

Lil Hope is now open at 18 LaSalle Road in West Hartford Center. Photo credit: Ronni Newton

- Congratulations to **WIP Fitness** on their official ribbon cutting held last Friday with the **West Hartford Chamber of Commerce**, celebrating the re-launch of the business under the leadership of new owners Paul and Julia Ducey. They celebrated over the weekend as well, with an open house held at New Park Brewing. For more [information about WIP Fitness](#), check out last week's [Business Buzz column](#).

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WIP Fitness (485 New Park Ave.) celebrated the re-launch with a ribbon cutting with the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce on Sept. 29. Photo credit: Ronni Newton

- The efforts of a West Hartford-based brand helped save a life! **ABLE MADE**, which was founded by West Hartford resident **Suzanne McKenzie** – whose husband died of cardiac arrest while playing soccer – is not only an emerging fashion brand but is also an advocate for heart health, CPR, and AEDs. ABLE MADE shared the following story: At a Kendall Wanderers men's soccer game held at Medford High School on Sept. 17, a dire situation unfolded reminiscent of a tragic event from 2009. A player collapsed and fell unconscious from sudden cardiac arrest. The very same fate befell Ucal, husband of ABLE MADE Founder Suzanne McKenzie, while playing against Kendall in Boston in 2009. However, this story took a different, life-affirming turn. In an inspiring response to Ucal's passing, the Kendall Wanderers ensured that each of their five teams was equipped with an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). According to Kendall

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leadership, this move was also influenced by the dedicated advocacy and education efforts of ABLE MADE, Ucal McKenzie Breakaway Foundation, and In A Heartbeat Foundation. John O’Toole, President of the Kendall Wanderers comments, “Without the inspiration of Ucal and the steadfast dedication of Suzanne and the foundations, it’s doubtful we would have had even one AED within the club, let alone five.” Able Made was launched in 2012 to support the Ucal McKenzie Breakaway Foundation (UMBF), a foundation inspired by her late husband Ucal McKenzie—a Jamaican-born mentor and soccer enthusiast who died of sudden cardiac arrest on the field playing the game he loved. Able Made is a soccer-inspired luxury clothing brand that blends style, sustainability, and social responsibility. They use portions of their profits to fund UMBF’s annual soccer & health camps and clinics, emphasizing hands-only CPR and AED education, health education, and personal growth for city-youth. This past July, Able Made and UMBF joined forces with Boston Parks and Recreation and In A Heartbeat Foundation to begin a program to distribute Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) across public fields in Boston. Suzanne McKenzie and her company Able Made are honored to have played a role in helping equip Kendall’s Bay State Soccer League (BSSL), Boston public parks, and more with these life-saving devices. “Our team’s unwavering commitment to education and AED advocacy truly shone this past Sunday,” says McKenzie.

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West Hartford resident Suzanne McKenzie. Photo credit: Ronni Newton (we-ha.com file photo)

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