



Annual Report 2015



Every Family. Every Child. Every Time.

Just the Facts

The Mission of the Bridge Family Center is to foster the courage and strength in children and families to meet life's challenges and build fulfilling lives.

- Founded in 1969, the Bridge Family Center, Inc. based in West Hartford, is a comprehensive, regional nonprofit agency that provides a broad range of services for children and families throughout the Greater Hartford area.
- The Bridge offers child and family counseling; intervention in times of crisis; support groups for children who are struggling in school; mentoring for boys who need extra support from positive adult role models; supervised after-school alternatives for teens; prevention programs; personal development programs for parents, children, and youth; shelter for homeless youth; and assistance with the transition from youth to adulthood.
- The Bridge is recognized as a leader in bringing the community together to assess issues and needs, and plans, coordinates, delivers and evaluates services in a cost-effective manner.
- Last year the Bridge Family Center served approximately 9,000 young people and families.
- The Bridge's annual budget is \$8.2 million. Our services are funded by private donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, and organizations; the Town of West Hartford; the State of Connecticut Departments of Children and Families (DCF) and Education; and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- The Bridge is governed by a Board of Directors composed of 16 individuals from West Hartford and the Greater Hartford community.
- 176 staff members (69 full-time and 107 part-time) carry out the programs and services of the Bridge. Of our employees, 58% are people of color, and 76% are female. More than 150 volunteers assist staff.

Letter from the Executive Director



Margaret A. Hann
Executive Director

We are inundated with bad news in our world—so much so that we tend to become immune. If we block it out or shrug it off or distance ourselves from its raw reality, we can go on without pause. I suppose this response is a defense that we all put up at some level in order to move on. The downside is that we tend to transfer this same numbness to hearing good news. We can take too much for granted — as if to say that no amount of good news will ever outweigh all the bad news — so we simply ignore it all.

At the Bridge we are witness to plenty of good news as we help others overcome bad news in their lives. We are fortunate to witness firsthand the power of the human spirit in overcoming unthinkable circumstances. Bad news takes the back seat, loses its power, as good news brightens a path to a promising future.

One of my favorite quotes from Leo Buscaglia captures the work we do. “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

We count on the generosity of our many donors to carry out our mission. Through your generous support, we are able to bring good news to the lives of over 9,000 children and families each year.

Very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Margaret Hann', followed by a long horizontal flourish line.

Margaret A. Hann
Executive Director

We Grow in Thoughtful and Measured Ways —

Three New Programs at The Bridge

New Counseling Center Opens in Avon

The Bridge began as a nonprofit organization in 1969 to counsel youth on the Green in West Hartford Center. Over the years, we have grown to a licensed Outpatient Psychiatric Clinic with a Counseling Center in West Hartford as well as two satellite offices in other towns. Last year 443 clients were served by our therapists.

In 2011, we opened a Counseling Center in Rockville—Bridge East. Two therapists see young people and their families in that office in close proximity to Manchester Hospital. In addition, an APRN offers medication evaluations. They work closely with the schools and the Vernon Community Network

We opened a third Counseling Center in Avon—Bridge West—in April of 2015 to meet the needs of Avon and the surrounding communities. The office is in a quiet location in the heart of Avon. Bridge West is a calming place for children and families to come for guidance and to gain expertise in managing their life challenges with the support of competent and compassionate therapists. Three therapists are currently seeing clients. A child and adolescent psychiatrist offers medication evaluations for young people who are engaged in therapy with us. Those appointments are offered in our West Hartford office.



West Hartford Counseling Center



Bridge West in Avon

We Grow in Thoughtful and Measured Ways *continued*



Bridge East in Rockville

“The Avon Public Schools have been extremely receptive,” said Pat Tyler, Bridge Director of Youth and Family Services. “We have been partnering with them to teach mindfulness—a therapeutic technique encouraging calmness and focus—to reduce stress in students and teachers.”

Bridge therapists in all three locations offer individual, couple, and family therapy for children and families. Concerns that may be addressed include depression, anxiety, grief and loss, substance abuse, family issues, parenting challenges, coping with divorce, school concerns, behavior issues, abuse and neglect, anger, trauma, and self-destructive behaviors. Most recently, the Bridge became licensed to offer therapy to parents who are in need of support in a variety of areas, including substance abuse. We hired a licensed alcohol and drug counselor to serve these clients.

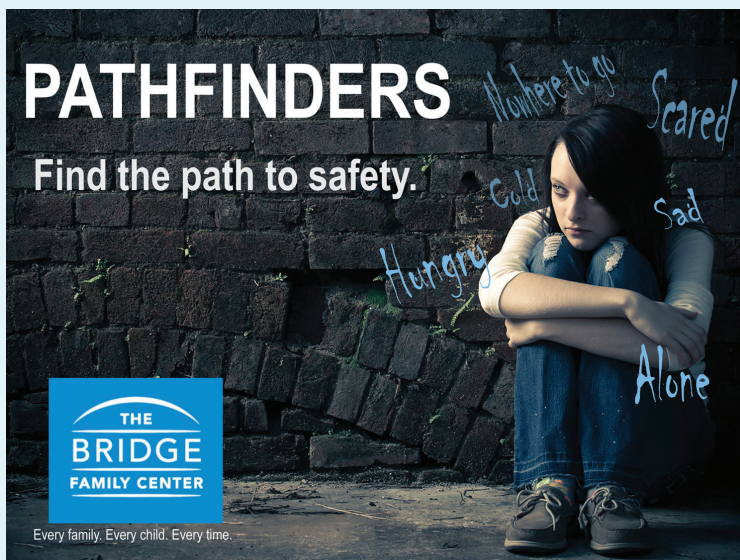
Our multi-disciplinary team includes Pat Tyler, director of youth and family services; a licensed clinical director; marriage and family therapists; professional counselors; social workers; and masters-level therapist trainees. A child and adolescent psychiatrist is available to provide medication evaluations for those clients engaged in therapy with us.

To schedule an appointment, contact the main Bridge office at (860) 521-8035. Both afternoon and evening appointments are available as well as Saturday appointments in West Hartford. Most insurance plans are accepted, including private insurance and HUSKY/Medicaid. For those without insurance, a very reasonable sliding fee scale is available. We never turn anyone away due to an inability to pay.

For more information, visit our website at www.bridgefamilycenter.org.

We Grow in Thoughtful and Measured Ways *continued*

Pathfinders Provides Further Support to Runaway and Homeless Youth



This past September, the Bridge received a federal grant for \$136,000 annually for three years to support a new program, *Pathfinders*. This crisis-support program provides emergency assistance to runaway and homeless youth who are not connected to the CT State Department of Children and Families. Eligible youth are boys and girls under the age of 18 who are experiencing temporary or ongoing homelessness.

“Imagine being a teenager living in fear on the streets, wondering when your next meal will be, or whose couch is available that evening,” said Margaret Hann, Bridge Executive Director. “Imagine feeling lost, tired, lonely, afraid, and invisible. The Bridge will now be able to do what we do best—offer a safe haven for young people and empower them to better their lives. We are thrilled to have this opportunity.”

Pathfinders’ objectives are to provide immediate safety for young people; build permanent relationships with family, caring adults, schools, and communities; and foster healthy decision-making and long-term self-sufficiency. The ultimate goal is to ensure that these youth are equipped with the skills necessary to overcome life’s challenges. Youth will be referred to a variety of in-house and local services including family counseling; prevention and treatment for substance abuse and mental health issues; and opportunities to engage in education and life skills development.

The Bridge is the only provider of comprehensive services for runaway and homeless youth in the Greater Hartford area. Each year, approximately 2,500 young people ages 14-24 access our wide array of services. *Pathfinders* is prepared to assist approximately 130 youth with emergency services and support. Fifteen to thirty of those youth will be offered emergency shelter with temporary stays of up to 21 days.

For more information, or to make a referral, call Mike Rulnick at (860) 521-6890.

We Grow in Thoughtful and Measured Ways *continued*

Synergies Abound —

The Bridge Family Center and *Great by 8* Join Forces

After months of strategic planning, *Great by 8*, a nonprofit focused on improving access to high-quality services in early childhood education and health, joined forces with the Bridge. Its focus is in keeping with the Bridge mission to help children and families to meet life's challenges and build fulfilling lives. The boards of directors of both the Bridge and *Great by 8* voted unanimously in favor of the plan.

The Bridge's Family Resource Center (FRC) will oversee the operations of, and work collaboratively with, *Great by 8* to support the healthy development of families in the West Hartford community. The partnership will enable the Bridge to offer even more family support services aimed at enhancing parenting skills, promoting family involvement with schools, and helping children succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

Great by 8 will continue to operate as a community partnership, bringing together parents, early childhood educators, health professionals, school district administrators, and community leaders to support young children in West Hartford. Senator Beth Bye and Jane Lehman, a member of the Bridge Board of Directors, will serve as *Great by 8*'s co-chairs. Deborah Zipkin, Director of the Bridge FRC, will oversee *Great by 8*'s operations and work closely with *Great by 8* Coordinators Andrea Thomas and Dana Kuhl, both of whom are now employees of the Bridge.



"The synergies were self-evident," said Margaret Hann, Executive Director of the Bridge. "Our missions are both aimed at supporting and improving the lives of children and their families. The FRC runs notable programs such as the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI), People Empowering People (PEP), early learning playgroups, multiple reading groups, and summer programs targeted at incoming kindergarteners with no prior preschool experience. The relationship between the FRC and *Great by 8* has already proven to be highly collaborative and valuable. *Great by 8* brings a lot to the table and we are committed to their long-term success."

"*Great by 8* will play a significant role in helping to formulate long-term strategies for the Bridge's early childhood programming by sharing the data it collects on young children in our community," said Jane Lehman. "*Great by 8* will also continue its efforts to inform the community about opportunities for parents and teachers, oversee school readiness funding, and connect local preschools and elementary schools. The Bridge will play a key role in future fundraising, and the Bridge staff will offer guidance on strategy, implementation, and execution of programs."

A Snowstorm Seemed to Add Excitement to Our 17th Annual Children's Charity Ball

On January 23, 2016, we hosted our 17th annual gala, the Children's Charity Ball, at the Hartford Golf Club. In spite of a snowstorm, 335 of the 365 registered guests attended. A peacock theme—*Show Your True Colors*—provided an elegant environment. The evening featured a black tie cocktail reception, sit-down dinner, live and silent auctions, and dancing to the music of the popular Timmy Maia Band. Matt Winter and Jane Lehman, Allstate Insurance Company, were the Honorary Chairs for the second consecutive year. Scot Haney, Channel 3 Meteorologist/Co-host of "Better Connecticut," was the spirited and entertaining emcee for the 15th year in a row.



The centerpieces echoed the peacock theme for the evening.

Once again, our community was incredibly generous. The entire event with ticket sales, silent and live auctions, a raffle of seven beautiful peacock-themed baskets, and the *Changing Lives Challenge* netted more than \$255,000 for our services for children and families in West Hartford, the Greater Hartford area and beyond. We are grateful to an incredible group of women who spent months planning the gala; to hundreds of businesses and individuals who sponsored the event or donated items to the silent and live auctions; to many individuals who made monetary donations to support the ball; to our team of gala volunteers; and to our guests for the evening.

Thank you, thank you.

Put next year's date on your calendar:
Saturday, January 21, 2017

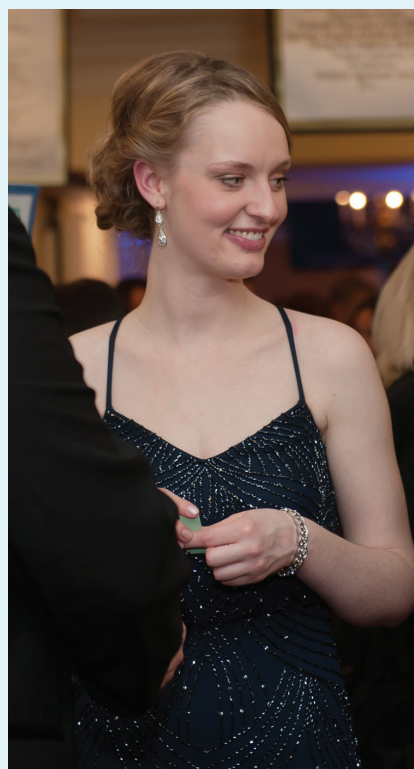
"Show Your True Colors"



The 2016 Ball Committee members pose for a photo at the start of the ball. Standing (l-r) Flo Votta, Dana Kuhl, Mary Ellen Flege, Liz Wilcox, Rebecca Holmes, Shelley Mendoza, Cheri Stabnick, Beth Ryan, Dee Newton, Carol Lorenzo, Cyndi Brown, Laury Currier, Stacy Raney, Kara Flanagan, Sue Healey, Nancy Hunt. Sitting (l-r) Mary Butler, Nancy Kennedy, Heather Clifford, Lynn Jimenez, Martha Rennie, Judy Bierly, Ellen Sayers, Paula Stabnick, Kara Langan, Laura Giannone. Missing from the photo: Barbara Kreitner, Kristin Magendantz.



Guests Tom and Anne Condon study the silent auction items.



Kate Hann enjoys the gala.



Honorary Chairs Matt Winter and Jane Lehman address the audience.

"Show Your True Colors"



Webster Bank Table, Sapphire Sponsor of the Ball — Seated (l-r) Margaret Coviello; Shannan Morris; Dawn Morris, EVP of Marketing at Webster Bank; Denise Hall, SVP & Treasury Sales Manager at Webster Bank. Standing (l-r): Michael Harrigan; Mark and Elaine Walker; Nancy Scirocco, Webster Bank; Michael Scirocco; Tom Hall.



Scot Haney entertains the crowd.



Anne Reilly enjoys the Live Auction.



Bridge Executive Director Margaret Hann enjoys Scot's antics.



Alecia Hogan, Manager, Community Affairs, UTC, the Galaxy Sponsor of the Ball; Scott Hogan.

"Show Your True Colors"

John Bierly, Platinum Sponsor, and Judy Bierly, Bridge Community Service Director, confer over bidding at the ball.



Mary Butler, President of the Bridge Board of Directors, is solemn as she watches the Bridge video. She and her husband Paul were Platinum Sponsors of the ball.



After the showing of a Bridge video, guests raise their paddles to bid in the Changing Lives Challenge.



Heather Clifford, a member of the ball committee, gets into the spirit with the Timmy Maia Band.

12 Donors Join Bridge Leadership Circle

Twelve generous donors were honored at the Bridge's annual meeting for stepping up to join the **Bridge Leadership Circle**, bringing the group's total membership to 47. These caring supporters have pledged \$1,000 or more annually for three years to build a solid foundation the Bridge can count on for its critical work. Their outstanding commitment will help ensure a bright future for the children and families we serve.

Leadership Circle members receive invitations to special events, program tours with executive director Margaret Hann, insider information updates, and recognition in our annual report.

Members of the Leadership Circle are:

Amanda and Scott Aronson
Verónica and Carlos Badiola
John and Judy Bierly
Patricia Bowen and Stan Guzek
Cynthia and Scott Brown
Lori M. Budnick
Robert and Barbara Burke
Paul and Mary Butler
Jeffrey and Jessica Capone
Anne and Jim Carroll
Judy and Olaf Casperson
Halsey and Michele Cook*
Mary Kay and Andy Curtiss
John and Suzanne DeSimone
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Driscoll
Barbara Foley and Tim Floyd*
Mary and Dick Froeb
Tony and Laura Giannone
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Robert and Francine Goldfarb
Peter and Cynthia Gutermann
Susan and Paul Hamilton*
Margaret and Bill Hann

* New member

Bill and Susan Healey*
Beth and Tim Herrick
Benjamin Kehl and Barret Katuna
Robert and Deborah Katz
Robert and Jennifer King*
Robert and Dawn Koff
Kara and Kevin Langan
Robert and Tamara Laurie
Jane Lehman and Matthew Winter
Carol and Tom Lorenzo
Stephen and Gail Lowe*
Kristin and Christopher Magendantz
Bill and Lauri McCarthy*
Ki and Tuck Miller
Peter and Chris Peterson*
Eric and Martha Rennie
Stephen J. Repka, II*
Beth and Mark Ryan
Ellen and Clem Sayers
John and Jaime Selldorff*
Jennifer and Michael Shiffman*
Brian Smith and Kim McClain
Dick and Cheri Stabnick
Felicia Wilion and Jay Frankel*



To learn about the Leadership Circle and how **you** can make a difference for children and families, please contact Martha Rennie, Director of Development, at (860) 521-8035 ext. 325 or martha@bridgefamilycenter.org.

Donor Profile: Ellen and Clem Sayers

Giving Back to Enrich Children's Lives

Over the years, generous community members have been the bedrock of support for the Bridge's mission of helping children and families overcome life's challenges and build fulfilling lives. With their passion, generosity, and can-do attitude, Ellen and Clem Sayers have given of themselves in countless ways to help realize our vision of serving *Every family, every child, every time*.

Both Ellen and Clem were born in West Hartford and have seen many changes since they grew up and raised their own children here. "It's always been a great town, with excellent schools and many ways of getting involved," says Ellen. "People from all backgrounds and countries have changed the town for the better, but today more residents need some help to succeed and thrive." They believe strongly in giving back to the town they love; as Clem says, "With so many choices for charitable giving, it's great to see the difference you can make right here in your own community."



Ellen relates, "Judy Bierly [the Bridge's community services director] was our neighbor and asked our friend Cheri Stabnick and me to join the Ball committee from the beginning, in 1999. We've been involved ever since." Ellen is a talented calligrapher and has designed the Ball logo, invitations, and event signage each year. Her creativity and enthusiasm have sparked the volunteers' transformation of the Hartford Golf Club into a uniquely beautiful and magical space, with every element tied into the gala's annual theme.

Clem's business, Rogo Distributors, is a Gold sponsor of the Ball, and through his business relationships Clem has secured wonderful items for the live and silent auctions—exclusive wines, tickets to major sporting events, in-home dinners with Chef Billy Grant, tours of Boston's Harpoon Brewery, and more. He and Ellen are modest about their efforts, and when asked about doing something for the Bridge or the Ball, simply say, "Of course." From supplying Stewart Sodas for our booth at *Celebrate! West Hartford* to printing the Ball banner for display on the Town Green, they are gracious, supportive, and happy to pitch in.

Children, Music, and Community

Ellen and Clem are the proud parents of three adult sons, all of whom excelled in Hall High School's music program under the inspirational leadership of Haig Shahverdian. "Our family activity was music," says Ellen. Concerned that gifted students without financial resources might not have the opportunities their own children had, Ellen and Clem were founding members of Gifts of Music, which supports music lessons and instrument recycling for talented young West Hartford musicians in grades 5-12.

When the Bridge formed its Leadership Circle two years ago, Clem and Ellen were among the first to step up as charter members. "Our involvement with the Bridge is a natural progression of the community involvement we learned from our parents when we were growing up," they comment. "Margaret Hann is an extremely impressive leader with a great heart. We know the Bridge is here for the children who need help today and will be here for future generations."

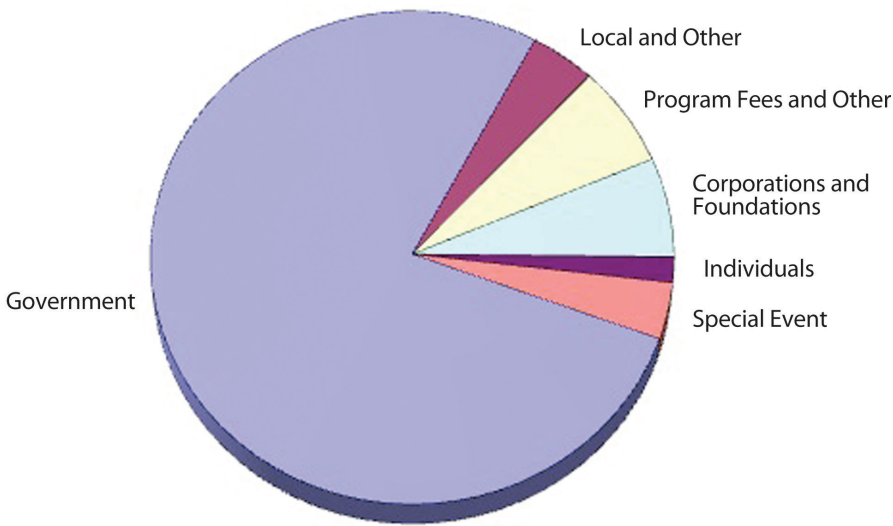
Ellen and Clem derive great joy from seeing the impact of their giving of "time, talent, and treasure." Please join them in supporting the Bridge to build a brighter future for our families and community.

Income and Expenses — Year Ending June 30, 2015

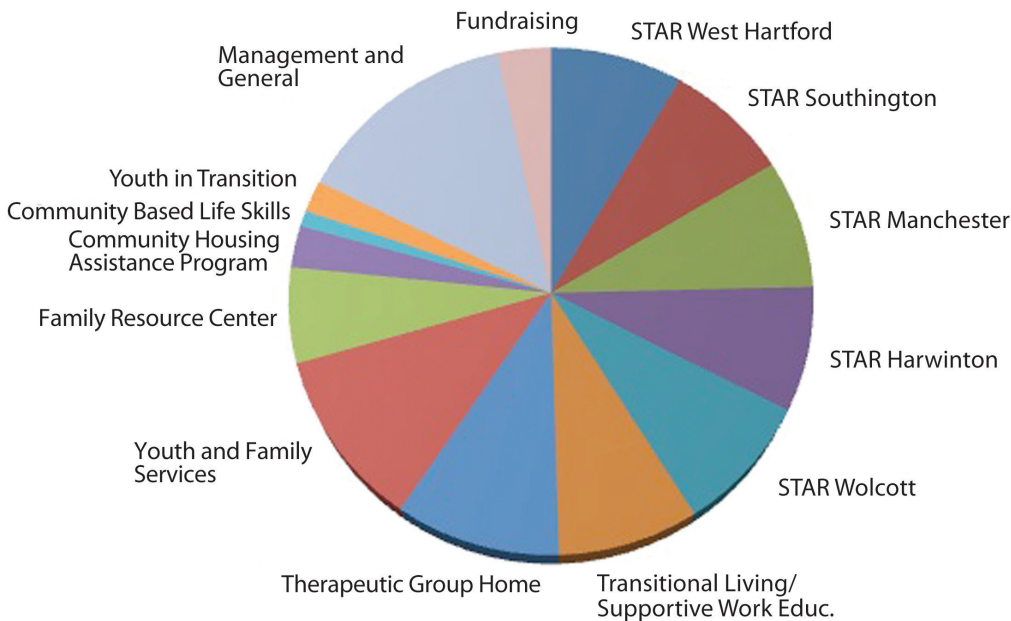
The Bridge Family Center, Inc.

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
INCOME			
Revenue			
Government	6,445,492		6,445,492
Local and Other	341,164		341,164
Program Fees and other	558,873		558,873
Net assets released from restriction— satisfaction of program purposes	116,831	(116,831)	0
Charitable Contributions:			
Corporations and Foundations	272,320	268,330	540,650
Individuals	141,110		141,110
Special Event	309,101		309,101
Total Income	8,184,891	151,499	8,336,390
EXPENSES			
Program Services			
STAR West Hartford	653,662		653,662
STAR Southington	619,481		619,481
STAR Manchester	640,641		640,641
STAR Harwinton	616,830		616,830
STAR Wolcott	664,422		664,422
Transitional Living/Supportive Work Educ.	656,108		656,108
Therapeutic Group Home	770,127		770,127
Youth and Family Services	863,848		863,848
Family Resource Center	473,293		473,293
Community Housing Assistance Program	205,669		205,669
Community Based Life Skills	79,106		79,106
Youth in Transition	157,656		157,656
Total Program Services	6,400,843		6,400,843
Supporting Services			
Management and General	1,109,664		1,109,664
Fundraising	264,604		264,604
Total Supporting Services	1,374,268		1,374,268
Total Expenses	7,775,111		7,775,111
Change in Net Assets	409,780	151,499	561,279
NET ASSETS, beginning of the year	2,257,478	149,710	2,407,188
NET ASSETS, end of the year	2,667,258	301,209	2,968,467

Revenue



Expenses



Making a Lasting Difference

Thanks to our Special Donors Who Are Supporting the Bridge's Future *Builders for the Future*

The Bridge's Planned Giving Society, ***Builders for the Future***, honors donors who have made a bequest or other planned gift to support our future and leave a legacy for many generations to come. Joining is simple: just include us in your will and let us know you have done so. Any size gift qualifies you for permanent membership.

Benjamin Kehl, a wealth management advisor with Kehl Financial and Bridge Board member, and his wife, Dr. Barret Katuna, care greatly about their community and wanted to make a lasting impact through their estate planning, while at the same time providing for their family. They named the Bridge as a beneficiary of Ben's life insurance policies and stated, "Now that we are parents to twin sons, we have an even greater appreciation for the services that organizations like The Bridge Family Center provide to so many families in our community. We continue to be impressed with the Bridge's programming for so many children and teens whose success greatly depends on this support. We feel assured knowing that the Bridge will always be a sanctuary in the Greater Hartford community for families in need."



We are grateful for this most profound level of support for the Bridge and are proud to recognize the members of ***Builders for the Future***:

Lori M. Budnick
Robert J. Burke*
David L. Clay
Greg Hammond

Margaret A. Hann
George C. Hastings
Benjamin E. Kehl and
Barret Katuna*

Nancy Clinton Parker
Emily W. Rankin
Sali G. Riege

* New member

The Bridge Family Center Fund

The Bridge is also pleased to recognize the generous donors to **The Bridge Family Center Fund**, our endowment fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Along with members of ***Builders for the Future***, these donors are committed to ensuring our ability to meet the needs of children and families far into the future. Contributors this year are:

Carolyn Arvidson*
John and Judy Bierly
Dr. Tim and Karen Brown
Mitchell and Ann Cohen

James E. Curry and
Kathleen M. McIntosh*
Mary Jean Kilfoil
Mike and Teisha Kothe
Gail and Stephen Lowe

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Beth and Mark Ryan
Lois Schneeberger
Bill and Karin Stahl*

* New contributor

You can make a lasting difference for the children and families of our community by making an outright or planned gift, such as a bequest, to The Bridge Family Center Fund. The Hartford Foundation provides management expertise, is a resource for advice on planned giving to the Bridge, and can work directly with you and your advisors on structuring a gift to the Fund.

To learn more about giving to **The Bridge Family Center Fund** or joining ***Builders for the Future***, please contact Martha Rennie, Director of Development, at (860) 521-8035 ext. 325 or martha@bridgefamilycenter.org. More information is available on our website, www.bridgefamilycenter.org.

*The Bridge Family Center is very grateful
to all of YOU—our supporters in fiscal year 2015!*

Heroes (\$10,000+)

Jane Lehman and
Matthew Winter
The McInerney Family

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Member, Bridge Leadership Circle

* Donor to endowment fund

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 Deborah Zipkin and Allan Polak*

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