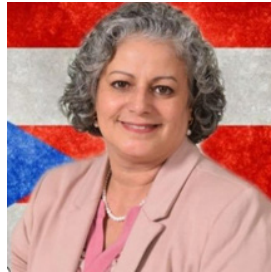


More Murals

The Neighborhood Heroes murals last year were enthusiastically received, and feedback suggested that our community wanted to honor even more heroes. This year we followed the same community nomination and voting process to select two more people to be honored. After tallying 400 votes, this year's winners were Gladys Rivera and Sammy Vega.

Gladys Rivera grew up in Frog Hollow and South End of Hartford. She served on the CICD Puerto Rican Parade of Hartford Board for over 30 years. She currently works at Capitol Region Education Council and is the former Program Manager for the Elderly Nutrition Program at CRT where she managed the Meals-on-Wheels program.



Sammy Vega also grew up in Frog Hollow and is the current leader of the CICD helping to organize the Puerto Rican Parade, Maria Sanchez Banquet, and other initiatives such as humanitarian efforts to support people in Puerto Rico following the hurricanes. In 1997, Sammy Vega won the national Junior Olympic Boxing Title. He went on to support and motivate young people working for Mega Education out of Dressler Law.

The new mural will be at the corner of Cedar and Park Street, on a building owned by Rego Realty. It is scheduled to be completed by the fall. It will be created by Lindaluz Carillo, the artist who worked with us on the mural at the Wolcott Street Family Park, and another local artist named Mercury. The mural will be mixed media and multi-dimensional, with an inter-active component.

All murals will be incorporated into a bilingual walking tour developed with SINA by Trinity students Max Norteman and Isabelle Sayas. It will be tested by a community group, finetuned, and ready in the fall. The tour starts at the Park Street Library and covers 25 stops along multiple blocks on Park and Broad Street. The tour aims to bring to life Frog Hollow history as told in the own words of neighborhood residents.



About SINA

Since its founding in 1977 SINA has worked with residents and community organizations on issues such as affordable rental housing, education, public safety, homeownership and employment. With nearly 100 homes built, a thriving Walk to Work Program, and the creation of community gardens and murals, its visible impact in the Frog Hollow, Barry Square and South Green neighborhoods has been significant. SINA continues operations today in offices at 207 Washington Street. For more information call (860) 493-1618 or visit www.sinainc.org.



REACH Event Returns

SINA is a partnership between Connecticut Children's, Hartford Hospital and Trinity College. SINA's mission is to work cooperatively with community stakeholders to restore economic vitality and improve the quality of life for the people who live, work, play, and study in the neighborhoods of South Central Hartford.



REACH Event Returns

June saw the in-person return of our biggest annual event, the 16th Annual REACH Awards Ceremony. The event honors people who contribute to the success of our neighborhood and provides scholarships for local students. This year’s ceremony was once again generously hosted by Trinity College, REACH honors people who contribute to the success of our neighborhood and provides scholarships for local students.



From Left to Right: Maribel Bermudez, Rob O'Connor, Angel Ruiz, and Franciszka Sadowski.

The winners of the Neighborhood Service Awards were Maribel Bermudez, Rodney Williams and Franciszka Sadowski. Maribel directs the Family Resource Center at Burns Latino Studies Academy and also oversees three similar programs at other sites run by The Village for Families and Children. Rodney is a 17-year employee of the

City of Hartford Parks Department who maintains Pope, Goodwin, Bushnell, Forester Heights, Colt and Barnard parks. Franciszka is the Director of the South End Wellness Senior Center, managing a wide range of programs aimed at keeping seniors engaged, educated, healthy and entertained.

Angel Ruiz of UConn Health/Connecticut Children’s, won the Stephen Balcanoff Award for community service. The award is named for Steve, a long-time SINA board member who retired after 40 years with CT Children’s.



A special, surprise award was given by SINA to Robert O'Connor, CEO of Thomas W. Raftery, Inc., a manufacturing company located on Broad Street, for his long time support of our community.

Ivan A. Backer Scholarship recipients were Phoebe Alexandra Sanchez, Ariel Francisco Jiminian Baldera, and Day'Avain Michay Mayo. Phoebe graduated from Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy. Ariel and Day'Avain graduated from Bulkeley. All plan to attend UConn.



Ivan Backer with Phoebe Sanchez and Day'Avain Mayo.



REACH member Laura Morin and Aniya Encarnacion.

Recipients of the SINA Student Support Scholarships were Gabrielle K. Fearon and Vanessa Whitton. Both are students at Capitol Community College and plan to become nurses.

Visit www.sinainc.org to read more about the awardees.



Gabrielle K. Fearon with REACH member Jessica Andry.

The Kelly Styles STEM Scholarship was awarded to Aniya Encarnacion, a graduate of the Sport and Medical Sciences Academy. The scholarship was created by employees of CT Children’s Information Solutions department to honor Kelly, their retired Chief Information Officer.



SUMMER READING

SINA’s REACH committee partnered with the Hispanic Health Council in their summer program at Maria Sanchez School. SINA recruited 17 volunteer readers, including several senior executives from CT Children’s. For three weeks in July, they read to about 50 students in grades K through 2. After coaching in how to engage children and encourage interaction, the volunteers read about 30 books, most of which focused on social/emotional learning. The kids chose their four favorites, which SINA will donate to their school library.

Books by Students



A casual conversation over lunch at SINA resulted in a new program to encourage a love of books in children. Staff learned of a student who wrote a book and sneaked it into a library, where the delighted librarian put it into circulation. This inspired our partnership with Hartford Public Library Park Street Branch @the Lyric to create an Earth Day-themed book writing contest for local students.

Children in grades K through 5 were invited to write books, and four submissions were chosen to be published. These are real books, printed and bound by the Hartford Public Schools print shop, with International Standard Book Numbers (ISBN) and bar codes. Copies will be provided to the libraries at the schools the authors attend. The Park Street Branch @ the Lyric will also have copies of the books displayed on a the new local authors shelf, so people can borrow the books.



The 2022 REACH Book Author Contest book authors are Dhyanaa Satish Kumar, Henry Burns, Ada Ploof (with illustrations by Ela Vega and Selena Brown) and the team of Neymar Perez Ortiz, Drenier Robles Baez, Broshin Ortiz, and Ana Zamorano.



Dhyanaa wrote Runny the Bunny Recycles. She is a first grader from Glastonbury East Hartford Magnet School and a resident of Hartford. Henry wrote Earth Goes Back! He is a kindergartener from Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School and a resident of Simsbury. Ada, Ela and Selena created Saving Luna the Red Panda. They attend second grade at Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School. Neymar, Drenier, Broshin and Ana’s book is Saving the World/Salvando el Planeta Tierra. The four are students in the Hispanic Health Council’s afterschool program and are fourth graders at Maria Sanchez Elementary School.

At an awards event at the library on August 18, the contest winners received certificates, trophies and buttons saying “Ask Me About My Book.” They signed copies of their books and read from them. They heard from a keynote speaker, Leticia Colon de Mejias. She is founder and CEO of Energy Efficiencies Solutions, and co-founder/President of Green Eco Warriors, a non-profit youth ecology and conservation group. Leticia is also a published author of numerous books for children.