Dear Friends,

We are pleased to update you about Kevin’s Fund, our 2019 scholarship recipients, and events since our April 6th benefit dinner dance and scholarship presentation. For those unable to attend this year’s scholarship presentation, we have included Emilia Cuevas’ comments in accepting this year's $100,000 scholarship, as the most outstanding senior in the Norwalk High School class of 2019, following this letter. Emilia will be attending the University of Virginia in the fall.

Over the past several weeks Kevin’s Fund awarded 10 additional scholarships recognizing outstanding achievements in the areas in which Kevin participated and excelled.

- On April 25th, Vincent Ferrucci, Boston College class of ’20, from Fishers, IN received the $19,000 Kevin M. Eidt Memorial Scholarship awarded to the outstanding junior in the Boston College Carroll School of Management Honors Program. This scholarship is presented to the junior who, in the opinion of the faculty and administrators of the Honors Program, has demonstrated the unique combination of academic achievement, character, leadership, and school spirit like Kevin.

- On April 30th, the Boston College Emerging Leader Scholarship was presented to the freshman in the Emerging Leader Program whose leadership skills and potential best represent Boston College’s philosophies of “Ever to Excel” and “Being Men and Women for Others”. The $2,000 scholarship was awarded to Henry Bayly, Boston College class of ’22, from Fort Meyers, Florida.

- On May 23rd, Norwalk High School held its annual awards assembly at which Kevin’s Fund presented the following scholarships:
  
  - $1,000 Scholar-Athlete Scholarship to Gianluca Trofa for outstanding contributions to Norwalk High School both as a scholar and an athlete. Gianluca will be attending Harvard University.

  - $1,000 Orchestra Scholarship to Katja Jarozewski for outstanding contributions to the orchestra program. Katja will be attending Louisiana State University.

  - $1,000 Achievement Scholarship to Julia Sferlazza for overall excellence in the areas which Kevin participated and excelled. Julia will be attending Assumption College in the fall.
Established in 2015 to further the connection between Norwalk High School and Boston College, Kevin’s Fund awards a one-time $2,000, (amount recognizing Kevin was in the BC class of 2000), scholarship to each senior who matriculates at Boston College. This year David Chuba and Madison French are recipients of this scholarship.

On June 2nd, Sean Murawski was awarded the $5,000 St. Jerome Youth Group Scholarship at their year-end graduation banquet. This scholarship is presented to the individual who, in the opinion of the Youth Group Adult Ministry Team, has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the youth program and community and religious service like Kevin. Sean will be attending the University of Connecticut.

On June 3rd, at the year-end Norwalk High School band banquet, Kevin’s Fund awarded the following scholarships:

- $1,000 Marching Band Scholarship to Jason Gorman. This scholarship is presented to the four-year member of the Marching Band, in good standing, with the highest cumulative grade point average like Kevin’s achievement. Jason will be attending the University of Connecticut.

- $1,000 Jazz Scholarship to Sean Donaher. This scholarship is presented to the senior, in good standing, who has made an outstanding contribution to the Jazz program. Sean will be attending Western Connecticut State University.

On May 1st Boston College EMS, the student run Emergency Response Organization, held its annual awards banquet. Boston College EMS was founded in 1997 by Mark Ritchie, a classmate of Kevin’s, to ensure future situations like Kevin’s would be met with the skill and resources which could mean the difference between life and death. Boston College EMS established the Kevin M. Eidt Excellence Award, the organization’s highest award, presented annually to the most outstanding member of the organization. The 2019 recipient of Kevin’s Excellence Award is Mary Kate Pensabene, BC ’19, from Philadelphia, PA.

As is our tradition, the most recent recipient of Kevin’s Norwalk High School scholarship to graduate college speaks at our dinner dance to share their experience of what receiving Kevin’s scholarship has meant to them. We are pleased to share with you, following this letter, the comments by Brody O’Brien, the 2014 scholarship recipient and 2018 graduate from the University of Connecticut.

Congratulations to our recently graduated 2015 scholarship recipients who received financial support from Kevin’s Fund for the past four years: Kim Devine ~ College of The Holy Cross, (Norwalk High School Scholarship), and Allison Hall ~ Sacred Heart University ~ (St. Jerome Youth Group Scholarship).

For the upcoming fall semester, Kevin’s Fund will be providing financial support to 17 students matriculating at, Georgetown, Furman, Cornell, Virginia, Boston College (4), Rhode Island, Merrimack, Notre Dame, Connecticut (2), Western Connecticut, Harvard, Louisiana State, and Assumption.

Photographs of the April 6th benefit dinner dance and scholarship presentation were taken courtesy of Yvonne Marchese A montage of these photos can be viewed
Current information regarding Kevin’s Fund activities will be posted on our website: www.KevinsFund.org. You can also follow us on Twitter @KevinsFund_org and join the Kevin Eidt Memorial Scholarship Fund Group on LinkedIn. In the event you have any questions or suggestions please feel free to contact us at KevinsFund@aol.com.

As is our practice, we will be announcing the 2020 scholarships Kevin’s Fund will support in our November status letter. Save the date for our 21st annual benefit dinner dance and scholarship presentation to be held on Saturday, April 4, 2020 at The Shore & Country Club in East Norwalk, CT.

Through your generosity Kevin’s legacy has touched over 160 recipients with gifts of education in excess of $2.1 million. Two elements have been essential to this achievement. A short life, fully lived by Kevin, with his passion and compassion touching the hearts and minds of his communities and the compassionate response by those communities to ensure his memory will be carried on by each of his scholarship recipients.

Thank you for making the extraordinary achievements of Kevin’s Fund possible and for allowing our scholarship recipients to be a living legacy of Kevin’s enduring personality and glowing accomplishments.

With sincere gratitude on behalf of Kevin’s Fund,

Chris

Christian H. Eidt,
Director

SPEAKERS REMARKS
APRIL 6TH BENEFIT DINNER DANCE
AND SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION

Emilia Cuevas – 2019 Scholarship Recipient Remarks

“Good evening everyone. It is such an honor to be standing up here tonight as the recipient of the 2019 Kevin M. Eidt memorial scholarship. It is so humbling to see everyone who has come together tonight to celebrate Kevin’s life, knowing that I have the opportunity to carry on his legacy.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Eidt family. Thank you for serving as such an important force in Norwalk, motivating students to reach their fullest potential and better the community. Thank you for allowing me to reach my collegiate goals, giving me an opportunity to further my education without being held
back by financial worries. Seeing the way your family has been able to bring the community together and turn a tragedy into a positive force is truly remarkable.

I would also like to extend my appreciation and gratitude to everyone who is here tonight and who contributes to Kevin’s Fund. Without you, I would not be standing here today. Thank you for your continuous support of students like myself, who are inspired by Kevin’s accomplishments and are motivated to follow in his footsteps.

Thank you to the Norwalk High School community for providing me with limitless opportunities to engage with others. Throughout my four years in high school, I have been able to become involved with Best Buddies, Norwalk Swim and Dive, the Music Department, and so much more, all while taking rigorous classes and being pushed by my teachers to reach my fullest potential. Being a part of the Norwalk High School community has shaped me into the student, and more-so, the person I am today.

And of course, I would like to say thank you to my parents. Thank you for always standing behind me, supporting me as I pursued new adventures. Thank you for never doubting me, questioning my ambition, or holding me back from following my dreams. Thank you for always setting the best example for me, teaching me how to treat others with compassion and kindness from a very young age. You undoubtedly have prepared me to step out into the world on my own. I am who I am because of your unfaltering love. While I may not say it enough, I am eternally grateful for you both.

Two years ago, I had a life changing experience when I was able to travel to Belize for two weeks on a service trip. It was here, away from everything I had ever known, that I found myself. On this trip, I was teaching English at a middle school. I became particularly close with an eight-year-old student named Julio. Julio came from a very poor family, and I came to learn that the following year he would not be attending school but instead would be working full time to support his family. Despite having dreams of becoming a doctor, his financial status would prevent him from getting the education he deserved. I felt empty - shocked to see the true impacts of poverty. Julio would no longer be able to be a child, instead having to carry a financial burden on his shoulders. To my surprise, this was not the only lesson I would learn on this trip. The next day Julio surprised me by coming up to me at lunchtime with a bag of chips. He had spent his lunch money to buy me, his new best friend, a snack. While a bag of chips may seem like a small, simple gift, it was everything he had. I was touched at this action, realizing that helping others does not mean performing grand gestures, it means giving back in any way you can. Inspired by Julio, with whom I am still in contact with, I went on another service trip to the Dominican Republic and have become more involved with service initiatives in our community. I have realized my passion for service and am confident that I will be pursuing a career in global health. I have learned the power of simple acts kindness. Julio’s act of kindness strengthened our friendship amidst a time of turmoil for him, inspiring me to spread kindness throughout my community. Now, surrounded by people who loved Kevin Eidt and who are devoted to carrying out his legacy, I am once again reminded of the incredible power of a group of people coming together and turning a tragedy into a positive force, motivating others and bettering their community.

As I stand here tonight, overwhelmed by gratitude and quite frankly, at a loss of words, I know that I am supported by my community as I attend college next year. I am filled with excitement at the thought of being able to carry on Kevin’s legacy, and to hopefully
inspire future students to strive for success. Seeing those students here tonight, such as Katerina, who have served as inspiration for me, I am overcome with happiness and gratitude at the thought that I can be a similar role model for future recipients. While I was unfortunately never able to meet Kevin, he has inspired me to continue to be engaged in my community, to be compassionate to others, and ultimately to always look for the best within the worst situations. Thank you so much.”

Brody O’Brien –2014 Scholarship Recipient Remarks

“Good evening. It is an honor to be here tonight.

It is surreal for me to think that five years ago I stood here to accept this prestigious award. It was truly a blessing to become the 2014 recipient of the Kevin M. Eidt Memorial Scholarship and to be recognized with an award that embodies Kevin’s loving spirit and legacy. I cannot thank you all enough, for believing in me and providing me with the financial and motivational support to live my life according to Kevin’s values.

In May 2018, I graduated magna cum laude from the University of Connecticut, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering and a minor in Environmental Engineering. As an “Honors Scholar,” I was the only student in my major to graduate from the Honors Program. Taking a vast array of classes across all disciplines within my major, the Engineering Department and the Honors Program fed my hunger for learning and pushed me to reach new academic heights. My senior design project challenged me, as I designed a replacement railroad bridge for H.W. Lochner and the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Conducting research during my junior and senior years, I completed an Honors Thesis on the design and development of Storrs Center. My civil engineering analysis of the mixed-use development ultimately ignited my passion for transportation planning and led me to pursue this academic interest halfway across the world.

A month prior to the start of my senior year, I spent three weeks abroad in Amsterdam, Netherlands, studying the interrelationship between sustainability and transportation planning. Throughout the course, I conducted field-based research on the bicycle network in Amsterdam, facilitated professional interviews, and documented my findings in a short film, which appeared in the 2018 Connecticut Urban and Transportation Film Festival. After three weeks of cycling and enriching myself in Dutch culture, I can now say that I have a newfound appreciation for Amsterdam. My time in the city showed me firsthand how transportation planning can be utilized as an effective tool to build sustainable urban communities. Because of this unforgettable experience, I have a new way of examining the infrastructure around us, which I have carried forward in my career as a civil engineer.

Outside of the classroom, I made a big school feel small by immersing myself in extracurricular activities. I was a three-year member of the Men’s Ultimate Frisbee team, competing in tournaments across the country to help the team qualify for Nationals three years in a row and for the first time in program history. During my junior year, I spent a week in Birmingham, Alabama, serving the local community while exploring the roots of civil rights and urban poverty. As the Program Director and Student Coordinator for Community Service Days, a club that offers one-time service events with the mission of providing students an entry point into service, I worked with
several organizations in the Storrs community while helping students understand the importance of reciprocity and active citizenship.

I am incredibly fortunate for the education and the college experience I received. As the first person in my family to go to college, my four years at UConn enabled me to pursue my academic interests, serve communities from Storrs to Birmingham, make lifelong friendships and memories, and start a career in civil engineering. Because of the Kevin M. Eidt Memorial Scholarship, I was also able to graduate from UConn debt-free. I recognize the life-changing nature of this opportunity and simply cannot find the words to express my gratitude.

Graduating debt free enabled me to accept a full-time position with BL Companies, a multi-disciplinary engineering firm, in Hartford, CT. As a staff engineer in the Transportation group, operating under the State’s Consultant Liaison Engineering Bridge Program, I work closely with engineers from the Connecticut Department of Transportation to design and rehabilitate the State’s infrastructure. Connecticut received an infrastructure grade of a C- in 2018. I've never received a C- in my life, so something must change around here.

After being with BL Companies for almost a year now, I can proudly say that I love what I am doing. This amazing opportunity to start my career wouldn’t have been possible without this scholarship and all of you.

To the benefactors of Kevin’s Fund, thank you for your generous support. Your unselfish contributions have not only enabled me, but each recipient of this scholarship, to go on to college and follow their dreams. To the selection committee, thank you placing your confidence in me and allowing me to carry Kevin’s legacy forward. To the Eidt Family, thank you for sharing Kevin's memory. Your devotion to honoring Kevin's legacy has inspired the Norwalk community and beyond to follow in his footsteps. To my own family, thank you for raising me to become the person I am today, for always loving me, and for supporting me in all my endeavors.

While I never had the privilege of meeting Kevin, I would like to especially thank him for inspiring me to live my life with purpose, to cherish every moment, and to leave a meaningful impact on my community.

Every year I look forward to this special night in April, to hear the stories of past recipients, to welcome a new member into the family, and to celebrate the loving spirit and legacy of Kevin M. Eidt. As each winner of this scholarship goes on to leave his or her mark, Kevin’s Legacy lives on. Thank you.”

*The Kevin M. Eidt Memorial Scholarship Fund, a 501(c)(3) publicly supported charitable organization, was established in honor of the exemplary achievements of Kevin, who died from cardiac arrest during his freshman year at Boston College. The Fund recognizes outstanding achievement in academics, athletics, the arts, and community and religious commitment.*