

Darienite

News for Darien

<https://darienite.com>

Six Darien Residents Honored for 'Outstanding Volunteer Advocacy' for Children

Author : David Gurliacci

Categories : [Charity Events and Opportunities](#), [Community Organizations](#), [Darienites](#), [Volunteering Opportunities](#), [Volunteers](#)

Tagged as : [CAC 2021](#), [Child Advocates](#), [Child Advocates 2021](#), [Child Advocates of SW CT 2021](#)

Date : May 18, 2021

Six Darienites who have taken on the task of advocating for vulnerable children have been honored for their services by Child Advocates of Southwest Connecticut, the organization announced.

— *an announcement from* [Child Advocates of SW Connecticut](#)

The Darien residents recognized for "outstanding volunteer advocacy" are Amy Harned, Robert Noonan, Megan Pryor, Maureen Roach, Ruthie Strother and Jody Truwit.

Child Advocates of SW Connecticut (CAC) is a Fairfield County-based non-profit organization that trains and supervises volunteer advocates for vulnerable children.

“CAC is thrilled to honor our incredible volunteers,” said Stacey Sobel, executive director of CAC.

“Vulnerable children have suffered disproportionately during the COVID pandemic, and our volunteers have done a tremendous job ensuring needs are being met.”

CAC volunteers are a consistent, caring presence in a child’s life and advocate for the child’s best interests in the community, school and courtroom. Volunteer advocates get to know a child one-on-one and speak with people who touch the child’s life — families, foster families, teachers, doctors, social workers, therapists, and attorneys.

CAC volunteer advocates complete 35 hours of training and are supervised by CAC staff.

“I have been working with an 8-year-old, non-verbal, severely autistic girl for the past several months, said Amy Harned, one of the Darien advocates. “During COVID, she has been home schooled and extremely socially isolated, living with a family member as her temporary guardian.

“As her advocate, I have been working to reunite her with her mother and siblings and to ensure her access to much needed educational and therapeutic services.”

Honoree Jody Truwit said, “Volunteer advocates are often desperately needed to support, collaborate and advocate for children engaged in the foster care system.

“For the last six years, I have had the privilege to work with many courageous young women and girls who embrace this support and refuse to let traumatic life circumstances stop them from being their best. After so many life disappointments, I thank them for trusting me and CAC to be a part of their lives.”

To offset funds normally raised at CAC’s annual Love Luncheon, CAC has organized “The Gift that Gives” [an on-line campaign](#) honoring CAC volunteers.

According to the CAC:

Since 2010, over 165 CAC volunteer advocates have donated their time and talent as child advocates.

CAC volunteers work one-on-one to get to know a child and work to ensure that the physical, psychological, educational, and emotional needs of the child are addressed. CAC works closely with judges and community providers in the hopes of meeting the needs of every child in the community and court system.

Volunteer advocates increase the likelihood that a child and his or her family receive needed services, and they reduce the number of traumatic transitions and the chance that a child will spend time in long-term foster care for the child by half.