



Thank you
for always being there for
your neighbors during a
year like no other

ON THE COVER

Dotty Young and her granddaughter Lila show off their new lawn sign. Branford Community Foundation board members personally delivered these to donors to the COVID-19 Response Fund. They became a badge of pride — and a hot commodity! — throughout town.

BRANFORD
Community Foundation

Summer 2021

Dear Treasured Friend,

Here's what we learned about you during the time of the pandemic.

When your neighbors need you, your generosity knows absolutely no bounds.

We've always known that you, our Branford supporters, are generous, caring, and compassionate. And that you love our Branford community.

Your gifts to the Branford Community Foundation have long aided people and businesses across a wide spectrum of projects and problems — everything from supporting the Branford Diaper Bank to helping families afford their rent during times of crisis.

But this last year, the needs were breathtakingly urgent and vast — and they affected every one of us. People struggled to survive — unable to afford groceries, paralyzed by grief and isolation, and without the means to get the medical care they needed.

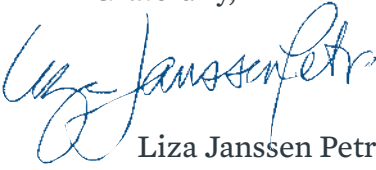
We put out the call for help, not knowing whether any of you — in the midst of coping with the pandemic — would be able to respond.

And then ... well, there's only one way to put it. You blew us away with your outpouring of generosity!

You went above and beyond during this overwhelming emergency. And your donations literally made the difference for many of your Branford neighbors between getting through this terrible time — and falling through the cracks.

We can't begin to describe the pride and gratitude we feel for you, our compassionate Branford neighbors. We hope the stories that follow in this booklet give you a sense of just how profound your impact has been on the Branford community during the last year.

Gratefully,


Liza Janssen Petra,
Executive Director


Director Heather Hackely,
Board Chair



Branford children were going hungry — until you stepped in

When you think about the pandemic and all its enduring consequences, there isn't much to feel good about.

But there is one wonderful thing that happened.

BECAUSE OF YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS to the Branford Community Foundation, Feed Branford Kids — an all-volunteer organization that has been providing weekend meals and snacks for hungry elementary school children since 2012 — grew into something even bigger and better.

Hungry on the days between free school meals

Feed Branford Kids was created nearly ten years ago to make sure every child in Branford had enough to eat.

You may be surprised to hear that at any given time nearly one out of every four Branford children receives free or reduced-cost lunch at school. That helps fill kids' stomachs on weekdays — but what about the weekends?

That's where Feed Branford Kids aimed their efforts.

Any Branford family struggling to provide enough food for their kids was invited to sign up — no income eligibility standards required. School staff would discreetly place bags of shelf-stable,

individual servings of food in participating kids' backpacks every Friday to help them get through the long, hungry weekend.

Over the years, your contributions to the Branford Community Foundation helped the organization develop a broad reach. Since Feed Branford Kids started, the 100%-volunteer-run program grew from just ten participants to nearly 200 — each receiving weekly bags full of nutritious food.

Weekends for these kids became a time to look forward to — instead of a time to dread.

Then came the pandemic

As with most everything else in our lives, the pandemic threw Feed Branford Kids into upheaval.

The need was suddenly greater than ever as many parents and caregivers lost their jobs and paychecks. And with schools closing, how would hungry families even get the food they needed?

"When the world shut down, we had to figure out what to do," says Kristine Klarman, president of Feed Branford Kids. "Joe Carbone, supervisor

"It was eye-opening to see how some children live. They are really in need. You just don't know what kids lives are like outside of school." KRISTINE KLARMAN, PRESIDENT, FEED BRANFORD KIDS

of facilities & grounds for the district, volunteered to help us out. Before we knew it, Joe's crew was driving all over town to deliver food directly to the kids at home — more than 180 bags a week!"

FBK also opened their warehouse — and later, several outdoor locations throughout town — so that anyone in need could come pick up what they needed. Free. No registration required.

"I remember a woman who came in with her kids every Thursday night at the beginning of the pandemic," says Kris. "The daycare she ran had shut down and her unemployment was stalled. She was so thankful to get enough food to get them through another week."

The organization relies on the Branford Community Foundation, which provides FBK with its largest single donation every year. "The Foundation really helped us get through the pandemic," says Kristine.

Kristine is being modest — Feed Branford Kids did so much more than just "get through the pandemic." They reached beyond their original mission of putting weekend meals into kids backpacks to making sure nutritious food got into the hands of those who needed it — whoever and wherever they were.

That's what community does in tough times. And you made it possible. **Thank you.** ♥



Branford Has Heart

How you helped get \$50,000 to 88 Branford families in desperate need



IT WAS MARCH, 2020 and the world was about to change.

We didn't know exactly what was coming. But we were pretty sure it was going to be bad.

Our executive director, Liza Janssen Petra, and Meghan Scanlon, former executive director of Women & Family Life Center, brainstormed by phone. How, they wondered, could they get desperately needed cash into the hands of the Branford residents who were already struggling as the pandemic bore down?

Out of those early phone calls, the COVID-19 Response Fund for Branford was born. Liza and Meghan hoped that by working together — with the Branford Community Foundation handling

the fundraising and W&FLC distributing grants to people in need — they just might be able to make a difference.

The two executive directors set a fundraising goal of \$20,000 and crossed their fingers.

Donations started to arrive immediately. And just as quickly, people in trouble were invited to complete a simple online application for an emergency cash grant.

Applications poured in from people confronting the crushing consequence of the pandemic — individuals who were sick or suddenly unemployed . . . families who were unable to pay the rent or buy groceries for their kids . . . elderly people who couldn't afford their medications.

And within just days— **thanks to your commitment to your neighbors** — these people received emergency checks, ranging from \$500 to more than \$1,000, to help them get through.

No restrictions. No strings attached.

Branford families made it through — thanks to you

We blew by the original \$20,000 goal in a matter of weeks. Barely a month in, you — our amazing, generous donors — had already contributed nearly \$140,000.

And the donations kept coming.

We shouldn't have been surprised. We always knew that Branford had heart.

Zozan Antar, program manager at W&FLC,

I want to tell you what a difference you all made in our lives.

My husband and I were both laid off and we had no savings. We have 4 kids and we couldn't pay for enough diapers, milk, or food. We were worried we'd be kicked out of our apartment.

And thanks to you all, and the two grants you provided my family, we made it through the worst. My husband is back at work. The kids are back at school. I think we'll be okay.

You honestly saved my family and I'll never be able to thank you enough! Mom & family

has dozens of moving stories to tell about the life-saving impact of these emergency grants on Branford families. Interestingly, the people who most needed help were often not the people you might expect.

"One population that surprised me was restaurant workers," says Zozan. "We tend to think it's mainly young people who wait tables. But there were so many women in their late 50s or 60s who had been working in restaurants their whole life. Suddenly, they were unemployed, left with no savings, no benefits — nothing to fall back on."

Domestic violence incidents increased significantly, as the pressures and stresses of the pandemic pushed people to the breaking point. Zozan remembers getting a call from a desperate woman whose spouse had become abusive.

"She was financially dependent on her husband. When we were all ordered to shelter in place, she

found herself trapped with him in the house, not safe, trying to protect herself and her child."

Zozan quickly got a grant into this young mother's hands, which she used for the first month's rent in a new apartment, away from her spouse. This made it possible for her to get a part-time job and receive help from state food assistance and social services programs.

"This woman recently called to tell me that she doesn't know what she would have done without us, that she and her child are doing much better," says Zozan. "When you hear that, it's just incredible."

Imagine 88 stories like that, one for each of the families you helped get through the pandemic with your gifts to the COVID-Response Fund.

Thank you, Branford, for your incredible, heart-felt compassion for your neighbors! ♥

I can't even begin to describe how I felt when I opened the envelope with your check in it! The stress and worry that was weighing me down just lifted!

I was able to pay our rent this month because of you. Really, when I look at my little girl — I just don't know what we would have done.

The kindness you showed us will be repaid forward when we can. Bless you! Mom and daughter

Thank you so much! We only have 30 bucks to last us until next Thursday's paycheck as my husband only worked 5 hours last week and I only worked 8. Hearing you say we are in this together honestly brought tears to my eyes — this is such a stressful time!

Family of four

A unique community where people take care of each other

Thank you, Bob and Jeanette Mobeck

“I grew up in a modest family, living a very middle-class life,” says Bob Mobeck. “Philanthropy was never talked about.”

YET DECADES LATER, Bob is the epitome of generosity in his beloved community of Branford. He and his wife, Jeanette, have been loyal donors and supporters of many local organizations — including the Branford Community Foundation, since its founding in 1980.

So how did Bob get to be such a believer in the profound value of giving?

“When I was young, some of my older clients who were very philanthropic were father figures to me,” says Bob. “They modeled giving to make a difference in people’s lives. And it was a wonderful thing to watch and learn from.”

In Branford for four generations

“Branford is in our roots,” says Jeanette, “from grandparents to parents to children to grandchildren. Four generations.”

Bob and Jeanette met as students in Branford High School. They’ve been married for 40 years and together have blended a family of three children and seven grandchildren. All of them were (or are still being) educated right here, in the Branford Public Schools.

Why has the family stuck around so long?

There are so many reasons — from the joys of living in a beautiful shoreline community to the rich cultural and ethnic diversity of the population.

But what they love best about Branford is its caring character, which has remained unchanged for generations.

“When I came through the school system,” says Bob, “people watched out for me. I played sports and the coaches were family to me. And there were community organizations that helped me out. As I grew up, I realized what a unique community Branford is.”

The Mobecks built their careers here in Branford — Bob as the founder of a financial investment firm and Jeanette as a speech pathologist in the New Haven Public Schools and an affordable housing manager. As soon as they were able, they wanted to participate in that caring character that makes Branford so special.

Why they choose the Branford Community Foundation

Bob and Jeanette contribute to several local organizations as volunteers, donors, and board members.

And the Branford Community Foundation has been at the top of their list for more than 40 years. Not only do they make a generous contributions throughout each year, but they’ve also left a gift to the Foundation in their will. Bob’s been active with the Foundation for more than 40 years and his investment firm even provided financial

management services to the Foundation for most of that time as well.

“Why all this to the Foundation and not one of the other myriad charitable organizations? Because,” explains Bob, **“the Branford Community Foundation is the only organization that’s always in position to answer the call for those organizations who need it the most at that moment.”**

During the last challenging year and a half, for example, the organizations that people rely on to help them get through periods of crisis — food banks, rental assistance programs, mental health providers — had more urgent needs than ever.

“The thing I’m most proud of,” says Bob, “is that the Foundation rallied at that moment in time when COVID came upon us to raise money to help struggling people and organizations survive.”

“And it wasn’t just the wealthy,” adds Jeanette. “People gave what they could, based on their means.”

The legacy of giving continues

The community of Branford is lucky that Bob’s early clients were role models of philanthropy, setting him on such a generous path. But it won’t end with Bob’s generation.

“I learned the importance of giving through my husband,” says Jeanette. “Bob has been the model for all of us — me, our children, and our grandchildren. And I think our children are very giving, compassionate kids!”

Here’s to four more generations of Branford Mobecks! And at least four more after that! ♥



Bob and Jeanette, second row from the top, with three generations of Mobecks in Branford.



You made 2020 so much better
(maybe we should say less bad?!) for so many,
thanks to your amazing generosity.

THANK YOU!

YOU PROVIDED

5,000 meals
each month for hungry
neighbors through the
Community Dining Room

PHOTO COURTESY OF CDR



YOU BROUGHT LIVE
THEATER TO

33 young people,
making it possible for
them rehearse virtually
for Tabor Arts Center's
Beauty and the Beast

PHOTO COURTESY OF TAC



THANKS TO YOU

58 children
and their families received
urgently needed mental
health care through
Clifford Beers



YOU MADE SURE SERVICE
WAS UNINTERRUPTED

at **SARAH**
during the pandemic
by providing personal
protective equipment for 88
employees and 51 clients



YOU MADE SURE

20 clients
of Orchard House adult
day center received weekly
home activity packs to help
them stay mentally active
during the pandemic



YOU HELPED

57 pet owners
in Branford feed their
beloved animals by
funding home delivery of
pet supplies during the
pandemic

YOU GAVE

291 books
to children through
Read to Grow



YOU CREATED A
**Mobile Health
Unit**

for East Shore District
Health Department by
repairing, refurbishing,
and supplying a used
ambulance



YOU PROVIDED

1,150 hungry
Branford residents with gift
cards to local restaurants
through Branford Rotary
Club's *Help-Out Take-Out*





2020 Grant Awards

The Branford Community Foundation (BCF) is pleased to announce that it committed \$230,900 for initiatives and organizations serving Branford in 2020. This reflects 25 grants made through our COVID19 Relief Fund, 12 through our competitive grant making, 31 scholarship awards, 2 grants from designated funds for local organizations, and investments in BCF-driven leadership initiatives.

| | | | |
|----------------|---|----------------|--|
| \$500 | Branford High School EXCEL Club to support a “Clothing Closet” for the Branford Fire Department and the Branford Counseling Center. | \$3,450 | Tabor Arts Branford to support general operating expenses due to the loss of income during COVID19. |
| \$785 | Orchard House Medical Adult Day Care Center to provide activity care packets to 20 members for 15 weeks during COVID19. | \$4,000 | Tail to Paw Animal Support to aid 18 Branford Households with pet care costs to be able to keep their pets during COVID19. |
| \$1,000 | Neighborhood Music School to support online Dance for Parkinson’s Disease Dance Program to combat isolation during COVID19. | \$4,500 | Community Dining Room to cover costs of take-out packaging as a result of COVID19. |
| \$1,000 | Branford Diaper Bank to support the Diaper Bank during COVID19. | \$4,900 | Orchard House Medical Adult Day Care Center to support cultural activities for members, including music therapy and pet therapy. |
| \$1,000 | Leadership Initiatives. | \$5,000 | Branford Public Schools Robotics Club to cover costs for registration, robot supplies, team supplies and travel for the FIRST Tech Challenge. |
| \$1,768 | Designated to local organizations. | \$5,000 | Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter to support the building of a Pet Food Pantry room as part of a capital campaign for building renovation and expansion. |
| \$2,500 | Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter to support home delivery of pet supplies to over 57 Branford Residents during COVID19. | \$5,000 | The Legacy Theatre to support general operating expenses due to the loss of income during COVID19. |
| \$2,500 | Read to Grow to support the distribution of books through the Community Dining Room and East Shore District Health Department during COVID 19. | \$5,000 | BHCARE to support case management and purchase Personal Protective Equipment for case managers and clients during COVID19. |
| \$2,500 | Flu Vaccine Community Effort to support the effort to get Branford residents vaccinated. | \$5,000 | Community Dining Room for operational support for increased demand during COVID19. |
| \$3,000 | Branford Parks and Recreation Department to purchase kitchen equipment to be able to hold long term cooking, healthy eating programs. | \$5,000 | Clifford Beers Guidance Clinic for trauma-informed, non reimbursable case management and care coordination services for Branford children and families. |
| \$3,000 | Canoe Brook Senior Center to provide disposable adult undergarments to seniors in need during COVID19. | | |
| \$3,300 | Tabor Arts Branford to support general operating expenses due to the loss of income during COVID19. | | |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| \$5,000 | The Connecticut Hospice to cover a portion of expenses incurred as a result of purchasing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be equipped as an overflow site for area hospitals. |
| \$5,000 | SARAH to support the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment to allow staff and clients to interact safely. |
| \$5,000 | VNA Community Healthcare to support the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment to allow staff and clients to interact safely. |
| \$5,000 | Canoe Brook Senior Center to purchase technology to connect seniors. |
| \$5,000 | East Shore District Health Department to support the repair and refurbishment of a donated ambulance as a mobile health unit. |
| \$5,500 | Shoreline Chamber of Commerce to support general operating expenses due to the loss of income and increased demand during COVID19. |
| \$6,466 | Literacy Volunteers of Greater New Haven to support English as a Second Language (ESL) volunteer tutors and students. |
| \$6,875 | Sponsorships of local events and organizations. |
| \$15,000 | Women & Family Life Center to support general operating expenses due to the loss of income and increased demand for services during COVID19. |
| \$10,000 | Branford Microfund to support interest -free loans of \$2,000 to qualified Branford residents facing a financial emergency. |
| \$10,000 | Branford Early Childhood Collaborative to support early childhood trauma and social emotional training expertise to teachers. |
| \$10,000 | Branford Early Learning Center to support general operating expenses due to the loss of income and increased demand for services during COVID19. |
| \$10,000 | Branford Rotary to support the Help Out-Take Out initiative of the Branford Rotary Foundation and Branford Counseling & Community Services to support financially support local restaurants and families through COVID19. |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| \$10,000 | Feed Branford Kids to support Branford children with meals during COVID19. |
| \$10,000 | East Shore District Health Department to support the repair and refurbishment of a donated ambulance as a mobile health unit. |
| \$15,000 | Branford Counseling & Community Services to support rental assistance and grocery cards for Branford residents adversely impacted by COVID19. |
| \$25,000 | James Blackstone Memorial Library Capital Campaign to encourage smaller donations from community members to support their critical renovation (\$100,000 over four years). |
| \$37,000 | Branford High School Scholarships to 31 Branford High School graduates pursuing higher education. |
| \$50,000 | Women & Family Life Center for emergency financial support grants for Branford citizens impacted by COVID19. |

Competitive grants are awarded to qualified nonprofit and government agencies serving the town of Branford. For more information and the application form, go to our website: www.branfordcommunityfoundation.org.





2020 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Liza Janssen Petra and BCF Board Members Bobi Gill-Brooks, Deborah Conklin and Bob Mobeck receive a check from the Harbor Lights Second Annual Luminary Event, a neighborhood fundraising event held at Branford Point.

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES of the past year, together, we rose to the occasion with unprecedented support to both the Branford Community Foundation (BCF) and for BCF’s COVID 19 relief efforts.

Your support was critical in a time of unexpected need and a vivid demonstration of BCF’s ability to respond to a crisis.

BCF takes the stewardship of the assets entrusted to it very seriously.

We are pleased to report that assets increased by 14% for the most recent fiscal year to nearly \$3 million, a high-water mark for our portfolio.

This increase helped us respond to the pandemic by distributing more than \$202,000 to local organizations devoted to helping those in need. Total grants for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020 were \$374,324, up 130% from the previous year.

| As of December 31 | 2020 | 2019 | % Change |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Total Assets | \$2,993,510 | \$2,618,664 | 14% |
| Total Contributions | \$448,948 | \$140,318 | 220% |
| Total Distributions | \$374,324* | \$162,693 | 130% |

Build Your Legacy of Caring Choosing to include a gift in your Will ensures your compassion will reach Branford families well into the future — and it has the power to inspire others to do the same!

To discuss leaving your legacy, simply contact Liza Petra at (203) 444-4898 or lpetra@branfordcommunityfoundation.org.

*COVID 19 Fund grants represent \$202,235 of this total
Our Finance Committee works with the investment professionals at the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (“CFGNH”) to preserve and grow our endowment. BCF’s individual funds are pooled and invested in a diversified portfolio managed by CFGNH.
Key financial indicators are extracted from annual financial statements and exclude inter-fund gifts and grants. A copy of our Form 990 is available upon request.

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\$10,000 AND UP

- Anonymous Donor *
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\$250 TO \$499

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Susan & Michael Luchini
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* indicates donation to COVID 19 Fund

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Indemnity Company
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We worked carefully to ensure the completeness and accuracy of this list. We apologize for any mistakes, and ask that you contact Liza Janssen Petra at (203) 444-4898 or, lpetra@branfordcommunity-foundation.org to correct any inconsistencies.



We still don’t know exactly what things will look like, post-pandemic. But I’m confident the future will be bright because Branford has people like you — ready and waiting to step forward to help whenever your neighbors need you.

LIZA JANSSEN PETRA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Thank you
for your compassion and generosity

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