

BUDDY BASH 2020



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH, 6:00pm

DUNKIN DONUTS PARK

2020 AWARD WINNERS

Hartford Yard Goats

Camp Courant Staff Celebrating 20+ Years

Presented By

Hartford Courant



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To our Camp Courant Family,

It is truly an honor to be chosen to lead this incredible organization. The passion and drive that I have seen in my short time is second to none. In speaking with the staff, volunteers, campers, and parents, it is so clear the important work that is done each and every day moving this mission forward.

For 125 years campers have attended the grounds on Batterson Park Road. On the 126th year, we were presented, along with the rest of the world, an unprecedented 2020. Of all the challenges this year has brought, it has also showcased our ability to adapt, be flexible, welcome change, and show the true strength and passion of our community.

This year's honorees showcase the backbone of all that Camp Courant encompasses, as they are shining examples of our core values, integrity, respect, fun, community, collaboration. Celebrating our staff of 20 plus years: Greg Dresko, Beth Gibbs, Debra Gomez, Julia Gonzalez, Gail Jensen, Tarra Johnson, Nichole Knight, Andrea Kowalsky, and Marta Shepard. We also celebrate the unwavering support from our community partner, The Hartford Yard Goats. We cannot thank you all enough for your unparalleled commitment to Hartford's kids.

Camp Courant's mission is to provide Hartford children equal opportunity to participate in recreational and educational experiences that balance fun with enrichment while expanding horizons, instilling confidence, promoting healthy lifestyle choices, and inspiring big dreams for the future. Even during a time of such uncertainty, our dynamic team pulled together to create a virtual experience for all our campers over this summer. Staying true to our mission and doing our very best to bring camp 'home'.

To all our community partners, individual and corporate, volunteers, staff, board of directors, I thank you. Thank you for continuing to support Hartford's youth during a time where your support is more essential than ever. Because of your generosity, the children of Hartford will have the opportunity to attend camp in 2021. These funds are critical as we begin prepping for the upcoming year. Consider sending a kid to camp for a day (\$40), a week (\$200), a month (\$800), the summer (\$1,200)—anything and everything you can do to move our mission forward.

Here is getting us back to camp in 2021!



Kindly,

Corrienne Gagliardi Chipello
Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer
Hartford's Camp Courant

Schedule of Events

6:00 PM.....Registration, Seating, Cocktails

6:30 PM.....Entrees Served

6:45 PM.....Program Begins

Emcee Jimmy Altman

Welcome

**Corrienne Gagliardi Chipello
Hartford's Camp Courant**

Awards

**Corrienne Gagliardi Chipello
Hartford's Camp Courant**

**Adam McLaughlin
Chairman of the Board**

**Hartford Yard Goats
2020 Award Winner**

**Camp Courant Staff Celebrating 20+ Years
2020 Award Winners**

Greg Dresko

Julia Gonzalez

Nichole Knight

Beth Gibbs

Gail Jensen

Andrea Kowalsky

Debra Gomez

Tarra Johnson

Marta Shepard

Keynote Speaker

Beth Gibbs

7:20-9:00 PM..Cocktails, Food, & Movie

8:00 PM.....Silent Auction Closes

8:45 PM.....Silent Auction Checkout Ends

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Hartford's Camp Courant Staff

Corianne Gagliardi Chipella: Executive Director & CEO

Heather Dinneen: Development Assistant

Tim Uhl: Camp Director

Andrea Kowalsky: Director of Finance & Facilities

Jessica Pierson: Director of Community Engagement

Mily Naveda: Administrative Service Manager &

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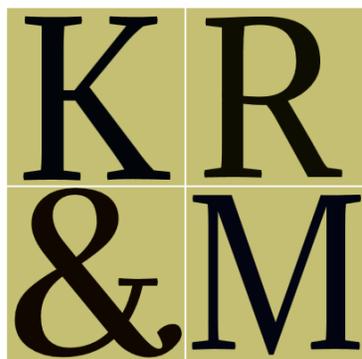


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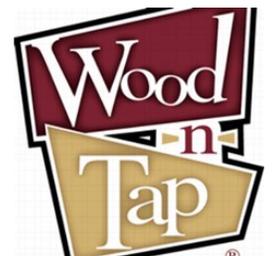
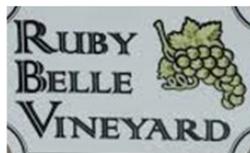
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Elizabeth Gibbs

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Ken DeLisa

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Kevin Ehrlich

Gail Elansky

Garrett Kenny

Allan Kleban

Kat Kluger

Adam McLaughlin

Evan Seeman

Dan Tapper

Jason Williams

Jennifer Wislocki

2020 Award Winner

Hartford Yard Goats

The Hartford Yard Goats, Double-A Affiliate of the Colorado Rockies, have been a staple of entertainment and philanthropy in downtown Hartford for the past four years. Opening in 2017, Dunkin' Donuts Park quickly became one of the most popular minor league baseball teams in the country; breaking attendance records and winning numerous awards both nationally and locally. Known for their out-of-the-box promotions, fan-friendly engagement, and powerful promotional efforts, the Yard Goats also quickly became a vital part of the community creating programs that empowering school-aged children in the arts, academics, and athletics. In 2019, the Yard Goats also welcomed their 1-millionth fan to Dunkin' Donuts Park... the quickest team in New England to reach that goal.

The Yard Goats have become a strong community partner with Camp Courant in a variety of ways-- each year inviting 600 campers on a field trip to Dunkin Donuts Park with a select group of our campers stepping onto the field to sing our Nation's National Anthem , the Hartford Yard Goats players visit our campsite in Farmington and join in on the fun with our campers. They participate in arts and crafts, sports, tricycle races, play basketball, and kickball. This year, the Hartford Yard Goats opened up their doors to Camp Courant to host a safe, social distancing 'Play Date'. They were also the distribution location for campers to pick up Foodshare and camp supplies every Friday during the camp season. The Yard Goats commitment and dedication to Greater Hartford and our community is unparalleled. Their examples of values, sportsmanship and being an integral part of the future of our city teaches us all a great lesson for our campers to emulate.



2020 Award Winner

Camp Courant Staff Celebrating 20+ Years

There are many famous quotes about summer camp. “The tans will fade but the memories will last forever.” “Camp-making memories that last a lifetime.” “There is always that one summer that changes you.” And the funniest (and sadly, one that is very much true), is “Camp-nature’s way of feeding mosquitos.” But at Hartford’s Camp Courant, there is one quote that always seems to resonate more than others. “Camp-where strangers become friends, and friendships last forever.’ That quote has rung true for 126 summers, but at Camp Courant, we take that quote even one step further.

“Camp-where strangers become friends, friends become family, and family lasts forever.”

Camp Courant employs only a handful of people year-round, but the staff swells to over 100 during the camp season in order to ensure that our 750+ campers have the summer of a lifetime. Nine of those individuals are celebrating 20+ years with Camp in 2020 (and many more of those 100 are inching nearer to that 20 year mark).

Greg Dresko, Beth Gibbs, Debra Gomez, Julia Gonzalez, Gail Jensen, Tarra Johnson, Nichole Knight, Andrea Kowalsky and Marta Shepard epitomize what Camp Courant is all about. They live the Camp Courant mission (or as we like to say, they “drank the Camp Courant bug juice”), not just 29 days of the summer, but 365 days a year, for the last 20+ years. They believe that every child in Hartford, regardless of their circumstances, deserves to experience the joy and wonder that is Camp. They believe that learning through play is paramount to the growth and development of our young people. They believe that they each can play a role in helping our campers to dream big -to stretch themselves beyond their comfort zones-to create memories that last a lifetime. Camp Courant is not a job-it is not something our staff ‘do’ in the summer to pay the bills or pass the time. While Greg, Beth, Debra, Julia, Gail, Tarra, Nichole, Andrea and Marta may not be related by blood, Camp Courant runs in their blood, and that is the very definition of what constitutes ‘family.’ Like a family, each individual plays an integral (and equally important) role.

2020 Award Winner

Greg has been with Camp for over two decades, serving in a variety of different capacities, but most recently as our Director of Sports & Recreation. While he moonlights as a baseball coach and elementary school teacher during the year, there is nothing he looks forward to more than the start of summer. He recently passed his Administrator's exam to become a school principal, and initially he was sad rather than excited because it meant summers away from Camp Courant—summers away from his kids. He couldn't celebrate his success if it meant negatively impacting our campers. That is family.

Beth spent 17 years as the Executive Director & CEO at Camp Courant, guiding the organization through some exciting and difficult times, including the economic meltdown of 2009. She retired at the end of 2012...except in the summer months of course, where you can still find her at the campsite multiple days per week, guiding our campers through a yoga session. Retirement is supposed to be about you. But not for Beth. It is still all about the kids. That is family.

Debra has provided hands-on assistance to our Arts & Crafts program for years, passionately encouraging our campers to push themselves beyond the task at hand and think independently and creatively. When you encounter a camper who is talking to Ms. Debra, there is always a smile on that young person's face. There is always a hug that follows a conversation, so much so that Ms. Debra can't enjoy a five-minute lunch to herself. A camper always wants to say hi. A camper always wants to say thank-you. And sometimes, a camper just wants someone to talk to that always listens. And Ms. Debra always listens (no matter how hungry she is). That is family.

Julia does the nitty-gritty work. The down and dirty work. But it is the work that never goes unnoticed by our campers. Unfortunately, there are many campers that come to us without a proper outfit, don't have a bathing suit, or forgot to bring a towel after a cool dip in the pool. And when that happens, sometimes our campers become embarrassed. They don't want to ask for help or admit they can't go swimming because they don't have a suit. But they can talk to Julia. Julia makes sure that every young person is prepared for the camp day, whether it's discretely slipping them a pair of close-toed shoes for a hike, or a fabulous sparkly bathing suit for a swim. And when the campers hop on the bus to go home after the day, she picks up after all of them—washes everything so it's clean and ready for the next day, with nothing but a smile on her face. That is family.

2020 Award Winner

Gail has one of the most important jobs at Camp-she makes sure our campers (and more than a few staff), eat, and eat hearty. With 750 kids a day, it seems impossible to keep track of who likes what. But not with Gail. She knows this camper doesn't eat cheese-she knows this camper likes extra pepperoni sticks-she knows this camper only likes the purple ice-pops. 93% of our campers qualify for free/federal reduced lunch, and during the summer months, some of our campers are hungry. Sometimes you will see a camper taking an extra meal for a sibling. Sometimes you will find a camper felt ill but came to Camp that day anyway because they were hungry. Gail always knows who those campers are, and always makes sure they leave Camp with a full tummy. That is family.

Tarra can be described as the 'Miss Fix-It' of Camp because there isn't a job at Camp she hasn't done. She has been the Assistant Camp Director. She has been the Program Director. She has handled the hiring of staff. She has handled the performance reviews. She has handled the program budgets. She has organized orientation and training. She has many conversations with happy (and occasionally angry) parents. She worked hand-in-hand with Stan Glowiak, our former Camp Director, who retired last year after 22 years (we joke this was her hardest job). She too has dreamed big, pursuing a degree in IT and landing a great gig in the IT field, which means she doesn't have as much time to spend at Camp. But after putting in a full day at work, she always comes to the campsite to help with bus-loading and drop off to ensure every camper makes it home safely. That is family.

Nichole has the infectious personality that every camper loves. She works one-on one with our pre-teen campers, and anyone who has a pre-teen knows that is one of the hardest jobs in the world. Yet Nichole is someone they can relate to-someone they can take listen to and take advise from without feeling judged. She is tough but fair. She is funny but serious. She views each and every one of those campers as if they were her own child. A few years ago, Nichole had to take a summer off to care for her own child. She was missed. Our campers were sad. When it is time to come back to work after caring for a young kid, many mothers are sad and apprehensive. Not Nichole. Her Camp Courant 'kids' needed her. She needed to get back to them. That is family.

2020 Award Winner

Andrea is the glue that holds Camp Courant together. The only full-time, year-round staff person on the list, she has seen many organizational changes over the years. The evolution from a pure summer camp to a youth development organization-The economic down- turn that took Camp from 1,200 campers per day to less than 500 per day-Five Executive Director's. But through the good times and the bad, Andrea has always stayed with Camp. She always saw the light at the end of the tunnel. She always believed that Camp's best days were still ahead of it. Her commitment, dedication and institutional knowledge have been instrumental in the growth and evolution of the organization. There is no one who can pull together a budget report, meet with the auditors, lead a volunteer group and pump gallons of water out of the pool after an intense rain storm, all in a 72 hour time period, without thinking, 'that's not my job.' Except Andrea. That is family.

Marta can only be described as the Camp Courant matriarch. With 30+ years at Camp Courant, there is no one who knows and loves Camp more than Marta. As a kid, Marta dreamed of going to Camp Courant after seeing all the kids waiting for the bus, talking animatedly and excitedly about what they were going to do that day. Unfortunately for Marta, that day of being a camper never came. She was forced to take a job at a very young age working in the tobacco fields. Who would have thought that just a few years later, she would land a summer job at Camp Courant and never look back? Marta has assumed many roles at Camp over the years, from working with our campers from HARC, leading the Photography program, to being our Director of Discipline, using her expertise as a Paraprofessional with the Hartford Public Schools to use Social and Emotional Learning to help campers manage emotions and create positive relationships. As the former Director of our Junior Leader (Counselor In Training) program, she has helped shape the lives of hundreds of our campers, many of whom have stayed on as counselors, graduated from college or a secondary degree program, and have come back to thank her for changing their lives. She never forgets a name. She never forgets a face. She always pushes you, but always supports you. That is family.

Year 126 has been a strange year for Camp Courant. Covid-19 has changed the way we do our work. We have had to think differently. We have had to work harder. We have had to think creatively. But we have served Hartford's people for well over a century. We have been able to not only survive, but thrive, because when times get tough, your family always has your back.

Camp Courant is family.

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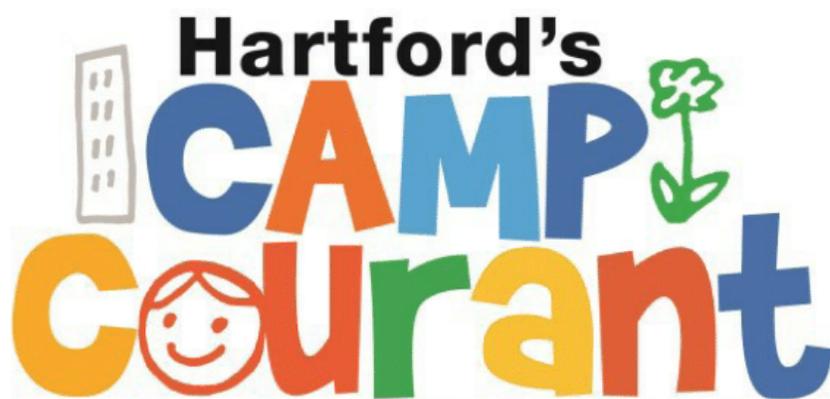
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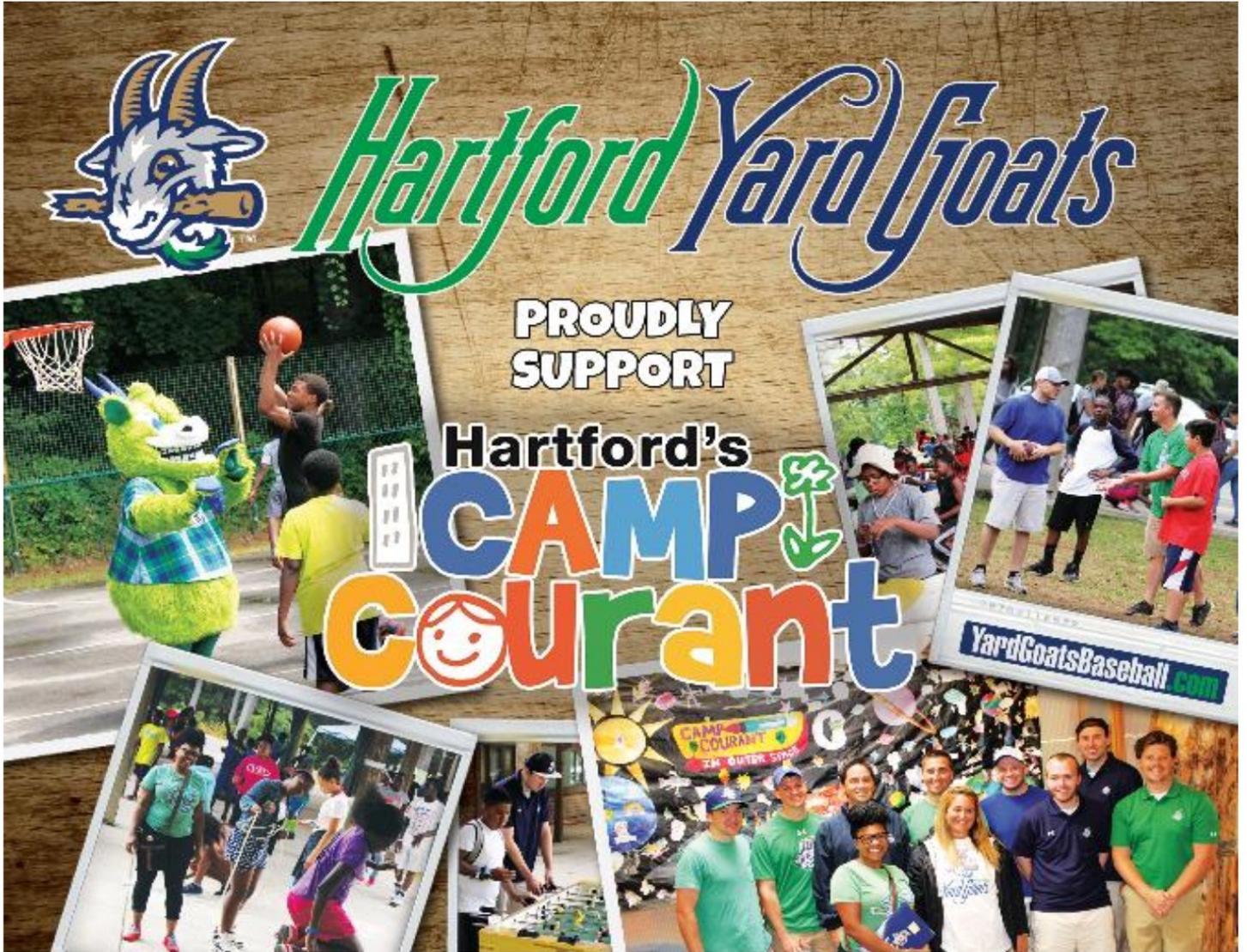


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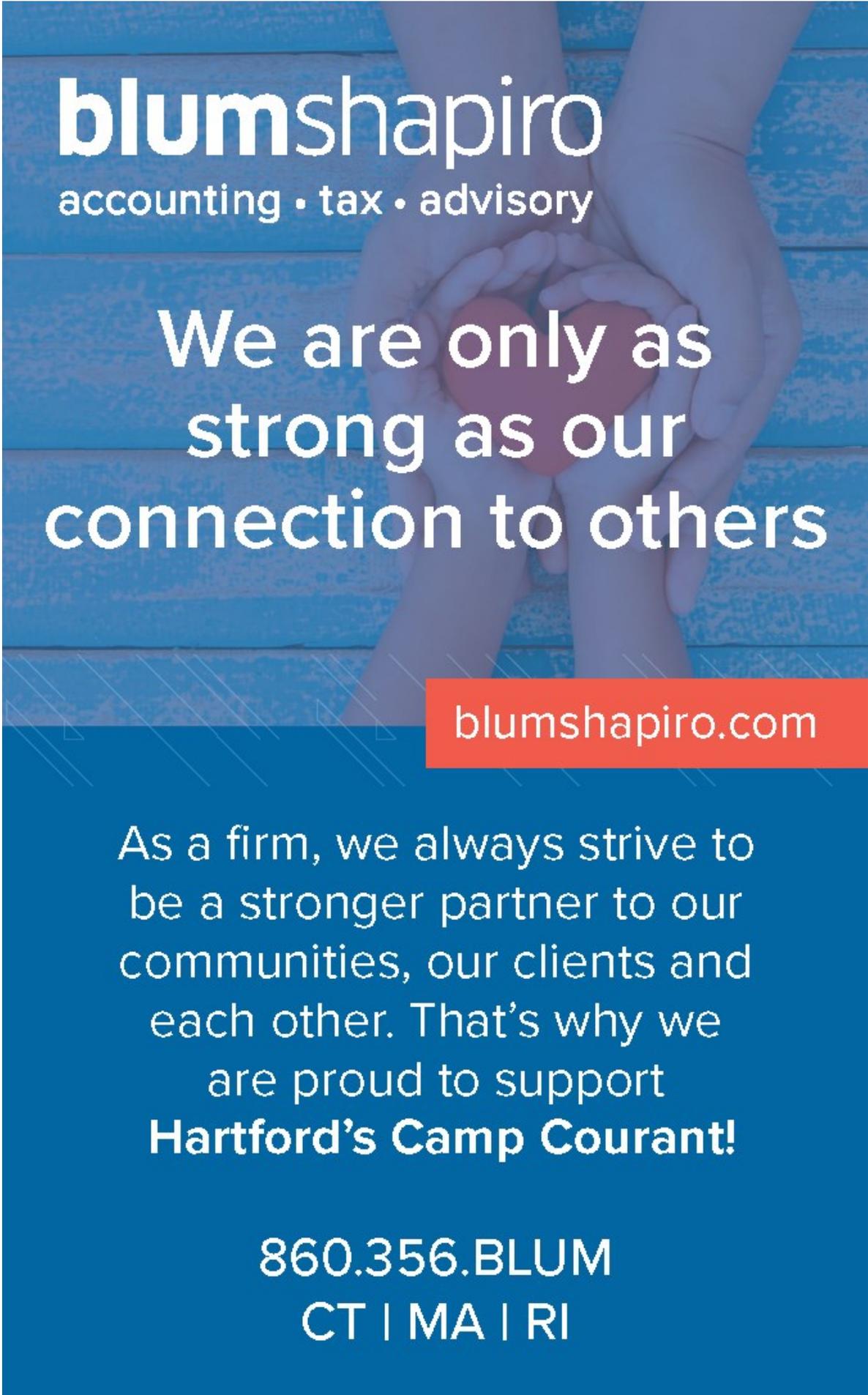


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The background of the entire page is a blue-tinted image of several hands of different skin tones cupping a red heart. The hands are positioned in a way that they appear to be supporting the heart from below. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional, with a focus on community and support.

blumshapiro

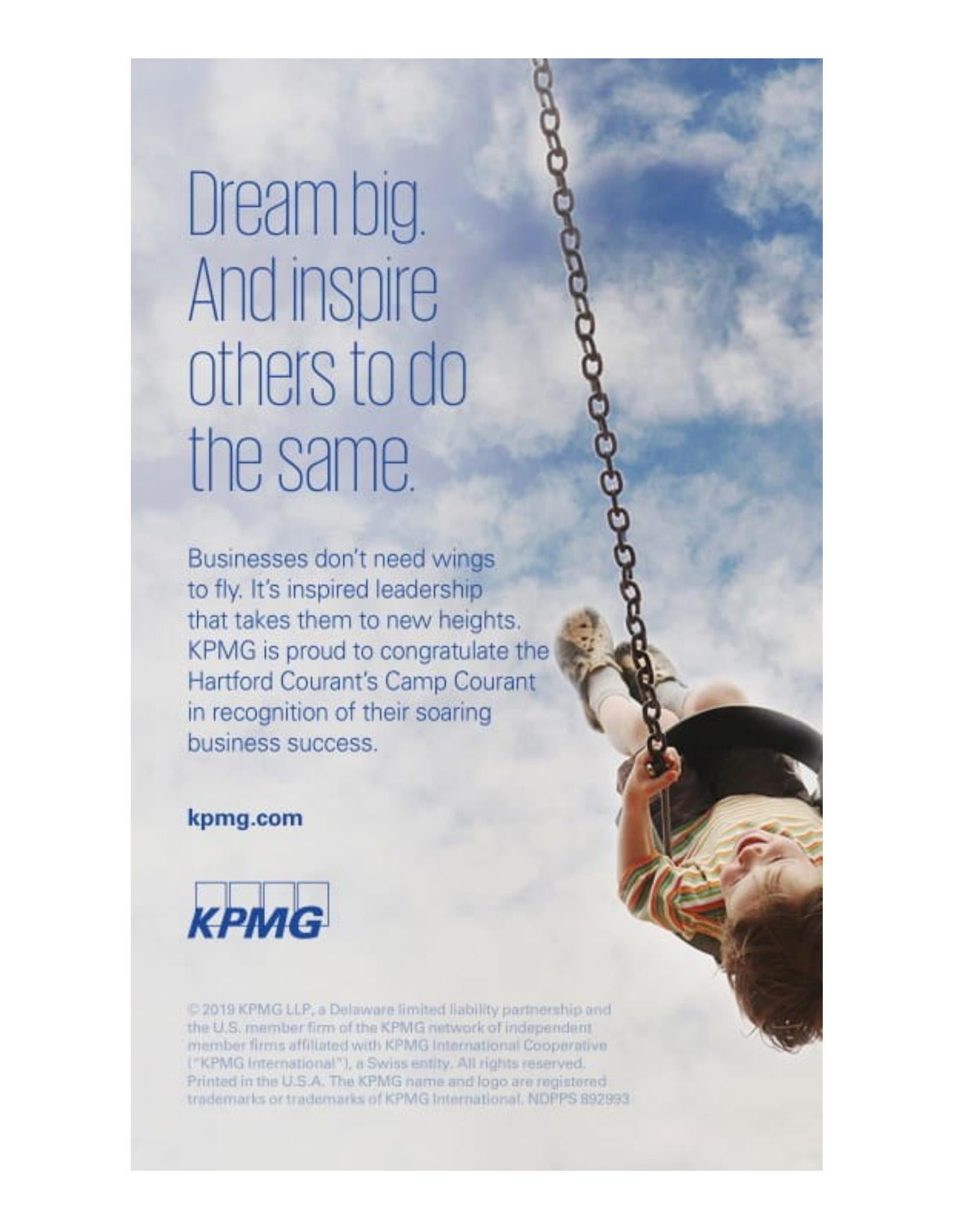
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