

Community News For The West Hartford Edition

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Dance school launches crowdfunding campaign for dance scholarships for Hartford youth

AREA -- Sonia Plumb School of Dance is working to provide minority youth after school dance programs to build a stronger community through dance. The project's organizers are calling on the community to join this initiative by donating to a crowdfunding campaign or volunteering in the effort. All community donations will be doubled by Sustainable CT's Community Match Fund, which is an innovative funding resource for public, community-led sustainability projects.

If the campaign reaches its \$8,000 goal by its fundraising deadline of Aug. 31, the project will receive a matching grant of \$8,000 from Sustainable CT. Visit [Patronicity.com/23dancescholarships](https://patronicity.com/23dancescholarships) for project details and to donate.

The funds will be used to provide instructional training and pay instructors. "Our Hartford youth, which is 80-percent Black, Indigenous or People of Color (BIPOC), needs opportunities like these after school dance programs now more than ever," said Sonia Plumb. "Most do not have access to online learning and have been unable to participate in in-person classes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This opportunity is a game changer for the future of our youth as role models and active participants in their community."

She said the goal is to have 50-percent of students from the BIPOC community attend. Having the teachers' wages covered honors the work necessary for students to have exceptional training. Students will receive between 3-5 classes per week to begin in mid- to late-September once families have settled into back to school mode. These students, who would not normally be able to afford after school programs, now have somewhere to go, to meet new friends and be a part of the larger community - a community with similar values and ideals."

Sustainable CT is an initiative of the Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE) at Eastern Connecticut State University that inspires, supports, and recognizes sustainability action by towns and cities statewide. The Community Match Fund, supported by the Smart Seed Fund, Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, and the Connecticut Green Bank, provides a dollar-for-dollar match to donations raised from the community, doubling local investment in projects.

“Through the Community Match Fund, we aim to put residents at the forefront of creating positive, impactful change,” said Abe Hilding-Salorio, community outreach manager for Sustainable CT. “Match Fund projects are community led and community funded, demonstrating the power of people working together to make change in their communities.”