

Darien Wins 'Most Generous Town' Award by a Hair Over New Canaan

Author : David Gurliacci

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In a close competition for the 2017 “Most Generous Town” award, Darien took the title by a slim margin of just \$1,040 over New Canaan.

But according to the Darien and New Canaan community foundations, when you give locally to help your community, it’s a win for us all. #GivingTuesday is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration.

— *an announcement from the Darien Community Foundation*

Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year philanthropic giving.

This year The Community Fund of Darien and the New Canaan Community Foundation used the friendly rivalry that already exists between the two towns as an incentive for residents to give generously in the first annual “Most Generous Town” contest.

The two community organizations decided to collaborate to raise awareness and much-needed financial support for critical local needs such as homelessness, hunger, mental health, substance abuse and more.

The two towns had different game day strategies. The Community Fund of Darien had a dual approach which included online giving as well as partnerships with local businesses.

According to Executive Director, Carrie Bernier, “We blanketed Darien businesses with banners, balloons and signs encouraging support on # GivingTuesday.

Over 30 Darien businesses participated, giving a percentage of sales and individual gifts. We also engaged social media channels to spread the word. The support of Darien never ceases to amaze me.”

The New Canaan Community Foundation took a different approach. CEO Lauren Patterson said, “I’ve always been impressed by the generosity of our residents, and #GivingTuesday was no different.

To celebrate our organization’s 40th anniversary this year, we already had a group of anonymous donors in town that created a challenge match, matching dollar for dollar up to \$107,500 in gifts from new donors or increased donations from past supporters. A good number of residents stepped up to that challenge match, effectively doubling our impact.”

While The Community Fund of Darien raised the most money in online and business support during the twenty-four hour period of #GivingTuesday, collectively the two organizations together raised nearly \$70,000 to support our local community.

The message they hope we take from #GivingTuesday is that the real winners here are the Fairfield County nonprofits who will benefit from the money raised.

Thanks to the generosity of Darien and New Canaan residents and businesses, the neighborly competition helped to raise awareness for both organizations and their partners, and will increase local giving. The two organizations look forward to making it an annual tradition.

To learn more about these organizations or to make a contribution please visit the [Community Fund of Darien](#) or the [New Canaan Community Foundation](#) websites.