



FALL 2021

Newsletter

Dedicated to providing educational scholarships to Fairfield County students diagnosed with cancer



The Annual Susan Fund Scholarship Reception is a unique event which captures the essence of The Susan Fund’s mission through the celebration of its recipients. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, last year’s reception was held virtually via video recordings. As unifying as the video clips were, The Susan Fund Board of Directors, recipients, family and friends were elated to have the opportunity to reconvene in person this June.



At this year’s outdoor, socially distanced reception, passing clouds were a welcome sight on the mid-80 degree Sunday held under a grand white tent on the Saint Agnes Parish lawn in Greenwich. Jeff Booth, the Fund’s newly appointed Chair, began the ceremony and welcomed everyone back to the annual gathering. During his opening remarks he shared his gratitude for the Fund’s Chair Emeritus and founder, Ann Lloyd.

David Lloyd, Susan’s brother, then offered a warm and loving remembrance of his sister. David celebrated Susan as “an amazing person with a great smile, infectious laugh, and positive attitude. Even throughout her diagnosis and difficult 13 months of treatment, she provided a blueprint of how to live life. The Susan Fund’s supportive nature and longevity truly embodies Susan’s upbeat, joyous, and fearless spirit.”



David was followed by Cordelia Scudder, this year’s featured speaker. As a seven-time scholarship recipient, Cordelia spoke about her experience with cancer and The Susan Fund. “It is an honor to speak on behalf of all cancer survivors and to encourage them to never give up. Every time we wake up, it is another day to live life to the fullest.” She expressed her gratefulness for the support The Susan Fund has given her. Cordelia remarked that, with the Fund’s assistance, she has completed her course of studies in Social Work earning both a Bachelor’s Degree and, following the completion of an internship, her Master’s Degree.

Susan Fund Board Member, Kathy DiGiovanna, subsequently proceeded to award this year’s recipients with their scholarships. She praised their past and future accomplishments in academics, extra-curricular activities, and all-around good-natured contributions to our community. The ceremony concluded with the recognition of Deanna East, last year’s featured recipient, who graciously attended this year’s reception since the 2020 reception was virtual.



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ONLINE AT:



TheSusanFund.org

FROM THE CHAIR - JEFF BOOTH

It was a tremendous honor to be named the Chair of The Susan Fund in March. I was a very close friend of Susan's and I continue to be in awe of her courage. And I speak for all of the Board members when I say how inspirational it is to get to know our recipients and hear their stories.

During this year's January Board meeting, one of the members asked what the future was for the Fund. I gave that a lot of thought, and remembered when I hit 40. In my eyes, I was just reaching middle age, and I still had many things I wanted to accomplish in my life. That is the way I look at The Susan Fund. A lot of great things have been accomplished over the last four decades. But I see The Susan Fund as just hitting middle age, with so many more great things to come.



Needless to say, I have huge shoes to try and fill. I have known Ann Lloyd for 43 years, and she is the humblest person I have ever met. Ann would never blow her own horn, so I'll do some horn blowing for her. By my calculations, in the 40 years Ann served as Chair:

- She spent more than 8,000 hours on The Susan Fund activities
- She led 320 board meetings and scholarship interviews
- Her efforts have provided emotional support and scholarships to roughly 300 Fairfield County students diagnosed with cancer
- And perhaps most impressively, The Susan Fund has awarded almost \$2 million in scholarships, including a record amount in 2021

I am looking forward to doing whatever I can to continue Susan and Ann's legacy in the years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Booth". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.



Susan Davis Lloyd was a typical all-American teenager, entering her senior year at Staples High School, when she discovered she had osteogenic sarcoma. Despite having her leg amputated, Susan continued to participate in school activities and hold two jobs. A cheerleader and an outstanding student, she was accepted to Colgate University. Unfortunately, her chemotherapy treatments were not effective, and she was unable to begin college.

When Susan died, her family and many friends wanted to do something positive to remember her. The Susan Fund was established with the goal of helping other young people who have been treated for cancer attain their educational goals. The Fund has continued to grow, and during the past 40 years has awarded more than \$1.9 million in scholarships. Through the generosity of others, Susan's memory remains very much alive.

A LOOK BACK WITH FOUNDER & CHAIR EMERITUS ANN LLOYD



Forty years after her daughter, Susan, died of cancer and The Susan Fund was established to provide educational scholarships to Fairfield County students diagnosed with cancer, Ann Lloyd stepped down as the Chair earlier this year. She will continue to remain a key member of the Board as Chair Emeritus. We sat down with Ann shortly after this year's 40th annual scholarship reception for her thoughts on The Susan Fund.

Q. What were the early days of the Fund like?

Ann: After Susan's passing, my husband and I wanted to do something educationally related in Susan's honor. We were welcomed as part of the Candlelighters of Fairfield County, and established The Susan Davis Lloyd Educational Memorial Fund. In October 1991, the Fund incorporated separately as The Susan Fund, Inc. and was designated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Q. How has the organization evolved over the years?

Ann: I am personally amazed that The Fund is still going strong four decades later. In 1982, scholarships were awarded to six recipients, and we have had as many as 37 recipients in any given year. In total, we have distributed just shy of \$2 million to almost 300 Fairfield County students diagnosed with cancer.

Q. The Fund distributes more than 90% of its contributions directly to scholarships. How have you accomplished this?

Ann: The Susan Fund is still run by a volunteer board of directors and has no professional fundraising, no staff, and no rented office space. We have always kept a close eye on our expenses so we can give as much as possible to our recipients. Aside from the costs associated with the annual scholarship reception and newsletter, almost everything goes directly to scholarships. Many people have stepped forward to honor Susan's memory by supporting The Susan Fund with their time, their dollars, or both. This has been a very personal effort, and we are very grateful to everyone whose support has made it possible for us to help these amazing young men and women achieve their dreams.



Q. What are you most proud of in terms of The Susan Fund?

Ann: I am delighted that the Fund has been able to make a difference in the lives of our recipients. It has also been very gratifying to hear back from their parents. We meet all of our candidates and encourage them to re-apply every year they're in school. It is especially heartwarming to see them grow and share their triumphs. We are also there for them when they share their challenges. Three of our current Board members are past recipients, several others are cancer survivors, and every one of us has been impacted by cancer in one way or another. So we all understand how important it is to provide support and encouragement. But the truth is, they truly inspire us and it is an honor to know such an amazing group of recipients.

Q. Where do you see The Susan Fund heading in the future?

Ann: I believe we are in a great place and well positioned for the future. We have a dedicated Board and a new Chair who was a close friend of Susan. We are all highly devoted to helping our recipients in any way we can. This year we distributed a record amount of scholarships, and we are looking into new fundraising opportunities so we can give out even more in the future. It is a great feeling to be a part of this organization and I am excited for the future.



A heartfelt thank you to everyone for helping honor Susan's dream of going to college!

A TRIBUTE TO ANN LLOYD FROM HER SONS



REVIEWING APPLICATIONS
(Kathleen DiGiovanna, Ann Lloyd,
Ellen Schigg, David Lloyd)



This space has long been reserved to explain what made our sister Susan so special and why she has been such an inspiration to us. That will never change. What has changed, however, is the leadership atop The Susan Fund, and we didn't want to let the moment pass, without thanking and honoring our mother, Ann Lloyd, who has devoted nearly half of her life to this scholarship and its hundreds of worthy recipients down through the years.

Thomas Edison's quote about genius is that it's "one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration". Susan inspired this endeavor, but for over forty years our mom has provided the energy and hard work and backbone to make it endure, and indeed thrive. Lofty goals and good intentions mean little, unless they are supported by those willing to roll up their sleeves and get after it. Since the inception of The Susan Fund, Ann has been blessed with a committed, selfless group of board members, but when push came to shove the final responsibility always lay with her. We can't tell you the number of times over the years she'd be up late, on deadline, putting the finishing touches on the newsletter, figuring out a tax return, or doing any of a thousand unseen thankless little tasks to sustain this scholarship fund. Despite the millions of dollars The Susan Fund has awarded to students, it has always retained its mom-and-pop charm, and to that end, our mom still adds a personal touch to every single one of the thank you notes she writes to donors, big and small. There is an honor and dignity doing all that, year after year, a lifetime's worth of service, and now she lays down her mantle and passes the torch to Jeff Booth, content in knowing she did her very best and accomplished so much for longer than any of us could have hoped.

We can picture our mom reading this, a bit surprised, and a bit embarrassed (okay maybe ALOT embarrassed) because she does not exactly bask in the glow of a strong spotlight, but every once in a great while it is necessary to elbow her out onto the stage to accept her just desserts. We love you Mom, and are so proud of you, and thank you for making your corner of the world a better place.

- Will, David and Doug Lloyd



2021 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



ALEXIA BOCCUZZI

Stamford, CT
University of Pennsylvania

Lexi will be entering her sophomore year at UPenn this fall. Lexi spent this past summer working on her political podcast called “The Lowdown with Lexi and Lilah.” She continues to discuss politics in an approachable way. Lexi is involved with her weekly school paper, writing for *The Daily Times of Pennsylvania*. She gives her opinion on current political issues. Her favorite part about being a columnist is getting feedback from people. Lexi likes to challenge people to think outside of the box. Her former debate partner describes Lexi “as a book, and her story is worth reading. You may get many qualified candidates for your scholarship, but you get very few who can change the world!” This is Lexi’s second Susan Fund scholarship.



GIACOMO BRANCATO

Fairfield, CT
Fairfield University

Giacomo graduated in 2021 from Fairfield University’s Dolan School of Business with a degree in Finance. This fall he will continue at Fairfield University working towards a master’s degree in Finance, or an MBA. This past summer he continued to play baseball, where scouts would come to watch and observe the players. Giacomo hopes to play professionally one day in the MLB.

Giacomo’s letter of recommendation states, “He is a self-motivated, responsible, committed and highly dedicated young man, both on and off the baseball field.” The Susan Fund has awarded Giacomo five scholarships.



LAUREN BUSSER

Newtown, CT
NYU Tandon
School of Engineering

Lauren is enrolled in the Integrated Design Media program and will graduate this spring with her Master’s degree. She reflected, “My goal is to work in a user experience role, focusing on content design which will tie in with my writing experience.” Lauren was awarded recognition for one of her short stories by the Connecticut Press Club. Lauren’s enthusiasm for her studies and the opportunities available to her was evident throughout her interview with the Board. She described one project that focused on improving comic book accessibility for blind and low vision readers. Another exposed Lauren to wearable electronics. This is Lauren’s sixth Susan Fund scholarship. She plans to pursue a PhD in Educational Technology and will remain part of The Susan Fund throughout her education.



JOSE CAMPANARIO

Danbury, CT
Western CT State University

Jose completed his first semester at Western Connecticut State University with honors. He has taken a leave of absence due to findings related to his cancer.

In his letter of recommendation, his teacher quoted William Ernest Henley regarding Jose’s strength as the “unconquerable soul” and his courage to be “the master of (his own) fate.” Jose ultimately wants to become a successful financial advisor or trader. This is Jose’s second Susan Fund scholarship.

2021 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



CHARLIE CAPALBO

Fairfield, CT
Fairfield University

Charlie is currently undergoing cancer treatment for a third time at Boston Children's Hospital. As of this newsletter printing, he has been in the hospital since January 2021. Charlie made the Dean's list at Fairfield University in the Fall of 2020 before he was diagnosed again. Charlie is majoring in Business with a minor in Psychology. He is an avid hockey fan and dedicated goalie. He looks forward to getting back on the ice someday soon.

Before he was hospitalized in January, Charlie was a COVID testing administrator and a clinical assistant at a physical therapy clinic. Charlie continues to have a fighting spirit during his treatment. As one of his doctors said, "Let's control what we can today and continue to have faith in tomorrow." This is Charlie's fourth Susan Fund scholarship.



JOSH CAPPELLO

Trumbull, CT
Southern CT State University

This is Josh's second Susan Fund scholarship. He embodies much of what makes our recipients so special. His social worker notes in his recommendation, "Josh is a survivor and a warrior having to cope and live with diagnosis (of recurring brain tumors), surgery, treatment and resume life since two years of age." He missed the last year of school as he completed his treatment for a brain embryonic tumor. Josh is now transitioning back into being a student. He is attending Southern Connecticut State University and lives at home. His educational goal is to earn a Bachelor's Degree in History. Josh is especially fascinated by Ancient, Middle Eastern and Asian history. After graduation, he would like to work helping people better understand the past. Josh's reference letter noted, "He is a sincere, thoughtful, emotionally hardy, tenacious young man who is kind and ethically minded. He is brave and resilient. My recommendation is with full appreciation and admiration."



JACK DEMERS

Bethel, CT
Eastern CT State University

Jack will be a junior this fall at Eastern. He changed his major from Sports Management to Communications because he enjoys working with people and socializing. Jack looks forward to taking a TV production class this fall to try and discover which communications route works best for him. His ultimate career choice would be to find a job where he "doesn't dread going to work every day and allows me to provide for myself and eventually a family."

Jack's letter of recommendation states, "He remains steadfast and dedicated to all he commits to do in life, no matter what the obstacles may be, keeping his positive perspective on life intact." This is Jack's third Susan Fund award.



TIERRA GARVIN

Stratford, CT
University of Bridgeport

Tierra began her health services career as a home health aide/companion, then obtained her CNA license through classes at the American Red Cross and practice at the Jewish Home in Fairfield, CT. Tierra has been a CNA for over 10 years and works at Brightview Senior Living in Norwalk. She is a Senior Resident Assistant and has learned a lot from nurses in the assisted living facility. Tierra is in her first year at The University of Bridgeport in The School of Nursing. She plans on attaining her BSN. Her favorite areas to work in are in oncology and labor and delivery. Ultimately, she would like to become an RN, working in pediatrics. This is Tierra's first Susan Fund scholarship.

2021 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



MICHAEL HOLTZ

Fairfield, CT
Stonehill College

Michael has been a Susan Fund recipient for two years. While he adapted to taking classes virtually last fall and made Dean's list, Michael happily returned to campus in January 2020. He noted, "My strengths and interests have influenced my desire to major in Business." He is double majoring to pursue a BS/BA in Marketing and a BA in Economics. Michael is fascinated by market research, branding and product development. He is a member of the Economics Club, the Stonehill Campus Ministry, and is a member of The Student Conduct Board. This past year he gave back to NYU Langone Hospital, where he was treated, by raising funds for programs that provide for the comfort and care of children with brain tumors. He supports the Make-A-Wish Foundation and Operation Help. In his note to the Board he wrote. "I am very proud to be part of The Susan Fund. I really value what the organization does and how it makes cancer survivors like me feel valued."



LAUREN KELLY

Norwalk, CT
Boston University

Lauren graduated from Brian McMahon High School in June. Due to a diagnosis of a secondary cancer, AML, Lauren will delay her college start at Boston University this fall. She may take online courses when she is able to begin her freshman year. Lauren describes her educational path as majoring in vocal performance or double majoring in speech, language, and hearing science. She plans on pursuing a Master's Degree in Speech Pathology. Her goal is to work with singers and vocalists in need of voice or speech therapy. Lauren has been a singer since she was very young. She almost lost her voice after she completed aggressive cancer treatment in her junior year. She wrote, "Through that experience, I have found a purpose. Through my work as a vocal therapist, I want to help others find or rediscover their voices, as everybody deserves to have one." Lauren has performed at the Crystal Theatre's production of the operatic version of Pinocchio and virtually at the Make-A-Wish Gala where she amazed everyone with her incredible vocals. Her physician noted, "I was struck by Lauren's positive attitude, sense of humor and intelligence. She is the embodiment of resilience and strength." This is Lauren's first Susan Fund scholarship.



SONA KOCINSKY

Trumbull, CT
Tufts University

Sona is a graduate of Trumbull High School, where she had an outstanding academic record. She is in her freshman year at Tufts. Sona fell in love with the school's location, welcoming attitude and the superb academic program. She is planning to major in Biology and then pursue a graduate degree, possibly in medicine. Sona is a passionate volunteer and was featured in an article in her local newspaper. She has worked with Infinite Love for Kids Fighting Cancer and raised \$12,000 for Spin4Kids. She worked with Sustainable Trumbull and was a math tutor. This is Sona's first Susan Fund scholarship. She discovered The Fund through her granters at Make-A-Wish Foundation. For her wish, the organization is building a garden for the patients at Sloan Kettering in White Plains where she was treated. This reflects the kind of person Sona is. One of her references described her as "someone who has faced many challenges but has emerged as a strong and powerful person." This is Sona's first Susan Fund scholarship.



DANIEL KREKOSKA

Stratford, CT
Providence College

Daniel is in his sophomore year at Providence. He had a very successful freshman year, earning a 3.8 GPA his first semester. Daniel is interested in majoring in either health policy management or political science. Upon graduation, he would like to attend law school.

Daniel became involved in many activities at school. He was on the debate team (conducted online), participated in the Campus Ministry, and was a member of the orientation planning committee. He also worked as a fitness center manager. Daniel's letter of reference noted, "Daniel's determination, character and commitment to academic excellence shine brightly. He possesses a sense of curiosity in his studies and strong writing ability." This is Daniel's second Susan Fund scholarship.

2021 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



BRENT MCCREESH

Southport, CT
Sacred Heart University

Brent will be a freshman at SHU this fall. He chose the school for his education and because they have “a really good chess team.” His major is undetermined, but because he is an avid chess player, he hopes to be in a career that leverages those strengths. Brent fosters his love of chess by working as a teacher, tournament director, and receptionist at the Norwalk Chess Club. In addition, he has his own YouTube channel called “Brent Plays Madden” with over 2,000 followers. He enjoys volunteering for Team Brent, which his parents formed for childhood cancers.

A science teacher of Brent’s wrote, “he is a careful observer, scrutinizing what goes on in any class with the eyes of a zen master.” He single-handedly has taken chess into the mainstream of social life in his school community. This is Brent’s first Susan Fund scholarship.



ERIC MENGEL

Southport, CT
University of Wisconsin

Eric is passionate about politics and has worked on a voter outreach strategy, as well as Invictus Strategies for fundraising during his time at the University of Wisconsin. Last year, he took some time off from attending the University of Wisconsin to take classes locally. He took his time to re-establish himself and figure out where he wanted to be as a college student. A dean from his high school wrote about the time he took off from college, “It was awesome that he has recaptured his bold love of life and enthusiasm for life’s possibilities.”

Eric’s long-term plans include working in politics, potentially on campaigns, on political action committees, or in strategy. This is Eric’s fourth Susan Fund scholarship.



SOFIA PETRAFESA

Stamford, CT
Southern CT State University
& Norwalk Community College

Sofia has completed three years of her five-year nursing program at Southern and has maintained a GPA of 3.5. Sofia will earn a Bachelor of Science degree and plans to become a pediatric oncology nurse. Her reference said, “This will enable Sofia to help children and parents with her unique perspective.” Last fall, she earned her Connecticut Nurses Aid certification and is now working in a Greenwich pediatric practice while taking classes at NCC. This clinical certification and clinical experience allow her to grow personally and professionally as she gains experience with pediatric patient care. Although volunteering offered unique challenges this past year, Sofia led her virtual #LikeAWarrior in MSKCC’s Cycle for Survival annual fundraising event for research to beat rare cancers. Sofia has just celebrated her five-year *cancer*iversary of being cancer-free from Ewing’s sarcoma. This is Sofia’s third Susan Fund scholarship. Her reference wrote, “Sofia has taken her experience (fighting cancer) and has made it her passion.” She will truly make a difference in the lives of families she touches.”



JOSHUA RUBENSTEIN

Trumbull, CT
University of Maryland
College Park

Josh described his first year at Maryland as “amazing.” He found his classes challenging and enjoyed the people he met. Josh describes his ultimate goal as “being eligible for the most prestigious medical school.” His goal is to work in the field of public health. Although COVID prevented Josh from volunteering in person, he continued his work with The Casey Powell World Lacrosse Foundation where he serves as a junior advisor. Josh is in contact with several children throughout the United States who are currently fighting cancer. He plays video games with them and stays connected via texts. He is a wonderful role model for them. Josh is described by the founder of the organization as possessing “passion, drive and tenacity!” In the fall, when he returns to school, Josh plans to work with Be The Match Foundation by organizing a bone marrow swab drive. This is Josh’s second Susan Fund scholarship. He became aware of The Fund through Charlie Capalbo, a past recipient. They were both in Boston in the hospital at the same time and have become close friends ever since. They are both amazingly resilient and strong!

2021 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



CORDELIA SCUDDER

Bridgeport, CT
Sacred Heart University

Cordelia is pursuing her Master's in Social Work degree at Sacred Heart. She is a seven time Susan Fund scholarship recipient, who has been described as a "never give up cancer survivor." The Board has been honored to share Cordelia's pursuit of her Bachelor of Science degree and now to support her in earning her Master's degree. She has noted, "School challenges your mind. Education is such a blessing!" Her career goal is to work with children as a social worker. Cordelia has been employed at a daycare in charge of preschoolers. She describes the experience as exciting and fun. Her letter of recommendation describes Cordelia as "hardworking and a motivation to the staff members. She not only excels academically but has shown great social skills and leadership qualities. She has a love of learning and a level of commitment necessary to succeed."



JACK UNGAR

Darien, CT
University of Richmond

Jack is a sophomore at The University of Richmond in The School of Arts and Sciences. He continues to volunteer at the Noroton Fire Department, fueling his passion for firefighting and helping others. As a child growing up in New York City, Jack's mom would bring him for visits to local firehouses, where he began his lifelong dream to become a firefighter. In 2021, Jack completed his EMT certification, furthering his ongoing desire to help alleviate people's pain and suffering. Jack's Assistant Chief at the Fire Department states, "If character, focus, discipline, and diligence are material measures taken of candidates under your consideration, Jack is sure to impress." This is Jack's second Susan Fund Scholarship.



WILLIAM VARVARO

Easton, CT
The New School

During the pandemic Will decided to transfer colleges, realizing that his previous school was not the right fit for him. The school that he attends now will allow him to pursue a degree in film/media arts and communications, where he can enjoy his passion for editing and film production. Will feels strongly that The New School will be the perfect fit for his career goals. This past summer, Will was his mother's social media manager. He edited her Instagram and Facebook pages as well as her house tours for her real estate job.

His letter of recommendation describes Will as "a confident, self-aware young man possessing the communication skills needed to advocate for himself in any learning environment. He stands above his peers in maturity and is communicative and well-spoken." This is Will's third Susan Fund award.



MATTHEW VIGLUCCI

New Fairfield, CT
SUNY - Oneonta

Matthew will be a freshman this fall at SUNY Oneonta. He will study the music industry and ultimately would like to be involved in sound production and orchestration areas of the music business. Matthew would like to play music in a band at college. He has played the trumpet since he was in the fourth grade. Matthew loves jazz and soundtrack music. He can envision himself being involved in the production of soundtracks for video games and film. He recalls these games getting him through feelings of isolation during his cancer treatments.

His high school counselor describes Matthew as "an incredibly kind, hard-working and talented student." This is Matthew's first year as a Susan Fund recipient.

THANK YOU NOTES from CURRENT RECIPIENTS

Dear Susan Fund Board,

*With sincere gratitude
and warmest thanks.*

Thank you all so much for granting me this amazing and generous scholarship. It is because of you that I can enjoy my college experience to the fullest. Your actions have helped my family in more ways than you will ever know! Again, Thank you all so much and I can't wait to see you again next year!

*Best wishes,
Jack Demers*

*Thank you to the Susan
Fund Committee for your generous
scholarship and for accepting me
into your family.*

*Matthew
Viglucchi*

Thank you so much for my 2021 Susan Fund Scholarship. I am so very honored.

I really enjoyed being able to see everyone again, finally in person. Yesterday's reception was very enjoyable. I am very proud to be part of The Susan Fund and I really value what the organization does and how it makes cancer survivors like me feel valued.

I appreciate all of your kind words and support as I continue my education as a rising junior at Stonehill College.

Thank you all so very much! May you all stay safe and cool this summer!

Sincerely,

Michael Holtz

The logo consists of the letters 'SEP' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, enclosed within a circular border. The circle is light blue and has a subtle gradient.

Dear Committee of The Susan Fund Scholarship,

I would like to express my gratitude for your continued financial support with this year's award of a Susan Fund Scholarship. As I enter my junior year, your generosity affords me the ability to focus on my academics as they become increasingly more challenging with greater demand with time spent studying.

My education pursuits would not have been possible without your generous support as I continue to grow personally and professionally. Knowing that you have lightened my and my family's financial burden and inspires me to help others and look forward to one day helping others achieve their educational goals just as you have helped me.

Warm Regards,

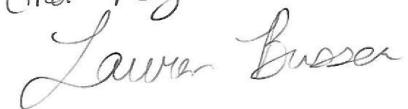
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sofia Petrafesa'.

Sofia Petrafesa

*To The Members of the Susan Fund Board,
Thank you so much for your
continued support of my education.
My master's program has given me
so much and your support in paying
my tuition has helped immensely.
I'm looking forward to the next
year where I can dig into virtual
reality and land on the perfect
topic for my thesis. Your support
means I can focus on my studies
and hone my craft on aesthetic to
be competitive after graduation.*

*Thank you so much for your
support and I hope to keep in
touch in the years to come.*

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lauren Brasser'.

FORMER RECIPIENT UPDATES

UPDATE FROM GREG MORO



It was my pleasure donating to The Susan Fund (2020) - the money was actually the result of a sales presentation competition at work. Unfortunately, I came in second place, but was happy to offer it to a cause that is near and dear to my heart. I can't believe how long it has been since receiving scholarships, I still remember the interviews very well!

As you can imagine, a lot has happened. I completed my economics degree from UMass Amherst in 2011 and have been working in the financial services industry after leaving campus in 2010 (I had a few credits left to complete, but opted to finish them at Naugatuck Valley Community College instead of staying another semester on campus.)

From 2010-2016, I worked in Shelton, CT for Prudential Annuities. I started in the customer service center and over the course of my six years made my way up through the sales department. In March of 2016 I received a LinkedIn message from a recruiter indicating that T. Rowe Price, my current employer, was looking for individuals with my skill set and experience, and that Summer I packed my bags and moved to Baltimore, MD (last summer we moved just outside of DC to Bethesda, MD).

Since then, I've been promoted to Senior Intermediary Sales Consultant, earned the Certified Investment Management Analyst certification, I now have two beautiful nieces and as of less than three weeks ago I am a happily married man! My wife, Allie, and I had a small civil ceremony at the DC War Memorial. It certainly wasn't how we drew it up, but because of the current environment we decided to scrap the big wedding and just get hitched. Hopefully we'll be able to have a big party eventually, but we of course don't know when that will be possible.

SUSAN FUND EXPERIENCE BY SAMANTHA DOMMERMUTH

The Susan Fund became a part of my life during my first years of college at the University of Connecticut and contributed to my education through graduate school at Temple University. My experience with The Susan Fund not only allowed me to pursue my academic and career goals, but it also introduced me to a group of people who 'got it.' As a cancer survivor, especially an adult who survived childhood cancer, it can be an isolating experience. The Susan Fund has shown me that I am not alone and there are other people who are living their lives after cancer; for that, I am ever grateful. My academic experience landed me in Philadelphia over 10 years ago where I am now a pediatric speech language pathologist at Nemours Children's Health. I am a proud mother of a two year-old boy and two boxers and live in Philly with my husband. I think about The Susan Fund often and how they have helped me get to this wonderful point in my life. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Good luck to all The Susan Fund recipients, enjoy the ride!



UPDATE FROM JESSICA BANKS (GANGEMI)



I am currently living in Fairfield, CT with my husband, Ken and my adorable sixteen month old son, Bryson. I am a Pediatric Nurse and I have been working at Bridgeport Hospital/ Yale for the past 5 years.

I was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma at age 15, which was a very difficult age. The support of my family, friends and the caring Nurses helped me realize my path in life. I knew I had to give back to other kids the same care and concern that I had received from the wonderful Pediatric Nurses. They say that your mental health is so important when you are going through a tough illness and I always felt that the Nurses understood me. They were upbeat and supportive and knew what a 15 year old teen would need. I knew that my experience would give me that compassion and understanding.

I am currently going to school for my Masters, with an ultimate goal of becoming a clinical instructor for nursing students! I was always very grateful to receive The Susan Fund Scholarship throughout my nursing school journey as it was a constant reminder of my accomplishments and drive to excel as a Registered Nurse.

THOUGHTS ON THE SUSAN FUND - KATHY DIGIOVANNA

What makes The Susan Fund so special are the heroic individuals that we are lucky enough to call our scholarship recipients. In the 30+ years I have been a Board member, each and every recipient is remembered and admired. We treasure the time we get to spend with them every year during the application interviews. They are teachers for us, having faced a difficult illness that now colors and focuses a part of their lives. They are optimistic and very goal driven. They have a humor and courage that they found within themselves and now share with all of us. They rarely say they are cancer survivors. They may mention the time when they were sick, but what shines through is the how they saw a direction through the disease, what they learned about life, and their focus is on what is ahead. Many of them end up pursuing careers in the medical field as a reflection of the care and concern they felt while they went through treatments that they now share with others. Every recipient has become a part of The Susan Fund family and continues to touch us all every year with another level of understanding their strength and our purpose in helping them.

IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Jazmine Patterson - 5-Time Award Recipient

Jasmine passed away on January 22, 2021. She will be remembered for her beautiful smile, gentle nature, and enduring strength. Jasmine had a true passion and gift for graphic design, she earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2017 from the University of Bridgeport.



She was very active on campus as a member of a campus step team (United We Step), the African Student Association (ASA), the Civil Rights Activist Club, and participated in numerous campus community activities including Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. As a childhood cancer survivor, Jasmine was passionate about participating in the annual CT Challenge bike ride. The event is a grassroots charity bike ride that raises money for important cancer survivor programs.

Jasmine was an active member of the Union Baptist Church in Stamford, CT. She participated in the UBC Youth Council, UBC Choir, and UBC Steppers. She also served on the Church and Pastoral anniversary committees and the Women's Ministry. She taught at the Vacation Bible School and assisted with the Children Church Bible School. She worked as an intern with the On-Air Media Graphics department at News 12 CT. She also freelanced as a graphic designer. Jasmine will be truly missed by all.



Jazmine Patterson
Norwalk, CT
University of Bridgeport

Jasmine completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design last summer. Her career goal is to work in motion media graphics, graphic design or web page design. She has designed a Facebook page which includes animation as well as a logo, "pathway to Jesus," for her church. She has been a participant in

the CT Challenge for the past two years and raised over \$ 1,000 last year. This is her fifth Susan Fund scholarship.



A Tribute to Wally Meyer - Co-Founder of The Susan Fund





Randolph (Wally) Meyer died on July 3, 2021, at the age of 91. He reflected on his stepdaughter, Susan at the speech he gave at the awards reception in 2019, "Throughout Susan's battle with cancer, it was overwhelming to see the support and love she received from the community. We wanted to continue to support other students who were fighting cancer attend college."

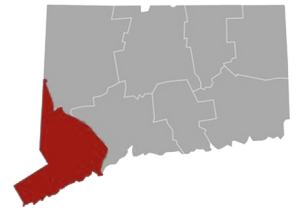
Wally was a co-founder of The Susan Fund, which was established to honor her memory. He was one of the Fund's avid public relations promoters and financial supporters. In his role as Justice of the Peace, he required that each couple he married contribute to The Susan Fund instead of paying his fee! Wally continued his mission in his obituary. He requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to The Susan Fund. The Susan Fund has lost one of its greatest supporters.



Staples High School Graduation
Susan Lloyd and Wally Meyer

HOW TO BECOME A SUSAN FUND RECIPIENT

-  Be a current resident of Fairfield County
-  Have been diagnosed with cancer sometime in one's life
-  Be attending or planning on attending an accredited post high school institution of higher learning
-  Fill out a Scholarship Application at TheSusanFund.org, available January 1st and due by April 1st



SUPPORTING THE SUSAN FUND

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE SUSAN FUND

- Mail a check to The Susan Fund at 458 Newtown Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06851
- Donate online at TheSusanFund.org
- Enroll in an Employer Matching Gift Program, if available
- Log into smile.amazon.com when making purchases on Amazon to have 0.5% of your purchase donated
- Consult your financial advisor about Donor-Advised Fund distributions, or the tax advantages of Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) from your IRA or appreciated securities
- Setup a special fundraiser supporting The Susan Fund in honor of, in memory of, or in lieu of birthday gifts by contacting us at susanfund@gmail.com

Support and Connection for Scholarship Recipients & Parents - by Susan Baron

Our scholarship recipients often say they feel they are a part of The Susan Fund family. When everyone meets at the reception, they often note that they feel a connection to recipients who are on similar journeys.

We would like to create ways in which parents and recipients could also feel more connected. In my new role of Parent/Recipient Liaison, I am hoping to create two special email groups through which (1) parents and (2) recipients can reach out to one another.

As a clinical social worker, I am hoping to set up a Zoom support group (see below), so you can share your experiences with others who understand. I am also planning to reach out to new parents on our website and through a handout which will become part of the application process.

Hopefully, this article will motivate you to reach out to me with your thoughts and ideas. I'd love to know what your needs are.

Please feel free to contact me, Susan Baron, by email at swbaron@optonline.net, or by cell at 203.667.2370.

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR THE LAUNCH OF OUR SUSAN FUND ZOOM GROUPS

Wednesday, January 5, 2022 from 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Recipients, past and present

*Co-hosted by Kelly Pollard, Recipient Liaison
& Susan Baron, Parent Liaison*

Wednesday, January 12, 2022 from 7:30 – 9:00 pm

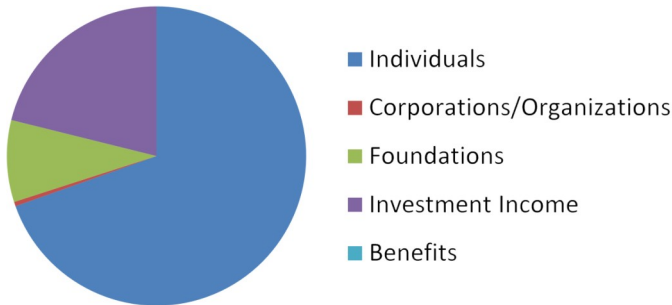
Parents of recipients, past and present

*Hosted by
Susan Baron, Parent Liaison.*

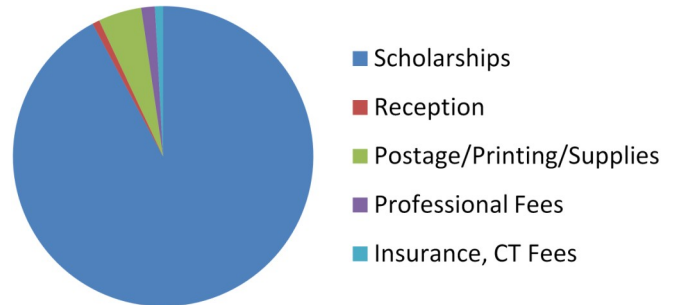
If you are interested, e-mail Susan ASAP at swbaron@optonline.net. A zoom link will be emailed the Monday before the groups meet.

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