



Working to benefit the community of Westbrook and its residents

## PLANTING SEEDS IN THE WESTBROOK COMMUNITY FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS

### PLANS TO PLANTS

In spring of 2014 The Westbrook Foundation gave the Valley Shore YMCA a grant in the amount of \$3000 to help seed and establish the community collaborative garden. In its premier year, the fertile garden yielded a bountiful crop of over 2,000 pounds of fresh vegetables



Photo courtesy of the Valley Shore YMCA

and produce that was then donated to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Pantries food pantry located at Saint Marks Roman Catholic Church in Westbrook.

“The generous donation from The Westbrook Foundation enabled us turn to our plans into plants,” said Chris Pallatto, Executive Director of Valley Shore YMCA.

Occupying 3,800 square feet, with 18 different growing beds, housing feverishly growing plants of squash, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, and bell peppers, over 100 Valley Shore YMCA volunteers clocked in over 1200 hours of service time, planting, weeding, sowing, and harvesting the garden to make this seedling project a huge success. In addition to the popular staple garden usuals, some specialty items were also added to the mix including cubanelle peppers and broccoli, and herbs, such as oregano and basil.

The idea, Chris explained, was to be able to harvest a high yield of vegetables rather than a large variety of different crops.

“The Foundation’s support enabled us to purchase

the materials needed to create and sustain our garden successfully. Specifically, the funds enabled us to buy deer fencing to keep ‘critters’ out, purchase the soil and composting materials to create a nutrient rich base, and install an irrigation system to ensure a healthy crop through the hottest months,” said Chris.

He added, “Thanks to The Westbrook Foundation, we were able to donate a huge amount of fresh produce to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Pantries and we helped several families in our community, as well as others, have the ability to have access to nutritious, locally grown, fresh food.”

Now that the seed has been planted for the community garden, the YMCA has plans of expanding the space this year and adding an additional 12 growing beds, increase the bounty and producing even more fresh goodies for those in need.

If you are interested in getting your hands dirty and volunteering at the garden, go to [www.vsymca.org](http://www.vsymca.org) for more information.

### SEEDS TO FLOWERS

Helping the Westbrook community remain beautiful, The Westbrook Foundation awarded the Westbrook Garden Club a grant in the amount of \$3,852. The monies are being used to replace 17 different planting containers in prominent locations throughout town.

With a mission to promote interest, understanding and education of gardening, horticulture and floral design, as well as, conserve and preserve the natural resources of Westbrook, the Garden Club is extremely grateful for the donation of these funds.

“Thanks to The Westbrook Foundation, whose grant will be paired with Garden Club funds, we will be replacing planting barrels in town and purchasing self-watering inserts to reduce the amount of time and water needed to keep the planters moist and plants thriving,” said Westbrook Garden Club President Mindy Gordon.

The Club, hand and hand with the Foundation, is working diligently to enhance the natural attractiveness of this small town and invites everyone to “Come Grow with Us!”

Local Postal Customer



# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Spring greetings to all the members of our Westbrook community! After battling another difficult winter season, the promise of new possibilities and rejuvenated commitments for the betterment of our town are before us with the restorative energy of the coming season.

We on the board of The Westbrook Foundation look forward to assisting you in sustaining and enhancing the quality of life we enjoy.

This Annual Report is created to highlight some of the initiatives the Foundation has supported this past year and to update you on the unfolding lives of Westbrook students who received financial assistance over the years. It's our hope that this information will spur new interest in seeking Foundation backing for programs or projects that you envision for the community.

The Foundation accepts grant applications in April and October. Approvals are strictly governed by Barbara Spencer's requirement that funds may only be used to benefit Westbrook residents. Applicants are asked to adhere to this rule and describe how it will be monitored if an organization has a multi-town reach. It should also be noted that only non-profit organizations may be recipients of Foundation funds per IRS rules.

Membership on the Board of Directors is for a five-year term. Directors may serve a maximum of two terms and when vacancies occur, they are filled by agreement of the remaining members. Staggered terms, along with term limits, guarantee that new perspectives are introduced on a regular basis, while maintaining an institutional history through current members. We welcomed Eve Barakos in January who fills the position so ably occupied by Beverly Schirmeier, over the past ten years.

As stated many times by many people, the heart of our community is kept vibrant through the extraordinary efforts of volunteers. They represent many organizations that provide invaluable service to us all. It's often difficult to find individuals, in fact, who aren't volunteering their talents, time, and energy in some way. Please consider what your group would dream of doing for our town if only the financing was in place. While the funds available to The Westbrook Foundation are not limitless, we always strive to choose recipients whose applications will benefit the most people.

The Foundation is required by law to distribute a specific percentage of its income every three years. While the overall economy struggles to completely recover, our investment portfolio has achieved significant returns due to the surging market. Please take this opportunity to brainstorm with your fellow community members about what could be a major boost for our wonderful town.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Crawford', written in a cursive style.

James Crawford, Chairman

The logo for The Westbrook Foundation, Inc. features the word "The" in a simple serif font, positioned above the word "Westbrook" which is written in a large, elegant, cursive script. Below "Westbrook" is the text "Foundation, Inc." in a serif font, flanked by two horizontal lines. Underneath this, the phrase "Established 1984" is written in a smaller, italicized serif font.

The  
Westbrook  
Foundation, Inc.  
*Established 1984*

## A Contribution to the Future

An individual or an organization who makes a gift or bequest to The Westbrook Foundation can be assured that they have made a contribution which will benefit future generations.

For more information about The Westbrook Foundation, go to [www.westbrookfoundation.org](http://www.westbrookfoundation.org).

## Flexibility in Giving

**CASH:** An outright cash gift to The Westbrook Foundation qualifies for Federal Income Tax deductions in the year of the gift.

**SECURITIES:** Stocks and Bonds that have increased in value may be given to The Westbrook Foundation. The donor receives a tax deduction for the value of the gift at market value, and avoids capital gains taxes.

**BEQUEST:** Bequests of cash, securities or property may be made to The Westbrook Foundation either as a specific sum or as a percentage of the donor's estate.

**MEMORIAL GIFTS:** A gift to The Westbrook Foundation is a meaningful way to honor a special person or create a memorial to a loved one.

### LIFE INSURANCE/CHARITABLE GIFT

**ANNUITIES:** Donors may name The Westbrook Foundation as a beneficiary of life insurance policies. In the case of annuities, donor may choose to retain income during his or her lifetime.

**CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST:** A donor may designate The Westbrook Foundation as the beneficiary of this type of trust and still receive income during his or her lifetime. Donor receives tax deduction in the year the trust is established, and reduces estate taxes.





From left: Chairman James Crawford, Paul Polo, Constance Vogell, Eve Barakos, Harry Ruppenicker Jr. Larry Lariviere, Vice Chairman Bernadette Jones, David Russell and Brian M. O'Connor

**In 2014, The Westbrok Foundation generously administered a total of \$78,492.84 in grant monies to be used to aid the coastal community of Westbrok.**

The following scholarships are awarded to Westbrok residents each year. Help to increase these scholarships by contributing to the fund principal of your choice:

- Calderari-Hoxsie-Schubert-Steinson Memorial
- Josephine S. Crump Scholarship
- Dorothy C. Hoyt Scholarship
- Manstan/Nolf Memorial Industrial Arts
- Herbert A. Muller Jr. Memorial
- Henry Ortner Memorial
- Elliot A. Spencer Scholarship
- Raymond L. Wilson Scholarship
- Westbrok Grange #123 Scholarship
- Ellen S. Murphy Scholarship
- Barbara Spencer Memorial Scholarships
- Pat Mazeau and Myrtie Gareau Scholarship
- Messerschmidt Fund
- Brandon E. Norman Memorial
- Marie Patrice Mazeau Scholarship
- Dan Nuhn Scholarship
- Shoreline Amateur Radio Club Scholarship
- Joanne Marino-Murray Memorial Scholarship
- Eileen M. Daily Scholarship

I am considering making a contribution to The Westbrok Foundation and wish to be contacted by a Director of the Foundation to discuss it.

My contribution is enclosed and I would like it to be applied to the fund principal for the following existing Scholarship.

Enclosed please find my company's matching gift form.

I would prefer my gift to remain anonymous.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

*Become a partner in philanthropy through annual giving. Please make checks payable to The Westbrok Foundation, Inc. All gifts are tax-deductible.*

### For Further Information

An individual contemplating a gift to the Foundation should seek the advice of his or her attorney.

This mailer was prepared as reference material, and further information, including copies of the Certificate of Incorporation and the By Laws of the Foundation may be obtained from:

The Westbrok Foundation, Inc.  
P.O. Box 528  
Westbrok, Connecticut 06498

### Directors

Eve Barakos

James M. Crawford, *Chairman*  
Bernadette Jones, *Vice Chairman*

Lawrence Lariviere

Brian O'Connor

Paul Polo

Harry Ruppenicker Jr., *Treasurer*

David Russell

Constance Vogell, *Secretary*

### Administrative Director

Nancy J. Howard

### Public Relations

Karena Garrity

### Honorary Members

Edmund Binder

Jane Butterworth

Janet Dickey

Teri Gavigan

John Hall III

Robert Kindt, Jr.

Judith Lowe

Joanne Marino-Murray\*

Donald Morrison

Barbara Reeve

Beverly Schirmeier

Johanna Schneider

Claire Anthony Smith

Michael Wells, *Attorney*

Richard Westbrok

\* Deceased

# PLANTING SEEDS OF A DIFFERENT KIND

## BUDDY BASEBALL

Opening up the all American game of baseball to children with special needs, The Westbrook Foundation provided a grant in the amount of \$10,000 to the Buddy Baseball program in Westbrook for seed money to start up the new challenger league in the community.

Buddy Baseball is a skill building non-competitive recreational league for boys and girls with special needs. The program focuses on experience of team play, exposure to a lifetime skill, and participation in one of America's favorite past times.

"We don't count scores, we count smiles," said Dr. Kim Walker, President of Shoreline Buddy Baseball Challenger Little League.

"We are so incredibly grateful for the Foundation's grant. It has allowed us to start up this league, as well as purchase some much needed equipment like uniforms, batting helmets and bases with wheelchair access" said Chris Walker, Director of the Shoreline Buddy Baseball Challenger Little League program.

Each child involved in this program is paired with at

least one volunteer middle school or high school "buddy", sometimes two, depending on the needs of the individual.

"We serve participants ages four to 21 years-old," explained Chris. "This is a very rewarding program to be a part of and giving children who may not otherwise have a chance to get out and play a sport on a team, with other kids their own age is wonderful," said Chris. "For many of these participants, this program is an absolute dream come true and they just light up with excitement as they hit a ball down the base line, or get a chance to go up to bat, it really is amazing."

Buddy Baseball plays all their games on Sundays in the spring at the Westbrook baseball fields.

"Sometimes we have all three fields going at once and



an audience of two to three hundred people," said Chris, whose own teenagers volunteer as "buddies".

"This grant from The Westbrook Foundation will allow us to grow our program and ensure the longevity of the program in the future," added Chris who invites everyone to come out to watch the first game, which will be held on May 3rd at noon.

## MARITIME EDUCATION NETWORK, INC.

Planting seeds of education, exploration, adventure and fun, in the youth of the Westbrook Community, The Westbrook Foundation awarded a grant in the amount of \$2500 to the renowned Maritime Education Network, Inc. program. The money will be used to help fund scholarships for summer camp activities, which introduce and educate children about the wonders and excitement of the Long Island Sound and the beach environment of its coastal communities.

"Grants and donations like the one from The Westbrook Foundation are so important to our program because it allows us to offer our programs to students who may not otherwise have a chance to experience this kind of summer camp," said Kathy David, Founder/Director of Maritime Education Network Inc.

She explained that Westbrook has the third largest population of students attending the Maritime Education Network, Inc summer camps, which are based in Old Saybrook and utilize Westbrook Town Beach as one of their sites for exploration when they are doing the crabbing day of the camp.

"If I were Barbara Spencer, I would be very pleased to see that money from the Foundation she started is going to programs such as this one, and children of all ages are getting to enjoy and learn about the unique coastal environment they are growing up in," said Kathy.

She added, "Our shoreline communities are so fortunate to live with such an incredible resource right in our own

backyards, yet many know so little about it. Using the sea as a carrot, through our thoughtfully developed Maritime programming and the insightful and generous efforts of Miss Spencer and the Foundation, students in grades K-12 are able, through experiential hands on learning, to gain knowledge and appreciation of the Long Island Sound watershed, instilling a lifelong passion for the healthy, cost effective outdoor activities and career opportunities that our glorious ecosystems provide."

Like the tides, the Maritime Education Network program is changing all the time, teaching kids about tidal creeks, fishing, crabbing and so much more.

"We have three certified U.S. Sailing on water Powerboat Instructors, which enable us to teach kids on water boat handling. Many Senior Projects are completed here, Education majors have completed student teaching assignments with our 'BEST' certified teacher, (we have 3 who have received the designation of CT Teacher of the Year) our kids have built two, 27' River Batteaus (and taken first place in the CT River Raft Race), five DN ice boats, about a dozen Brockway skiffs and scows and we have excitedly watched as one of our 5 year Youth Group students has continued on to become one of the major creators of America's Cup boat, Oracle, and was one of only three to be retained throughout the race," explained Kathy proudly.

In addition to summer camp programs, the Maritime Education Network does school field trips, participates in Project Limulus (horseshoe crab tagging & tracking), sets up aquariums, and holds birthday parties. It also has an Environmental Youth Group for middle and high school students who have been working with DEEP and the



Audubon Society to build and replace osprey platforms, as well as to map and investigate one of the largest concentrations of osprey found on Great Island.

"Kids of all ages are always tired at the end of the day after being here and I think that is a pretty good measure of the amount of fun we have," smiled Kathy. "We pride ourselves in being a resource for kids where they can come and get a chance to learn, have fun and most importantly relax and enjoy being a kid while at the same time realizing that where we live is a beautiful, interesting place."

## WHERE THEY ARE NOW

### YI-MEI TRUXES

From Westbrook to New York City, a graduate of the class of 2004, Yi-Mei Truxes is now in the throes of fast paced life, enjoying all the opportunities and adventures the Big Apple has to offer, however, she attributes her small town upbringing in Westbrook, to getting her to where she is today; the Senior Marketing Manager for Vogue Magazine.

"I am forever grateful that my parents raised my brothers and me in a small town. Teachers in Westbrook were supportive and took extraordinary interest in students' personal development and growth. In middle school and high school, I hated math with a vengeance... and my teachers took a lot of extra time out of their days to guide me through the problems and provide context for what I was doing. Fast forward 10 years: I manage marketing analytics and research (based in statistics) at Vogue. My team and I are the resident math experts—our main job is to turn numbers into meaningful and digestible marketing stories that help secure business for the publication," says Yi-Mei, whose job is very demanding and commandeers most of her free time, but when she does have a moment or two for herself, her favorite things to do are head up state to the Catskills or hop on a plane to travel "anywhere" to visit friends and family.

Making good use of a scholarship from The Westbrook Foundation, Yi-Mei graduated from Colgate University in 2008, where she majored in Psychology and Writing.

"While the scholarships distributed by the Foundation are of course important, even more significant than that, is the recognition and the vote of confidence a young person receives from the Foundation. I will forever be grateful for that support, says Yi-Mei thankfully.

She adds, "There is nothing that beats being close to your family and childhood friends. I'll always miss that about living in Westbrook."

Her advice to current Westbrook High School students is to appreciate the peaceful beauty of their surroundings being right on the Sound.

In addition, know that "...life is going to take you places you never expected it would. Be prepared for the course to change—and when it does, take a step back and really think about it. Don't fight to hold on to what you thought you wanted when you were 16 or 17 years old. Keep an open and honest mind."



Photo by Robert O'Shaughnessy

### Esteban Afonso

A member of the graduating Westbrook High School Class of 1999 Esteban Afonso is now living in Chapel Hill, NC with his wife Whitney Afonso and their son, six year-old TJ. He works as an analytical consultant for a company called First Analytics based out of Raleigh NC and his wife is a professor in the School of Government at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Calling his job exciting and different, Esteban says this field was not something he always knew he wanted to pursue.

"I had no idea what subjects I enjoyed most so I pursued education in areas of applied mathematics (biomedical and electrical engineering undergrad/economics PhD) because of the broad applicability of this skill set to almost all other subjects," explains Esteban.

Now using all of his education and skills to the upmost potential Esteban says he is very happy with his career path. "I get to solve new puzzles every day and I like it. Working as an analytical consultant, other companies pay our company to build data products that they use to make decisions based on statistics and programming,"

explains Esteban who did his undergrad work at Duke University, grad school at University of Georgia, and post-doc at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. However, he admits that, "Westbrook had the best and most invested teachers I ever had."

He thanks The Westbrook Foundation for his scholarship, which he used as seed money to start his educational pursuits.

"My Westbrook Foundation Scholarship, in combination with the financial aid package from Duke University, made what would have been an unaffordable education, affordable and I am very grateful," says Esteban who misses Westbrook and the people in the community. "You will always have a special bond with the people you grew up with, and went to school with, so I do miss that, but I am glad I have taken the path I have.

When he is not at work solving problems and piecing together intricate mathematical puzzles, Esteban spends his free time with his family and friends, hiking, spending time outdoors and enjoying the North Carolina weather.

## 2014 SCHOLARSHIPS

Celebrating the graduates of the Class of 2014, The Westbrook Foundation was proud to award graduating seniors a total of \$61,150 in scholarship monies to be used toward higher education pursuits. An additional \$15,000 was given to Westbrook residents through the Messerschmidt Scholarship Fund.