter Camp Weekend events. For a full schedule and more details, visit <https://waltercamp.org/events/the-weekend>.



At the Walter Camp All-America Youth Clinic, children ages 7 to 14 learn skills from some of the top coaches in the region, as well as meeting college and professional football players.

“Walter Camp Weekend continues to be a major happening in the Greater New Haven area and still, appropriately, has the label of making New Haven the ‘Football Capital of the World’ for that particular weekend.”

“The weekend helped me to understand the bigger picture of what the game of football brings to our daily life,” says Hau’oli Kikaha who played for the University of Washington and was a 2014 Walter Camp All-American. “Throughout the weekend, I developed and discovered life-long concepts that I apply to my everyday life.”

Looking ahead, the foundation will continue to change and evolve, says Madera.


“As the times and technology change, the Walter Camp Football Foundation must also change to continue its storied history and success,” he says. “We have already begun this process in different aspects of the foundation, and those changes have proven to be beneficial already.”

Coppola expects the foundation to keep growing its national reputation and prominence through a continued partnership with ESPN and expanded presence on social media.

“We will announce our Player of the Year on SportsCenter, and our All-America team will be announced on the prime-time 2019 Home Depot College Football Awards Show” in December, he says. “For the last 16 years, the foundation has named offensive and defensive Players of

the Week in the Football Bowl Subdivision, which not only gets our name out there across the nation and through our various social media outlets, but is also the longest-running weekly award, and is sponsored by a Connecticut-based company, Generation UCAN.”

Sure, times have changed. Fueled by television contracts, big money – along with big pressure on coaches and players – has worked its way down to the college football level. But Walter Camp’s beliefs and value system, which stressed a commitment to sportsmanship and having football make a positive difference in people’s lives, hasn’t faded. That makes the foundation created in his honor as relevant, and perhaps more vitally important, now than it was more than five decades ago – especially during that annual weekend in January.

“[Walter Camp Weekend] continues to be a major happening in the Greater New Haven area and still, appropriately, has the label of making New Haven the ‘Football Capital of the World’ for that particular weekend,” says Williams. “It remains extremely popular with former Walter Camp All-Americans and guys who have gone onto professional football careers.” 



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Life Support

Madison breast cancer survivor helps those with similar journeys

By ALIX BOYLE / Photography by AMY ETRA

Roberta Lombardi sits at the kitchen counter of her immaculate house in Madison, drinking coffee from a fine china cup, tapping out social media posts on her laptop. Dressed casually in jeans and slippers, she's also wearing a delicate infinity necklace. A breast cancer survivor, Lombardi is a force of nature who has devoted herself to making life better for other survivors.

The infinity necklace relates to two organizations she founded.

Infinite Strength is a nonprofit that assists breast cancer patients by paying for medical treatments not covered by insurance – and other costs related to treatment like parking, travel, and high-quality wigs and mastectomy bras. It also covers basics like food and rent for women who can't work while in treatment.

Infinite Beauty is a company that makes bras for survivors, including a bra for women who have had reconstruction surgery after breast cancer.

"After 14 months of treatment, I asked myself, 'Where do I belong?' Everything is different," Lombardi says. "Helping women have a better experience helped me feel better. It gave me a purpose."

Lombardi was diagnosed in September 2016 with what's known as HER2-positive (or human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 positive) breast cancer. After a double mastectomy in October 2016, she underwent chemotherapy, chemo-related treatments, and reconstructive surgeries. Despite the ordeal of breast cancer, Lombardi says she feels incredibly fortunate that she did not have to work during treatments and that her husband could help take care of their daughters during that time.

She also was fortunate in that she could afford treatments not covered by insurance and never worried about how to pay for parking at the hospital or meet basic needs like food and mortgage.

Wanting to give back to Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven Health, Lombardi in February 2018 founded Infinite Strength, a nonprofit that raises funds to support survivors. She put her event planner skills to work and created the fundraising gala "An Evening in Pink" in May 2018 and raised \$50,000. The 2019 gala raised even more.

Roberta Lombardi of Madison founded Infinite Beauty, a company that makes bras for breast cancer survivors like her.

“Roberta is an amazing and generous woman,” says Dr. Sarah Mougalian, an oncologist at Smilow, who treated Lombardi. “She has taken her own personal experience – what many would consider a nightmare – and used it to her advantage and the advantage of the entire breast cancer community. She initially thought she just wanted to hold a fundraiser for women with breast cancer, and with Infinite Strength, it has turned into so much more. She really has made advocacy for women with breast cancer her mission in life, and it’s incredibly inspiring.”

Many patients who are diagnosed with breast cancer undergo chemotherapy, putting toxic drugs into their bodies to fight the disease. At the same time, their pocketbooks take a hit.

Unanticipated costs can run the gamut from actually paying for part of the cancer treatment, to transportation, to finding someone to care for children or elders, all while taking time off from work in order to receive their treatment.

Infinite Strength donates money to hospitals, which in turn make grants to patients. Currently, the patient applies for help through the social worker and nurse navigator at the hospital where she is being treated and the hospital takes the money from the Infinite Strength account. In the future, Lombardi wants to fund patients more directly.

HAIR-SPARING TECHNOLOGY

Lombardi battled the physical and emotional aspects of cancer, including losing her long, thick, black hair, eyebrows and eyelashes. She remembers always covering her bald head with a hat or wig so that she wouldn’t upset her three daughters.

“Losing your hair isn’t about vanity. It affects the way you see yourself and messes with you mentally,” Lombardi says. “Your self-esteem tanks.”

While undergoing treatment, Lombardi met other women who felt the same way. Preserving hair preserves dignity, privacy, and some semblance of control. It helps patients to move forward and work on healing, and worry less about how they look.

Back when Lombardi was diagnosed, scalp cooling – a technology that can preserve much of the hair for patients undergoing chemotherapy – was not available in New Haven. In 2017, the Paxman Scalp Cooling System received U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval, and since that time, centers around the country, including Smilow Cancer Hospital, have made the treatment available.

Cooling the head before, during and after chemotherapy has been shown to prevent hair from falling out. A 2018 study in Germany showed that 71 percent of women who used the Paxman cooling cap while being treated with anthracycline/taxane-based chemotherapy preserved 30 to 50 percent of their hair – enough hair to forgo wearing a wig or a hat.

Chemotherapy works by targeting rapidly dividing cells in the body. Hair cells divide quickly, which is why chemo drugs cause hair loss. With the Paxman and other scalp

cooling technologies, patients don a tight-fitting silicone cap containing a cooling agent that reduces the temperature of the scalp by a couple of degrees. The cold reduces blood flow to the scalp so that less of the chemotherapy drug reaches the hair follicles. Scalp cooling adds about an hour of time in the treatment chair before chemo begins and an hour afterward. Some patients find it uncomfortable, but most tolerate it well.

“Unfortunately, insurance companies are not routinely covering this,” says Paxman’s CEO, Richard Paxman. “Roberta has helped patients who can’t afford scalp cooling, and Paxman discounts the treatment. This allows more patients to get more access. Roberta is building awareness and educating health systems. She’s a fabulous lady, just a great advocate, really.”

Paxman, based in the United Kingdom, has been offering this treatment for 20 years and nearly 98 percent of patients in the U.K. receive scalp cooling along with chemo, all covered under the National Health Service.

The Paxman family’s cooling expertise dates back to a beer cooling system for breweries the family pioneered in England in the 1950s. In the 1990s, Richard Paxman’s mother became ill with breast cancer and tried an early version of the cooling cap that didn’t work. Glenn Paxman, Richard’s father, recognizing how traumatizing hair loss is, developed a better system using the family’s expertise in cooling technology.

Lombardi also is working with Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro to support legislation that would mandate that scalp cooling be covered by insurance.

PRESERVING FERTILITY

Many young women are diagnosed with breast cancer in the prime of their childbearing years, and many of these women have cancers that require chemotherapy, usually for three to six months, and/or endocrine therapy, usually for five years or even longer, Mougalian says.

Becoming pregnant during these treatments is dangerous to a developing fetus and, with certain treatments, may not be possible. The older a woman is, the harder it can become to conceive a child; therefore, fertility preservation prior to the initiation of treatment can make having a biological child in the future more likely.

Patients with a breast cancer diagnosis can opt to freeze their eggs or freeze embryos before starting treatment so that they can have children after their treatment, says Dr. Pasquale Patrizio, a fertility specialist at Yale School of Medicine. It can cost \$8,000 or more for one cycle of the process, including monitoring, egg harvesting, making embryos, blood tests, ultrasounds, egg retrieval and more.

Even though Connecticut was the first state to mandate insurance coverage for fertility preservation, there are some patients who still cannot afford it, Patrizio says. Infinite Strength has donated money to Smilow to assist patients with fertility preservation.

“This shows how important it is to have collaboration



Smilow oncologist Dr. Sarah Mougalian, who treated Lombardi, calls her an amazing and generous woman who has used her own frightening experience to benefit "the entire breast cancer community."

with patient advocacy groups to help protect every man and woman so they won't have the double whammy of cancer and that they cannot freeze their future," Patrizio says.

Lombardi was invited to speak about the importance of funding at the International Society for Fertility Preservation conference in New York.

WARMING BRA FOR CANCER PATIENTS

When Lombardi had her reconstructive surgery with silicone implants, she couldn't understand why she felt freezing cold and why she'd experience chest spasms. Her breasts were cold to the touch and she felt like the implant was coming loose.

The cold is an unwelcome side-effect of reconstruction surgery, which leaves patients with very little fat or muscle tissue covering the implants, Lombardi explains.


Lombardi couldn't find a bra that kept her warm, so she made one. The bra from Infinite Beauty is now on the market, selling for \$82. Called the Felicia, after her grandmother, the bra is lined with a thin layer of neoprene,

the material that's used for wet suits. The bra keeps the wearer just the right amount of warm and supports the implants, which can feel quite heavy. The soft cups are covered in lace.

After a year of trial and error, and experimenting to find the right thickness of neoprene, the Felicia is warming, slightly compressing and beautiful to wear.

Her mechanical engineer nephew, Eric Conti, who once worked as a product engineer of armor for military helicopters, designed the bra with Lombardi. Austin Miller, another nephew with a marketing background, developed the website and its ecommerce feature. The Felicia and other styles are available online and at Lulu's lingerie shop in Guilford.

In a short time, Lombardi has founded a nonprofit, brought a bra to market, advocated for patients, and raised funds. Now, Middlesex Health is interested in scalp cooling and Norwalk Hospital wants her to start a fertility preservation fund.

It feels like she's just getting started. 

DELICIOUS



The Filet Cognac has been a fan favorite at Goodfellas since day one.
Photo courtesy of Goodfellas



High Steaks

Feeling carnivorous? These luxurious entrees are worth the splurge.

By **TODD LYON** / *Photography by* **STAN GODLEWSKI**

Decadence has its place. A big birthday, a successful IPO, the last kid finally leaves home...

Though we're all aware that plant-based eating is best for our bodies and the planet, there are those times when it's right and proper to abandon all rules of sensible consumption. High-end steaks, lovingly prepared, are that once-in-a-blue moon splurge, and New Haven has some of the best.

Are you ready to break the bank, eat every item on the "bad fats" list, and consume a week's worth of calories in a single sitting? Here are three ways to do just that in New Haven. Dig in!

At **Goodfellas**, beloved by the Elm City since 2005, Chef Gerry Iannaccone is as joyful as he's ever been. His enthusiasm for just about everything – his talented kids, a recent trip to Italy, his ever-popular State Street eatery – hasn't dimmed a bit, despite his many years in the grueling restaurant biz.

"I'm in a great spot in my life and my career," says the chef. "I feel like I'm blooming." Goodfellas is also in its prime. Service is seamless, gracious. The dining room, with its widely spaced tables, low-key tones, and kind

lighting, feels downright serene – this, in spite of the many TVs on the far walls continuously running gangster movies.

The menu at Goodfellas rarely changes (with the exception of seasonal specials) and regulars wouldn't have it any other way. Yet in and among the tried-and-true staples – Papardelle al Telefono, Beggar's Purse, the famous Meatballs with Salad – is a dish that stands above all others, and that is the Filet Cognac.

The story of the steak began in 1995, when Iannaccone was cooking at Tre Scalini on Wooster Street. "There was a veal scallopini on the menu," he recalls. "It had grilled portobello mushrooms, Maine lobster meat, and a gorgonzola cream sauce. The flavor was great but the veal was egg-battered, and it would shrink when you cooked it. Some customers said it was a little tough." When Chef switched out the veal and replaced it with beef tenderloin, a legendary dish was born. "I've made that steak ever since, at all eight of my restaurants over the years," he says, "and it's still my top seller."

And what a steak it is. The filet mignon is hand-butchered on the premises, as is all the beef at Goodfellas, and is probably three inches thick,





Goodfellas' dining room is hushed and serene, in spite of gangster movies looping in the background. Photo courtesy of Goodfellas

encased in a perfectly executed crust. On the top is a grilled portobello cap, which itself is crowned with tender pink lobster claws, picked whole, and drizzled with the gorgonzola sauce. With mashed potatoes on the side, the whole arrangement looks more like a dessert than an entrée – a chocolate lava cake, perhaps. It is certainly as rich, and as extravagant.

Should you find yourself in a position to request your last meal, make the most of it. Start with Goodfellas' complimentary antipasti; then, an order of Clams Casino; add a Mediterranean salad, with dark and pleasingly weedy greens; warm Italian bread with extra-virgin olive oil, balsamic, and grated cheese; a full-bodied red wine; and Gerry's Filet Cognac. Savor every bite. It is a true pleasure of life.



Jack's Bar + Steakhouse, at 212 College St., skews young. Smack in the center of downtown's nightlife district, the room is buzzy and fun, with LED "fireplaces" and a lively bar scene. There are irreverent offerings on the extensive menu,

including Jack's Naked Wild Wings, Tater Tots, and the Man's Salad, featuring onion rings and bacon. But when it comes to steaks, Jack's is all business, and sticks to time-honored steakhouse rules. As such, it is an a-la-carte experience, with wet-aged prime Angus steaks listed by cut and weight. There is filet mignon, New York strip, ribeye, hanger steak, top-of-the-line porterhouse, and a tomahawk chop.

With sauce, toppings, and side dish options, it's possible to build your own perfect steak dinner at Jack's. And, with the guidance of our very helpful server, my dining pal and I did damn near that. After much discussion, we went for the 22-ounce ribeye, cooked medium rare. With it, two sauces: béarnaise and Jack's horseradish (chimichurri also looked promising) with garlic butter on the side. Then, from a list of sides, including tempting choices like curry cauliflower and mushroom risotto, we opted for grilled asparagus, plus the double-baked potato, a dish I once heard described as a "culinary tool of seduction" for American men.

Our meal was, in a word, delicious. We had started with a fragrant appetizer of steamed clams, which tasted hyper-local. The much-anticipated



Exterior of 116 Crown



There's outdoor dining year-round at 116 Crown, thanks to "igloos" on the back patio.



A "Cookout" for two at 116 Crown. 40-ounce organic grass-fed angus tomahawk steak, crispy and whipped potatoes, garlic mushrooms and house-churned herb butter.

steak arrived in glistening slices, cooked to temperature, and proved to be tender, juicy, and deeply flavorful. Sauces were spot on (I'm a béarnaise snob, and I was pleased). The sides complemented each other as well as the steak, with the brightness of the slightly firm, simply prepared asparagus in contrast to the decadent, creamy potato.

Jack's has a large menu, with no fewer than eight categories including Small Plates, Shellfish, Homemade Pasta, and even a section for kids. The place has been open for about two years now, and my experience there has been limited. So, although I can't speak to any of the restaurant's other categorical offerings, I will say that Jack's Bar + Steakhouse really knows what to do with a beautiful piece of red meat.



116 Crown Street has been ahead of the curve, on so many levels, since the day it opened its hand-forged iron doors in 2007. Long before the

term "craft cocktail" was in the foodie lexicon, 116 was creating original drinks with provocative names ("Glitterati," "The New Black," "Purple Curtain"), unexpected ingredients (apple cider foam, quail egg, Earl Grey tea), and designer ice. The wine cellar, which focuses on organic and biodynamic offerings, has also been ahead of its time. Then there's the ever-evolving dinner menu, which has always featured surprising dishes along with of-the-moment charcuterie and cheese plates. Under the steady hand and visionary mind of proprietor Danielle Ginnetti, 116 Crown has been so consistently avant-garde that I never imagined it would offer something as traditional as a great steak. And yet, the Cookout for Two at 116 Crown is old-fashioned to the point of feeling downright prehistoric.

Our epic feast started with classic cocktails. Settled in a cozy half-circle of a booth in the raised dining room, overlooking the glowing slab of green onyx that serves as 116's bar, we two ordered from the drink menu's "Revived Cocktails." These familiar concoctions are "historically-sized," that is, they are served in petite vessels from days gone

CONTINUED PAGE 48



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Three Beautiful Soups

Story and Artwork by **Todd Lyon**

Making soup is a labor of love. A kitchen full of ingredients is corralled and chopped, coddled and simmered into one steaming vessel of nutritional bliss. Although the results are deeply satisfying, not all of us have the luxury of time (or talent) required for making our own sip-able sustenance. The solution: Heat and eat!

The following are a just a few winning soups from local purveyors that will obediently sit in your fridge, ready to nourish you when you're tired/cold/hungry or just really need soup. All three of these options are either vegan or vegetarian, and each is kind to the wallet. As Judith Martin once wrote in a love letter to soup: "You don't catch steak hanging around when you're poor and sick, do you?"

THE SOUP GIRL

Where: 1242 Whitney Ave., Hamden

What: Moroccan Red Lentil

This soup is a revelation, a complex concoction of ancient flavors and whispering spices that unfurls on the palate and makes a girl say, "Ahhh." Though dense with soft red lentils and toothy chickpeas, it feels lighter than many bean-based soups, yet is hearty enough to make an easy supper (add your own Moroccan flatbread). How is this possible? Only the Soup Girl, a.k.a. Jessica Hazan, knows for sure. Her take-out shop in Hamden is soup Mecca, offering four hot, scratch-made varieties every day. There is always a gluten-free, vegetarian, or vegan option, plus many more choices stashed in the fridge. Big news for locals: Order on Monday, and the Soup Girl will deliver fresh soup, salad, quiche or dessert to you on Thursday. How's that for creature comfort?

ELM CITY MARKET

Where: 777 Chapel St., New Haven

What: Vegetarian Split Pea

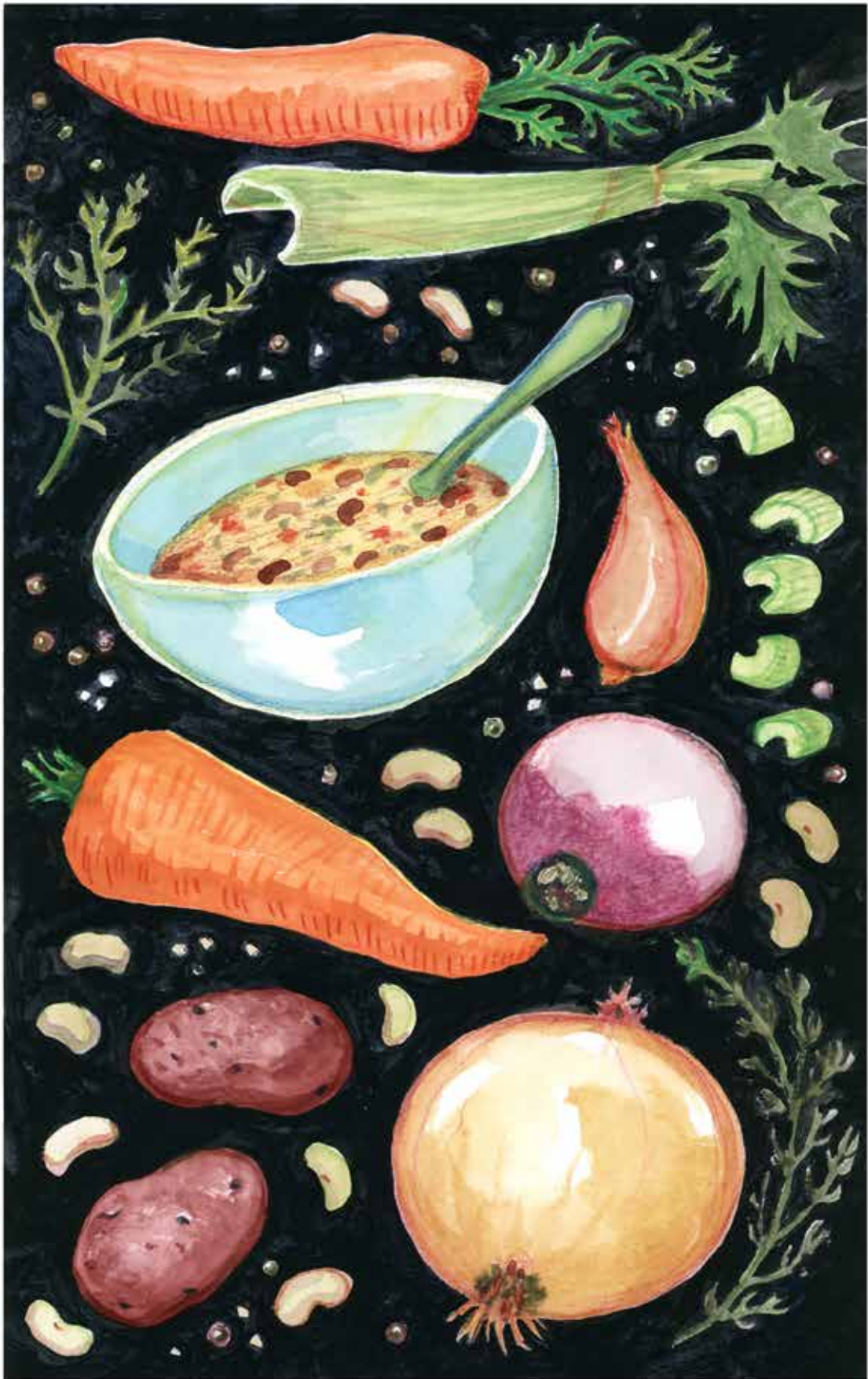
Readers: If you haven't yet discovered the prepared foods section at Elm City Market, don't wait another day! Salads were a bachelorette's pal all summer long (try the grilled salmon and spinach), and now that it's chilly and miserable out there, ECM's soups are just the thing to warm body and soul. The Vegetarian Split Pea is rich in flavor and has an ideal texture – not too thick, with nice pieces of carrots and celery visible – and a surprising smoky undertone that suggests ham. Is someone cheating? No, that satisfying flavor/aroma comes from liquid smoke, which is vegan (I checked). Liquid smoke can sometimes dominate a dish – not in a good way – but in this case, it is just enough to add depth and to keep the soup from feeling "less than," in spite of its meatless-ness.

FERRARO'S MARKET

Where: 664 Grand Ave., New Haven

What: Escarole & Bean

As a die-hard Ferraro's fan, I think I've tried nearly all of the ready-to-eat and ready-to-cook options at this market, which has been going strong since 1952. From stuffed mushrooms to eggplant rollatini to braciola, the store-made offerings at Ferraro's allow harried hostesses to present foolproof dishes that they can almost take credit for. Soup varieties are plentiful, and although most are made with chicken or beef stock, the Escarole & Bean is all veggie – a humble soup made from homey ingredients. The tender escarole has a lemony taste, and the petite cannellini beans benefit from the earthy flavor of both parsnips and turnips in the broth. A great first course, especially with a sprinkling of grated Parmesan (sorry, vegans!). Bonus: An eight-ounce serving of this classic soup comes in at about \$1.75.





116 Crown is famous for its cocktails, many featuring unusual ingredients and garnishes. Pictured: The quite leafy "116 Switchell".



S'mores inside your own private igloo... talk about cozy!



Just say yes to 116 Crown's truffle fries.


CONTINUED FROM PAGE 45

by and are thus blessedly easy on the alcohol content. Then, a plate of icy East Coast oysters, served with a Beaujolais shallot mignonette. Next, the star of the show: a 40-ounce organic grass-fed Maine Angus tomahawk steak. This Flinstonian cut, with its one enormous rib, was cooked to temperature throughout (quite a feat) and cut into various-sized slices. Laid out before us, with potatoes two ways (crispy and whipped) plus sautéed button mushrooms with garlic and oodles of house-churned herbed butter, we felt a bit as if we were foraging for each bite, hunter-gatherers with wristwatches and shiny shoes.

Tomahawk steak is essentially a bone-in ribeye, but bigger and much more dramatic. As such, it has plenty of fat, which makes for maximum juiciness, and also three different types of muscle, each with its own characteristics. With our inner cave people fully awakened, we explored the whole range of flavors and textures of the beast before us, finding melt-in-your-mouth tenderness here, and satisfying chewiness there, and appreciated that, in my friend's words, the dish wasn't "too cleaned up." The buttery whipped potatoes were some of the best I've ever had, and lovely with the garlicky mushrooms.

We didn't think our feast could get any better, but, in a flash of inspiration, my dining companion requested some of the bamboo charcoal salt he'd seen as an ingredient on the cocktail menu. It arrived, delightfully enough, in a mini carafe.

Really, the steak was perfectly seasoned and didn't need more salt, and neither did we. But we were so taken with the idea of black salt on a tomahawk steak that we tried it anyway, and loved the results.

Sometimes, on special nights with special friends and special meals, more is more. 



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There's No Place Like (Tiny) Home

New Haven couple loves their unique waterfront house

Written and photographed by FRANK RIZZO



John McCarthy and Amy Garner took living simply to a new level.

I drove right past the home of John McCarthy and Amy Garner when I set out to meet the young couple for a tour and talk in their intimate abode on the banks of the Housatonic River in New Haven.

After all, it was a tiny house.

But not so insignificant once you get up close and personal.

Yes, the home totals a mere 344 square feet, but with warm wood paneling, light streaming in, and a dining setting looking out at a stunning river view – cue the swans to paddle by – it feels cozy, not so claustrophobic. As you listen about the art of compact co-habitation, you begin to understand that this minimalist design for living is not just Zen but downright ingenious, and a perfect fit for those with a certain temperament, attitude, and lifestyle.

Their Traveler XL is a high-end, tiny home made by the Wisconsin-based Escape Traveler. They have lived at their current New Haven location with their black lab Winston for more than two-and-a-half years. Both agree it's one of the best decisions they've made and they have no regrets.

"Would you like a quick tour?" asks Garner, smiling as their guest enters their home.

The first things you notice are the light filling the space from the multitude of windows and the home's surprising height, which tops out at 13 and a half feet. (The width is 8 and a half feet and the length is 30 feet.)

From there, it's a home that would have left Henry David Thoreau speechless. The kitchen area includes a four-burner-plus-griddle propane stove, a dishwasher, a full-size refrigerator, cabinets, and a modest bar fashioned from a section of an old desk.





For this young couple, less is more.



The bathroom ingeniously doubles as the laundry room.

To the left upon entering is a cobalt blue, full-sized couch which abuts the main bedroom located on the first floor – a rarity in tiny homes, which usually perch the principal sleeping quarters on high. A queen-sized bed occupies most of the space in this downstairs hideaway, with a full-length mirror discreetly hidden on the opposite side of a sliding door. Garner’s clothes are in a modest closet. McCarthy’s are in drawers at the base of the bed.

“We could have had more storage space in the bedroom,” says Garner, “but we decided we’d rather get rid of more things and have high ceilings.”

On the opposite side of the house is a small cruise-ship size bathroom with a shower and a dry-flush toilet – but it also includes a combination washer-dryer, something the couple never had when they lived earlier in a studio apartment in the Winchester building in New Haven, or in New York.

Above that area is a loft bed space for guests, also with a window overlooking the river. A ceiling fan keeps the air circulating. Shelving runs high all along the inside perimeter of the home, where books and other personal items are stored and displayed.

RAISED IN BIG SPACES

The couple is part of a new movement of homeowners popularized by newspaper and magazine articles, websites, blogs, documentaries, conferences and television programs such as HGTV’s “Tiny House, Big Living,” not to mention the Great Recession in 2008, which spurred a new examination of lifestyle choices for many mindful people looking to get back to the basics. A new book “Tiny House: Live Small, Dream Big” (Clarkson Potter, 2019) documents the wide variety of downsized choices. But Garner and McCarthy would be the first to say that it’s definitely not for



Views from a kitchen don't get much better than this.

everyone.

With their backgrounds, you might think it wouldn't be right for them, either.

Both are from states known for their wide-open spaces. Garner, 32, is from Wyoming, a state many times the geographical size of Connecticut but with a total population comparable to Tucson, Arizona. McCarthy, 35, is from Minnesota.

Their first experience in living in small spaces happened when they met 15 years ago while both were in acting school in New York and living in a studio apartment.

They relocated to Connecticut nine years ago, when McCarthy began working for his family's metal manufacturing company in New Britain and Garner began her certification to become a Pilates instructor.

They lived in several places since moving to Connecticut, including a four-bedroom home in Marlborough on the edge of a forest. When McCarthy also achieved his Pilates certification four years ago, they relocated to New Haven, where they began their full-time physical fitness careers. They were considering moving back West but they



A small but well-appointed kitchen offers luxury touches, like a butcherblock countertop and a gas stove.





This small house has a big outdoor wow factor.

soon fell in love with New Haven, and their Pilates Haven business – located at the mActivity fitness center in the East Rock neighborhood – took off. “We made great friends and I fell in love with the pizza,” laughs McCarthy.

But the conversations about living in a tiny house began years earlier, with Garner being the first to think inside the box.

And what did McCarthy think?

“My reaction was, ‘OK, I’ll try anything. Let’s go for it. It sounds awesome.’ But don’t forget we lived in New York when all we had were an air mattress, a bookshelf, and a saucepan. If you’ve lived in New York, you’re used to being in a small space. I’ve always been a bit of a minimalist anyway, so the idea didn’t scare me.”

BUILDING TO ORDER

“I looked into it when we first moved to Connecticut,” says Garner, “and at that time there was only one main manufacturer, so we shelved the idea at the time. By the time we moved to New Haven, tiny houses had become a big thing. Suddenly, there were a bunch of manufacturers

and we found one that would build a first-floor bedroom.”

The home was built to their specifications. This standard size without any changes is \$78,000 but they added amenities such as stainless steel appliances, a washer-dryer and a dishwasher.

Through an architect friend, they found a riverside space they could rent, that also had utilities into which they could tap. (Rent for the land and utilities cost about \$400 a month.) “It’s very easy to heat and cool, and uses very little energy,” says Garner.

“Originally, there was this idea that we could go anywhere and still have our home,” says McCarthy, “even though I don’t think we will. I think we’ll probably stay here. We’re not going to be traveling because our business is based here.”

“But the thing is, it’s nice to have a place that’s yours that you could move,” says Garner, pointing out that Winnebagos can move too but aren’t insulated for the four seasons like their tiny home is.

But, for some, even their concentrated home isn’t condensed enough.



Not everyone can boast that they have a marina at their doorstep.

Garner and McCarthy have a tiny bit of advice to those considering taking that giant small step. Here are some things to know:

Make sure you like each other. “There’s no place to hide from each other in a tiny house,” says Garner, so a higher degree of compatibility is absolutely necessary.

Need a ‘man cave?’ Forget it. If you need space for total privacy or for your work, chances are, concentrated living is not for you. “We’re not here all that much because we’re away, mostly working like 12 hours a day – and we bring Winston to work with us,” says McCarthy.

Make sure you’re OK with getting rid of stuff. “Not just some stuff, but a lot of it,” says McCarthy. “Even from our studio apartment, we had to downsize even further,” he says. Says Garner: “Luckily, I’m not the type of person who cares about owning a lot of shoes but if you are, this would not be the right fit.”

Know where you’re going to put everything once you’ve made that final cut. After all, they say, everything has to fit in the new tiny dwelling. Everything.

Are you a clean, tidy and organized person? If you don’t put things away or you leave dishes in the sink, things pile up fast and are all the more noticeable when you’re living small. “A 10-minute clean and a Roomba is all that they need,” says McCarthy. “In the four-bedroom house, I had a spreadsheet of what to clean.”

Know where you’re going to park the house. As the real estate adage goes: location, location, location. “I don’t think we would have done this unless we had a location we loved,” says Garner, “and certainly not if our window looked out onto someone’s backyard or driveway.”

Be honest with yourself about what you want this to be. Is it short term, long term? Are you doing it to save money or for other reasons? “Ask yourself what you’re really doing it for,” says McCarthy.

“Most tiny homes are around 25 feet,” says Garner. “And in the tiny house community, it’s the opposite of keeping up with the Jones.”

She says if you look at tiny house Facebook groups, you’ll see people saying, “Oh, I downsized even further,” or, “30 feet? Oh, that’s so big. What’s the point?”


Ah, tiny minds.

But they love their home as is – and so do their friends and families. The scenic waterfront location makes their home a popular hangout for gatherings, they say, taking advantage of its front-of-house area which includes sky-blue Adirondack chairs, a gas grill barbecue and a rolling river.

“That’s interesting to me,” says Garner. “It’s a smaller space but people just like it here.”

“And in the winter, it’s very cozy,” adds McCarthy.

The couple say that their generation imagines how it can live differently from those coming before them, and that includes their homes, too. “People in our generation expect to leave their jobs and expect lives will change,” says Garner. “We know we’re not going to live in one place forever.”

“You and I are risk takers in general,” says McCarthy. “We opened a business and got a tiny house. We just say yes to things.” 



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Forces of Nature

Connecticut Isn't Immune to Wild Weather

By JOEL SAMBERG

As Connecticut's smartest and most notable conversationalist once said, "It is best to read the weather forecast before we pray for rain."

Mark Twain was simply alluding to the old proverb that what will be, will be. In other words, if nasty weather is on the way, there's not much we can do about it, other than be prepared. Some Connecticut residents take that platitude in stride, simply because our state seems to avoid the massive meteorological and geographical events from which others often suffer, such as gargantuan hurricanes, town-clearing tornadoes, ground-leveling earthquakes, Noah-like floods and unrelenting wildfires.

But if we're to be as wise as that noted raconteur from Farmington Avenue in Hartford, then we should listen carefully to the

experts before we boast about our relatively moderate state of affairs.

What do the experts say? Basically, that since natural and weather-related disasters have happened in the past, they'll most likely happen again.

"We've had some pretty nasty weather that can rival what happens in other parts of the country," notes Bruce DePrest, chief meteorologist for WFSB. DePrest, now in his forty-first year as a weather broadcaster, points to several

examples, including blizzards in 1888, 1978 and 2013 that dropped massive amounts of snow, caused widespread damage – and in the case of the 2013 storm, plunged hundreds of thousands of Connecticut residents into darkness for days. There have also been tornadoes (including one in 1979 that killed three people, injured 500 and destroyed many homes and businesses), a number of serious floods,





Hartford residents glide down Pleasant Street. Photo courtesy of The Connecticut Historical Society.

some earthquakes and, if you search the files, a handful of wildfires.

“We live in this powder keg where you get cold air from Canada meeting the warm gulf stream,” DePrest explains. “That provides a tremendous amount of temperature differential, and that’s when ingredients are in place for big weather events to happen veryfast.” Over at WTNH Channel 8, Chief Meteorologist Gil Simmons adds the unknown calendar to the equation. “Time is ticking for a large impact hurricane. Tornadoes are likely, as well. Connecticut’s climate does go through active and quiet periods,” he says, noting how such a realization requires us to stay alert. “In fact, we had a record number of tornadoes in 2018. Every season can offer something tough to deal with. We have to be ready.”

FLOODS

Floods, too, can develop with relative ease and speed because Connecticut has no lack of roads and parking lots, both of which disallow heavy rain and overflowing rivers from draining into the ground. In a video called “Rising Waters: Planning for Flooding in Connecticut,” Diane Ifkovic, the state of Connecticut’s National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) coordinator, declares that flooding is the most prevalent and frequent natural hazard in the state.



Flood of 1936: Bushnell Park, Hartford



Flood of 1936: Hotel Bond Lobby, Hartford



Blizzard of 1888: Corner of Main Street and State Street



Ice storm on South Street, Colchester, circa 1880-1889



Greenwoods Road looking from Carl Stoeckel Mansion, Norfolk 1900



Right: The Great Clinton Street drift and tunnel, Hartford 1888



Ice storm in 1958, corner of South Quaker Lane and Thomas Street, West Hartford



Blizzard of 1888: Main Street, Middletown

In 2017, the Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) at the University of Connecticut issued a report warning that local sea levels are likely to rise as much as 20 inches by 2050. That, in concert with the roads and parking lots, will add to increased flooding. Furthermore, snow melt from Vermont and New Hampshire can swell the Connecticut River, which then engulfs portions of Wethersfield, Cromwell, Rocky Hill and Glastonbury. Even smaller bodies of water, such as the Farmington River, can overflow their banks, turning communities into lakes.

Unfortunately, Connecticut has already experienced severe damage and human devastation from floods. In August 1955, the Great Flood struck 71 of Connecticut's 169 towns and villages, killing 77 people and leaving hundreds of people homeless. Torrington, Ansonia, Naugatuck, Winsted, Putnam and the Unionville section of Farmington were among the most drastically affected but some 20,000 families across the state suffered some flood damage, and cleanup and repair costs soared into the millions. There are also more recent examples. In 2011, Nod Road in Simsbury became a virtual tributary of the river, as did Folly Farm at the base of Talcott Mountain.

VOLCANOES

Talcott (also known as Avon Mountain) is one of several ranges in the state. Although they don't rival those of many other states, their mere existence underscores the fact that geologic activity from eons ago may have left a shadow or a specter of what's to come. Hamden, for example, is situated between two formations known as "trap rock," and geologists speculate that the ridges of these formations resulted from massive volcanic eruptions more than 170 million years ago. In the 16th Century, indigenous people in that area reported what they called "earthshaking" events. Moodus, a Haddam village, is a Native American word loosely translated as "a place of noise." In fact, more than a hundred small quakes were detected in the region in the 1980s alone.


While there is no evidence that ancient volcanoes under Connecticut are planning a comeback any time soon, seismologists report that a volcano is indeed forming under a large swath of the northeastern United States. Vadim Levin, a geophysicist and professor in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at Rutgers University, coauthored a paper for the journal *Geology* in which he and his team report there are ongoing seismic forces at work. His team assessed data from the National Science Foundation, which used thousands of scientific instruments to monitor volcanic and earthquake data.

"It is not Yellowstone-like, but it's a distant relative in the sense that something relatively small – no more than a couple hundred miles across – is happening," Levin wrote in the report. But for such a small state, a couple of hundred miles could one day be a big deal; on average, our state is a little more than 100 miles long and 70 miles wide.

"Furthermore," adds Bruce DePrest, "in New England, the rock under the surface is older and more rigid, which means that there can be an earthquake up in Quebec and we'll feel it here in Connecticut." That happened in 1925. A 1944 earthquake centered in Massena, New York and a 2011 quake near Richmond, Virginia also shook violently in our state. Between October 2014 and July 2015, a swarm of more than 100 small earthquakes shook the ground at Wauregan, part of Plainfield, including a magnitude 3.1 earthquake on January 12, 2015.



Photo by Paul Benjunas/CT DEEP Wildlife Division



“IF IT’S A DRY WINTER AND
SPRING, OUR OWN HOUSES
CAN BECOME PART OF THE FUEL
CHAIN THAT FEEDS A MAJOR
FIRE EVENT – EVEN HERE IN
CONNECTICUT.”

– Richard Schenk, fire control officer at the Connecticut
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

WILDFIRES

While we don't have many earthquakes, we do sometimes have a lack of rain and excessive heat. Both are known to spark other kinds of events, one of which is not often associated with Connecticut: wildfires.

As one of the smaller states, we have less uninterrupted acreage than others to burn during a wildfire sparked either naturally or through human intervention. Also, those same roads and parking lots that exacerbate flooding act as barriers to wildfires. But wildfires can, and have, occurred.

"We had a fire in Cornwall which went to 400 acres," recalls Richard Schenk, fire control officer at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. "It posed no real threat, had good containment lines, and wasn't going anywhere else – but it was smoldering on the ground for months." The 2016 fire started in mid-September and firefighters were still finding hotspots in January.

"Any fire that's 500 acres or more in Connecticut becomes very complex because of the density and the fact that homeowners and local governments aren't used to dealing with them," says Schenk, who is quick to add that Connecticut fire departments are well trained. He has fought fires all over the country, including Alaska, as well as in Canada, and does not discount the fact that even in Connecticut, with the right conditions, a wide-ranging, long-lasting fire episode is entirely possible.

Several decades ago, there were far more major fires in Connecticut when the farmland that had dotted the landscape prior to World War II was ignored and became more susceptible to fire. But even though old farmland is now less of a problem, other issues that can increase the

possibility of wildfires have taken its place, such as gypsy moth defoliation, increased leaf debris and more dumping of wood ash into gardens.

"What's more," Schenk adds, "if it's a dry winter and spring, our own houses can become part of the fuel chain that feeds a major fire event – even here in Connecticut."

So are we ready for any weather catastrophe or natural disaster?

If history is any guide, the answer is that no one really knows. That's because Connecticut residents have reacted to different events in different ways at different times. The middle of 1816, for example, was known as one of the coldest summers in Connecticut history, and resulted in widespread crop failures. According to state historian Walter Woodward (who is also an associate professor of history at UConn), residents reacted "by throwing in the towel and migrating to places like western New York and the Ohio Western Reserve to seek better opportunities."

By contrast, he says, after a major flood in 1936 and a destructive hurricane in 1938, residents worked together to implement full-scale, multi-year recovery efforts. Even though there's a world of difference between 1816 and 1938, sometimes human emotions are unable to tell time. Woodward notes that there is now a larger tendency to rely on federal, state and local resources for help, and that alone can cause some residents to be less than diligent. Then the question becomes whether or not the government is ready on our behalf.

According to Regina Rush-Kittle, deputy commissioner at the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, "The state is well-positioned to

handle any disaster or emergency."

Connecticut, she explains, is divided into five emergency planning regions, each with a full team of representatives from local communities who can skillfully provide support functions that include, among other things, evacuation assistance and mass injury care.

Twain once jested that we must never put off till tomorrow what can be done just as well the day after tomorrow. Back then, people knew far less about hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, floods and wildfires, and how they can all happen even in a fairly quiet state like Connecticut.


But the earth is a complicated place, with tricks up its sleeve that won't amuse us. There's nothing we can do about it except be ready. After all, as Twain also said, "The world owes us nothing. It was here first." 



Photo by Paul Benjunas/CT DEEP Wildlife Division

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BREAKFAST WITH



Breakfast with **SHANA SCHNEIDER**

By CARA ROSNER / photography by STAN GODLEWSKI



Shana Schneider started Fitstyle by Shana three years ago to help people who want to be active don't have the time - or desire - to hit the gym. She offers tips for working exercise into people's daily lives.

Shana Schneider almost never stops moving – literally.

She’s been known to do squats in her kitchen while waiting for cookies to bake, whip cream by hand for a quick arm workout, use her carry-on as a hand weight at the airport, and do leg lifts while waiting in line for her morning coffee.

She loves being active so much, in fact, that she’s made it into a career. As the founder of Fitstyle by Shana, she shows people how and where they can fit exercise into their daily routines. She’s the author of the book “Fitstyle Your Life: 5 Simple Keys for Taking Exercise off Your To-do List,” a certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor, and is licensed to teach Zumba and Walk 15® classes.

“I’ve always been interested in the fitness industry,” says Schneider, 41, who lives in New Haven. “I want to help people find what kind of fitness will connect with their lifestyle. I realized that time was everyone’s biggest challenge, so it’s about how to fit movement into things you’re already doing.”

To that end, she leads a growing number of Fitstyle walking tours throughout New Haven. Companies and universities hire her to lead group walks that not only burn some calories but also teach walkers about the city around them.

When she launched Fitstyle three years ago, Shneider, who is a Yale University alum, had more than 15 years of professional experience at places including Yale, New Haven-based Technolutions, and TV Guide. She is president of the board of directors of the New Haven Free Public Library.

She recently took some time over a cup of coffee – which she drank while standing, of course – at Maison Mathis in New Haven to share what she loves about the Elm City.

Q: What about New Haven prompted you to put down roots here?

A: I didn’t actually stay in New Haven when I graduated [from Yale]. I moved to New York and lived in Manhattan for a couple of years. There, I really fell in love with public transportation and the walkability of the city. Then I moved back to New Haven in 2003 and I felt that the city was different. There was an energy that I didn’t notice before, but also, I had a completely different perspective – I changed from a student who was focused on studies and campus, and

now saw it as a resident and a community member. Then I was like, “Whoa, this has everything New York has.”

Q: What’s your favorite way to spend a day in New Haven?

A: I would take a walk up to the top of East Rock. The view from the top of East Rock, whether it’s the wintertime or summertime, is just priceless. I would get a group of friends and do a little bit of a brunch crawl; we’d pick a few different locations. There are so many places to eat; why pick just one? And you get to walk between them. Then I’d go online and see what’s going on that day in New Haven – maybe it’s a show at College Street Music Hall, maybe it’s the Shubert. Then spend the afternoon shopping for what to wear that night.

Q: What’s your favorite part of New Haven to walk?

A: My favorite part of the city is downtown because there’s just so much to look at, get distracted by, and see and do, all in a condensed area. Most [Fitstyle clients] do the New Haven and Yale route. We cover about two miles in an hour. You really do get a feel for how much is here and get to cover a lot of downtown.

Q: What’s a local hidden gem that you wish more people knew about?

A: The hidden gems are usually right in front of you. People, I think, miss the public art that is in New Haven. How many people have seen the mural that’s on the wall next to Soul de Cuba? How many times have people walked by City Hall and not noticed the cool red sculpture that’s in the courtyard back there or taken the time to learn the artists behind them? To me, those are the hidden gems in plain sight.

Also, the New Haven Free Public Library on the green. The Orchid Café, which is in the library now. People don’t realize that it’s such an amazing space with a lot of resources. And I often use it as a co-working space.

Q: What are your favorite ways to stay active during the winter?

A: I actually have a tendency to do the same things I do in the summer in the winter; I just layer up. I do a lot of walking because I think that is where I get a lot

of my movement throughout the day. Living in New Haven, because it is so walkable, I can throw on my boots and my layers, and walk.

I will do ice skating once a year. I did curling – I look for super-random stuff that is very specific to the season. I also teach Zumba and that's something that I will do in the wintertime. I'll even go to someone else's class; it feels like a summer party and you're guaranteed to get warm.

Q: If you could eat your way through the city, where would you have breakfast? Lunch? Dinner? Cocktails?

A: I would start at Olmo with a bagel. Unless it's Friday, in which case I would go to Skappo for their fresh donuts, which are only available on Friday morning. Since I'm walking there, no guilt. For lunch, I would say Union League Cafe. It's such a good deal. It's really affordable, and the space is beautiful with the windows and the light coming in. For dinner, it's Tavern on State. They are doing some unique things. They try to do local and seasonal, so the menu is always changing. For cocktails, which might happen before

dinner and after dinner too, my go-to places are High George – with that amazing view and really great drinks – and also 116 Crown. The last spot, for dessert, is August. Not a lot of people know it because it's a tiny little wine bar, which also has great food, but they have great desserts. You can also pair dessert with one of their great wines.

Q: When out of towners visit, what's on your must-do list?

A: Definitely East Rock. Heading to Yale museums – they're free and open to the public; whether you're popping in for five minutes or an hour or more, I think those are a must. Of course, New Haven is a foodie town, so we've got to eat. Probably hitting up one of the ice cream places – Arethusa or Ashley's – and of course, a Fitstyle walking tour, depending on the weather. And I would probably do an evening at East Rock Brewing Company. It's a local brewing company and you can bring in food, so I could bring in pizza from all the New Haven places and do sort of a taste test.

For more about Fitstyle walking tours, visit fitstylebyshana.com. 

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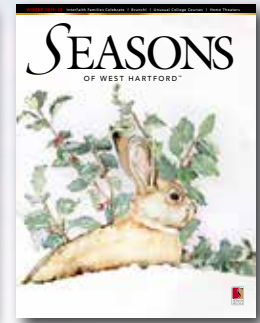
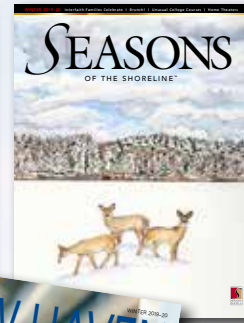
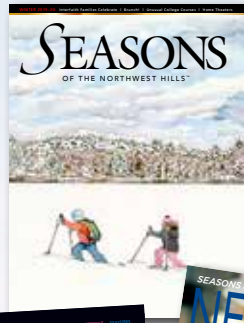
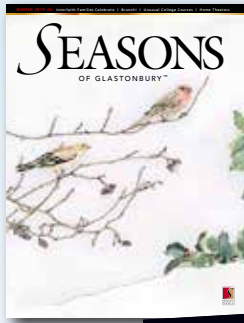
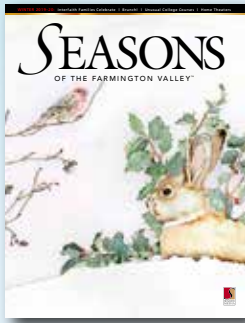
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Professor Bart Roccoberton, Jr., director of the Puppet Arts program at the University of Connecticut, chats with students.

Major (and Minor) Ambitions

Colleges and universities are offering students some unusual programs of studies

By **JOEL SAMBERG**

Imagine there were no moral or ethical restrictions against making up the name of a college major or minor to put on your resume. Some graduates might like that idea, simply as a way to impress prospective employers.

Let's say you want to work for a company known for its broad portfolio with more than two dozen individual manufacturing processes and marketing plans. Wouldn't it be great if you could list a complexity degree under the education banner on your resume? Doesn't complexity seem to be what a company like that is all about? (If you listed your degree in romance languages, it might not have the same effect.)

In Connecticut, more college students these days don't have to make anything up. That's because there are distinctive major and minor courses of study – and the

degrees that go with them – that help keep many resumes at the top of the candidate pile. Complexity, a minor at the University of Hartford in West Hartford, happens to be one of them. So are puppetry at the University of Connecticut, drone applications at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven, and equine studies at Post University in Waterbury.

UHart established the van Rooy Center for Complexity and Conflict Analysis a decade ago, through an endowment from university regent Jean-Pierre van Rooy and his wife, Marie-Claire. It was a topic in which van Rooy was very interested. In 2018, the school began to offer complexity as a minor.

"Our most recent graduate was an economics major who told me that with every job interview he went on, he



White Rhino by Ana Craciun. Photo by Richard Termine

was asked about his minor in complexity, and every time he explained it, the interviewer said that it was a field of study that would come in very handy for the job,” says Jane Horvath, Ph.D., associate professor of economics and director of the van Rooy Center.

“We have complexity minors who major in computer science, health science, political science, psychology, economics, and much more. Knowing how systems work and how they can be adapted to work better and in a changing environment is an extremely useful skill.”

The official explanation used by the university is that complexity is the study of the behavior of multiple interactions – including how crowds turn into mobs or how birds flock. Horvath’s view of its interdisciplinary value mirrors what professors at other colleges say about their

own unique major and minor degrees.

Even puppetry.

“We’ve had majors who have gone on to get teaching degrees and then successfully use puppetry in their classrooms as a teaching aid,” reports Professor Bart Roccoberton, Jr., director of the Puppet Arts program at the University of Connecticut, which offers master of fine arts, master of arts and bachelor of fine arts degrees in puppetry. The program came to life 54 years ago, when a set designer and technical director named Frank Ballard began to teach one puppetry class. It became so popular that the university had to limit the number of students who could enroll.

“We’ve had engineering students, art students, and even future attorneys in our classes,” Roccoberton shares. With his tongue only partially in his cheek (par for the course in



Performance of PETER & THE WOLF with the Boston Pops, Symphony Hall, Boston



puppetry), he says that lawyers often have to manipulate the people they cross-examine – and puppetry is all about manipulation. But that’s more than just a quip, for there’s truth to the sentiment, too: a solid background in the artistic and technical techniques and the emotional and persuasive effects of puppetry have proven as useful for puppeteers as it has for professionals in dozens of other fields.



Celia Stangarone

“Ultimately, when a company interviews someone for a job, what they really care about are the candidate’s skills, relevant work or internship experiences, and referrals from certified professionals,” notes Celia Stangarone, a career coach and transition specialist from Wethersfield who has worked as a consultant for HR departments at many large companies throughout Connecticut. “On the other

hand, if a college major or minor that you list on your resume helps spark a discussion about those very skills and experiences, then its distinctiveness can actually be an asset.”

The only time a distinctive major or minor on a resume may not work so well is if no logical connection at all can be made between the major or the minor and the job being sought. That, Stangarone says, would be like looking for a job in amusement park management by talking up your degree in inorganic chemistry.

But there are many courses of study that should be talked up, even when the connection isn’t immediately apparent.



Scott Graves at SCSU. Photo by **Isabelle Chenowith**

Take drone applications, for instance.

Drones, those small machines that dart about in the sky and hover like overgrown hummingbirds, are increasingly used by journalists, farmers, police officers, firefighters, miners, real estate agents, and dozens of other professionals. Drone applications, a minor at SCSU, can be traced to



Southern Connecticut State University Drone Academy. Photo by **Scott Graves**



Southern Connecticut State University Drone Academy. Photo by **Scott Graves**

the interests of Scott Graves, an environment, geography, and marine sciences professor at the school who traces his own curiosity to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010. Although that happened before the drone industry took off, many civilians used makeshift drones (cameras on balloons or kites, for example) to track the extent of the oil spill along the shoreline. Graves started that way too – but soon graduated to real drones.

“I began collaborating with a journalism professor. He was using drones for storytelling and I was using it for mapping. Together we realized that drones were going to change a lot of industries,” Graves says. Students who major in science, engineering, creative arts, journalism, and several other disciplines in SCSU’s College of Arts

& Sciences can work toward a drone applications minor. Despite the fact that flying drones often has the aura of amusement, the minor covers such weighty topics as FAA regulations, privacy issues and legal ramifications. It’s certainly not all fun and games.

If an expertise in flying drones can turn an architect into a better urban planner, can knowing how a horse prefers to eat make you a better environmental scientist?


Absolutely – because the more you know about the animal kingdom, the stronger foundation you’ll have with respect to the needs and challenges of effective environmental stewardship. In a program at Post University that goes back to the 1970s, students can earn a bachelor of science in equine studies that covers horse anatomy,



Members of the Equine Studies program and the Equine Club try to bring horses to campus for petting and pony rides a couple of times per year.

Stangarone, the career coach and transition expert from Wethersfield. She had no idea when she attended UConn what career to pursue. Her degree was in general studies and she figured it out after she graduated. It's who you are on the inside that's important, she says, not necessarily what ends up listed on your resume as a major or minor degree.

Nevertheless, several good things happen when students pick distinctive majors and minors. For one thing, it often opens doors. For another, students connect with equally unique classmates who may help their careers later on.

"I tell my puppetry students that their first networking meeting happens right here in class," says UConn's Roccoberton. His department's puppetry graduates have been out in the field for decades now, involved with the Muppets, "Little Shop of Horrors," "The Wizard of Oz," "Avenue Q," television shows such as "Between the Lions," and in classrooms, museums and theaters all over the world. Working for four years toward a degree in puppetry is a great thing, Roccoberton says – but having 50 years' worth of successful alumni who are eager to help the younger generation is an even greater thing. Sometimes it makes life much less complex. 

physiology, nutrition, wellness, safe barn and stable practices, and historical and contemporary equine business needs and challenges.

"Students enter the program with the idea that they just want to work with horses. Then, once the program is underway, they learn that they are getting a far broader education," says Abigail Nemec, the equine studies program chair at Post. "Some of our students go into psychology, biology, natural resource management and other fields. Over the course of four years, their ideas evolve about the world. They discover other things that are important to them. The nice thing about equine studies is that it allows them to do something they're passionate about while also getting an education that will help them in whatever careers they select."

Post doesn't own any horses or stables of its own, but leases animals and facilities from other local operations. That, Nemec says, is a win on many levels: students learn about horses in real-life environments, and the barn and stable operators have the benefit of skilled equine care from Post students. "It's an excellent partnership," she says.

In Connecticut, students can also major or minor in histology at Goodwin College (that's the study of the microscopic anatomy of cells and tissues), Caribbean culture at Wesleyan, formal organizations at Trinity, computer game design at Manchester Community College, and dispute resolution at Quinnipiac.

Still, not every student knows what field he or she wants to enter after college graduation – and even drones and horses may not help them decide. That was true for Celia



Nemec teaching at the anvil



Fast Forward

The New Year is approaching fast, and it's a big one.

Kind of.

The year 2000 was the definition of a big New Year. It had everything: A change of century. Those two digits that we had all lived with for so long would be no more. Flying cars, interstellar travel, chicken dinner in a pill – and all the other promises made by the science-fiction industry of the 21st Century – were now on our doorstep. The culmination of Prince's classic song 1999. Not to mention the impending collapse of civilization because computer scientists, decades before, left a small date problem for future generations to frantically solve.

The changeover from 2009 to 2010 was admittedly a lot less exciting than the dawn of the 21st century, and decidedly less fraught with peril. But there was one important ramification of that particular New Year: We could finally stop saying that we were living in the aughts. What a stupid way to describe a decade.

Now we stand at the cusp of the 2020s, and I find it almost impossible to believe. I remember sitting in my fifth-grade math class, learning to subtract across multiple zeros by calculating future years and ages, and deciding that the year 2020 would likely be the last year that I would have any fun. I'll be 49 years old next year. Practically dead, at least in the estimation of my

boyhood self.

What an idiot I was.

Today, I teach 10-year-old children. Though they are hardly perfect, they are most certainly smarter than I was at their age.

As we look ahead at the coming decade, it's hard to predict what might happen. Though 2020 implies perfect vision, what we have is anything but a clear sense of the future. One hundred years ago, the 1920s opened with optimism and joy. The Roaring Twenties, complete with a soaring economy, flapper dresses, and a bright future.

Then 1929 hit. The stock market collapsed, and the world descended into the greatest economic collapse since the Black Plague. I'm willing to bet that very few people celebrating

the New Year in 1920 saw that coming.

As we look back at our naïve selves in 2010, looking ahead at the next decade, I'm willing to guess that no one could have predicted some of the events of the last 10 years, either.

The Chicago Cubs won the World Series in 2016, ending an 108-year World Series championship drought. With the Red Sox winning the Series in 2004 (as well as in 2007, 2013 and 2018), the Cubs' victory brought an end to the lovable, cursed losers of baseball. Now, any team that fails to win a championship is poorly run, inadequately financed, or lacking proper analytics. The Curse of the Bambino and The Curse of the Billy Goat were the last vestiges of an innocent time now lost forever.

Here's a few things that seem to have been around forever but actually started in the 2010s:

Selfies. That's right. Selfies became a thing over the course of the last decade, beginning with cameras in our phones and extending to the embarrassment of the selfie stick. Instead of taking photos of things like mountains and dogs and our loved ones, we have turned to taking photos of ourselves. God, we suck.

Memes took hold in the 2010s, too, offering up such artistic classics as Grumpy Cat, Distracted Boyfriend, a small boy on a beach making a fist, and a young girl standing in front of a burning house, smiling with glee.

It's hard to imagine how the world survived before human beings could add short, pithy comments to these universally beloved palettes.

We also experienced some rare moments of collective attention over the course of the past decade. With the continuing fragmentation

What will the
2020s hold for
us? There's really
no telling. If there
was, I'd be in Las
Vegas and so
would you.



of the media and the decline of collective, unifying moments except for rare instances like the Super Bowl, we found solace in brief, universal firestorms like The Dress.

Remember that? Was it blue and black, or white and gold? The world raged over this important issue for days, but at least we raged together, united under a common banner of fashion stupidity.

Then there was the summer of the ice bucket challenge. Remember that? In lieu of donating money to a good cause, Americans decided that it would be better to embrace their personal narcissism and dump ice water over their heads while filming said action, so they could post something to social media that everyone else was doing so we could all do the same thing at the same time and look both cool and ordinary for doing it.

The 2010s were also the decade of innovation. The iPad was born in the previous decade, which seems remarkable since they are now everywhere. We scoffed at the name when the late Steve Jobs presented it onstage for the first time, complaining that iPad engendered thoughts of feminine

hygiene products, but Jobs knew how stupid we are and how quickly we would accept this name. A decade later, Jobs is now gone but the name seems just fine, and the iPad has infiltrated every aspect of our life. I can't tell you how excited I am to sit down in a restaurant and be handed an iPad rather than an old-fashioned paper menu.


These are the kind of innovations that we've always wanted. Not exactly interstellar travel or chicken dinner in a pill, but now I can see a picture of the food that I will eat and perhaps even play Words with Friends while waiting, rather than conversing with my actual friends sitting across the table from me.

Voice-activated home assistants like Amazon's Echo were also born in the previous decade, and they have been a boon for parents everywhere. Alexa can't change a diaper or empty a dishwasher, but when your child wants to know what planet has the most moons, you no longer need to find an answer for your curious little monster.

"I don't know," you say. "Ask Alexa. Our other parent. The smarter parent."

The answer, by the way, is Saturn. We discovered 20 new moons around the planet this year, allowing it to overtake Jupiter in the moon department. Another important change in the 2010s.

What will the 2020s hold for us? There's really no telling. If there was, I'd be in Las Vegas and so would you. Perhaps this will be the decade when the cure for the common cold is finally discovered. Maybe we'll find a way to get blood out of a white shirt. Maybe we'll find a few more moons orbiting Jupiter, allowing the gas giant to retake the mantle of most moons.

Personally, I'm hoping for chicken dinner in a pill. 

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