PRESS RELEASE

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The Big Connect Business Expo to Feature Over 70 Exhibitors, Nonprofit Awards, Annual Big Taste, Panels & Workshops, and a Networking and Social Hour

New Haven, CT – November 16th, 2022 – The Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce is hosting Connecticut’s premier business to business expo, the Big Connect, presented by Comcast Business. This year’s theme is: *Ignite: Harnessing the Power of Connections & Resources to Accelerate your Business*. The expo takes place in person on Thursday, November 17th from 7am to 7pm at the Omni New Haven Hotel at Yale located at 155 Temple Street New Haven, CT 06510.

9AM-4PM: Exhibitors
More than 70 exhibitors will be participating in this year’s Big Connect ranging from small to medium businesses to nonprofits to marketing agencies to colleges and universities and technology companies and more. Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center will have a flu shot and vaccine booth. Resume reviews will be conducted on site, and various hiring companies will be on the expo floor. Headshots will also be taken on site from 3pm-5:30pm by The Narrative Project.

8-9AM: Nonprofit Stars Align Awards Breakfast
The Big Connect will kick off at 8am with the Nonprofit Stars Align Awards Breakfast. The event honors nonprofits in the region that are making a positive impact in their communities. This year’s award honorees include the Coordinated Food Assistance Network (CFAN), The New Haven Ballet, The Connection, Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS), Joshua Watkins, Executive Director of Community Soup Kitchen, and Louis Perno, Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers of Greater New Haven. A few talented professionals working in the nonprofit sector will receive grants to fund their graduate school studies, including Jamie Owens of Marrakech, Inc., Cara Santino of City Seed, and Samantha Fazzino, SARAH Inc.

9-10AM: Opportunities in the Industrial Arena in the New Haven Market: A Conversation with Adam Winstanley
Adam Winstanley will review industry trends and opportunities in the region. His experience in the industrial market will provide a front row seat to understanding what it will take to re-imagine the industrial space in the New Haven area. Dale Kroop, economic development consultant, will moderate.

9:15-9:35AM: Welcome Remarks & Ribbon Cutting
The expo floor will open at 9:15am with welcome remarks and a ribbon cutting from the Chamber’s President & CEO, Garrett Sheehan, Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Tom Quinn, entrepreneur and author of “Delivering Greatness: How I Found Success and You Can Too,” and more.
9:45-10:05AM: The Avelo Story: A Conversation with WTNH's Dennis House
Travis Christ, Head of Marketing for Avelo Airlines, will participate in a conversation with Dennis House, WTNH Anchor, to provide an inside look at startup company, Avelo Airlines. Travis Christ will share insights and information into the real-life business case study of Avelo Airlines, including how Avelo Airlines started, how they carved out their niche serving businesses and personal travel within the Greater New Haven Region, and hear their plans for the future.

10:15-11:15AM: Artificial Intelligence in the Business World
This session explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming business operations. Industry experts will share business case studies, insights, and strategies that can lead to enhanced business operations through AI, and ultimately achieving a positive ROI.

This session empowers female leadership, celebrates executive women, and shares perspectives from panelists on what it takes to navigate negative stereotypes. This session is moderated by WTNH Anchor Laura Hutchinson.

11:30AM-1PM: The Big Taste
The 14th Annual Big Taste will feature over 10 restaurants and caterers from the Greater New Haven region. Participating restaurants and caterers include The Anchor Spa, BAR, Jack’s Bar & Steakhouse, Chacra, Bear’s BBQ Smokehouse, Shake Shack, Pacifico, Villa Lulu, New Line Blending & Roastery, Fest Faves, Sandra’s Next Generation, Community Soup Kitchen, and John Davenport’s.

1:15-2:15PM: Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion: Moving Beyond Diversity to Inclusion, Part 2
This session will explore evolving remote workforces, enabling gender identity & gender expressions, and multi-generational workforces. Panelists will share case studies on unconscious biases and microaggressions in the workplace. The content will help inspire DEAI strategies for small to medium company workplaces.

Five engaging presentations on the latest marketing trends from design firms and agencies, like Noble House, Story Real Studios, Krative, Mason, Inc., and Rebel Interactive will highlight and demonstrate the latest trends in brand, product, and service marketing. A Q&A will be included at the end of the session.

2:30-3:15PM: Lessons from the Experts: Signature Sales Processes that Close More Deals and Leads to Ultimate Success
This session will review sales closing techniques, closing pitch examples, and other tried and true strategies for Sales Professionals, Business Development Executives, and anyone else in business striving to accelerate growth through influencing people and behavior.
2:30-3:15PM: How to Recruit, Hire, and Retain: Workforce Development
Recruiting, retaining, and hiring employees has become very costly for all businesses, especially small businesses who have fewer employees to do the job. In this session, company executives and human resource professionals will share their tips and resources for small/mid-size businesses to build their workforce.

3:30-4:30PM: Growing CT’s Cannabis Industry - An Overview After Year 1 and What's Still to Come
An update on the current state of play on the cannabis industry in Connecticut. Panelists will answer questions on licenses issued and what is yet to come. Learn when cannabis businesses will open their doors in Greater New Haven, and the potential economic impact.

3:30-4:30PM: Entrepreneurship: 10 Lessons I’ve Learned Along my Entrepreneurial Journey.”
A diverse set of entrepreneurs will share their perspectives on company start-ups, running everyday businesses, and plans in this session. Attendees will learn how to balance the responsibilities of owning their own shop or start-up, while balancing a full-time career. This session will be moderated by Tom Curtin, President of New England Business Media.

4:30-6:30PM: Networking & Social Hour with Collaborative Connecticut
New this year, the Chamber is partnering with Collaborative Connecticut for additional networking time after the conclusion of the Big Connect expo hours with a cash bar and light hors d’oeuvres. This is a casual monthly meet up of innovators and entrepreneurs.


To register and learn more about the Big Connect, visit www.gnhcc.com under EVENTS.

About the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce
The Greater New Haven Chamber, whose mission is to provide value through resources and services to its partner companies and to lead regional economic growth through bold and effective advocacy, serves 15 municipalities, Bethany, Branford, Cheshire, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Wallingford, West Haven, and Woodbridge. Established in 1794, the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce is one of the three oldest institutions of its kind in the United States.

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