

Commemorating Black History Month, NewAlliance Foundation Announces Inaugural Kim A. Healey Leadership Award Recipient, Erik Clemons

A \$10,000 grant was awarded in honor of Clemons, who will get to direct it to ConnCAT



NEW HAVEN, CT (February 13, 2024) – Honoring a prominent Black leader of New Haven during Black History Month, The NewAlliance Foundation today announced Erik Clemons as the first-ever recipient of the Kim A. Healey Leadership Award.

This inaugural award is given to individuals who exemplify outstanding leadership qualities and have made significant contributions to their organizations and communities, regardless of their race. A \$10,000 grant will be awarded to Clemons, who will get to direct it to an organization of his choosing.

The namesake of the award, Kim A. Healey, served as the Executive Director of the NewAlliance Foundation for more than 20 years.

“I cannot overemphasize how thrilled I was to have Erik named as the inaugural recipient of an award I feel honored to have named after me,” **Healey** said. “I often think the people selected for an award say more about its stature than the namesake and, for that reason, I think Erik is an exceptional inaugural awardee. I’ve followed Erik’s career and he is truly of the community, by the community, and for the community.”

“Clemons, a visionary and tireless advocate, stands out as an inspiring leader whose impact reverberates across Connecticut,” said **Maryann Ott**, current Executive Director at NewAlliance Foundation. “Erik is a leader in every sense of the word—in family, in community, and in the organizations he works within to make real, systemic change.”

Clemons, the founding director of the Connecticut Center for Arts and Technology (ConnCAT) and co-founder of the Connecticut Community Outreach and Revitalization Program (ConnCORP), has dedicated over two decades to empowering marginalized communities. He currently serves as the CEO & President of both organizations and has led each to monumental successes over the years.

In 2020, in the face of the pandemic, Clemons single-handedly raised more than \$400k for direct aid to families affected by the economic downturn and lack of work. Those efforts initiated the launch of the [Economic Justice Fund](#), which later pivoted to support Black businesses with economic resilience. Clemons also engaged hundreds of local residents in a series of community conversations in order to more deeply understand their needs and

desires for the more than [\\$200 Million revitalization project](#), ConnCAT Place on Dixwell Avenue.

“I’m consistently humbled by the work I get to do through my teams at ConnCORP and ConnCAT,” **Clemons** said. “To be recognized by such a very special institution, with this inaugural award named after a dear friend, tells me we’re not only doing something right, we’re doing something necessary.”

Through a blend of vision, empathy, and integrity, Clemons has motivated and aligned his teams towards common goals, instilling a sense of purpose and value in every team member, regardless of their role, Ott said in announcing the award to the ConnCAT team in December.

In addition to leading two of New Haven’s most notable non-profit organizations, Clemons’ has also served as an Education Fellow at the Aspen Institute, Yale-New Haven Hospital Trustee, member of the Connecticut State Board of Education, Board Chair of the Housing Authority of New Haven, Board of Trustees at New Haven Bank, and Quinnipiac University Board of Trustees.

“Erik’s leadership style is characterized by a belief in the inherent potential and abundance in the world, leading from a place of yes,” said **Paul McCraven**, Chief Operating Officer at ConnCORP. “He’s a captivating storyteller and he draws from personal experiences to connect with others. Those personal experiences, really allow him to understand both the struggles and joys of this community. Watching Erik connect with people is a sight to see. He truly values individuals, uplifts them, and helps them meet their potential.”

The Kim A. Healey Leadership Award stands as a testament to the qualities of vision, integrity, courage, and compassion exemplified by leaders like Clemons. It is a celebration of their dedication to positive change and their ability to inspire others to follow suit.

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About the NewAlliance Foundation

The NewAlliance Foundation is a philanthropic organization committed to supporting initiatives that enhance the quality of life and create positive social change in Connecticut. The foundation focuses on fostering leadership, community development, and empowerment to build a better future for all.

About the Kim A. Healey Leadership Award

The Kim A. Healey Leadership Award is an annual recognition presented by the NewAlliance Foundation to individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities and made significant contributions to their organizations and communities. The award includes a \$10,000 grant directed to an organization of the recipient's choice.

THE NARRATIVE PROJECT

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