Report



2022



A Note FROM OUR Executive Director

"we look forward to expanding our programs to serve more families in new and creative ways"



LISA GRAY

Hello, Friends,

2022 was a year of new beginnings for Gifts of Love. We marked 33 years of serving the basic needs of low-income individuals and families with the addition of a new Executive Director, yours truly, and, for the first time, a Director of Development, Kris Welch.

As we headed into a third year of a worldwide pandemic, families continued to struggle to make ends meet, and Gifts of Love was there to help fill in the financial gaps by providing much-needed food, clothing, and household items, allowing families to direct their income to other essential needs such as rent and mortgage payments.

In 2022, Gifts of Love served nearly 1,400 household members throughout Greater Hartford, and stretched as far northeast as Vernon, as far south as Wallingford, and as far west as Waterbury.

Each month, an average of 240 clients, representing over 1,300 household members, visited our Avon and Hartford offices to shop for fresh food, clothing, and household items, and we provided over 40 boxes of food to seniors 62 and over through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP); every other Tuesday, we served 75 to 100 people through our mobile food distribution sites; through our Retail Rescue program, we picked up and distributed over 31,000 pounds of food from local grocery stores that would have otherwise gone to waste; we shared nearly 7,000 pounds of food through our Neighbors Helping Neighbors program to various senior living communities, the Salvation Army, and soup kitchens; we provided 242 clients and their families with all the fixings to prepare a Thanksgiving meal, from the turkey to cranberry sauce; and we filled over 300 backpacks each week with meals, snacks, and drinks, and distributed them to students throughout the Greater Hartford area and Torrington who receive free or reduced-cost lunches to help feed them and their families through the weekend.

In August, Gifts of Love provided all client children aged 5 to 18 with fully-stocked new backpacks so they'd have a successful start to the new school year; in December, we set up our annual Holiday Shoppe, and 247 client families received gift cards and were able to shop for new toys and other items for their families; and, during the cold weather seasons, Gifts of Love administers the CT Operation Fuel program for residents of the Farmington Valley, providing emergency assistance of up to \$1,000 to residents struggling to pay their energy and utility bills.

All of this work is only possible because of our strong partnerships, dedicated volunteers, generous donors, and amazing staff. We are excited to share this report with you, which is a result of their continuous and varied contributions.

2023 promises to be another year of successfully serving our community, and we look forward to expanding our programs to serve more families in new and creative ways. We hope you'll continue to follow and support us to see what's new!

Warmest regards,

Lisa Gray
Executive Director

Dear Valued Donors,

On behalf of Gifts of Love, I would like to express our deepest gratitude for your unwavering support and generosity throughout the year. We are grateful to have you as a part of our community of donors, and we appreciate your continued commitment to our mission.

Thanks to your contributions, we were able to make significant strides in improving our programs and expanding our clientele in the community. These achievements would not have been possible without your support and belief in our work. Your donations have made a real and meaningful impact on the individuals and communities we serve.

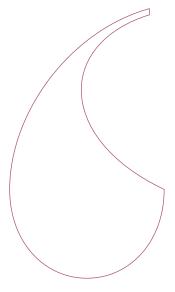
Your support has also enabled us to continue providing critical services to those in need, despite the challenges of the past year. Your contributions have helped us expand and implement new programs while serving an ever-increasing clientele.

As we move forward, we remain committed to creating positive change in the Greater Hartford area, and we are deeply grateful for your ongoing support. We look forward to keeping you updated on our progress and continuing to work together towards a brighter future for all.

Thank you again for your generous support and being a valued member of our community of donors.

Sincerely,

Kris Welch Director of Development Gifts of Love



A Note FROM OUR

Director of Development



KRIS WELCH

"we remain committed to creating positive change in the Greater Hartford area"

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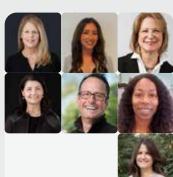
"I would like to thank you for your kind heart and to let you know that I appreciate you for everything you have done for my grandkids and me. You made Christmas possible and have blessed us with your given (sic) heart." - V.R.















May our world be filled with Feace this holiday season

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The mission of Gifts of Love is to help meet the basic needs of individuals and families in the Greater Hartford area experiencing a short-term financial crisis so they can return to self-sufficiency.

About GIFTS OF LOVE





Founded in 1989, Gifts of Love is devoted to the needs of the community and responds to the needs of individuals and families who have been impacted by a financial crisis through the distribution of food, clothing and household necessities, empowering them toward a path to self-sufficiency.

The organization primarily serves people facing a financial crisis due to reduced work hours, illness, divorce, death of a spouse/mate, exiting an abusive relationship, or a significant unexpected increase in expenses.

By helping clients meet their most basic needs through food, clothing, housewares and energy assistance through Operation Fuel - clients are able to divert their income to other necessities such as rent/mortgage, debt reduction, and medications/medical bills and regain their financial independence.

Your donations directly impact people in need in the community YOU live in.



WHO ARE OUR CLIENTS?

- A mixture of single and two-parent households, senior citizens, college students, and individuals who come to us directly, or through referrals from other agencies
- Often, our clients include an overlooked population who are above the federal poverty level and, therefore, not eligible for supplemental programs

2022 DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Household Members

Children aged 0 to 12 years	622
V 41 110 17	004

- Youth aged 13 to 17 234
- Young adults aged 19 to 24
- Adults aged 25 to 55530
- Adults aged 56+ 108
- Unknown 34

Household Members by Gender

Male	583

• Female 914

Non-binary 0

Unknown 143

Household Members by Ethnicity

Latino/Hispanic562

African American/West Indian 360

Unknown/Prefer Not to Answer 287

Caucasian 236

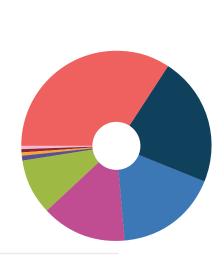
Multi-Racial 158

Asian/Pacific Islander8

Other 8

Middle Eastern

Native American



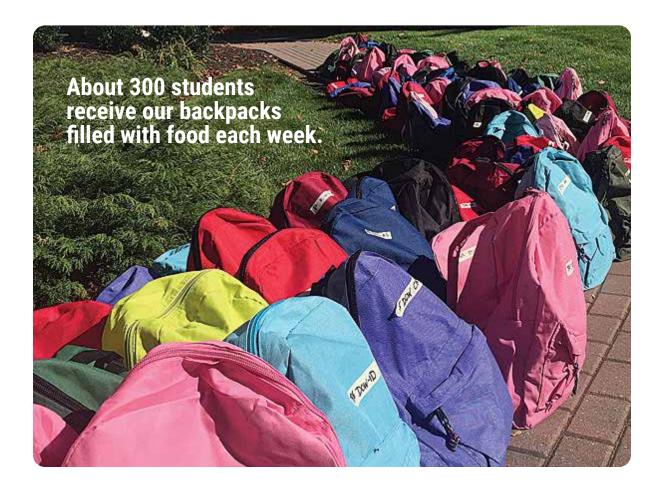
1640 Clients

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14

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OUIP PROGRAMS



"Before being referred to Gifts of Love, I can't count how many times I went without food just to make sure my son had enough to eat. I joined the backpack program and I look forward to coming in every week and seeing those same smiling faces. It's nice to know there's an organization like Gifts of Love helping so many in need like myself, and I'm forever grateful for all the help I've received." – K.M.

CLOTHING PANTRY

The Clothing Pantry offers gently used clothing donated by members of our surrounding communities. From winter coats to bathing suits, we change our Clothing Pantry to reflect the seasons. During their monthly visits, our clients may select items for all members of their household. For the "newest" members of our client families, we supply diapers, receiving blankets, crib bedding and baby bottles as well as baby equipment such as strollers, high chairs and car seats.

HOME GOODS PANTRY

The Home Goods Pantry is stocked with new and used household items. Pots and pans, bedding and bath towels, small appliances and wall décor are among the items our clients can choose from. Selections from our Home Goods pantry help our clients make their houses and apartments feel like home.

FOOD PANTRY

"Choice" is what makes our Food Pantry unique from other food pantries. Our clients shop as they would in a grocery store and choose the items they prefer. We offer staples such as canned goods and boxed cereals as well as fresh produce, meats and toiletries. The Connecticut food banks, the "retail rescue" program, and generous donations from various churches, schools and families all contribute to the success of our Food Pantry, keeping the shelves stocked and our refrigerators and freezers full.

RETAIL RESCUE PROGRAM

Food Banks work with local retailers to connect them with member agencies, such as Gifts of Love, and turn food that would otherwise be considered "food waste" into food donations. Food Waste is thousands of pounds of unsold but good food, still safe for consumption, that is thrown away by the food industry. A few examples of Food Waste are products past their "sell-by date", oddly shaped or bruised fruits and vegetables, or dented canned goods.

THE WEEKEND BACKPACK PROGRAM

Did you know that many school-age children go hungry on the weekends? Thanks to a small contingency of volunteers and our generous donors, every week approximately 300 backpacks are filled with food items and distributed to the local schools for children to bring home for the weekends. These backpacks bridge the gap between school and home and eating or not eating.

BACK TO SCHOOL BACKPACK PROGRAM

Every August, we offer our client families backpacks filled with school supplies, tailored to the various age groups from kindergarten to high school. This program helps give the children of our client families a fresh start to the school year.

COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM (CFSP)

CFSP is a monthly food program for our senior population (aged 62 and older). Foodshare delivers 42 boxes of food to the GOL Avon office. Each box consists of canned fruits, vegetables, proteins, cereal, pasta, sauces, juices, and shelf-stable milk (approximately 36 pounds). There is currently a 10 to15-person waiting list. Clients pick up at the Avon office, and we deliver a half dozen to the Virginia Connolly Residence in Simsbury.

MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

This non-qualified food distribution is hosted by Foodshare every other Tuesday at Farmington Valley American Muslim Center in Avon. Foodshare brings their truck, and we distribute what's available. We serve between 75 and 100 people at each event. Each person leaves with about 25 lbs. of fresh fruits and vegetables, bread, frozen meat, and dairy.

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Generally every Friday, Gifts of Love distributes overage from the Avon office that won't make it through the weekend to local subsidized housing facilities in the area. Places include Maple Glen, Whispering Pines, 21 Dowd, Peachtree, Soromundi Commons (YWCA), Virginia Connolly Residence, Salvation Army, and a Torrington soup kitchen. Year-to-date, we have "shared" almost 7,000 lbs. of food that would have gone to waste.

OPERATION FUEL

Operation Fuel is a state program that provides emergency assistance to Connecticut residents struggling to pay energy and utility bills, and advocates for energy affordability. Gifts of Love administers the CT Operation Fuel program for Farmington Valley residents. Each year, we receive an "allowance" from the State that can be distributed to our clients between December and May. In 2022, we received an allowance of \$15,000. The maximum amount each client can receive is \$1,000. In 2022, we have assisted 17 families during cold weather seasons. Clients make an appointment to come into the office, and we process their application with the proper documentation.









"A visit to Avon Social Services for energy assistance resulted in a referral to Gifts of Love, initially for assistance with the "supplemental energy assistance", but soon realized the full power of the other benefits of the program. The food pantry was obviously helpful, but the generous donations of clothing and housewares were simply amazing and the kind support of staff and volunteers was truly touching." – L. J.

GIFTS OF LOVE

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Hola: Hi nombre es Loura Hernandez familia quero por ta noble a Dios las bendiga a la gracias cerder una palabras para decirles posible todo esto. miles una bendicion el conter con su POLO mut grande sdo me Queda deciv GRACIAS !! apo 40. Quela luz de la ravidad was I havine a coder une de Nosderos los Berdigo a Ustades. Season's Greetings and best wishes for a Happy New Year



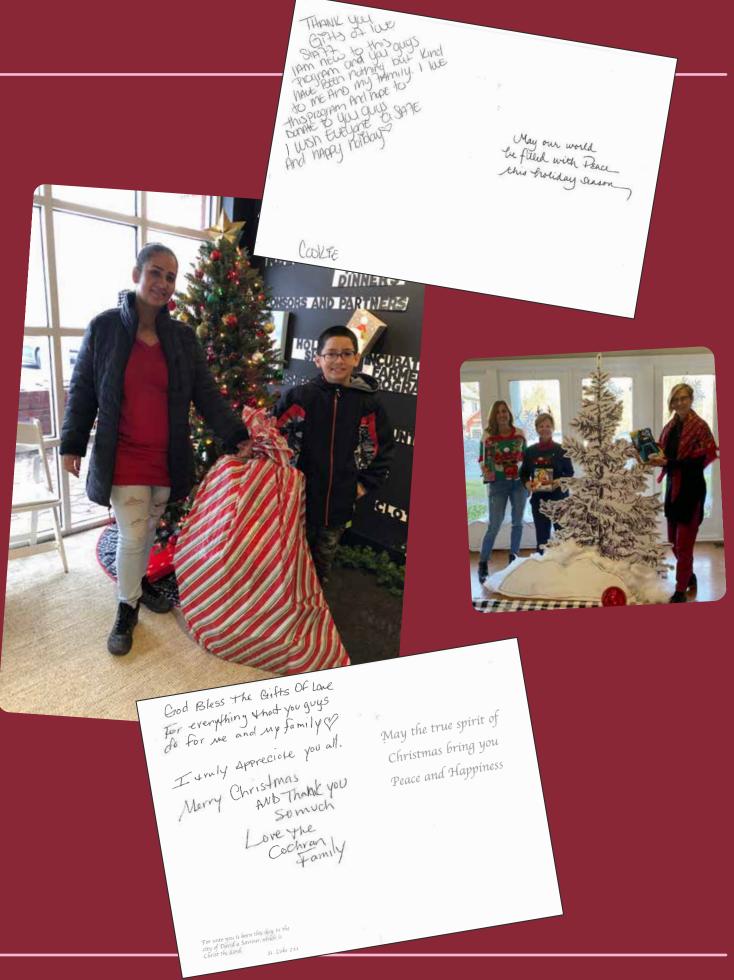
THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS

The holidays can be an exciting and fun time of year, but, for many, the holiday only adds further financial stress at a time when it is already difficult to make ends meet. Gifts of Love tries to ease this burden with the help of our holiday programs.

Every November, our client families receive a turkey and all the food necessary to make a traditional Thanksgiving dinner.

In December, we open our "holiday shop", decorated and filled with brand new merchandise that is generously donated by local families, schools, places of worship, local businesses and corporations. Our holiday shop offers a chance for our clients to do a little holiday shopping for their family members free of charge.

2022 GIFTS OF LOVE CY Words Cannot describe my grantitude for this program. You amazing congets have helped me in more ways than the single better of the seron and a new year fall of promise imagnable. Someone to tank to, Smiles to look forward to, Aime : Laguarte Security, Christmas and Ananksguing completed. Thank Nikko 50 50 50 Much. Gianni hope everyone has a happy holiday and healthrist new



2022 GIFTS OF LOVE CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

MAY 23, 2022

The 2022 Gifts of Love Charity Golf Tournament was a huge success - raising vital funds for our basic needs programs!

It was a picture-perfect day at the Golf Club of Avon for friendly competition and exciting auctions and prizes, all in support of our mission of "neighbors helping neighbors".

Through our food pantries, backpack program, energy assistance program, and clothing and housewares pantries, the support of our golf tournament gives local individuals and families a compassionate "hand up" to help them get back on their feet.





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Gifts of Love is a registered 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. Our tax identification number is 06-1309318.

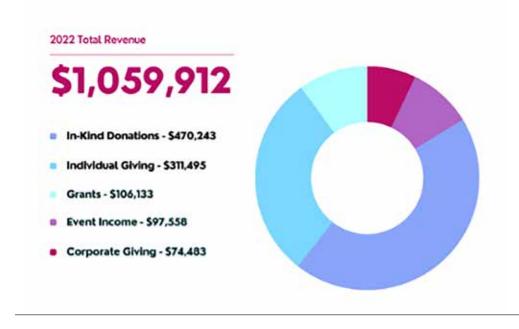
MAKING YOUR DOLLARS WORK FOR STRUGGLING NEIGHBORS

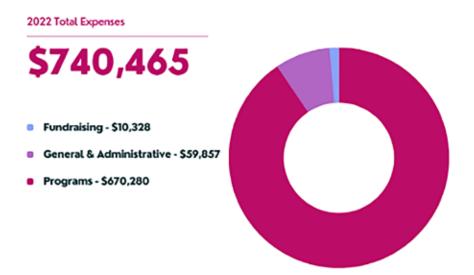
Our donors' generous financial contributions make it possible for us to provide food, clothing, housewares, toiletries and other basic needs to local individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet.

The following charts show our donation revenue and expenditures for fiscal year 2022.

We simply could not accomplish our strategic mission without the generous support of businesses, organizations, foundations and individuals who recognize the importance of basic needs assistance for greater Hartford's most vulnerable citizens.

2022 FINANCIAL REPORT





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LISA GRAY
Executive Director

Prior to leading the team at Gifts of Love, Lisa was the Founder and Executive Director of A Promise to Jordan, a nonprofit dedicated to raising awareness of substance use disorders established in honor of her son. She also served as Executive Director of the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce and held roles at the Simsbury Police Department and UCONN Health Center.



KRIS WELCH

Development Director

Kris leads all fundraising activities at Gifts of Love. She previously cofounded and served as Executive Director of a nonprofit that specializes in community support for mental health, and has worked in corporate engagement, marketing, and education.



NANCI CAKLSON

Volunteer and Outreach Manager

In addition to her Volunteer and Community Outreach responsibilities, Nancy facilitates all special events and manages the Weekend Backpack program. Nancy has been with Gifts of Love for over 13 years after a career in High-Risk Underwriting and as a Special Education teacher.



MICHAEL OLIVIERI

Food Programs Manager

Michael manages Gifts of Love's food pantries in Avon and Hartford. Additionally, he identifies and coordinates food distributions to other non-profit pantries across Greater Hartford. Michael has over 30 years of experience as an independent business owner.



KIYANA RIDDICK

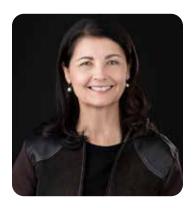
Hartford Office Manager

Kiyana manages operations at our Hartford location. Prior to joining the team at Gifts of Love, Kiyana worked in customer service at both Allstate and The Hartford. During the summer of 2021, she interned at Gifts of Love while completing her bachelor's degree in human services.



ANDREA YESKEY
Donor Administrator

Andrea assists with fundraising activities, donor relations, and communications at Gifts of Love. She has over 15 years of experience in Development and previously held the position of Sr. Communications Officer at the Greenwich Hospital Foundation.



VAL LAUZON
Client Administrator

Val manages all client activities at Gifts of Love. Prior to joining the team in 2021, she was a long-time volunteer. In addition to serving the clients, she organizes and oversees the Holiday Shoppe. Prior to moving to Avon, Val worked as a copy editor in Boston.

2022 GIFTS OF LOVE S T A F F

Meet the Yeam That Makes the Magic Happen.

Gifts of Love delivers life-changing services to the individuals and families we serve because of our incredible staff. Their tremendous efforts and contributions behind the scenes aren't often recognized or celebrated, but we couldn't do the work we do without them.



INGRID KANIA, MPH, MAT Volunteen Manager

Ingrid began as a volunteer for Gifts of Love in 2013 to give back to her local community. When offered the role of Teen Volunteer Program Coordinator, she eagerly accepted and has been guiding teen volunteers since 2017. She has a Master's in Public Health and a Master's in Teaching and is currently a teacher in a local school.



2023 GIFTS OF LOVE BOARD MEMBERS

- Robert Wong, President
- Sean Riley, Treasurer
- Lydia Tedone, Secretary
- Curtis Williams
- Joan Kemler



ROBERT WONG

President

Robert and his family have been active volunteers at Gifts of Love for the Weekend Backpack Program and at the main office in Avon. Robert is an executive at GE Capital.



SEAN RILEY

Treasurer

Sean has extensive business experience across corporate, consulting, and not-for-profit settings and is currently Vice President of Client Delivery & Practice Management for Kelley Management Consulting, Inc.



LYDIA TEDONE

Secretary

Lydia is a long-term Board member at Gifts of Love. She is a member of the Simsbury Board of Education and Chair of the CREC Council.



JOAN KEMLER Board Member

Joan became involved with Gifts of Love 20 years ago as a volunteer and board member. She especially enjoyed planning successful fundraising events for the organization. After her retirement as a nurse practitioner in Geriatric Psychiatry, she returned to Gifts of Love as a volunteer and board member."



CURTIS WILLIAMS

Board Member

Curtis's interest in Gifts of Love was sparked by one of his college classmates at UCONN who was a volunteer. He is a math teacher at Global Studies Magnet Middle School in the Norwich Public School system. Our deepest
gratitude goes out to
former Board members,
Ashley Born, Maura
Fitzgerald, and Robert
Walz, who all retired
from service in 2022.

Volunteers

"The staff and volunteers provide more than just the 'nuts and bolts'. They create an atmosphere of warmth and welcoming in hopes of making a difference in the clients' daily lives. Plus they make being there fun!" – M.L.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

The more than 200 volunteers who give over 14,000 hours annually of their time in support of our mission perform a large range of jobs, including clerical work, client interaction, donation sorting, and food pantry tasks.

The VolunTEEN program gives local teens the opportunity to get involved and complete service hours often required by their schools. They volunteer evenings and weekends as their schedules allow."

William Buster Akers

Maya Anam

Vrinda Anand

Lily M. Anderson

Lynne Anderson

Anthony B. Arce

Cathy Arciero

Kathryn N. Ausere

Rachael Simone Badeau

Maryellen Bailey

Harshini Balaji

Ishanvi Balaji

Brenda D. Barrows

Diane Barry

Savannah Elise Beckius

Lana M. Bell

Charlotte Riley Berliner

Amy Borg

Diane Boyce

MaryEllen Bradley

Susan Bradley

Madison Kate Brady

Nancy Rose Breznicky

Connor J. Budzik

Terri Buganski

Amy Buonocore

Claire M. Burchill

Katelyn Nicole Burkett

Brigham Burkey

McKenzie Piper Campbell

Margaret M. Carlin

Kimberly Casazza

Kathryn M. Cayne

Kathleen Chambers

Sally Chen

Julia Grace Christolini

Kathryn Christolini

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter

Day Saints - Bloomfield

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter

Day Saints - Canton

Katelyn M. Cifaldi

Caitlyn Cleary

Catalina C Costache

Radu S. Costache

Geri Sarfo Darko

Sohani Das

Carter B. Davies

Lauren Denges

Ryan Donohue

Kaya Dua

Grant Michael Duclos

Margaret S. Ehrhardt

Grayson L. Ellis

Diana Emerson

Laura A. Falcon

Susan Falkner

David Farrell

Donna Farrell

Alejendna Fernandez

Sarah Joy Ficks

Lori Ellen Fontana

Kiera S. Gabel

Edmund J Gagne

Donna Galvin

Vibhue Gangina

Makenzie Ann Gaudet

Donna Gianini

"It's a place focused on helping people, and I'm honored to have been a part of it. I'm thankful for my time here and encourage anyone thinking of volunteering to come in and try it." – R.L.

Grace A. Grano	Jospehine Lydia LeFranc	Caitlin O'Dea	Kathleen H. Service
Darcy Gray	Jeffrey Norman Levine	Jennifer O'Dea	Connor Shaw
Alexa D. Green	Nadia Levine	Martha J. O'Leary	Carol Sicilian
Tyler Joseph Gresh	Sadie Levy	Sofia Olivares	Leanna Skaret
Martha Guidry	Tom Lezzi	Anna G. Ollenschleger	Cara Andea Smith
Sara Gupte	Eric Li	Alexander T Orlowski	Jennifer Smithberger
Angelina M. Hartnett	Michelle Lipar	Shayna S. Orr	Judith R. Spring
Rebecca E. Hartnett	Jeanine Longfritz	Luke Orullian	Richard Starkel
Jordan H. Hedges	Hillary H Lyons	Linda Oseychik	Trina Stehlik
Jackson Andrew Holl	Betsy Mack	Christine Oswick	Finola Stenson
Keira Elizabeth Hovorka	Jack H. Magel	Katherine Overbye	Yegu Subbiah
Jocelyn Hoye	Kathleen M. Maglia	Mason M. Pagano	Anne Rose Sweeton
Ben Ernest Huber	Meghan A. Mahoney	Zachary Richard Palanza	Diane Tatelman
Patrick M. Hydeck	Stephanie Ramsby Makowski	Rebecca Pardoe	Lindsay J Thurston
Prisha Jindal	Denise G. Maloney	Vraj Patel	Melissa Tocash
Linda Johnston	Arjun Mantripragada	Jack T. Pavlakis	Alyssa Tousignant
Ava Louise Joiner	Betty Ann Martin	Katie Ann Pavlakis	Susan Tousignant
Carol Jones	Ella Mason	Tamar P. Phillips	Nick Uzzi
Carol D. Jones	Quinton Strong Mather	Mark Pickett	Betsy Van Loon
Varun Kandarpa	Kevin T. McElligott	Devon E. Pierangeli	Laura Eleanor Vickery
William Aaron Kashner	Emilie L. McKenna	Betty B Poster	Katie Villa
Eknoor Kaur	Sasha Fay Mensh	William G Pratt	Claire L. Volpe
Laurie Kelley	Deborah Micheller	Donna S. Pritchard	Alessandra Walmsley
Joan Lazar Kemler	Arielle Mills	Carolyn Raymond	Ming Hao Wang
Mafi Amber Klein	Kristin M Minnich	Shelby Raymond	Ethan Joseph Wesley
Donna M. Kolodziej	Sarah P Moger	Sahithi C. Reddy	Annie E. Wollmar
Samantha J Krawshuk	Antonette Molson	Sarayu C. Reddy	Ruth L. Woodford
Elke Kulas	Miranda Rose Monyak	Taina Reyes-Caon Manick	Susan M. Wurz
Durga Kuvelkar	Barbara Moris	Denise Risley	Timothy Wynne
Joanne Labbadia	Wylma Nartey-Tokoli	Madelyn E Rivard	Debra York
Coelyn Elizabeth Laiuppa	Naveen Natchiappan	Avery M. Ross	Raymond Fang Zhang
Reid Lamberty	Nivedha Natchiappan	Annabelle Roussel	

Tanvi Saxena

Toni Schnur

Paul R. Nyklicek

Diane Oberhausen

Natalie V Langou

Margery Lawrence

SUPPORT GIFTS OF LOVE

By making a donation, you will have the opportunity to see your generosity in action and may receive a federal income tax charitable deduction when you itemize.



Here's how:

• Donate online

Visit us at GiftsofLoveCT.org and click on "Donate Now"

Donate by phone

Give us a call at (860) 676-2323

Donate by mail

Mail a check to Gifts of Love, 34 East Main Street, Avon, CT 06001

· Ask your employer to match your gift

Many employers match dollar-for-dollar the charitable gifts their employees make – some will double- or even triple-match an employee's donation, which is a great way to maximize your ability to contribute to Gifts of Love.

· Payroll deductions

Many companies offer an employee giving program in their workplace.

Donor Advised Funds (DAF)

A donor-advised fund is a type of charitable savings account. When you fund the account, you receive an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend grants to an eligible charity, such as Gifts of Love.

· Brokerage and investment accounts

When you donate appreciated securities or mutual funds that you have held for more than one year to an eligible charity, you can reduce or even eliminate federal capital gains taxes on the transfer.

Retirement accounts

Once you reach age 70½, you can donate to Gifts of Love from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) any amount up to a maximum of \$100,000 per year.

· Leave a bequest

By naming Gifts of Love in your will, you'll be able to perpetuate the values you've expressed during your lifetime and ensure that Gifts of Love is able to serve many generations to come.

Gifts of Love offers this information to provide general gift, estate and financial planning information. It is not intended as legal, accounting, tax or other advice. For assistance in planning charitable gifts, the services of appropriate advisors should be consulted to determine tax and legal implications. Always consult an attorney if your plans require the revision of a will or other legal document.

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GIFTS OF LOVE - AVON

34 East Main Street, Avon, CT 06001

Phone: 860-676-2323
Fax: 860-676-9864

GIFTS OF LOVE - HARTFORD

571 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105

Phone: 860-206-0045

Please call for office hours.

We are also open for client services by appointment.

Donations of food, clothing, and basic need items are accepted during regular business hours.

info@giftsoflovect.org

