



# CHATTER THAT MATTERS®

Volume 9, Issue 2

Winter 2020

## A Message from Greg Smith:

It's a New Year.

Using the title of our publication as a reference point, I think the *chatter that matters* is the many requests for more communication, more feedback, and recommendations for improvements within the company. The April all-employee survey, and the November union survey, both provided this feedback – some about the past and some about the present. What I hear being said is, “Tell us more.”

What I want to make sure each of us hear, and my message to you as we turn the page to a new year, is: Make good recommendations to address areas that you feel need improvement.

Communication, in both directions, is critical for all of us to perform our work and to continue to achieve record results year after year. Communication is key, not only for us to know what is happening in the company, but to maintain a positive work environment for all.

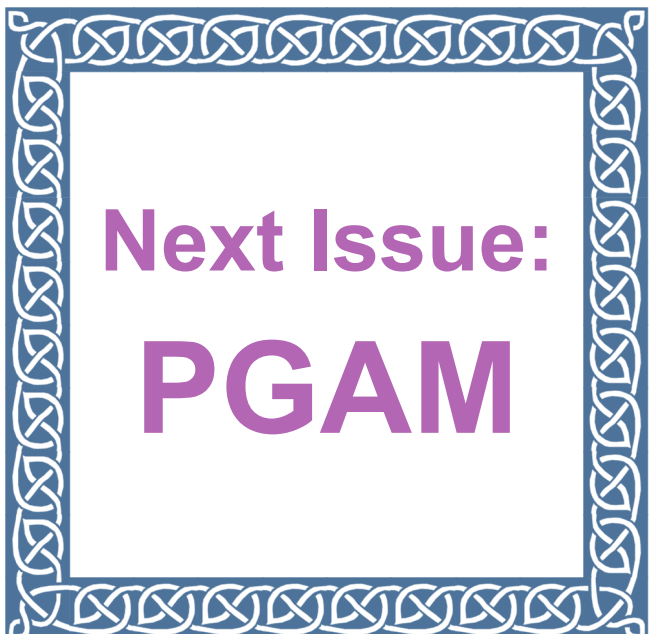
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**Next Issue:**  
**PGAM**

# RG Focus: An Interview with Art Mongillo of the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG)

By: Annmarie Daigle



I recently had the opportunity to speak with Art Mongillo, Manager of Policy & Communications at CCPG, to learn a bit more about his role within the organization with which we partner.



**AD: How did you become involved in the field of problem gambling?**

**AM:** Even going as far back as my time at the legislature working in constituent services, I was always interested in working with people and helping those undergoing challenging circumstances. After I transitioned into the nonprofit world, that feeling only grew stronger as I began working with youth populations impacted by trauma and instability. Having close personal experience with the devastating effects of disordered (or problem) gambling, I was intrigued at the opportunity to raise awareness around this "silent addiction" and help those suffering as a result.

**AD: Can you tell me a little bit more about your role as Manager of Policy & Communications?**

**AM:** My role is to increase awareness of problem gambling as a societal issue, as well as the treatment options available statewide. With Connecticut facing a large proposed expansion of legalized gambling (new casinos, online gambling, sports betting), we work to ensure that problem gambling is included as a factor in all legislation and discussion around gambling and gambling expansion. Acknowledging that the majority of people can gamble for entertainment without negative consequences, we want to ensure that the safety net of prevention, treatment, and recovery is strong enough to protect those who may suffer from problem gambling addiction.

**AD: I know working with youth is one of your passions. What advice do you have for teens (or their parents) from a prevention perspective?**

**AM:** The fact that there are widespread opportunities to gamble and limited education regarding its risks means that young people are particularly vulnerable to its harms.

More work needs to be done with policymakers, schools, families, and youth to ensure that they understand the risks. As a parent myself, I recommend keeping an open, non-judgmental line of communication open with kids. Model healthy gambling behavior and talk about different forms of gambling, as many youth don't think of certain activities as gambling. Prevention begins at home.

**AD: Problem Gambling Awareness Month is coming up. Is there anything new CCPG is doing this year that you can share?**

**AM:** Problem Gambling Awareness Month is observed every March, and it provides an opportunity to increase public awareness of problem gambling and the availability of prevention, treatment, and recovery services. We also encourage healthcare providers to screen clients for problem gambling.

This year we'll continue to build on our outreach and education initiatives by scheduling free screening events for college students, veterans, and at-risk populations.

**AD: Sure to be a busy time for you. What interests do you have outside of work?**

**AM:** I'm a lover and collector of vintage--from vinyl LPs (yes, records!) to t-shirts and advertising ephemera. I'm basically the opposite of Marie Kondo. As a matter of fact, I always had an affinity for the old CT Lottery 'money tree' logo and have a few old tees with that design. I also "enjoy" exercise, attending concerts, and spending time with the family.

**AD: Thank you for your time today Art. I'm sure we will see more of you in the future.**

**AM:** Thank you! It's great to work with organizations like the CLC that are committed to protecting its patrons and promoting statewide responsible gaming initiatives.

# Community Volunteer: Heart-filled Handbags

By: Annmarie Daigle



Heart-filled Handbags is a New Britain-based, non-profit organization created by Christina Cassone in 2018. The organization collects gently used handbags, fills them with make-up, beauty products, and feminine hygiene products, and then donates them to women's shelters.



**AD:** What a truly amazing way to give back to the community. Can you share how Heart-filled Handbags came to fruition?

**CC:** At my previous company I worked with a variety of people of different ages, backgrounds and income levels. I noticed a lot of people struggling. I also, in general, wanted to find a way to help people in need. I asked a few friends there at the time and received several bags of handbags and some products and was able to make a donation. Time went by, and I got busy and didn't have the opportunity to take it where I wanted to at that time. Then in 2018, the day before Christmas Eve, everyone around me was being grouchy and complaining about shopping and presents and wrapping, and I realized there are so many people who will never have this burden. I called my little brother, and we each spent \$100 at the Dollar Tree and filled every used handbag I had and dropped them off at two women's shelters. From there my charity came alive.

**AD:** What a wonderful and inspiring idea. It must feel so good to empower women at what could be the most difficult time in their lives. Was it difficult to get started?

**CC:** I asked my sister-in-law to be my partner so I could really take this to the next level. The hardest part was finding a name no one had so that we could create a social media presence. We spent many nights creating our logo and printing signs and creating our Facebook and Instagram pages. We then created three donation boxes and found local businesses that women frequented and promoted those places as drop off locations. The support has been overwhelming. We turned one of my large closets in my basement into our stockpile of purses and products. We recently made substantial drop offs right before Thanksgiving and Christmas at Prudence Crandall Center, the oldest domestic violence program in Connecticut.

**AD:** Any special plans or events on the horizon?

**CC:** I am working with another woman-owned small business to plan a purse and product drive and I also partner with "Soap Sacks" which is another charity that hand-crochets little sacks that hold a bar of soap that they then donate to homeless shelters. They send me 25-50 sacks every three months.

**AD:** So good to hear. How can others get involved?

**CC:** Donating gently used purses would be amazing. The harder part is also getting the products to fill the bags. We only fill them with new, never-opened items, so donating even one item can make a huge difference. We are also in need of bars of soap, as we include a soap sack in every bag and need the soap to fill them. I have a donation list I can provide to anyone interested. Also, if anyone knows of any individuals specifically in need or shelters that may appreciate a donation, I would love to be in contact.

**AD:** Thank you, and all the best to you and Heart-filled Handbags for another successful year!



# Vendor Spotlight: CT Community Nonprofit Alliance:

*Putting People to Work Since 1977: Statewide Preferred Purchasing Program*

By: Sharon Zarotney

PRO  
BUSINESS

INCLUSION

The CT Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance) has been a vendor of the CT Lottery Corporation since July 1, 2002, for the rental of mats and mops used throughout our building. The Alliance works with commercial company Unifirst Corporation to provide products and service delivery statewide. Unifirst Corporation coordinates job opportunities through Kennedy Center Rehabilitation Program, providing individuals with disabilities employment opportunities not readily available to them. These employment opportunities continue to provide independence and enhance the quality of life for those who participate. The CT Lottery Corporation is committed and proud to be a part of this wonderful program.

The Kennedy Center crew works hard in the Unifirst Corporation plant located in Stratford.



Their mission is to advance excellence in community-based nonprofits through advocacy and capacity building.

More info at [ctnonprofitalliance.org](http://ctnonprofitalliance.org)

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I don't think anyone envisions an easy answer -- me saying, "Do these three things and everything will be better." To actually make improvements, and to talk about things candidly, every employee, no matter their position, needs to make an effort. You may choose to initiate realistic ideas for improvements, or participate in developing and implementing them. This will happen through discussions within department meetings, by cross-department teams working on a solution that affects a larger process, or by a few employees who choose to make a recommendation to their supervisor. If you wait quietly on the sidelines, the changes being made may not include your thoughts, or solve the problem that you see.

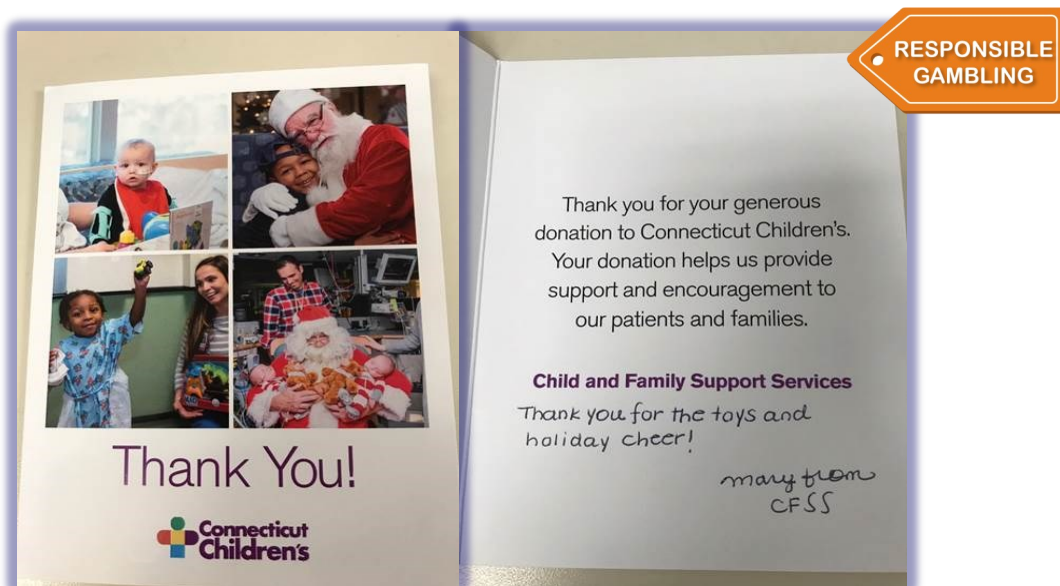
Change does not happen overnight, but I have heard concerns that will be addressed, some I know are already in the works. And you being part of this process is some of the best training and skills development anyone could ask for. It definitely helps prepare you for future opportunities.

In short, be part of the solution. Be part of our success.

— Greg Smith

## A Thank You from Connecticut Children's

Two-Thousand-Nineteen marked CT Lottery's 6th annual "Give a Child a Toy, Not a Ticket" holiday campaign to promote the responsible gambling message that lottery tickets are not suitable gifts for children, while collecting toys for patients at Connecticut Children's. Below is a thank you we recently received from Child and Family Support Services at Connecticut Children's.



In total, the lottery, along with its retail partners, raised well over 1,000 toys for donation.

To highlight the heart of the campaign, the CT Lottery was treated to a special guest speaker, Patricia McIntosh, Manager of Child & Family Support Services, who spoke about the positive impact of raising toy donations for patients in need.

# Old Pallets Take On a New Look

GREEN INITIATIVES

Pallet repurposing by the very creative and talented Bob Olinatz.



GREEN INITIATIVES

## Green Initiatives ~ Take a Second Look, You Might Not Know ~

By Nubia Morales-Florez

### DATELINE:

2008 - In an effort to protect water quality, the CLC added rain gardens at our headquarters. The rain gardens are the islands that separate the rows in the employee parking lot.

### DEFINITION:

"A rain garden is a natural or dug shallow depression designed to capture and soak up storm water runoff from roofs, driveways, walkways, etc. Storm water is considered one of the main sources of water pollution nationwide. A rain garden allows the runoff generated on the property to infiltrate into the ground and reduce potential water quality problems."



## Congratulations! 2019 NASPL Powers Award



The Powers Awards are presented in recognition of the significant contributions lottery and/or vendor employees have made through exceptional job performance. These awards are named in honor of the late Edward J. Powers and are presented to industry stand-outs.

**Congratulations to 2019 Award Winner**

**Margaret Annino**

**CLC Principal Cost Analyst**

# GNEMSDC Business Conference & Expo 2019

*By: Karen Chambrello*

The Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council held its Business Conference & Expo on September 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> at the MGM Springfield, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Representatives from both our Purchasing and Sales departments attended the event. The Sales team of Rob Kelly, Makeba Hampton, Tony Pena, and Bob Olinatz set up and worked the CLC booth at the event; they also had the opportunity to walk around and meet the various vendors. The Purchasing team of Suzanne Colley, Sharon Zarotney, and Karen Chambrello met with current and potential new vendors.



The Purchasing team also represented the CLC at breakout sessions and as ambassadors at the Shining Star Reception. Andrew Walter, Nubia Morales-Florez, and Kia Manson joined the Purchasing team attending the Awards Luncheon held on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

This annual event gives us the opportunity to see how important Supplier Diversity is in today's business world. Collaborating with diverse vendors allows them the opportunity to expand their business while supplying products to large corporations. This process is beneficial to both.

A thank you to those who attended the event with me: Suzanne Colley, Makeba Hampton, Rob Kelly, Kia Manson, Nubia Morales-Florez, Bob Olinatz, Tony Pena, Andrew Walter, and Sharon Zarotney.

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## Location! Location! Location!

*By: Suzanne Colley*

While attending the Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council's Annual Business Conference & Expo, held at the MGM Springfield Resort & Casino, we had the opportunity to stop by the GameSense venue. Their spot is located directly across from the entrance to the casino floor, the perfect location.



We could not help but notice the extensive display of GameSense information readily available to passersby. And, the GameSense team was attentive and easily approachable.

It was nice to have had an opportunity to say hello to the folks who were working that day.



**Use your GameSense  
It just makes sense.**



## The Corporate Responsibility Team:

- Karen Chambrello
- Suzanne Colley
- Annmarie Daigle
- Kendra Eckhart
- Bryan Figueroa
- Rita Finocchiaro
- Steve Fox
- John Gasparini
- Wendy Gasparini
- Valerie Guglielmo
- Jodi Ketchale
- Rebecca Lambert
- Violetta Lukin
- Zuleika Mercado
- Nikki Nearing
- Barbara Petano
- Robin Raboin
- Justin Rivera
- Janet Rocco
- Greg Smith
- Susan Starkowski
- Linda Tarnowski
- Steve Wagner
- Andrew Walter
- Jeff Yue
- Sharon Zarotney



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