

The Norwalk Hour

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SoNo Collection for sale amid mall shakeups

By Alexander Soule
STAFF WRITER

More than seven years after it held a brief reign as America's newest mall, The SoNo Collection is up for grabs in South Norwalk amid contrasting fortunes for Connecticut's remaining enclosed malls.

The SoNo Collection was listed for sale in March by commercial real estate brokerage JLL, on behalf of investors who bought out shares of developer Brookfield Properties not long after the mall opened with a limited number of stores in time for the 2018 holiday shopping season.

The SoNo Collection debuted that year weeks in advance of American Dream in East Rutherford, New Jersey, with original anchors Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom still at The SoNo Collection today and "fee interest" stakes in those boxes included in the JLL listing.

The mall has seen other retailers come and go since its opening, with departures having included Amazon 4-Star, children's toy store Camp, the bowling entertainment venue Pinstripes, and sports bar Yard House.

Brookfield sold its majority stake in 2019 for \$304 million,

while retaining a minority share and continuing to manage the shopping center.

It is the second mall in the state to be put up for sale recently. The Trumbull Mall was listed after months of going through a court foreclosure process. In Waterford, General Dynamics Electric Boat is converting the Crystal Mall to an engineering and training office, with the vast majority of stores having closed.

JLL lists an 86% occupancy rate for the Norwalk mall as of March, with the mall totaling 738,000 square feet. In addition to Nordstrom and Bloomingdale's



Ned Gerard/Hearst Connecticut Media

The SoNo Collection, shown in February 2025, was listed for sale in March by commercial real estate brokerage JLL.

'SOMETHING SPECTACULAR'



Jack Dempsey/NCAA via Getty Images

The UConn Huskies arrive for the 2026 Men's Final Four Wednesday in Indianapolis.

FINAL FOUR
SOUTH CAROLINA
VS. UCONN WBB

PHX Arena, Phoenix
Friday, 7 p.m. (ESPN)

ILLINOIS
VS. UCONN MBB

Lucas Oil Stadium,
Indianapolis
Saturday, 6:09 p.m. (TBS)



UConn's Final Four runs paying off beyond court

By Alex Putterman
STAFF WRITER

Carefully examine a replay of the shot that shook Connecticut last Sunday, and you might spot, toward the left of your screen, in the front row of the crowd, a familiar head of blonde hair thrown back in celebration.

That's UConn president Radenka Maric, the woman whose support is necessary for the school's basketball programs to prosper, just as

shocked and thrilled as everyone else around her.

"It was an out-of-body experience," Maric said this week, of Braylon Mullins' 3-point shot that sent the UConn men to another Final Four. "You almost feel like your whole energy is out for love of those players, and you are almost coming back to Earth because what happened is an out-of-this-world experience."

Maric, who grew up in what was then Yugoslavia, rooting on her nation's powerhouse basketball teams, has become a true believer in UConn hoops. This week

Impact continues on A4

» **INSIDE:** 16-page section previewing the UConn women's and men's basketball teams' Final Four appearances, with statistics, profiles and everything you need to know to watch the big games.

CT public school spending at \$12.2B

By Natasha Sokoloff
STAFF WRITER

Connecticut public schools spent about \$12.2 billion in 2024-25, up from \$11.9 billion the previous school year, and kindergarten enrollment dropped by over 12% compared to 2023-24, according to the state Department of Education's latest yearly status report on public education.

The Condition of Education in Connecticut report shows many education trends continue to persist — such as enrollment declines and pandemic recovery challenges — as well as changes compared to the previous year, including higher expenditures and fewer students experiencing homelessness.

Here are some of the key findings for the 2024-25 school year:

Schools continues on A6



Ned Gerard/Hearst Conn. Media

Marc Karun is shown being arraigned in state Superior Court in Norwalk June 17, 2019.

DNA at center of murder trial

Norwalk girl, 11, killed in 1986

By Ethan Fry and Peter Yankowski
STAFF WRITERS

STAMFORD — Two men once considered suspects in the 1986 murder of 11-year-old Kathleen Marie Flynn in Norwalk were excluded when their DNA was tested decades later against a pubic hair recovered during the girl's autopsy, a prosecution expert told a jury Wednesday.

The man now on trial for Flynn's murder, 60-year-old Marc Karun, was

Trial continues on A6

Teen who overcame rare blood cancer heads to Final Four

By Bryant Carpenter
STAFF WRITER

Elijah Randolph calculates he's been to more than 100 UConn men's basketball games over the past few years.

Just about every home game, a number of road games, the Big East Tourna-

ment in New York, the 2024 Final Four in Phoenix: Name it and the eighth-grader at Farmington's Robbins Middle School has been there/done that at the tender age of 13.

But that Braylon Mullins bomb to beat Duke on Sunday? Elijah Randolph hadn't

Elijah continues on A4



Dave Zajac/Hearst CT Media file photo

Elijah Randolph, now 13, of Farmington, shows his signature next to UConn men's basketball coach Dan Hurley Aug. 27 in Storrs.

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Weather: Low clouds may break, morning mist, breezy.
High: 63. Low: 49.
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