



Working to benefit the community of Westbrook and its residents

2022 BY THE NUMBERS: SCHOLARSHIP AND GRANT GIVING

SCHOLARSHIPS

Last June, the Westbrook Foundation awarded scholarships totaling \$207,650 to members of the Westbrook High School Class of 2022 to support their post-secondary educational pursuits. The Foundation also awarded \$8,000 in Messerschmidt Scholarships to Westbrook residents currently enrolled or enrolling in college and graduate school and administered \$5,000 in scholarships from the Westbrook Education Association.

GRANTS

In 2022, the Westbrook Foundation awarded \$186,423.92 in grants to 18 organizations during its fall and spring grant cycles. Grantees included:

- Bare Necessities
- Child & Family Agency of Southeastern CT
- High Hopes Therapeutic Riding
- Incarnation Center: Bushy Hill Nature Center
- Junior Achievement of Southwest New England
- Middlesex Health
- Safe Harbor
- Shoreline Wrestling Academy
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Town of Westbrook Park & Recreation Department
- Town of Westbrook Department of Public Works
- Westbrook Congregational Church
- Westbrook Garden Club
- Westbrook Land Conservation Trust
- Westbrook Little League
- Westbrook Music Boosters
- Westbrook Public Schools: Daisy Ingraham School
- Westbrook Social Services

In addition, the Westbrook Foundation awarded \$137,500 in special allocation grants to Westbrook Social Services, Westbrook Senior Center, Westbrook Youth & Family Services, Westbrook Visiting Nurses & Public Health, the Town of Westbrook and the Town of Westbrook Conservation Commission.

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WESTBROOK FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Pictured, from left: Julie Campbell, An-Ming Truxes, Paul Winch, Kathie Cietanno, Joan Angelini, Tiffini Hovey, Jeff Dickey, and Mike Engels. Front row: Sid Holbrook

FROM THE CHAIR



Since its founding in 1984, the Westbrook Foundation has advanced its mission by adhering to two goals: To financially assist high school seniors and town residents in their pursuit of post-

secondary educational opportunities, and to support local charitable and community, civic, and service organizations in their efforts to improve the wellbeing of Westbrook's citizens.

In 2022, the Westbrook Foundation delivered on these mandates, continuing its investment in the community by awarding more than \$544,000 in scholarships and grants.

On the scholarships front, more than 35 students received awards ranging in value from \$500 to \$16,000.

New this year, our Grants Committee established a Special Allocation Grants initiative through which community and service agencies are invited to propose projects for funding consideration outside of the Foundation's regular grant cycle. In the Special Allocation Grants' inaugural round, the Foundation awarded more than \$67,000 to the Westbrook Senior Center, Westbrook Social Services, Westbrook Visiting Nurses & Public Health, and Westbrook Youth & Family Services for a range of critical needs, including, for example, free medical transportation for low-income/disabled elderly residents administered by Social Services, and the purchase of HIPAA-compliant software for the Visiting Nurses.

The Special Allocation Grants initiative also enabled the Foundation to work directly with the Office of the First Selectman to provide \$20,000 in emergency fuel assistance to residents facing rising oil costs this past winter.

Highlights in grant-giving from our regular cycles in 2022 include a \$14,769 grant to Daisy Ingraham School to help create a STEM center, \$5,500 to Westbrook Little League for uniforms, and \$9,406 to Westbrook Public Works for amenities to complete the town dog park.

In closing, I want to thank the nine board members who serve without compensation and share a commitment to improve Westbrook. Specifically, I would like to thank Grants Committee Chair An-Ming Truxes and Scholarship Committee Chair Joan Angelini for their efforts over the past year.

Sincerely,
Paul Winch

The Westbrook Foundation, Inc.

Established 1984

Consider Donating Today

A contribution to the Westbrook Foundation supports the organization's mission to help meet the medical, educational, social, welfare, cultural, recreational, and civic needs of the town's residents through grants and scholarships.

For more information about The Westbrook Foundation, visit www.westbrookfoundation.org.

An individual contemplating a gift to the Foundation should seek the advice of their attorney.

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. Please note that the Westbrook Foundation can only accept checks made out to "Westbrook Foundation, Inc." If you wish to support a specific scholarship fund, please reference that fund in the check's memo line. The Westbrook Foundation is not able to accept cash donations or postal money orders.

LIFE INSURANCE/CHARITABLE GIFT

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

CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST: A donor may designate The Westbrook Foundation as the beneficiary of this type of trust and still receive income during their lifetime. Donor receives tax deduction in the year the trust is established.



WHERE THEY ARE NOW

Catching up with past recipients of Westbrook Foundation Scholarships

RYAN CAMIRE

Westbrook High School Class of 1998

Current City: Brooklyn, New York

Undergraduate Degree: B.A. in Science, Technology, and Society from Vassar College in 2002

Graduate Degree: Master's in Social Work from New York University in 2004; Post-Baccalaureate Advanced Certificate in Public Health from City University of New York (CUNY) School of Public Health in 2017; Ph.D. in Social Welfare from CUNY Graduate Center, anticipated in 2023

Current Position: University Director of Mental Health and Wellness in the Central Office of Student Affairs at CUNY; lecturer at CUNY School of Professional Studies in psychology, sociology, health services administration, disability studies, and communication and media; and consultant to New York State Office of Mental Health

Advice for students about to graduate from

high school: Don't be afraid to explore your options. If college is part of your next plan, explore the classes offered before settling into a major. I planned to go into medicine, but I enjoyed the psychology and sociology classes I took so much that they changed

my career path entirely. High school provides an excellent base for learning, but you can explore new areas in college.

Take risks – within reason! When it comes to the world of work, I suggest applying for jobs that interest you, even if they seem like they might be out of reach. You never really know what a recruiter or a manager is looking for, and you may be a perfect fit!

Make some time to disconnect. We live in a very connected world, and some people have trouble stepping away from everything for some self-care. Be sure to take some time to enjoy yourself and be with friends and family regularly. Find out what brings you some non-screen time joy and add it to your schedule – it does a world of good!

Finally – learn something new every day. Learning doesn't stop after high school, so take advantage of every opportunity to learn new things and experience the world.

(Continued on back cover)



2023 Board of Directors

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Jeff Dickey, *Secretary, Treasurer*
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Tiffini Hovey
An-Ming Truxes
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* *Deceased*

For Further Information

This mailer was prepared as reference material. Visit www.westbrookfoundation.org to view news articles, previous Annual Reports, and other information.

The following scholarships are awarded to Westbrook residents each year. Full descriptions of each scholarship can be found online at www.westbrookfoundation.org/scholarships. Help to increase these scholarships by contributing to the fund principal of your choice:

- Barbara Spencer Memorial Scholarships
- Brandon E. Norman Memorial Scholarship
- Calderari-Hoxsie-Schubert-Steinson Veteran's Memorial Scholarship
- Dan Nuhn Memorial Scholarship
- Dorothy Christopher Hoyt Scholarship
- Eileen M. Daily Scholarship
- Ellen S. Murphy Scholarship
- Elliot A. Spencer Memorial Scholarship
- Henry Ortner, Jr. Memorial Scholarship
- Herbert A. Muller, Jr. Memorial Scholarship
- Josephine S. Crump Scholarship
- Lew Daniels Scholarship
- Marie Mazeau Scholarship
- Manstan-Nolf Memorial Technology Education Scholarship
- Messerschmidt Scholarship
- Nicholas P. Tragakes Scholarship
- Patricia Mazeau and Myrtie Gareau Scholarship
- Raymond L. Wilson Scholarship

- Shoreline Amateur Radio Club Scholarship
- Tom O'Dell Scholarship
- Westbrook Education Association Daisy Ingraham Scholarship
- Westbrook Education Association Peter M. D'Errico Scholarship
- Westbrook Education Association Scholarship
- Westbrook Grange #123 Scholarship

- I am considering making a contribution to The Westbrook 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 Westbrook Foundation, Inc. All gifts are tax-deductible.

HELPING TO FILL A CRITICAL THERAPEUTIC NEED



From left: Board members Julie Campbell, An-Ming Truxes, and Paul Winch checking out the equipment in the new sensory gym at The Mayer Center ribbon-cutting event on December 7, 2022.

The Westbrook Foundation's \$25,000 grant to Middlesex Health helped to establish and outfit a sensory gym at the new Mayer Center in Essex.

Prior to the fall of 2022, area families of children and adolescents on the autism spectrum, as well as those with sensory processing disorders, speech disorders, and cerebral palsy, frequently found themselves traveling up to an hour across the state to access treatment and resources; there simply were no local options. The opening of The Mayer Center at Middlesex Health's Essex Medical Building last November changed that, bringing a range of therapeutic services to the shoreline.

One highlight of the new center is the sensory gym and multi-sensory room, made possible with a \$25,000 grant from the Westbrook Foundation.

"There's a platform swing, a climbing wall, and even a trampoline, and this equipment is designed to improve proprioceptive function and motor planning," explained Sarah Moore, executive director of development for Middlesex Health. "Trained clinicians create individualized treatment plans for children using this equipment. This therapy helps children with developmental needs facilitate communication, engage with sensory skills, and develop motor skills, among many other benefits. The overall impact improves the quality of life for children, their parents and caregivers, and their siblings."

Just a few months since opening, the Mayer Center is already offering a safe and therapeutic environment for 85 children and adolescents.

"We are grateful to The Westbrook Foundation for its generous support," said Moore. "This grant has enabled us to launch a critical new service in our community to help children get treatment as early as possible, which makes a tremendous difference for their long-term wellbeing."

SUPPORTING A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

A \$900 grant from the Westbrook Foundation for wrestling shoes helps break down the barrier to entry for aspiring athletes.

Back in 2021, Andrew Miesse was inspired to launch a nonprofit wrestling program in Westbrook. The interest in the community was immediate, but Miesse quickly realized that the cost of wrestling equipment was proving a barrier to entry for many young athletes. So, in 2022, Miesse turned to the Westbrook Foundation for help—something he had done a year before when he successfully applied for and received a grant to purchase the wrestling mats and equipment that would lay the foundation, quite literally, for the Shoreline Wrestling Academy (SWA).

The \$900 grant SWA received in the spring of 2022 from the Foundation to support the purchase of wrestling shoes for a lending library was about more than just the shoes, said Miesse; it was about taking SWA and its athletes to the next level: "With proper gear, we were able to compete in statewide competitions recognized by USA Wrestling. This year we had athletes compete in several tournaments, earning metals and placing first, second, or third for their given weight class. One of our wrestlers placed second in the Connecticut state finals."

Miesse said that SWA is instilling the spirit of good sportsmanship and a strong work ethic among its growing roster of athletes—up from 20 in 2021

to 31 in 2022—and the Westbrook Foundation's assistance has played an integral role.

"With this age group, this club is often a first introduction to the sport of wrestling. Reducing the financial burden is a priority to ensure everyone who wants to participate is able to do so. The club would not exist if it wasn't for the Westbrook Foundation's continued support!" said Miesse.



Shoreline Wrestling Academy team getting ready for a tournament in Meriden. Photo courtesy of Andrew Miesse

WHERE THEY ARE NOW *Catching up with past recipients of Westbrook Foundation Scholarships*

JAMI SACCO

Westbrook High School Class of 2022

College: First-year student at the University of Connecticut with intended major in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences

Career Aspiration: To become a speech-language pathologist.

Advice for students about to graduate from high school: I cannot stress enough that it is OK and extremely normal to not know immediately what specific career path you want to pursue right after high school. Nowadays it is so normalized to believe that all high school graduates have their interests figured out when that couldn't be more wrong. My advice would be to go at your own pace in learning new passions, but to also take advantage of any opportunities to try new things. It is good to take a step out of your comfort zone, whether it be to travel to new places, join a unique club, take a new class, etc. Life is all about what you make of it, and taking part in new experiences can help facilitate a newfound interest you would have never known you had!

Q. What has it meant to you to receive a scholarship from the Westbrook Foundation?

A. I am beyond grateful for the generosity of the Westbrook Foundation last year. The giving nature of the Westbrook Foundation allowed me to attend school at UConn, which was one of the best decisions I have made. This opportunity has opened so many doors for me and has allowed me to feel financially secure, which is a luxury I will be forever thankful for. This statement doesn't just apply to me, but it also applies to the many other people the Westbrook Foundation has been able to financially assist and make their dreams of attending their desired college a reality.

Q. How have your connections to Westbrook enriched your life?

A. I still keep in touch with my basketball coach, Sean Donadio, along with my assistant basketball and head tennis coach, Paula Fitzgerald. I was able to volunteer as a practice player over this past winter break, and it felt great being able to revisit Westbrook High School and seeing my fellow peers. Coach Donadio and Coach Fitz have taught me so much about the hard work it takes to succeed and in strengthening our mentality. They stressed the importance of "getting better



every day," which can be applied on the basketball and tennis courts, but in real life as well. I carry on this motto into my work at the University of Connecticut. I strive to do well in my classes, and I am always willing to work my hardest with my end goal of having a successful career in the back of my mind.

(Ryan Camire continued from page 2)

Q. What have you been up to since graduating from college?

A. My current role is the University Director of Mental Health and Wellness in the Central Office of Student Affairs at the City University of New York. The City University of New York is a system of 25 constituent public colleges in the New York City metropolitan area with a strong focus on providing education and opportunity for students regardless of background or means. As a university system that celebrates diversity, equity, and inclusion, each campus has a unique student body with mental health and wellness needs that require a flexible and creative approach. Working closely with campus leadership in mental health and wellness services across the 25 campuses, my focus is mainly on policies and procedures, mental health and wellness best practices, professional development, and student affairs administration. When not working at my primary CUNY position, I also teach undergraduate students at the CUNY

School of Professional Studies in psychology, sociology, health services administration, disability studies, and communication and media. Finally, I am a consultant with the New York State Office of Mental Health, providing clinical and oversight surveys of state-operated and private psychiatric facilities throughout the region. My short-term goal is to finish my Ph.D., as I am very close to the end! When I complete my degree, I aim to advance my career in higher education or mental health administration. One of the reasons I chose the fields of study I did is because of their flexibility, so I have many options should I decide to make changes in my career path. Higher education suits me perfectly right now, but there are always new areas to explore.

Q. What's one challenge you've faced in your professional life, and how have you handled it?

A. There have been many challenges in my career, as the world of work is more complex than it is commonly believed. There are many opportunities

for growth and upward movement, but challenges can force a reassessment and new beginnings. Over the years, I have faced disappointments in job interviews, a financial layoff, and complex work realignments. These challenges have, happily, featured a flip side that made the difficulties worth enduring. While losing a job may not be the most positive experience, it did set the stage for new opportunities that came about as a result. Not getting a job or a promotion I sought might have been ego bruising, but eventually landing a great position is worth the wait. Being a student at Westbrook helped me with these challenges because I faced disappointments along the way there, too. Being able to successfully cope with getting a poor grade or a tryout not turning out well allowed me to understand that positives and negatives are part of the process of academics and work. Thankfully, we can make those mistakes in an atmosphere with the support of Westbrook schools and learn the lessons to be ready to tackle more significant challenges that may follow.