



PRESS RELEASE

For More Information, Contact:
Katharine DiDona, 203.965.7733
kdidona@spefct.org

Stamford Community Steps Out for Education with Record-Breaking Participation at SPEF's 5K Walk & Run

STAMFORD, CT—October 4, 2023—Hundreds of students, educators, and community members laced up their running shoes last Sunday, October 1, to **Step Out for Education** at the 11th annual **SPEF 5K Walk & Run**. With race registration hitting 750 walkers and runners, this year's event at Mill River Park was the largest yet for the race organizer, the Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF). This year's action-packed festivities also included the first **SPEFy's Fun Run** for those under 12, and SPEF's **FallFest** for a morning of free family fun.

After a warm-up routine led by The U and a beautiful performance of the National Anthem by Stamford High's Esther Jean Charles, the air horn blared and the runners and walkers were off, hitting the streets of Stamford, following the fast-flowing Mill River, weaving their way through Scalzi Park, and ultimately making their way back into Mill River Park. As students and families raced to the finish line, encouraging words from Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools Dr. Tamu Lucero and SPEF CEO Malena Loucks could be heard from the stage. Both Stamford High and Westhill cheerleaders lined sidewalks and paths to add an extra layer of excitement.

At 10 a.m., participants gathered near the stage for the Awards Ceremony, where siblings Elias Hubbard (29 years old) and Bianca Parrotta (15-year-old Stamford High student) took home the top honors! Elias ran the 3.1 miles in just 15 minutes and 58 seconds, while Bianca followed closely behind, at just 20 minutes and 26 seconds.

Also announced was this year's winner of the coveted MarcUS for Change 5K Spirit Award: Westhill High School! The Spirit Award honors the memory of Stamford High graduate Marcus Dixon McNerney and serves as a reminder of what can happen when a community like Stamford comes together to support its youth and promote equitable access to a quality public education.

—MORE —

Following the 5K and Awards, SPEF's FallFest opened. Community partners such as Kids Helping Kids, Boys & Girl Scouts, and Stamford Cradle to Career served up free family fun including fall-themed crafts, face painting, ice cream, carousel rides, and more! Hospitality tents featured a section of free snacks including donuts, bagels, fresh fruit, and more courtesy of Liz Sue Bagels, Donut Delight, Chartwells, Trader Joes, and Stop & Shop.

All proceeds support SPEF's mission of delivering education programming, including mentoring, tutoring, parent engagement, and literacy initiatives, that prepares and inspires Stamford students to thrive.

About SPEF: Founded in 1996, the mission of the Stamford Public Education Foundation is to elevate student success by delivering educational programs and solutions that promote equitable access to quality public education in Stamford. For further information, visit www.spefct.org.

#