

## Board Leadership: The Center for Empowerment and Education Appoints Bold New Leadership

**DANBURY, CT, January 6, 2025**— The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE) hosted its Annual Meeting, celebrating a year of impactful work and setting a bold course for the future. During the meeting, the organization officially appointed its 2025-2026 slate of Officers and welcomed six dynamic new Board members. Together, they bring a renewed commitment to CEE’s mission that works towards breaking the cycle of interpersonal violence and empowering individuals and families across Upper Fairfield and Lower Litchfield Counties.

The newly elected slate of Officers is composed of accomplished leaders from their Board of Directors, all of whom are ready to take CEE to new heights:

- **Erin Byrne**, CEO of ThinkSiSu and owner of Cotton Candy Fabrics, was named **Board Chair**.
- **Vicki Taylor-Bloch**, owner of At Home Design, will serve as **Vice Chair and Development Chair**.
- **Kelcey Hoyt**, Chief Financial Officer at Linde, will continue as **Treasurer**.
- **Amanda Bristol**, Senior Tax Manager at CironeFriedberg, was elected **Board Secretary**.

This exceptional team is eager to guide CEE through critical periods of transition and growth, keeping the needs of victims and survivors at the forefront. Together, they will lead the development and execution of a forward-thinking Strategic Plan, ensuring CEE’s mission adapts to the evolving challenges of interpersonal violence while expanding its life-changing impact.

“We are entering an exciting new chapter at CEE, and I couldn’t be more thrilled about the passion and expertise our new leadership brings to the table,” said Ashley Dunn, CEO of The Center for Empowerment and Education. “This group of dedicated professionals offers fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and an unwavering commitment to our mission. Together, we will continue to grow, adapt, and create meaningful change for the individuals and families we serve.”

Adding further strength to the organization’s Board leadership, six exceptional professionals were appointed to the Board of Directors for a two-year term:

- Dayna Beylouni White, Zone Sales Director, PepsiCo-Frito Lay
- Kelly Garretson, AVP, Human Resources for Eastern Region, Nuvance
- Imranul Haque, Director, Tax Technology, Linde
- Reed Idriss, Medical Director, Nuvance Health GoHealth Urgent Care
- Elvis Novas, Software Engineer, Meredith Corp.
- Chelen Reyes, CEO, Union Savings Bank

“The CEE Board of Directors is composed of individuals who bring diverse and essential skills and experiences necessary for effective strategic planning, governance, and advocacy in our communities. We look forward to partnering across CEE to fulfill our mission and create safer communities,” said Erin Byrne, Board Chair. These new Board members bring diverse expertise and perspectives, amplifying CEE’s ability to tackle systemic challenges and create lasting change. CEE’s Annual Meeting served as a powerful reminder of the organization’s unwavering commitment to addressing interpersonal violence and advocating for victims and survivors. The new leadership team is poised to chart an ambitious course for the future, ensuring that CEE remains a beacon of safety, resilience, and hope while continuing to grow its reach and impact.

For more information on how you can support The Center for Empowerment and Education, visit [www.thecenterct.org](http://www.thecenterct.org) or follow us on social media.

### About The Center for Empowerment and Education

Since founding in 1975, The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE), formerly The Women’s Center of Greater Danbury, has been a safe haven as the sole provider of services to victims of domestic and sexual violence in the Northern



Fairfield and Southern Litchfield County areas. Each year, CEE serves over 22,000 individuals from area communities with confidential services available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, and provided at no cost.

CEE provides support services in the form of crisis intervention and advocacy, counseling, and emergency shelter. Their advocates empower individuals to find their voice and choose their path toward healing as they rebuild their lives. CEE prevents and reduces interpersonal violence in the community through prevention education and awareness. CEE is reducing trauma by stopping violence from manifesting in the first place. CEE believes that everyone deserves to live a life free from violence.

All funds provided to CEE support their critically needed domestic violence, sexual assault, and resource services for adults and children in an 11-town service area, including: Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, and Sherman. CEE is a member of the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) and The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence.

**NOTE TO MEDIA:** For further comment, please reach out to Ashley Dunn, CEO of The Center for Empowerment and Education, contact her at [ashley.d@thecenterct.org](mailto:ashley.d@thecenterct.org)

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