

## Community Investment 2018 Responsive Grants Awarded

VCF's responsive grant distributions are announced each year, providing details about the receiving organization, the grant amount, and its purpose. But what happens *after* VCF awards a grant to a nonprofit? These grants can range from a single-year distribution to a multi-year award and can provide operating support, assistance with capacity building efforts, or a particular project. As part of VCF's terms of grant, the receiving organization is required to report on outcomes and data showing the impact of that funding – something we would like to start sharing with you.

### Valley YMCA

With a two-year grant from VCF to provide general operating support to the Valley YMCA in 2015 and 2016, The Y served 4,106 individuals during 2017 and saw an increase in visits over 2016. New membership increased with 1,446 new families, youth, and high school students joining the Y through October 2017. The Y served 230 youth in its after school programs, 110 youth in its camp program, and 30 preschoolers and school readiness youth in programs during the 2016-2017 year. Partnerships were created with the Valley Initiative to Advance Health and Learning in Schools (VITAHLS) as well as Massaro Farm to develop gardens for the summer camp program. A total of 22 individuals also completed a diabetes prevention program.

### Valley Emergency Medical Services (VEMS)

With a one-year capacity-building grant from VCF in 2016 to support the replacement of a Life-Pak 15 Cardiac Monitor, VEMS was able to acquire the most advanced technology available while responding to emergencies in the region. The Life Pak monitors were purchased from 2013-2016 and were used immediately, as well as in required annual training exercises.

Since VCF's original grant first awarded in 2013, VEMS has responded to more than 22,700 calls and serves the public with this state-of-the-art equipment.

### Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley

With a three-year grant to provide general operating support awarded in 2014-2017, The Boys & Girls Club, in years one and two of the grant, served between 3,000 and 3,315 youth annually. A total of 51% of its membership received free or reduced tuition. In years two and three, 950 youth members engaged in programming focused on academic success, homework assistance, and tutoring. More than 250 members participated in community service projects each year. In year two, 100% of high school seniors graduated, all of whom pursued higher education.



Two children participating in a diversity activity at the Boys & Girls Club. In pairs, youth held their painted hands together and said something that was similar between them. After letting go, they saw the paint had mixed into one color on both their hands showing that we all have more similarities than we may realize.

We would like to hear your feedback about this new feature article. Is it helpful? Does it make you want to learn more about VCF's grants to organizations serving the Valley? Please contact us at 203-751-9162 and let us know.

## Sponsored Events

The following events were supported with unrestricted funds by VCF this season:

### January

#### Ansonia Dr. King Bust Committee

To sponsor "Unity in the Community" Dinner & Cabaret - A Tribute to Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on January 19th.

#### New Haven Symphony Orchestra

To sponsor the 25th Anniversary Gala January 25th.

### March

#### BHcare

To sponsor Bowl-2-Benefit the Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services on March 3rd.

### April

#### Shelton Exchange Club Foundation

To sponsor the 7th annual Charity Indoor Mini golf Tournament at the LNV Boys & Girls Club on April 6th.

## The Great Give® 2019 dates announced!

The annual 36-hour online giving event will be taking place May 1-2. Visit [www.thegreatgive](http://www.thegreatgive) for details.org

## You're Invited!

Join us on the evening of **Tuesday, May 14, 2019** at Race Brook Country Club for the Valley Community Foundation's **15th Annual Reception**. Register at [valleyfoundation.org](http://valleyfoundation.org) or call our office at 203-751-9162.



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# Good News About the Valley

## Get Ready for The Great Give® 2019

Last year, during an exciting 36-hour period, our community united as one to achieve the same goal: strengthen local nonprofit organizations and the services they provide. More than \$1.7 Million was raised from over

11,000 donors for 400+ nonprofits serving Greater New Haven and the Lower Naugatuck Valley. On May 1-2, 2019, our community will come together again for the common good during The Great Give® 2019.

### What You Can Do:

Ask your employer if the company would consider being a sponsor of the event. Contact our office at 203-751-9162 for details.

Own your own business? Consider creating a special named prize that benefits select nonprofits serving the Valley or that provide similar services.

Help your favorite local nonprofit by becoming a Peer2Peer fundraiser and networking with your friends to help the nonprofit win prize money.



Make sure your favorite nonprofit is registered to participate. Approximately \$175,000 is up for grabs in matching funds and prizes, but eligible nonprofits MUST register this year. There is no cost

to participate and there are plenty of free trainings available to help nonprofits succeed.

If you are a Valley Community Foundation donor advised fund holder, be sure to take advantage of special giving incentives soon to be announced.

If you're active on social media, please share our event announcements with your friends and be on the lookout for the return of #gGTheAcorn.

The Great Give® was created by our partner in philanthropy The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and has been sponsored by the Valley Community Foundation since its inception. It's a fun way to support nonprofits and issues that are important to you. Get ready to Get Your Give On!

VALLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

# Legacy Matters



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*JUUL is a brand name e-cigarette that manufactures devices like the one pictured, which is small enough to fit in a closed fist and designed to resemble a USB flash drive. Replacement cartridges contain oils to create vapor that dissolve quickly into the air. A single JUUL cartridge contains nicotine, among other additives, and is roughly equal to a pack of cigarettes or about 200 puffs.*



*Vaping devices, like these made by the brand Puffit, are specifically designed to be discrete and resemble an inhaler so they can be used in plain sight.*



*While e-cigarettes do not contain smoke, they still release secondhand emissions when exhaled just like tobacco-filled cigarettes, which exposes others to potentially harmful chemicals and nicotine.*

## Smart Investment

### Addressing Youth E-cigarette and Vaping Use

In a time where cigarette smoking has generally declined, youth are turning to alternative nicotine delivery methods and are using e-cigarettes and vaping devices more so than ever before. Despite the misconception that these devices produce harmless water vapor, there are serious health risks associated with nicotine levels and long-term usage.

According to the 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey, 20.8% of high school students used e-cigarettes last year, representing a 78% increase over 2017. The numbers for usage among middle school students totaled 4.9%, increasing by 48% over the prior year. Considering these trends along with local data, the Valley community is taking action to safeguard the region's youth.

**Risks:** E-cigarettes and cigarettes both deliver nicotine into the body. The stimulating chemical releases dopamine and increases alertness but the smoker also takes in the negative side effects and the manufacturer's additives. The American Lung Association reports that when 600 ingredients in a cigarette are lit, it produces 7,000 chemicals, including but not limited to ammonia, arsenic, carbon monoxide, lead, and tar, which are inhaled into the body. E-cigarettes can also contain heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead.

E-cigarettes have an attractive smell compared to cigarettes because of a broad range of flavors. The health impact of those chemicals is incomplete however since the devices are relatively new and have only gained popularity in the U.S. during the last decade. Diacetyl, for example, is a chemical present in microwave popcorn that is also found in many flavored e-cigarettes, which has been connected to some users developing bronchiolitis obliterans, otherwise known as "popcorn lung." The air sacs found within the lungs become permanently scarred and resemble popped corn. This effect is irreversible and causes

respiratory symptoms similar to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

While there is no side stream smoke produced from vaping, exhaled chemicals may produce health risk for pets and loved ones. Richard Le Pera, BS, EP, cardiac exercise physiologist and coordinator of Griffin Hospital's Smoking Cessation Program, said, "Vaping is new and we're still learning about the long-term risks. Our awareness is changing and the information is getting out there. Realistically, helping kids avoid the habit reduces healthcare expenditures for everyone and benefits the community."

**Devices:** An e-cigarette is just one way to refer to electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS). They are also known as JUULs, vapes, and vape pens. There are basic components common to every e-cigarette, such as is a battery or charging mechanism that heats the liquid and an atomizer that transforms the warmed liquid into vapor. While devices can look like cigarettes, many do not.

Pamela A. Mautte MS, MCHES, CPS-R, director of the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness at BHcare in Ansonia, pointed out that the JUUL, a branded device, has a slim design that looks like a thumb drive, a resemblance that is reinforced when it is plugged into a USB port for recharging. "Parents don't even notice it. Other e-cigarettes look like a regular ball point pen or an asthma inhaler. All of these can be hidden in plain sight."

Unlike traditional tobacco products, the FDA does not regulate vaping devices and the amount of nicotine is not limited in e-cigarettes. Access for minors is legally banned but manufacturers offer flavorings to appeal toward a young market, such as cotton candy, birthday cake, and ice cream.

"Young people who never smoked a cigarette are intrigued by vaping

## Smart Investment

### Addressing Youth E-cigarette and Vaping Use

because of the flavors. They can order the devices online and have them delivered right to the house so it's not hard to get them." Mautte reported the results from the 2016 Valley School Survey, which indicated that vaping devices are more widely used among teens than tobacco products. "The nicotine is in there and, soon, teens are addicted."

Furthermore, the smell associated with e-cigarettes allows those who vape to smoke marijuana without a telltale scent. "We encourage parents to attend presentations held in Valley schools, to learn what to look for and how to talk with their children. They should know these devices are not harmless and the health risks are real."

Hidden in Plain Sight is a parents-only event where attendees walk through a mock bedroom, challenged to identify vaping devices, before they talk about what they found, risk factors, and how to speak with their children.

"We don't want parents to be constantly suspicious. That's not the most effective approach. We encourage open and honest communication when they identify suspicious behavior because 90% of addiction disorders begin in adolescence."

She said, "Some signs of vaping include an increased thirst and nose



*Vaping devices and e-cigarettes come in a variety of different looks.*

bleeds because vaping dries out the mouth and skin inside the nose. Also, you'll see more respiratory illnesses, coughing, and even pneumonia. Parents might find devices or cartridges in pockets while doing laundry or see wrappers in the trash."

Mautte advises parents to use school presentations as a way to start the conversation with their children, and to overlook their own fears that might stop such an important talk. "Parents can serve as role models for their children," says Mautte. "Not using vaping devices themselves, setting rules with clear consequences, and encouraging safe and fun activities that help to keep teens away from risky situations are all important strategies to prevent vaping among youth."

There are also community approaches to the problem. "Statewide, we're working from a policy and legislative angle, considering the same tools that were successful in reducing tobacco use among our youth, such as increased taxes and licensing fees for retailers and penalties for sales to minors," Mautte added.

**Allure:** Smoking in any form has a certain allure that has been promoted by tobacco companies for decades. Since 2000, six out of every 10 PG-13 movies contained some form of tobacco use according to data collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The organization estimates that changing those ratings to R could reduce the number of teen smokers by 18%.

Le Pera notes that many ads are aimed at teens and the mechanics of the devices lend themselves to an attractive self-image. "You get more smoke from vaping than you do from a cigarette so users often do tricks with that smoke to perpetuate a cool image."

What isn't cool is the result. "Breathing becomes difficult as the lungs stiffen. You can't get the carbon dioxide out of your body so you begin to suffocate as the cilia in your airways fails to remove mucus and infection. Problems like chronic pneumonia set in."

**Quitting:** The words smoking and quitting are inextricably linked. Since both cigarettes and e-cigarettes contain nicotine, there is no way to escape its intensely addictive quality.

Le Pera's smoking cessation program is part of the hospital's Community Health Improvement Plan. He said, "The most asked question is, 'Are e-cigarettes a good alternative to traditional smoking products?' The answer is that it's not better or worse; they still pose an inherent health risk."

He further explained, "E-cigarettes seem like a way to easily transition off of cigarettes but, because 99% of e-cigarettes contain nicotine, they won't help you quit. Of course, the best health practice is to avoid starting the bad habit altogether, but our goal is to get you completely off smoking. E-cigarettes obscure clinically proven methods of quitting, such as patches, gums, and lozenges, combined with lifestyle changes that are a big part of the program."

Considering the impact to the most vulnerable Valley population, Le Pera added, "Vaping has grown exponentially in the last few years, especially into the child and young adult population. We often receive calls from parents asking how to help them help their children. The good news is that the program can help anyone, any age, and is free year-round."

Keeping people well throughout their lives and preventing them from forming an addiction to any harmful substance is a critical component of a healthy community.

## Featured Fund

### Griffin Family Memorial Fund

*The Griffin Family Memorial Fund began as a way for one family to cope with grief and is fast becoming a force for positive change in the community.*

Nicole Mason (née Griffin) said, "My younger brother Billy died from longtime drug abuse in May 2012. He was only 31 years old."

As she, her parents, Karen and William Griffin, Sr., and sister, Corey Evans, processed the emotions that come with a significant loss, they were overwhelmed by generous support from friends and family. However, the family was unsure of how to best use the money. "Joseph Pagliaro, Jr. from Riverview Funeral Home in Shelton, where we held my brother's services, suggested we reach out to the Valley Community Foundation."

That initial meeting presented a range of options for the family to consider. The Foundation team was patient as the Griffins considered what might be best for Billy's memory and the needs of the community, debating several of the ideas, which included a possible scholarship. The family established a designated fund at VCF with the goal of educating young people about the dangers of drug use. The Griffin family hopes to inform and ultimately spare youth and their families from the same challenges they faced as Billy struggled with his own addiction.

Since siblings, Nicole, Corey, and William (Billy) Griffin, Jr., grew up in Oxford it was both logical and meaningful that these new drug abuse and addiction programs were made available for students at Oxford High School, where Corey is a teacher. "We're happy knowing that we're doing something to help prevent other kids from following the same path Billy took. This is also a way for us to remember my brother, who was a wonderful person. Not a day goes by that I don't think about Billy and miss him."

According to Nicole, VCF has been very helpful in developing the details of the educational programming, such as speakers who talk with students at pivotal age when they are tempted to try drugs.

"Oxford is a small town but one of the biggest messages we can share is that no family is immune to this problem. Addiction can happen to anyone in any city, big or small. By providing information early, we can help kids make good decisions that will impact the rest of their lives," Nicole said. "Perhaps one student will say no to an offer of drugs and that will make all the difference for him or her."



William (Billy) Griffin, Jr.

Nicole encourages others to learn more about the Foundation, "VCF was a natural fit for us. We weren't sure what to do with the donations we had received but Sharon Closius and her team have been very helpful. I'd recommend anyone talk to them to find a way to help others in the community. Everyone at VCF made it easy for us to do something meaningful during a time that was especially difficult for our family."



### Planned Giving

*VCF welcomes Lynne Bassett Perry, Ned Miller, Raymond Oppel, and Dr. Beth Smith to the Gates Society, the Foundation's planned giving community. Your planned gift will impact the charities you're passionate about forever, regardless of the amount. Call us at 203-751-9162 or learn more at valleyfoundation.org*