



Power of Together 2

Meeting Minutes, May 9, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Barb Silver. An announcement was made of the recent passing of a most passionate supporter and one of the founding PoT2 organizers, Gae Melford, who struggled valiantly with her battle against cancer. Members were thanked for their moral and financial support for Gae and her family. A moment of silence was observed. She leaves an unfulfillable gap, and will be sorely missed.

Barb noted that PoT2 is celebrating its 7th year anniversary this meeting, and after this meeting, will have raised over \$300,000.

Eunice Sutphin, the recipient of the February award, then spoke of the many ways the PoT2 funding has been used to support the **Eastern Connecticut Community Gardens Association**, which is engaged in growing and teaching how to grow fresh, chemical-free vegetables in Eastern Connecticut. The funds have so far supported a variety of efforts in Norwich, New London, North Stonington, Ledyard, Waterford, Stonington, East Lyme, and Groton.

Requests were then made for pitches from members. The three names chosen from the hat included:

1. **A Sacred Place**, presented by Cindy Palmer, is a program for incarcerated women at Niantic Women's Prison. This program was started by the parents of a daughter who took her own life while incarcerated, and offers many vocational and educational courses and opportunities to help the women there. A PoT2 donation would help defray these course fees.
2. **Hope in Focus**, formerly Sofia Sees Hope, and presented by Laura Manfre, is an organization dedicated to supporting families with a member with a rare retinal disease (Leber Congenital Amaurosis – LCA) that results in blindness. PoT2 funding will support impacted families in attending the annual LCA conference and connecting with other families with sight-impaired children.
3. **New London Community Meal Center**, presented by Lori Calobrisi, is an organization that helps feed the 31,000 food-insecure people in New London and beyond, and build an equitable food system in the area. Their staff is small (4), and their volunteers number over 400; they serve 70,000 meals a year, as well as other initiatives, like a "dine truck" which travels to neighborhoods to deliver take-out.

The recipient with the most votes was **A Sacred Place**.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. The next meeting is August 8, 2023, 7 pm, Mystic Y.