

## CCP President Karla Fortunato

### 2019 Annual Conference Remarks

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#### Morning Remarks

Good morning everyone. And happy anniversary. This is CCP's 50th year of supporting the philanthropic community, and this is the 50<sup>th</sup> year that the philanthropic sector been organizing itself and operating more deliberately together as a community.

I'm so delighted to see you all – bright and early – for our annual gathering. I'm Karla Fortunato, CCP's president. Three years ago, my predecessor launched CCP's first full-day conference. And that event attracted about 120 people. This year, we have over 200 people joining us for the day-long conference. So, thank you for being here today and for helping us to grow this event.

Since January, I've been thinking a lot about CCP's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. About the legacy of work behind us and even more about what is ahead of us. What is the long-term vision for this community and what does that mean for our next five years of work? I am continuously thinking about the context in which we all are working – nationally, there is mistrust in the federal government, cuts in federal spending that have rippled throughout our state, and attacks on members of our communities. And at the state level, the challenges are significant too. I spent my work anniversary at the LOB hoping to testify on a bill that would levy taxes on nonprofits with endowments, pension accounts, or significant savings accounts. There are serious financial challenges that threaten to intensify the pain that some communities are already experiencing.

And I think that many of you having been taking in the same realities that I have. Because when I've spoken with many of you, I've felt your heaviness, your frustration.

Here, in the philanthropic community though, we have some incredible privileges. And there is one that I want to hold up today, and I think that for some of us, this privilege seems like a small flame, in danger of being blown right out. But for today, and for those days when we are feeling discouraged, I want us to remember it, to breathe some life into it and into ourselves – and this is the privilege of hope. It isn't unique to this community; in fact it's the energy that powers up so much work in this sector. It's the hope of a different outcome, a different tomorrow, a different system that keeps so many in this room engaged.

And this community – the philanthropic community – is the beneficiary, the historian, the collector – of the stories of success: the organizations that passed the bill or launched the new program that is working, the leaders who came and conquered, the communities that rose up and demanded accountability. When I read your newsletters, your email announcements, when I attend your meetings and celebrations – I leave always deeply impressed by the work and the outcomes and the

leadership, and I also leave energized and excited, and HOPEFUL about CT – the leaders, the organizations, the storytellers, the artists, the young people, the communities.

Today, I want us to appreciate the decades of work and billions of dollars that our organizations, and other organizations, have invested in hundreds of nonprofit leaders and organizations and programs, working to make Connecticut a better place.

I want us to feel proud of so much of the work that came before us. 50 years of work (and of course more work came before that). I want us to be excited about some of the great work that is happening now. And I want us to be able to take pride in an aspirational vision that we can imagine this community achieving down the road.

A vision that includes a more equitable CT, a healthier CT, a CT that values all residents – regardless of their gender or their race or ethnicity or age or ability or religion or immigrant status. A CT that knows and then *behaves as if all of our community members matter*.

And so many of you are already doing this work. You have these and other visions. And this brings me – and I hope you – more hope.

Today, we aim to challenge your minds and your vision, and also to feed your hearts and your hope. And we have a rich agenda– full of ideas and stories and art – to help us do it.

This morning, we are going to begin with a panel conversation focused on visions for the future of philanthropy – a conversation among 3 national leaders – a racial justice leader, a foundation leader, and a philanthropic leader. I feel like this is the start of a really nerdy, philanthropy joke.

Anyways, after that, attendees can continue the conversations with these experts by attending a breakout session with one of them.

After that we are going to come back together for our luncheon – to celebrate members of the philanthropic community, to thank old and new CCP leaders, and to hear a key note from one of CT's own – Titus Kaphar – a groundbreaking, award winning artist, and as if that's not enough (because it is) he has co-founded a really exciting nonprofit in New Haven, called NXTHVN.

This year, we're capturing our meeting with two kinds of images – our photographer Maza Rey will be taking photos, and our graphic note-taker Constanza Segovia, will be creating a piece of graphic art. So, be on the lookout for them. We also are encouraging some interactive activities this year.

We are grateful to the Thomas and Jeanne Elmezzi Private Foundation for a grant that allowed us to experiment with new technology – we have a conference app! You can use this app to get more detailed information about the program, our speakers. You can see what's being said on social media #CCP50 or to see and connect with people who are in the room. Engaging with the app awards you with points and there will be a prize for the person who earns the most points. So, get to it.

You might have noticed the Re-Vision Wall that we set up outside of the ball room. I want to encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with us and to read what others are thinking about the day too.

There will be a robust amount of thanking during the lunch program, but I do want to take one more minute to thank our conference supporters, our planning committee, and the awesome CCP staff. It takes a lot of effort to make an event like this one happen and I'm deeply appreciative to everyone who helped.

Now, I'd like to invite our panelists and moderator to join me on stage and I will turn the program over to Frances Padilla. Frances is president of Universal Health Care Foundation, she serves on the CT Health Care Cabinet, she serves on the steering committee of the State Innovation Model, and lucky for me – she serves on the board of CCP, among other organizations.

Please help me welcome everyone to the stage.

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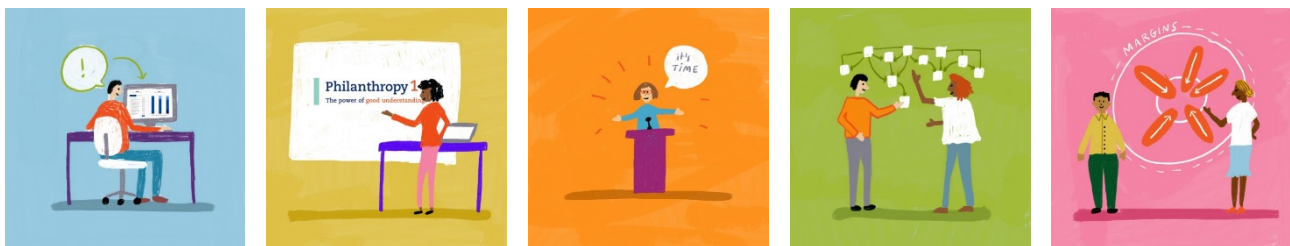
## Afternoon Remarks

Good afternoon and happy anniversary. I'm delighted that you are all here to help us celebrate the CT Council for Philanthropy's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. If you are just getting your start with CCP, or if you are a long-time member or colleague – I am happy to welcome you to the room today.

I want to revisit some thank yous. Of course, thank you to all of our supporters – we have more supporters this year than ever before – and we are grateful to you all. I also want to thank our planning committee, who helped to inspire, guide, and inform today's program. Finally, I want to deeply thank CCP's staff. Esther Massie managed today's event. And the rest of the team pitched in to the planning, promotion, and execution. Please help me thank Esther Massie, Laurie Allen, and Dee Goodrich. Today, we are surrounded by Omni staff, the A/V team, a photographer, a graphic note-taker, and a whole host of volunteers (including my mother, Dee's husband, Esther's brother, and Laurie's daughter). They are all working today to make sure that we're all registered, that we know where we're going, that you understand the conference app, and that we're all well fed. So, let's take a minute to thank them all as well.

Finally, I want to thank CCP's Board and I especially want to thank our Board Chair, Kathy Luria, for her leadership and partnership.

One year ago, I talked to you about some of my short-term goals for CCP, and I want to report back on what we've been since then.



One of my first goals was around improving our data – and we've done a lot of work on that front. We've worked hand in hand with Foundation Center and many of you to improve the data that we have about CT giving. We launched a new tool – CT Foundation Stats. This year, we partnered with the CT Nonprofit Alliance to survey nonprofits and funders about how they are experiencing and responding to state budget cuts and the new tax law. We'll be publishing the results this month.

We invested a great deal in building our capacity to hold high quality programs. We hired a new staff person, launched a new Philanthropy 101 program, we are leveraging local and national partnerships to boost our program offerings, and are currently developing a cohort program focused on understanding the role of race and racism.

We have continued to raise the visibility of your leadership in CT – whether it’s testifying to the CT General Assembly, or speaking out against police violence, or your partnership with the state government to ensure that CT federal employees could pay their bills during the government shutdown.

We held our inaugural State Budget Impact Forum and shortly after this event, we will be inviting philanthropic leaders to discuss whether there is shared interest in developing a philanthropic agenda to work together.

We have continued to place “building community” as a high priority throughout all of our work – with an increased focus on supporting networking, connecting like-minded colleagues, deepening relationships through new cohort-style programs, and by bring philanthropic leaders together statewide.

Finally, I talked about CCP deepening its commitment to equity. And I’m proud that we’ve continued to advance this priority as well. We’ve engaged in staff and board learning, we brought about 35 funders together for our first racial equity training, and we are working to weave diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the work we do and the ways in which we do it.

In some ways – small ways & big ways – things haven’t changed that much in 50 years. Dee was reviewing old board minutes and found decades old conversations about whether members would be willing to accept a common application.

But in other ways, the world is much different. Last week, I celebrated my 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary working with CCP at the LOB because the General Assembly is looking for new revenues and there were 2 bills that would levy new taxes on nonprofits with endowments, pension accounts, or significant savings accounts.

Historically, the philanthropic community has been able to choose how visible it wants to be, but in the last year or so, it has faced increased scrutiny. The attention being paid to this community is higher than I’ve ever seen – multiple critiques of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors, calls to action, and here in CT, Dalio Philanthropies made a big media splash with their commitment of \$100 million to support older children and young adults through investments in education and workforce development.

Because of all of these changes we may find that in order to appropriately pursue our missions, this sector may need to step out in a different way. It may need to be able to respond to policy developments quickly. It may need to strengthen its ties to decision makers, to lend its voice and social capital to the communities – the people and organizations that it supports. It may need to be more nimble, more responsive, louder. It may need to embrace its power. As Jeanné talked about this morning, power is built with organized money and organized people. And this community can do both of those things well.



[A Call to Modernize American Philanthropy](#)

New York Times - Nov 27, 2018

EDGAR VILLANUEVA: Our history of colonization has been about dividing, ... of decolonizing wealth is about closing the race-wealth gap.



[America Relies Too Much Upon the Generosity of the Rich](#)

TIME - Sep 6, 2018

In his new book *Winners Take All*, Anand Giridharadas argues that many of these “changemakers” are actually key actors in upholding systems ...



[Dalio foundation spearheads major investment in CT schools](#)

The CT Mirror - Apr 5, 2019

State government will match the Dalio Foundation's \$100 million donation over the next five years, and work with that group to raise yet another ...

Hedge fund mogul Dalio offers \$100M to CT for education

CT Post - Apr 5, 2019

With CCP's bolstered capacity, we think now is an excellent time for the organization to plan ahead. As I spoke about this morning – we need to know where this community wants to be in 50 years – the bold vision, the aspirational vision – so that we can set a course for the next 5 years.

We are lucky here. We have 50 years of work and connections and successes to build on. We have generations of smart and committed nonprofit leaders and organizations – experts and partners. We have communities organizing and connecting. We have state leaders that want to do well and a Governor that is open to partnerships that seem promising. We also have an outrageous arts and culture community – including a Macarthur Genius award winning artist – who has been catalyzing important conversations with his compelling and moving art and sculpture.

This morning I talked about hope. This afternoon, I'd like to use some humor.

My father in law was visiting this weekend. He's a retired Army Lt Colonel and I was thinking that maybe I could pick his brain for a military analogy for you. Something that would describe the upcoming year of work – there may be a battle or two – the significance and strength of our "enemies". But that seemed so dark.

So I'll try something else.

Imagine for a second that there is a wall north of us that separates Connecticut from Massachusetts. And let's give a name to the challenges that we all are impacted by (the CT state budget, income inequality, racism). Let's call those things the Night King. He has always been, but he is on the move South from Massachusetts.

We have a lot of resources. We'd like to have more, but we have information, data, tools, we have strategists and fighters, leaders and wealth. We will need to assemble ourselves, we will reach out to all of our colleagues – those we know and those we don't not know because that Night King and his army – they are formidable opponents. We will need allies. We will need to make some agreements – what will we agree to do together & what will happen if we successfully achieve those goals? And then we can develop our strategy – one that will make the most of our strengths, that will minimize our weaknesses – so that we can defeat these present and incoming threats. The Night King.

I'm excited to continue our work together this year and I thank you for being part of the CCP community.

