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News for Darien

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Thank You, Annie Slaughter, for Your Volunteer Work on the Pet Therapy Team at Silver Hill Hospital

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Thank you, Annie Slaughter — and Otis! — for your volunteer work on the pet therapy team at Silver Hill Hospital.

—This article is part of a series of daily articles profiling the volunteers recognized in May at the Darien annual [volunteer recognition luncheon](#) organized by the [Community Fund of Darien](#).

Annie Slaughter's Work at Silver Hill Hospital

Annie joined the pet therapy team at Silver Hill last spring [2018] with her dog, Otis.

Annie would like us to believe that it is Otis who deserves all the praise, because as she humbly explains, he is the one who brings delight and humor to the patients every time he visits Silver Hill.

Through her gentle, patient conversations, Annie encourages patients to talk about the things that they like to do, which reminds them that they possess talents and strengths that can help them in their recovery.

Of course, pet therapy, by its very nature, creates a lot of laughter and also has a calming effect on people.

Eyes shine brightly when Annie and Otis are around — their wide smiled and friendly manner create enthusiasm and joy all around.

— *Lisa Ruggiero, volunteers director at Silver Hill Hospital*

Here's the Full List of Volunteers

Each of these volunteers was recognized this year and will be profiled in this series:

Shyamla Menon (A Better Chance);—Nina Miller (At Home in Darien);—Rochelle Charnin (Building One Community);—Frank Huck (Darien Arts Center);—Darien firefighters, including Fire Chiefs Vic Pensiero, Shaun Volin & John Hessmer (Darien Board of Selectman);—Pam Miller (Darien Book Aide Plan);—Cheryl Williams (Darien Chamber of Commerce);—Pat Parlette (Darien Community Association);—Tiffany O'Connor (Darien High School);—Anne Lise Brown (Darien High School Parents' Association);—Carolyn McGrath (Darien Historical Society);—Janet Cling (Darien Land Trust);—Kathy Larkins (Darien Human Services);—Peter Eder (Darien Library);—Mike Wheeler (Darien TV79);—Scott Overbeck (Darien YMCA);—Jennifer Geddes (Domestic Violence Crisis Center);—David Ball (Family Centers);—Shelly Skoglund (League of Women Voters);—Andrea Huntington (Mather Homestead Foundation);—Katie and Emily Wiley (Norwalk Grassroots Tennis);—Hayley Ackers (Person-to-Person);—Margaret “Annie” Slaughter (Silver Hill Hospital of New Canaan);—Reeve Boeckmann & Elizabeth Hall (The Carver Foundation of Norwalk);—Jill McCammon (The Community Fund of Darien);—Bryne Pozzi (The Darien Foundation);—Donna Collins (The Darien Nature Center);—Kathy Arrix (The Depot, Darien Youth Center);—Annie Arrix & Lily Kosnik (Thriving Youth);—Stephanie O'Malley (Tokeneke PTO);—Katie Murphy (Darien Youth Commission).

Sponsors of the 2019 Recognition Luncheon were the Darien Community Association, Brown Thayer Shed and Halstead Real Estate.

About This Series

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- The profiles in this series were presented at the 2019 volunteer recognition luncheon held at the [Darien Community Association](#) and recorded (in [this video](#)) by Darien TV79.
- Darien runs on volunteers — from our churches to our town government, schools, political parties, sports teams, three fire departments and our local nonprofits. They're the largest part of what makes this town a community. We should all encourage them and thank them.
- Darienite.com is running this series now, while more people are thinking about whether they want to volunteer in the upcoming year.
- Each article presents the description provided about that volunteer (or sometimes more than one) as provided by an organization that benefited from that person's efforts.