

Close to 400 Attend Liberation Programs Annual Gala Thursday at Woodway

Author : David Gurliacci

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On Thursday, June 6, nearly 400 of the area's most philanthropic residents came to Woodway Country Club for Liberation Programs' 12th Annual Spirit of Hope Gala.

— *an announcement from* [Liberation Programs](#)

The event, hosted by the organization's President and CEO, John Hamilton, raised over \$400,000. The money will provide critical funds for life-saving treatment Liberation Programs provides for recoverees, and outreach work it does to prevent substance use disorders in the communities in our area.

Highlights of the evening included moving performances by singer Daphne Willis, as well as a touching vocal performance by the nationally acclaimed Darien High School Tudor Singers.

Video presentations showcased the tremendous impact the organization is having on our community, and guests competed for exciting raffle prizes.

U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal kicked off the program. "Liberation Programs is the gold standard, and I am proud of the work that you're doing to break the stigma of substance use disorder," he said. "They are breaking down barriers, and providing new kinds of help for people when they are most vulnerable."

The evening honored some of the nation's leading addiction experts, each having raised the standard of care

in substance use treatment and recovery. Awards were presented to Gary Mendell, Founder and CEO of Shatterproof, The Lighthouse Sober Living and The Lighthouse Recovery Coaching 365 Program, and the organization's own Maggie Young, MSW, LADC, Liberation Programs Chief Recovery Officer.

"I never dreamed I'd be standing before you as a Spirit of Hope honoree," said Young, who was a client of Liberation Programs herself some 27 years ago. "Ever since my treatment stay in 1992, I wanted to be present for others like me, who needed help and support."

Michael Pollard, chief of staff for Stamford Mayor David Martin, attended the event. "I am honored to know Maggie, all the people she helps are a testament to the great work of Liberation Programs, and her amazing title of chief recovery officer represents the extraordinary work Liberation Programs is doing saving lives," he said.

Additional donations to the event are still welcome. Please visit [this Web page](#) to make your contribution today.

Liberation Programs would like to thank its dedicated gala committee led by co-chairs John Bassler, Debra Hertz, PhD and Cynthia J. Shaw, as well as its generous corporate sponsors, Atlantic Diagnostic Laboratories, First County Bank, KPMG, The Lighthouse/Recovery 365, Mountainside Treatment Center, Pitney Bowes, Stamford Health, and Yale New Haven Health.

The organization has been a pioneer in the field of integrated behavioral health services in lower Fairfield County for nearly 50 years.

Liberation Programs provides services for youth, adults and families that include two inpatient treatment programs, outpatient and intensive outpatient services, health education for older adults and people living with HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses, treatment and resources for adolescents and their families, education and prevention efforts in the community, and permanent supportive housing for families.

In operation since 1971, the agency has sites in Greenwich, Stamford, Norwalk and Bridgeport and serves more than 2,000 adults and youth each year. To learn more, or to make a donation, visit www.liberationprograms.org or call 203-851-2077.