



Dave Zajac/Hearst Connecticut Media
Whiting Forensic Hospital in Middletown on Aug. 22.

‘A crisis on multiple fronts’

Lawmakers seek changes at state-run hospital due to staffing issues

By Alex Putterman
STAFF WRITER

Lawmakers are calling for greater scrutiny of Whiting Forensic Hospital in Middletown following a CT Insider report into conditions for patients and staff there. Whiting, which houses

mostly people convicted of crimes who have severe mental illness, has seen 99 employees miss work due to injuries suffered on the job in 2025, the most of any year in recent memory, according to state data. To fill these gaps, employees say they have been assigned to frequent double shifts,

which they say leave them overworked and exhausted. Though Whiting has faced staffing issues for years, longtime staff and patients say conditions now are worse than they have been in years. In a news release last week, three state Senate

Republicans cited CT Insider’s reporting, calling the situation “a crisis on multiple fronts.” “It’s a staffing crisis as well as an employee morale crisis, which could have long-term negative impacts,” Sens. Heather Somers, Jeff Gordon and **Whiting continues on A4**

‘Not ready to give up’

New Fairfield woman perseveres in 24-year battle with breast cancer

By Kaitlin Keane
STAFF WRITER

NEW FAIRFIELD — With the support of her family through multiple surgeries, chemotherapy treatments and radiation therapies, Sheri Freedman has been resilient in living her life while battling breast cancer on and off for the past 24 years. “(My oncologist) said to me, ‘When I tell you to get your things in order, then you’ll know. In the meantime, you’re doing fine,’” said the 75-year-old New Fairfield resident, who now receives treatment at Danbury Hospital. **Freedman continues on A4**



Courtesy of Sheri Freedman
Sheri Freedman, 75, has been keeping hope alive while living with breast cancer over the past 24 years. Freedman, a New Fairfield resident, is with her 7-year-old granddaughter Sydney Freedman-Miles.

‘It’s gone’

Federal funding loss ends 20-year nutrition program at Hispanic Health Council

By Cris Villalonga-Vivoni
STAFF WRITER

A statewide nutrition education program at the Hispanic Health Council, which has served roughly 15,000 people each year, is shutting down effective immediately. The health care advocacy non-profit said its program was forced to close after its federal funding through the educational component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP-ed, was cut as part of the Trump Administration’s tax bill. Chief Executive Officer Ken Barela said they were heartbroken to close down a trusted resource for the community, but are adamant that they will find a way to restore it. “It was that quick, and we’re talking about a program that has been around for over two decades and has reached literally thousands of families,” he said. “The community impact is going to be extremely prolific in that this has been a lifeline for thousands of families, especially Latinos. For two decades, we’ve assisted them with access to nutrition, through case management, **Funding continues on A4**

‘THE ULTIMATE PLACE OF BELONGING’

UConn legends Sue Bird, Maya Moore inducted into Naismith Hall of Fame



Jessica Hill/Associated Press

By Maggie Vanoni
STAFF WRITER

SPRINGFIELD, Mass.— After an hour of torrential downpour and a brief tornado warning, the weather Gods parted the sky for basketball’s biggest night. Blue skies and patches of golden sun shone down on the streets of downtown Springfield Saturday evening as Sue Bird and Maya Moore received basketball’s biggest honor. The two became the third and fourth former UConn women’s **Hall continues on A4**



M. Anthony Nesmith/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images

Sue Bird, top right, and Maya Moore, above right, speak during their enshrinement in the Basketball Hall of Fame as Geno Auriemma listens along with Swin Cash and others Saturday in Springfield, Mass. At left, the inductees attend a tip-off celebration and awards gala at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville on Friday.

Peacebuilder Diego Lopez says joining COMPASS transformed his life, allowing him to focus on what he describes as “God’s work.”

Jim Michaud/Hearst Connecticut Media



‘It’s powerful when you show up’

Nonprofit is reducing crime among young people in Hartford

By Cris Villalonga-Vivoni
STAFF WRITER

HARTFORD — A sign that Isaiah Luna is doing his job well is when the kid he is driving around Hartford falls asleep in his car. For him, that means they finally trust him enough to let their

guard fully down, giving them both the room for the real work to begin. Luna serves as a mentor, also known as a peacebuilder, with COMPASS Youth Collaborative, a nonprofit organization that helps hundreds of teenagers and young adults in Hartford reconnect with

education, employment, and other support services to disrupt cycles of violence. It’s not a regular 9-to-5. There’s no clocking in or out. At a moment’s notice, Luna is ready with his car, phone, and a bright orange T-shirt that says “peace- **COMPASS continues on A6**