## ELS CASE COMPETITION

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER, 2021

MEMORY BOOK

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

























### About the 2021 **ELS Case Competition**

In September 2021, ELS launched its third case competition bringing together teams of emerging leaders from across the country, executive mentors, judges, sponsors, and volunteers to help address the barriers that contribute to hunger and access to food in central and northeastern Connecticut. Teams were immersed in learning about food insecurity and were positioned to identify creative solutions, develop personally and professionally, sharpen their virtual presence and form a network of individuals with diverse backgrounds and leadership styles.

United Way Emerging Leaders Society (ELS) powered by ConnectiCare created this "Shark Tank" style competition to allow for innovative thinking, problemsolving and professional development, all while offering up ideas that may have a long-term impact on our community.





## **Thank You 2021** *ELS Case Competition* **Committee**



L to R: Trish Hesslein, Community Marketing Manager, TEGNA's FOX61 & CW20; Aaron Knight, Grants and Contracts Specialist, CT Department of Public Health; Jazna Stannard, Program Specialist, Lanc[H]artford; Brent Robertson, Co-Founder, Fathom; Mackenzie Manning, 2021 Chair, Program Manager, Raytheon Technologies; Ryan Baldassario, Full-Time MBA Program Administrator, University of Connecticut School of Business; Matthew Banever, Founder and CEO, Bards Clothing











Martha Page
Executive Director
Hartford Food System

Sarah Santora
Director, Community Programs
Connecticut Foodshare

Robin Lamott Sparks
Past Executive Director
End Hunger CT!

## **Congrats 2021 Winning Team**







### Excerpt from Steam United's La Cocina de mi Abuela Public Awareness Campaign

"Hartford has one of the highest concentrations of ALICE (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed) families with food insecurity among the areas served by United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut. The many food pantries and resources in this area remain under-utilized, especially by Spanish-speaking families, due to factors including differing hours of operation, documentation requirements, and the pride of those who would be served.

We estimate 9,000 households of the Hartford Hispanic community are in the ALICE category. Our target geographic area of Frog Hollow, Barry Square, and Behind the Rocks neighborhoods, are 70% Hispanic, with a concentration of approximately 4,000 ALICE households.

Through our campaign, *Cocina de mi Abuela*, United Way can have the greatest exposure per dollar and improve the rate at which Spanish-speaking ALICE families use food-sharing services by enhancing awareness and acceptance.

Our campaign is tailored to increase familiarity, reduce stigma, and streamline the experience for new and existing patrons of food pantries. We aim to achieve this using a "Spanish-First" printed and word-of-mouth distribution via faith-based organizations and schools, combined with social media outreach through United Way's social media channels. The focus of our campaign will tie into CT Foodshare's annual Walk Against Hunger, highlighting at least one local food pantry, and host the festive unveiling of a community mural delivered in partnership with a local Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ)."

## Thank You 2021 ELS Case Competition Judges



















## JUDGES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: TOP ROW:

**Erica Dean,** Vice President, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Northeast Division), Comcast/NBC Universal (Rounds One and Two)

Joe Gianni, President, Bank of America of Greater Hartford (Head Judge: All Rounds)

Michael Goldbas, Retired Partner, Deloitte (Rounds One and Two)

**Rob Kosior,** Senior Vice President, Pharmacy and Medical Cost Management, Emblem Health/ConnectiCare (Rounds One and Two)

Tiffany Donelson, President and CEO, Connecticut Health Foundation (All Rounds)

### **BOTTOM ROW:**

**Jackie Garofano,** PhD, Chief Technology Officer, Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (Rounds One and Two)

Diane Cantello, Vice President, Social Impact, Stanley Black & Decker (Final Round)

Chris Preston, Vice President, Corporate Relations, United Way Worldwide (Final Round)

**Taylor Kinzler,** Host, CT Live!, NBC Connecticut (Final Round)



L to R: Patti MacRae, Point32Health; Isabela Piza Danielsen, Pratt & Whitney; Pete Collins, Travelers; Carlos Brown, Trinity Health Of New England; Patrick McMahon, VibrantCT Consulting; Chelsea Mouta, Parkville Market; Melissa O'Hara, O'Hara Solutions Group

## **Pete Collins**

MENTOR, HUNGER HEROES, CVS HEALTH

"Most Likely to Have a Person for That"



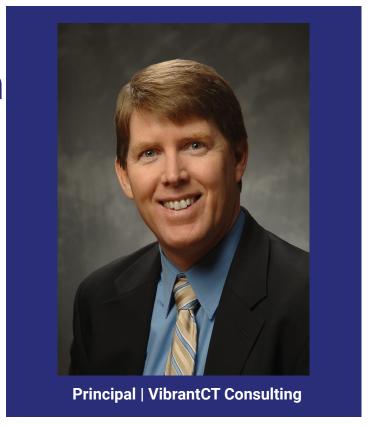


## **Patrick McMahon**

MENTOR, AETNA'S ELITE, CVS HEALTH

"Most Prepared (to do the YMCA)"





## **Patti MacRae**

MENTOR, STEAM UNITED, HSB

"Best Guide from Good to Great"





## **Chelsea Mouta**

MENTOR, HHC CHANGEMAKERS, HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

"Most Supportive"



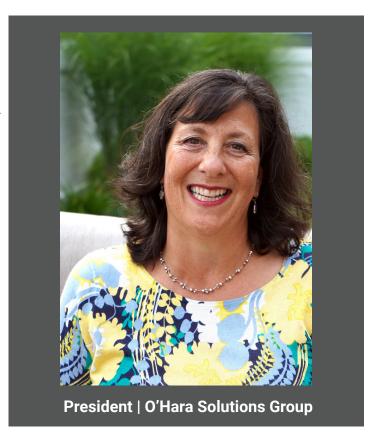


## Melissa O'Hara

MENTOR, COMCASTERS FOR LIFE!
COMCAST

"Most Patient,
Caring, and
Encouraging Coach
we Could Ever Have."



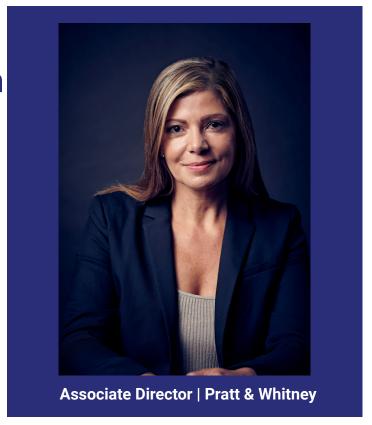


### Isabela Piza Danielsen

MENTOR, HUSKIES AGAINST HUNGER
UCONN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

"Most Likely to Challenge, Support, and Energize You All at the Same Time!"





## **Carlos Brown**

MENTOR, GSRC (GLADLY SERVING OUR COMMUNITY), PRATT & WHITNEY

"Most Likely to Challenge and Empower"



















## **AETNA'S ELITE CVS HEALTH**



Mentor: **Patrick McMahon** VibrantCT Consulting

L to R: Ryan Cunningham, Josephine Kong, Alexandra Wald, Madison DesMaisons, William Gollnick

**FINALIST** 

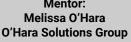
"MOST GEOGRAPHICALLY CHALLENGED... AND EFFICIENT!"



## **COMCASTERS FOR LIFE!**

## **COMCAST**















L to R: Dalton Taylor, Racheal Lane, Tera Boyce, Robert Luca Jr., Desarae Guilbert

"MOST HEART AND GROWTH!"



## **GSRC** (GLADLY SERVING OUR COMMUNITY)

## **PRATT & WHITNEY**











Mentor: **Carlos Brown Trinity Health Of New England** 

L to R: Alaina Washington, Gabrielle Hodges, Matthew Wilson, Sydnei Kimball



## HHC CHANGEMAKERS HARTFORD HEALTHCARE



Mentor: Chelsea Mouta Parkville Market

L to R: Claudia Martinez, Veronica Reyes, Maria Shimer, Hima Katrapati, Victoria Okyere

"MOST LIKELY TO HYPE YOU UP!"



## HUNGER HEROES CVS HEALTH



Mentor: Pete Collins Travelers

L to R: Zoe Sailer, Larry Sage, Grace Sleder, Nidhi Mahagaokar, Victoria Vulitsky





## UCONN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS













L to R: Sara Kerger, Jacob Gregus, Elizabeth Greenberg, Neha Savardekar

"BEST AT TAKING CHARGE OF THEIR OWN DESTINY!"



## **STEAM UNITED**

### **HSB**



Mentor: Patti MacRae Point32Health







L to R: Linkesh Diwan, Hunter D'Addeo, Alondre Rush

"BEST COLLABORATION...
MOST PASSIONATE!"



## CONNECTING. COMMUNITY.



Comcast NBCUniversal proudly supports the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut and this year's Emerging Leaders Society Case Competition promoting partnerships and innovative thinking to help solve real community issues.

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## **CONGRATULATIONS**

## **ELS JUDGES: ROUNDS 1 AND 2**

This was a wonderful process and experience. My fellow ELS Judges, it was my pleasure to serve on a panel with such esteemed members of our wonderful community! Working with you as a team was inspiring and I learned so much from both you as judges, as well as our inspiring team/participants. Kudos to all!

Erica M. Dean











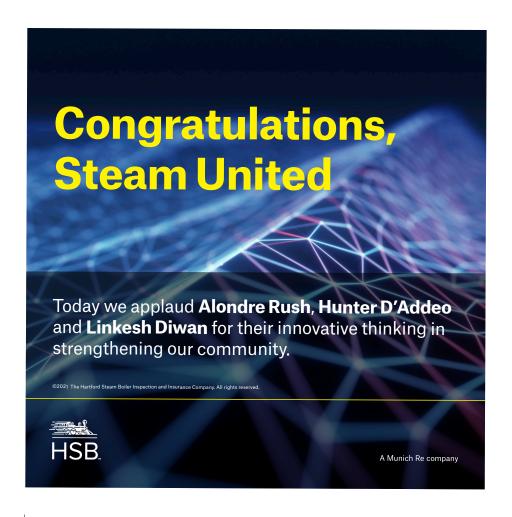
## **CONGRATULATIONS**

## **Hunger Heroes**

Grace, Nidhi, Larry, Victoria, and Zoe,

It's been an honor and a privilege to work alongside you. Thanks for making my role as mentor so easy and so much fun!

**Pete** 





communities. YOU ROCK!

**Patti** 



## **CONGRATULATIONS**

## **Huskies Against Hunger**

I am so proud to have mentored such a talented, creative & motivated team, extremely dedicated to making a positive impact on our community. It took each teammate much persistence, commitment, and an immense amount of dedication to the cause and each other. Congratulations on bringing it all together so wonderfully. I can't wait to see what's next for each of you!

Isabela Piza Danielsen



## **ALL ELS TEAMS AND MENTORS**

You leaned in!

You worked hard!

You were passionate!

You cultivated and shared amazing ideas!

THANK YOU for your contributions toward helping United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, and their community partners, identify viable solutions to address food insecurity for ALICE.

Keep up the great work,

Patti MacRae



## **CONGRATULATIONS**

## **2021 STEERING COMMITTEE**

Collectively and individually, I could not imagine a better team to lead with! Celebrating everything about you!

With love and appreciation

Rebekah

#ELSCASECOMP



The ELS Case Competition was a wonderful experience.



## **CONGRATULATIONS**

## **Stephanie Berman**

Your faithful leadership, creativity, and strategic perspective have been and continue to be invaluable to ELS' communication strategy, particularly social media.

Your vision, talent, and passion allowed us to tell the story of the 2021 #ELSCASECOMP in new and innovative ways.

We appreciate you so much! 2021 ELS Case Competition Committee

Each team member and mentor that participated in the *ELS Case Competition* invested an average of

5 hours per week

totaling

1,300 HOURS!

Collectively, in

8 WEEKS\*

we invested the equivalent of

8 MONTHS

of one person's full time job.

## **About Emerging Leaders Society**

Connect Leaders. Cultivate Relationships. Change Our Community.

ELS is a convener of local, young professionals. ELS members represent a new generation of leaders committed to making a difference in our community by leveraging the power of United Way to connect, serve and grow – both personally and professionally.







## About United Way

United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut's mission is to engage and bring together people and resources committed to the well-being of children and families in our community. Our vision is a community where opportunities are available for every child to succeed in school and for every family to achieve financial security.

United Way brings people and resources together to address immediate needs and find long-term solutions to challenging problems, such as hunger. We do this by investing in programs and services, leading community change initiatives and mobilizing resources and volunteers. With your support, we and our network of community partners will build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic.





Northeastern Connecticut

### Why Your Support Matters

Most households who have not accessed food services before COVID-19 are unfamiliar with existing ways to get food assistance.

66% of families who accessed emergency food for the first time during the pandemic could not name a food pantry.

There was an alarming 14% increase in food insecurity across Connecticut in 2020. One in every seven adults and one in every six children across the state are at risk of hunger.



While data exists around those seeking food resources, there are many potentially vulnerable populations that aren't always captured effectively in data collection efforts (ex: communities of color, veterans, the elderly and children).

Many households experiencing food insecurity are ALICE, a United Way-coined acronym that stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. These are adults and families with incomes above the Federal Poverty Level but below a basic cost-of-living threshold. Simply put – despite working hard, they struggle to make ends meet.

### Thank You United Way Staff

Rebekah Castagno, Team Lead

Maura Cook and Jen Gifford, Executive Sponsors

Kate Blackburn

Kayla Hernandez

John Prescod

Annie Sommers Fazzino

Amanda Trothier

## Personal Messages

Congrats to all of the participants!!!

Participating in the Case Competition
as a Steering Committee member has
been a thoroughly enjoyable experience.
The time, effort, passion and persons!

growth demonstrated by each team was
amazing to watch!

Thank you United Way, Rebekah and Mackenzie for the opportunity to serve.

faron Knight
- Steering Committee -

Well done to all the participants!

As this experience clearly showed, you have the power to drive community solutions that deliver sustainable results - unleash that power and the world will benefit! Thank you for the opportunity to be part of such a great program!

Diane Cantolli) Judge

Mentoring the HHC Changemakers team was an incredibly enriching experience – I am very grateful to the united Way for giving me the opportunity to work with this group! Veronica, Victoria, Claudia, Maria and Hima clicked as a team from the outset and with their shared experience at Hartford Healthcare they laid the foundation for a trusting and energetic dynamic. Everyone participated whole heartedly in each meeting and they respected and valued each other's opinions and that alignment was clear in their presentations. It was a pleasure to mentor them through the stages of the competition with enthusiasm and I was so proud of the work they produced. Thank you to HHC Changemakers for being so engaged and for truly embodying the spirit of teamwork and collaboration – your work and home teams are lucky to have each of you!

Wahling the relationary Shown between marting I teams was my favorite part!

Doent Josephon

Chelsea Mouta

Completing the first rand of presentations was a highlight. There was so much excitement in how well we worked and how we could improve.

Grace, CVS Health Hunger Heroes

I May never meet those who will have been directly impacted by our work, but I know someone somewhere will be smiling because of it. That supersedes wins or losses. This competition allowed us to be a voice, a light, part of the change. What an honor!

Alondre Rush - Steam United -

I am so grateful for the experience of serving as part of the Judge panel for the 2021 United Way ELS Case Competition. I learned so much from each of the teams. I thank you for your hard work, preparation, and support of our community. Your enthusiasm and passion were infectious! Erica Dean-Judge





To our mentor Carlos,

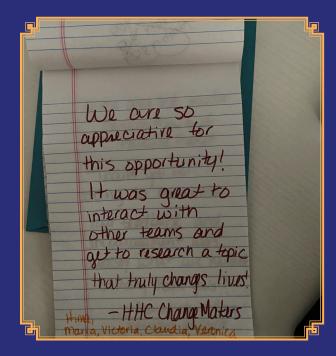
It was a pleasure to learn from you! We appreciate how you challenged us to think outside the box, to validate our thoughts and engage in effective teamwork. We thank you for planning and organizing our team meetings, connecting us with the correct resources that empowered us to take our thoughts to the next level. We are truly grateful for all you have done for our team. Without your support and help we would not have made it as far as we did. Thank you!

Sincerely, Alaina, Gabrielle, Matt, and Sydnei (GSrC: Gladly Serving Our Community)

Seeing our teams passion and drive for two Prodet, as nell as our innovative, and divers tred Solutions has nade me beyond proud to be a hunger hero, win or lose. This Care Comp has been a phenomenal chance to learn, graw, and give back. Lary /age

The 2021 case competition provided me an apportunity to grow my public speaking skills and confidence. The judges were so helpful and muided great feedback during our presentations!

- Hima Katrapati



Being apart of the 2021 case competition was one of the most challenging yet, Rewarding experiences. I loved taking this journey with my team and our neutor. Learning about and executing on Design Thinking is what I will continue to incorporate in my career toolbox

Daton Taylor Comcasters for Life!

Meeting dedicated community leaders who are so passionate about making a difference has been amazing! I can't wait to get more involved with the ELS!

Hunter D'Addeo
Steam United

It was a true privilege to hork with such a Ialented team. I gained so much from this experience and was so i pleasantly) surprised at how much of actually learned from each teammate. The ha, sarah, Jake & Blizabeth: you well each fly so high there's to achieving all your hopes and dreams!

Sabela Piza Danielsen tuskies Against teunger

This has been an amazing learning and development experience!

I'll always remember the positive, funny messages from teammates before presenting each round and our willingness to give each other honest, constructive feedback. And thank you to our mentor Patrick for always providing resources and cheering us on. So proud of all the teams! !!

- Josephine Kong Aetna's Elite With how quickly +

deeply I connected

with a town and communty

I'd never heard of 3

months a go.

- Madison DesMaisons

Aetna's Elite

Not only did I gain
Important team building 3

presentation skills, this process
also offered me a deeper
Understanding of the challenges
our communities are facing,
I found that to be most
impactful on my journey
to becoming an informed
and influental leader.
Maria Shimer
HHC Change Makers

Continue to develop your teamwork problem solving and presentational skills in your professional careers, alongside the compassion and commitment you demonstrated for the community.

Serve. Lead. Be authentic.

Joe gini Tudge

It has been an honorto take part in the steering
Committee for the ELS Case
Competition. I was blown away
by the innovative out reach plans
our teams put together. I'm
excited to see these plans
yet into action to benefit the
local community!

Ryan Baldassario

Meet with the teams at
the beginning of your process
and along the way!

From my point africal, your
efforts to raise awareness
of a critical community issue
like food security makes you
all winners!!

Lartha Page
Community
Partner

Compatulations to all
ELS Case Competition

Participants:

You worked hard, thought

Creatively and committed

to being part of the Solution

to address food viscourity.

You Plus Dome!!!

Keep up the great work and

Continue to be a visual for

Change! Together we will

Make a positive difference.

Patti

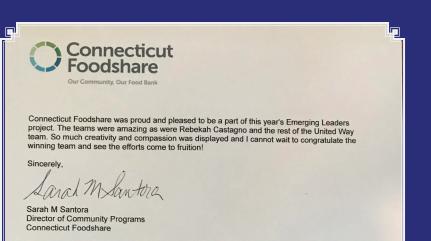
Not having experience in the community investment space did not step me from leaning in and giving my all to this ELS case competition. I'll never forget how much this experience has helped me grow as a leader, a person, a contributor, and a community member.

Rocheel Lone Concasters For Life! The 2021 ELS Case Compositions has been else-opening, and has provided a catalyst for personal of professional of professional of the Mark you for the Creat Opportunity!

This experience
has been challenging
and rewarding!
Couldn't have done
it without my team mates
and Mentor!
Sydnei Kimball
GSrC

Boing apart of team. "Comcast for life," was such a great expaniance. I will truly charish this opprotunity. —Tera Boyce

I loved the playfulness,
laughten + fun we had as
a team
Mulissa O'Hara
Comcastos for Life! Menton



Being a judge was tremedously rewarding, but much harder than I expected. Goes to the talent and preparation of all the teams. It's nie to see the next generation of leaders rise to the occasion.

Rob Koslor
JUDGE

While all of my team members work in the same rotational program as me, I carely interacted with them on a day-to-day basis. The most meaningful memory that I will take away from this experience is getting to know my other colleagues on both a professional and persual level. This includes our mentor, Patrick, who was an incredible support system throughout our journey!

- Ryan Cunningham, Aetna's Elite

Morking with a brilliant team + amazing mentor to address a critical need.

Health is a Human Right? - Victoria

CVS Hunger Heroes

Being a participant in the ELS Challenge was

Being a participant in the ELS Challenge was

a wonderful experience to support a great cause to

help with food insecurity. To share best practices

with so many outstanding leaders is unforgettable.

Robert Luca Ir.

\*Comcasters For Life\*

This case competition was a

tentastic way to meet new people
and to paise quereness for the

prominent hunger issues in Connected to

I teally enjoyed putting so much
effort into this project with my
texammentes, and look forward to the

rowlts.

Will Gallmithe

Being able to contribute
meaningfully to a team
using the skills I gained from
past experiences was a
great feeling! I'm proud of
how my team used our diverse
backgrounds to inform and
create a strong, thoughtful
strategy.

- 70e Sailer
tunger Heroes

Friority

Fife can be complicated, but

your work will help our neighbors

find the openings for new
opportunities. your case

stratagies offered ease of
interaction and provided

multiple ways to engage

that will lead to changing

be harjors.

I am very proval to have
been part of the 2021 writed.

Way Els Case Competition.

Thank you! ThishHesslein

(Committee name bay)

HUGE CONGATULATIONS

to all the teams and mentors
who participated in the 'zl #Els carecomp
I'm in avve of the creativity,
passion, i determination you've
all showcased! You should be
proud of the work you did to
help battle hunger in our community.
Your dedication and perserverence
in the face of this difficult
challenge was inspiring!
HUGE THANK YOU

to everyone who made this possible!
It was a privelege to be a part of!

Macchail Manning committee Chair)

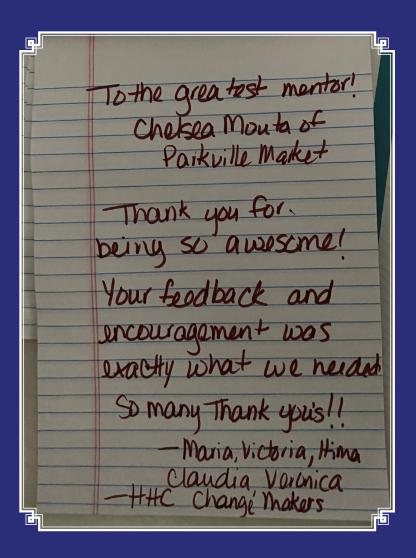
Ps. can't wait to see what amoung things you all do next!!

What a privilege it has been to help guide Team Aetna's Elite and learn from such a talented group of young professionals. It was a thrill to watch the teams blossom and develop such inspiring Campaigns in short order. The future is bright for this amazing group of emerging kaders!

Thank you United Way, Rebekah and the Steering Committee for a great ride.

Patrick McMahon

Mentor



Pratt & Whitney's GSrC (Gladly Serving Our Community) team members are tremendously gifted individuals!

**Carlos Brown** 

I really enjoyed being a mentor again.

Spending time with these young leaders, seeing then express their passion and creativity on solving real problems for our community is inspiring and rewarding

Tels Collins

MENTOR

Teams, sponsors, poutners, menters, judges, committees, Thank year for an unforgettable year. 2021 has set a new standard for buture competitions thanks to the collective efforts of each one of you!

With gratified, Rebekah.

Thanks to all the participants for the thoughtfulness on creating positive impact in your community. With the food security divide widening during the pandemic, these ideas will go a long way to help United Way and the community close the gap. I really appreciate the inspiration from these ideas. I also hope everyone had as much fun participating as I did judging.

## THANK YOU!

unitedwayinc.org/elscasecomp

# SAVE THE DATE! THE ELS CASE COMPETITION RETURNS SEPTEMBER 2022