



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Local Businesses and Residents Receive Achievement Awards
At STAR's 71st Annual Meeting**

STAR, Inc. Lighting the Way... recently held its **71st Annual Meeting and Achievement Awards** at its headquarters in Norwalk. The open house event kicked off with hot passed hors d'oeuvres, tours of the new STAR Assistive Technology Center and Lending Library and art show displaying the artistic talents of STAR day program participants under the guidance of local artist and STAR's full-time art instructor, Neha Sharma. This year's annual meeting and achievement awards honored the dedication and contribution of STAR's staff, families, supportive community and business partners, and enthusiastic board members who have worked tirelessly to make a positive impact on our community.

"We are excited to come together to celebrate our 71st year of making a difference in our community," said Katie Banzhaf, Executive Director, STAR, Inc. "The Annual Meeting and Achievement Awards is a time to recognize the exceptional efforts of those who have made our mission a reality. We are grateful for their dedication and look forward to the continued growth and impact of STAR."

The STAR 2023 Achievement Awardees:

Employer - Lamy America

Community Partner - Connecticut Community Bank

Humanitarian Award- The Piscitell Family

Parents - Maritza and Luis Diaz

Self-Advocate- Steven Conley

Youth Volunteer- New Canaan Service League of Boys (SLOBS)

Community Volunteer- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Volunteer- Sharon Ippolito

Jeannette Shivers Award for selflessness- Negesti Mulugeta

STAR was established in 1952 by parents who believed that children with intellectual and developmental disabilities are entitled to the same basic opportunities as other children. Today, STAR, Inc., Lighting the Way is a not-for-profit organization that has grown to include a full array of services for over 700 individuals with disabilities, from birth to their senior years and their families. STAR's mission is to create opportunities for individuals to live full lives with independence, freedom of choice and personal growth by providing support, services and advocacy. They inform and encourage the community to recognize and appreciate the value of all individuals. Services include early intervention pediatric therapies; family support services; high school transition, customized employment and ongoing job supports; assistive technology, adult day services, recreation; and residential support to adults in group homes and apartments. For more information about STAR, Inc., Lighting the Way or to explore current job openings, visit www.starct.org. We are hiring.

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STAR, Inc., Lighting the Way is the legal name of the organization. The shortened version is STAR, Inc. In all instances please have STAR in all upper case lettering. Thank you.