



December 2018 News

Founded in 1969 as Center City Churches

Hands On Hartford, in partnership with others, strengthens community in Hartford by responding faithfully to people in need through programs that change lives and renew human possibility.

Gratitude and Hope

Happy New Year to all of our friends, volunteers, donors, board members, guests, clients, staff and collaborators! As I reflect back on all that has transpired between New Year's Day 2018 and New Year's Day 2019, I am filled with gratitude and hope. Thousands of volunteers have teamed up with us to make the Hartford community a better place for us all. Hundreds of individuals and groups have lent their financial and in-kind support to the folks we serve in Hartford. We have worked in partnership with non-profits and faith groups to deepen and extend the services we provide, increasing food security, providing health support and ensuring folks are safely and stably housed.

The news I hear and read from around the country is a mixed bag, colored by uncertainty and unease. But when I look close to home, I am heartened by the generosity and care I see in our Hartford community. I see folks who don't hesitate to give up a holiday with family and friends to serve our Hartford neighbors. I see folks who freely give their hard-earned money to help those who are struggling to get by. I see people working together in partnership to strengthen community and renew human possibility.

2019 marks our 50th year serving the Hartford community! We look forward to honoring our roots, celebrating this milestone anniversary and launching into the future throughout the year. I'm excited about all 2019 has to bring, and I am confident that we can all work together to make great things happen. To all of our friends, warmest wishes for a happy, healthy and hope-filled year to come.

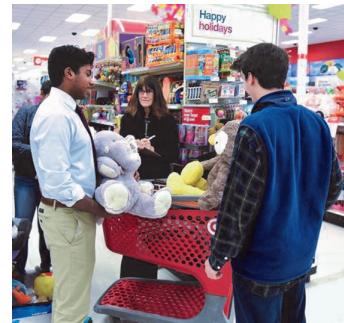
Barbara A. Shaw, Executive Director

Toy Shoppe Holiday Celebration

What a wonderful Toy Shoppe Holiday party we had in December! We are so honored to have worked with the community-minded young men from [Avon Old Farms School](#), who brought holiday cheer to hundreds of children in Hartford.

The Toy Shoppe party was also made possible by our sponsors: [First Church of Christ Simsbury](#), [Robinson+Cole](#), [UnitedHealth Group](#), [Insurity](#), [Travelers Insurance](#), [Key Bank](#) and [Infoshred LLC](#).

The Hartford Hawks Women's Basketball team got everyone dancing to great music played by DJ Prodigy from East Hartford. Parents selected gifts for their children; there was courtesy gift-wrapping; kids did hands-on science with the [CT Science Center](#), visited with Santa and did art and crafts; and everyone enjoyed pizza and snacks. We are thrilled and grateful to be a part of this incredible caring community.



Faith In Action

In addition to supporting the Toy Shoppe party as described earlier in this newsletter, this amazing group from [First Church Simsbury](#) joined us yesterday for our annual New Year's Day meal for the community. They decorated; donated snacks, juice, salad and dessert; played bingo with the guests; served the meal; and stayed to clean up when we were done. Their good cheer and lovely connection to our guests started out the 2019 year on a wonderful, community-focused note.



Christmas Day Meal

We celebrated Christmas Day with our traditional Christmas meal. Dozens of volunteers, led by Hands On Hartford alumna [Emily Kaas](#), served a delicious meal of brown-sugar honey glazed ham with red bliss potatoes and Christmas corn (and

 more, all prepared by [Chef Kim Bunton](#)) to over 130 guests. Every child who joined us chose special gifts from under the tree, and the day was filled with love and good spirit. And each guest left with a gift bag courtesy of our friends at [The Hartford](#). If you didn't see the [WFSB](#) video describing the day, you can

find it on our Facebook page!



KNOW GOOD Holiday Bazaar

On December 8th Hands On Hartford hosted vendors as a part of the KNOW GOOD Holiday Bazaar. [The Café at Fifty-Five](#) was open for business with some delicious specials and our full range of coffee and beverages. Vendors here included our Shared Kitchen Members, [Amazing Ackee](#), [Fit and Trim Nutrition](#) and [Loafing](#)

[Around LLC](#). There were many other vendors with awesome holiday gift options. Vendors were located at several other locations along Bartholomew Avenue, including [Hog River Brewing Company](#), [Hardenco](#), and the [Dirt Salon](#). We continue to be delighted to be part of such a creative and thriving community here in Parkville.



We all have our hands on Hartford!



Not only did Webster Bank donate 280 pounds of food, but they also donated \$3,500.00 to support our MANNA food programs.



Gengras Center School & East Catholic High School brought special gift bags for families who attended this year's Toy Shoppe.



Barnes and Noble customers in Glastonbury donated over 1,000 books which we gave out during the Toy Shoppe. There still plenty to spare for our Book Nook in the food pantry and for kids at upcoming holiday meals.



Rotary Club of Hartford Rocks! Not only did they bring some holiday cheer (music and treats), to one of our community meals this past month, they also donated gifts of warmth and toiletries.



UBS Financial is keeping Hartford warm with their gifts of warmth: hats, gloves, scarves, & socks.



Dollar Giving raised money to support Hands On Hartford during the Hartford Marathon.

Adopt-a-Family Gratitude

A huge and heartfelt thank you to the many individuals, families and groups who adopted families for Christmas this year. These folks purchased wish-list items for men, women and children, wrapped them with love, and delivered them to us to be given to families in time for Christmas. The joy we saw on the faces of both the adopters and adoptees was truly moving, and so many lives were touched by this wonderful example of the spirit of Christmas.



Does your employer have a matching gifts program?

Many employers match financial donations to charitable organizations like Hands On Hartford, or make gifts to match volunteer hours. You may be able to double the impact of your gift! Questions? Contact Kate at kshafer@handsonhartford.org or 860-706-1505.

The Café at Fifty-Five is open Tuesday-Friday, 7:30am-2:30pm, here at 55 Bartholomew Avenue in Hartford.



Caterers Who Care provides on-site and off-site catering, including a broad selection of breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack items with an emphasis on our ability to customize our selections to fit groups from a handful to hundreds, and accommodate your budget. **[Check out our new catering menu at our website!](#)**

Our Community Kitchen also operates as a shared use kitchen, where members use the kitchen and all of its equipment on an hourly basis—ideal for small culinary businesses, start-ups, and food trucks/carts.

The Café, Caterers Who Care and Shared Use Kitchen all support Hands On Hartford direct service programs.

For more information contact Molly Reynolds at 860-706-1537 or mreynolds@handsonhartford.org.



Are you an online shopper?

Check out Amazon Smile – for all Amazon.com shoppers, start your shopping at smile.amazon.com. Select Hands On Hartford as your charity, and you're off and running! .5% of eligible purchases will go to Hands On Hartford.



55 Bartholomew Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-728-3201 - Fax: 860-549-8550
www.handsonhartford.org