John Bradley

Walk in to the Sunrise Café in Wooster Square at 7:30am and you might forget that at this eatery, complete with tablecloths and flowers, no check will arrive at your table when you have finished your meal. The café is run by Liberty Community Services, an organization whose mission is to end homelessness in the Greater New Haven area. John Bradley, Liberty’s executive director for the past 10 years, is a driving force behind the cafe’s success.

Celebrating one full year of operation, the Sunrise Café is open five mornings a week, and has changed the traditional soup kitchen model. Critical to the operation of Sunrise Café is a group of dedicated Yale volunteers – initially recruited by John Bradley – who arrive each morning ready to seat and greet guests, take their orders, and prepare and serve the meals. They do this for the more than 100 patrons who visit the café each day. And as John says, “This whole thing is not [just] about food. It’s about building community.”

His work across the community extends well outside of the café’s walls or Liberty’s residence on State Street. John developed a collaboration with the Community Health Care Van through the Yale AIDs Program to provide on-site medical services and educational talks to Liberty clients in various neighborhoods throughout New Haven. He partners with the Yale AIDS program to combine its medical services with Liberty’s social programs to provide services for the reentry population. Liberty also provides families in imminent risk of homelessness with funding through a collaboration with the Yale Hunger and Homelessness Action.
For his tireless work to provide meals, housing, hope and a sense of community to individuals in need in New Haven, Mayor Toni Harp and President Peter Salovey present John Bradley with an Elm Award.
When Elsie Chapman relocated to New Haven in 2003, she “absolutely fell in love with this city, its culture, its diversity and its architecture and couldn’t imagine living anywhere else.”

Elsie joined Yale University as a development officer for the Yale Alumni Fund and was instrumental in implanting the Yale Class of ’51’s partnership with Wexler-Grant School, a partnership that provides generous annual donations that support after-school tutoring and programming.

Elsie served on the board of the New Haven Free Public Library where she promoted interactions between the library and the university. Combining her love of history, Yale University, and New Haven, she organized a popular tour of the Yale gargoyles, building features that many don’t notice, and even more don’t know the stories behind them. Now a member of the board of the library’s foundation, she remains an active connector, recruiting members of the Yale community to share their time, talents, and treasure with the public library.

A tireless volunteer, Elsie is also the current President of the Historic Wooster Square Association, a neighborhood that many in the Yale community call home and whose famous restaurants and events regularly convene Yale and New Haven. Elsie is currently hard at work planning Wooster’s Square’s annual Cherry Blossom festival, an event made possible because of the volunteer efforts of the entire neighborhood. And Elsie also serves as a Cultural Affairs Commissioner for the City
of New Haven making this entire city more robust with creative activities for New Haven and Yale families throughout the year, including the United States Navy band concert at Woosley Hall, last month. New Haven was one of only 23 cities in 5 states to host this band’s during its 2016 tour, and it was Elsie’s work with the Cultural Affairs Commission that brought this free, standing-room-only event here. She likewise brings her creative skills to bear in her service on the board of the International Festival of Arts & Ideas.

Elsie’s breadth of volunteerism, enthusiasm and spirit to take on leadership roles expresses her dedication to New Haven and to making her community a better place. For this commitment, Mayor Toni Harp and President Peter Salovey present Elsie Chapman with an Elm Award.
Erik Clemons

Once in a generation, if you’re fortunate, you’ll come face to face with a natural-born leader whose mission it is to selflessly lift the community and who works tirelessly to guide others to do the same. Erik Clemons, director of the Connecticut Center for Arts and Technology, is such a person. If you sit down and talk with Erik, you quickly sense his honesty, integrity, commitment, and passion for service. And it’ll rub off on you. This is what inspires his staff each day, who all have the fire of genuine passion to help others and will work from sun up to sun down because of the energy Erik inspires.

ConnCAT’s motto is: “Everyone has the opportunity to be great”. Erik serves as a beacon and draws people to ConnCAT from all over and encourages them to work together to make our collective community greater. He regularly hosts Yale students at ConnCAT both to inspire the next generation and help guide them in effective organizational leadership skills. Toward this end Erik has hosted a Yale World Fellow, and has hosted numerous Yale President’s Public Service Fellows. All of the student fellows come away better equipped to meaningfully connect with their neighbors.

Erik also regularly convenes courageous conversations at ConnCAT that ask all of us in the New Haven and Yale communities to collectively lift our community. An example of this is “A New Day in Newhallville” which featured Yale School of Arts alumnus Titus Kaphar and the Yale MOMs
partnership, and a panel discussion led by members of the Yale and New Haven community explored Freedom Summer 1964 and how it relates to our community today.

Erik’s expertise and passion are also sought after outside of ConnCAT’s walls: the Yale School of Management partners with him on its Interpersonal Dynamics spring semester course for second year students. He coaches students there on how to communicate with persuasiveness, presence, and personality. He has also helped to convene leadership forums at Yale SOM to explore leadership trends in education.

Erik is a connector, creator, and catalyst and, thanks to him, ConnCAT is a vibrant part of the cosmopolitan canopy now flourishing at Science Park. In recognition of Erik’s unceasing leadership in building community, and encouraging the development of intentional leadership skills of future generations, Mayor Toni Harp and President Peter Salovey present Erik Clemons with an Ivy Award.
Eugene Kimball

Students and faculty describe him as a great listener, which is an essential quality to have in a recording studio. But for Eugene Kimball, who recently retired as Director of the Fred Plaut recording studio at the Yale School of Music and after 45 years of service in the university, it goes deeper than that. Passionate about making music accessible to all, Eugene has spent a career perfecting audio capture. Yale’s archival music collection, along with most of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra recordings during this period, reflect and portray his invaluable contributions to the university and the city and, most importantly, to the discipline of music throughout the world.

During Gene’s tenure, more than 5,000 concerts were recorded at Sudler Hall, Woolsey Hall, Sprague Hall, Battell Chapel, Harkness Tower, and the Yale Center for British Art. These included concerts by the New Haven Symphony and the great artists series in Woolsey Hall.

His life at Yale began as a student in the Drama School, where he worked as an audio specialist in the Technical Design and Production Department. He also studied at music school with Bulent Arel, Mario Davidovsky, and Frank Lewin, and worked on projects with Jacob Druckman and Robert Morris and other musicians and composers who lived, worked, and shared music in New Haven and beyond.
All recording on campus was done by contractors, until 1973, when Fred Plaut, former chief engineer at Columbia Records, was appointed senior recording engineer and organized an audio recording studio at the Yale School of Music. Gene joined as the recording engineer. Four and a half decades later, an average of more than 200 programs at Yale have been recorded annually in addition to those recorded for musical organizations in New Haven.

Gene has been “co-creator” for generations of faculty, students, and internationally acclaimed artists. So many “firsts” came under his guidance, perhaps the most influential being free worldwide streaming of all programs in Sprague, Woolsey, and Norfolk. He has never missed a Philharmonia concert since 1973 – or an inauguration of a Yale president! Artists come from around the globe to be recorded by Gene in Sprague Hall and those recordings are then shared back around the world.

Among his thousands of projects, standouts include recordings of over 140 short film scores; four Yale Cellos Delos recordings, with a Grammy nomination; recordings of jazz legends including Dizzy Gillespie, Eubie Blake, Duke Ellington Orchestra, Slam Stewart, Anthony Davis, Pearl Bailey, Willi Ruff and Dwike Mitchell, and Dave Brubeck; Six CDs of Charles Ives Songs on Naxos. In essence, Gene’s work preserves music at Yale for almost a half century – and it is regularly disseminated across the globe.
In recognition of his work making music free and readily accessible by radio, smartphone, and computers alike, as well as for preserving the birthright of music for generations to come, President Peter Salovey and Mayor Toni Harp present Eugene Kimball with an Ivy Award.
Rafi Taherian

Leading an organization that serves 14,000 meals a day is a significant undertaking. But for Rafi Taherian, executive director of Yale Dining Services, his vision goes significantly beyond getting the food on the table and includes the university’s neighbors in New Haven.

Since Rafi came to town in 2008, he has supported numerous small, local food businesses, helping them grow and expand their operations and product offerings. As but one of numerous examples, when Yale was looking for a new sausage product, Rafi reached out to Lamberti Sausage on Long Wharf. Now run by the third generation of the Lamberti family, the company worked with Yale chefs to develop a breakfast sausage to be served in campus dining halls. Similarly, when Yale was looking for a healthier, nitrate-free hotdog, Rafi turned to New Haven’s own Hummell Bros. After initially being designed for and purchased by Yale, this nitrate free hotdog is now headed to wider distribution.

Rafi continues to recognize and utilize local resources. He was an early supporter of Whole G Bakery’s products and subsequently provided the owner with business that allowed Whole G to grow from 6 employees to a 40-employee operation. From hotdogs to honey -- all of Yale’s honey is purchased from a local New Haven honey and candle business – Rafi’s goal is to continue to buy local and support local whenever possible.
Rafi also encourages his team to volunteer locally—the dining hall regularly donates food to organizations like the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen, which provides free, nutritious meals for homeless individuals and families. And Yale Dining annually hosts a Chili Cook-off, a community event that invites everyone to the Schwarzman Center and supports the United Way of Greater New Haven.

For his tireless commitment to feed the New Haven community by buying local and supporting local businesses and nonprofits, President Peter Salovey and Mayor Toni Harp present Rafi Taherian with an Ivy Award.
Dr. Marjorie Rosenthal

Dr. Marjorie Rosenthal is a pediatrician who has spent her career developing and nurturing partnerships among New Haven and Yale and has taught the value of working together for the benefit of the community’s health.

Margi has led many successful community-academic partnerships that improve the health of New Haveners, including helping hospitals give whooping cough vaccines to family members of babies; facilitating the New Haven Police Department’s understanding of the mental health needs of their employees; integrating the Fair Haven Community Health Center’s adult-focused and child-focused obesity prevention program into a family-focused program; helping parents of Clifford Beers clients describe what they need to integrate their child's mental and physical health; and working with Columbus House, Cornell Scott Hill Health Center, and Yale-New Haven Hospital to gather the support and data to create a medical respite program for homeless individuals.

In addition, for the past seven years, Margi has helped foster Yale’s collaboration with New Haven Family Alliance in three projects to reduce gun violence and intimate partner violence among New Haven’s youth.

Margi is a shining example of someone who unites city and university. She is tireless in her commitment to improving the lives of New Haven’s children and families, and she is inspiring
new generation of potential leaders—her students and mentees—to give back to New Haven.

For her commitment, President Peter Salovey and Mayor Toni Harp will present Dr. Rosenthal with an Ivy Award.
In most animals the brain serves as the center of the nervous system. The Yale graduate students leading the Yale Neuroscience Outreach Program believe that teaching New Haven youth about the brain should not make anyone nervous. Manipulating cockroach legs through stimulation or examining a sheep brain dissection are all part of this group’s Brain Education Day, an annual neuroscience event for more than 100 local students in the Yale Pathways to Science Program.

Middle school and high school students explore the brain with Yale’s top neuroscientists and students, tour Yale science laboratories, and learn brain anatomy through specimen dissection, and attend workshops with topics including comparative neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, and sensation and perception. And while the students are busy learning about the brain, parents participate in a Yale led session on how to make higher education work for their families.

In addition to this annual event, Yale graduate school students with the Yale Neuroscience Outreach Program are dedicated to promoting knowledge about and interest in neuroscience to New Haven K-12 students through local school visits. The goal is to teach basic concepts of neuroscience through hands-on activities, introduce students to neuroscience research, and highlight the importance of understanding brain function. Program members give students intensive tutorials in a branch of science they might not spend as much time on in class, with the added benefit of using items like oscilloscopes and seeing shark brains—items not usually available in a typical school anywhere.
The Yale Neuroscience Outreach Program is designed to spark curiosity in New Haven youth and activate these young brains’ inquisitive nature. As a result of the program’s efforts to reach out and connect with local youth, these New Haven students learn something about the brain, and see that they too have a place as future scientists.

In recognition of their work to inspire future generations of scientists by promoting and supporting science literacy, President Peter Salovey and Mayor Toni Harp present the Yale Neuroscience Outreach Program with a Graduate and Professional School Ivy Award.
Jacob Wasserman

If you have ever heard of goNewHavengo, New Haven’s newest, highly publicized civic campaign to promote non-automotive forms of transportation, you should know that the man behind that program is none other than Jacob Wasserman, Yale class of 2016. This past summer, sponsored by Yale’s Dwight Hall Urban Fellows program, Jacob went above and beyond as an intern for Doug Hausladen at City Hall’s Office of Transportation, Traffic, & Parking, where he continues to work to this day. As coordinator of goNewHavengo, Jacob helped to facilitate a month-long, city-sponsored contest in September urging businesses and individuals to use non-automotive forms of transportation. The competition involved 483 individuals and 35 companies, which altogether cut over 74 tons in carbon emissions, burned 588,000 extra calories, drove 152,000-fewer miles by car, and saved $83,000 in transportation costs. Moreover, Jacob not only coordinated the program but also managed the initiative’s publicity campaign. It is not surprising that within the halls of 200 Orange Street you can often hear an echo of “Go Jacob Go!”

And this cheer continues to sound throughout the New Haven and Yale communities. As co-chair of the Ward 1 Democratic Committee, Jacob reinstated regular meetings for the Ward Committee and brought together groups from across campus to discuss city matters. Jacob has also written for the Yale Daily News encouraging the Yale community to get involved in New Haven affairs.

Jacob also joined dozens of Yale students to serve as a volunteer for the past three years at New Haven Reads, where he helps to tutor local elementary school students and also helps manage
the local book bank program. He also works as an advisor to City Atlas—New Haven, a new community publication that seeks to highlight sustainability efforts and policy initiatives in New Haven. Moreover, he has served as a leader in Yale’s FOCUS on New Haven program—a pre-orientation program that seeks to introduce sophomores and incoming transfer students to the city and helps get them involved with the New Haven community and local non-profits.

Time and again, Jacob has shown that the “Yale bubble” is a myth. Through his efforts, countless students have become even more deeply connected to, and appreciative of, the community where they live as students. His service is meaningful because it comes from a love and respect for Yale’s hometown. In recognition of Jacob Wasserman’s efforts to better connect himself and others with the surrounding community, President Salovey and Mayor Toni Harp present Jacob Wasserman with an Undergraduate Ivy Award.