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Foundation inspires giving

By **PATRICE FISHER**
STAFF WRITER

NEW BRITAIN — The Community Foundation of Greater New Britain (CFGNB) is a nonprofit organization serving Berlin, Plainville, New Britain and Southington. Since 1941, CFGNB's mission is to inspire philanthropy, responsibly manage permanent charitable assets and partner to address key community issues through strategic leadership.

In 2018, CFGNB achieved a milestone by awarding over \$2 million in scholarships since its inception. With over 45 scholarships, the Foundation aims to alleviate some of the financial pressure for students furthering their education. In April, the Foundation partnered with Central Connecticut State University to launch a pilot program of their Degree Completion Initiative.

"We were seeing rising numbers of students who were in their junior or senior years of college dropping out due to financial need, and we knew something had to be done about it," says Kimberly Duncan, Communications and Donor Relations Manager. With money raised from the James G Williamson Education Assistance Fund, the Foundation paired up with CCSU to establish criteria for students who were less than two semesters away from graduation and needed some financial assistance to

complete their educations. This year, five CCSU students will benefit from the new Degree Completion Initiative and go on to finish their undergraduate studies.

Twice yearly, the Foundation gives grants to nonprofits whose missions aim to improve the communities where we work and live. In order to apply for a grant, a 501(c)3 organization must first submit a letter of intent explaining how the grant would benefit their organization, and in turn, the population of our four-town area. Once the letters of intent are reviewed, selected organizations will be invited to apply for funding. Letters of intent must be completed by Jan. 1 to be reviewed by Feb. 1 and by July 1 to be reviewed by Aug. 1.

Members of the community who are looking for a way to get involved might consider joining the CFGNB's Catalyst Giving Circle. Catalyst members make a small gift and together take on a key issue affecting the community. This year, the topic selected is suicide prevention for younger people. At the first meeting in June, members will hear an expert discuss the topic and how it's affecting our community. In September, three organizations chosen by the Community Foundation will give presentations to the group as a request for funding. In the final meeting of the year in November,

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KIMBERLY DUNCAN | Communications and Donor Relations Manager

members will vote on which organization they would like to receive a \$12,500 grant to address that need. "The Catalyst Fund is ideal for those who wish to actively make a difference without requiring enormous amounts of time or money," says Joeline Wruck, Director of Community Initiatives and Program Services.

Looking ahead, the Foundation will continue to work with families and organizations that want to establish a fund with them so that they can continue to make our community a vibrant and better place to work and live. For more information on the Community Foundation of New Britain, visit www.cfgnb.org or call 860-229-6018. Staff are available to answer any questions 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday.



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