



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Healing Arts Fundraiser to Benefit Youth Programs

NEWTOWN, CT- The Spread Your Wings Project wants to empower youth in the state this fall by holding a healing arts fundraising event at New Fairfield Middle School. The Spread Your Wings Project will be held October 17 from 6-8 p.m. The event will unite students and community members as they paint some 300 canvas feathers for integration into an angel wing art sculpture to be permanently installed at the school. The final design will be created by New York artist Elizabeth Bryan-Jacobs, co-founder of The Spread Your Wings Project.

Family or community members can paint a feather for \$5 each and anyone can purchase feathers as sponsors for the event. Proceeds from the fundraiser will benefit the school, the project and Dylan's Wings of Change.

Joel Pardalis, a leadership advisor and teacher at New Fairfield Public Schools (NFMS) and Dylan's Wings of Change co-founder Ian Hockley will be working closely with Bryan-Jacobs on the project. The Spread Your Wings Project was founded by Bryan-Jacobs and her husband Bobby Jacobs, who said they wanted to bring everyone together in "hope, love and courage through art" by combining art and therapy for fundraising initiatives. The couple most recently worked with the city of Las Vegas creating and installing a monumental pair of stone Angel Wings memorializing the 58 lives lost in the 2017 mass shooting.

"We are in awe of what Ian and his team have done to honor Dylan and are proud to pilot this event with Wingman at New Fairfield Middle School," Bryan-Jacobs said. "We have a

mutual goal of bringing “The Spread Your Wings Project” to every Wingman school, sharing something positive, empowering and beautiful with America’s youth.”

Pardalis said he is looking forward to a great community event and what might be produced as a result that will have lasting impressions for “years to come.”

Hockley said as mass shootings continue to “plague our nation,” communities – especially youth - need strong, resilient support networks.

“Wingman inspires children to be more compassionate, empathetic, courageous and inclusive young leaders,” Hockley said. “There is an epidemic of social isolation in our country that needs to be addressed through social & emotional learning (SEL).”

Dylan’s Wings of Change is a foundation dedicated to the memory of Dylan Hockley, who was killed in the Sandy Hook school shooting tragedy. The Wingman program, created under the umbrella of Dylan’s Wings of Change, is an innovative youth-led SEL learning program of team building activities to foster inclusive and supportive environments in schools, dance studios, and sports.

The program is offered in schools in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey and more than 300 dance studios in the U.S., Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Individuals or groups who wish to sponsor the fall Spread Your Wings event can email events@dylanswingsofchange.org.

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The Spread Your Wings Project was launched in 2017 at the Dell Children’s Medical Center of Central Texas where it broke all fundraising records for the Art of Giving event. The couple donates all personal art sale proceeds to the non-profit project.

<https://thespreadyourwingsproject.org/>

DWC is fiscally sponsored by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, a 501c3 registered public charity based in Newtown, CT

www.DylansWingsofChange.org

