

May 2019



# GREENS FARMS

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# L I V I N G

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A Social Publication For The Residents Of Greens Farms



## TEAM *Rach*

Photo by Venture Photography

**Greens Farms Association Annual Meeting: May 14!**

OUR STORIES. OUR PHOTOS. OUR FAMILIES. OUR FRIENDS. OUR COMMUNITY.



Rach's Hope kickoff support team

# Rach's HOPE

Photos by Samara Robison

**Nothing can prepare you for the loss of a child, but the power of community has helped one Greens Farms family to take their greatest loss and turn it into a mission to help other families.**

Seven months after the tragic loss of their daughter, Rachel Hope, the Doran family chose to find a way to celebrate her life and bring light to other families. A nonprofit in her name and honor was conceived, **Rach's Hope**, with a goal to help families "weather the storm" of critical illness by providing them with practical, emotional and financial relief.

On July 13, 2018, the Dorans' life was turned upside down. Rachel, a healthy, vibrant, 2015 Staples graduate and rising senior at Cornell University, developed an exceedingly rare reaction to a common medication. Consequently, she spent the following weeks hospitalized, first in the Connecticut Burn Intensive Care

Unit at Bridgeport Hospital and then in the intensive care unit at Columbia University Medical Center with secondary complications. After an excruciating and courageously fought thirty-five day battle, Rachel Hope Doran passed away.

According to Rachel's mother Lisa, "The support we received from family and friends during and after Rachel's illness was instrumental in helping us keep our bearings and remain present for her. Not everyone has the resources and support that we did. No one should go through the critical illness of a child alone." Rachel's father Alan added, "As a family, we have been through so much heartache, and the trauma of losing a child is unbear-



Rachel Doran in front of her curated event, Go Figure: The Fashion Silhouette & The Female Form, at Cornell in 2017



Prints of Rachel's work at auction in foreground with original sketches and design in the background



Ellie Doran and friends volunteering in their pajamas

able. One of our biggest obstacles, when Rachel was sick, was to advocate for her and still find time to care for ourselves and our other daughter, Ellie."

Rach's Hope seeks to help families manage some of the day-to-day complexities they face when they have a child in an intensive care unit for a prolonged period of time. "Our nonprofit will continue to evolve and take shape as we move forward," says Alan, "but we will begin by focusing on four pillars of support for families, born from our experience: nutrition, housing accommodations, counseling services, and financial support, all in an effort to provide the necessary resources needed for families navigating the stress of caring for a child in the ICU.

With this mission in mind, it was time to rally the troops. Enter Team Rach, a diverse group of Lisa and Alan's close friends, transformed from support network into de-facto event planners. Working together, with less than six weeks, the team hit the streets looking for local businesses, friends, and family to help them execute Rach's Hope's inaugural fundraising event.

The Rach's Hope Kickoff event, held on March 2 at Penfield Pavilion, was an epic party with almost 300 attendees. Live music by Ellis Island (donated), delicious eats by Bodega Taco Bar (sponsored by United Bank) and a bar sponsored by Greens Farm's Spirits with Tito's Handmade Vodka and Two Roads Brewery created a festive

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environment. Partygoers took “pajama chic” attire, an ode to Rachel’s business “Rachel’s Rags,” to a new level. Venture Photography set up a photo booth and donated all photographs. The live auction was raucous and Rachel’s artwork caused some heated bidding wars in the silent auction, alongside a multitude of other fantastic items. Ellie’s friends joined in by checking coats, selling Rach’s Hope T-shirts and sterling bracelets with Rachel’s birthstone (donated by Gioiella Jewelry) and assisting with the raffle. At evening’s end, guests left with United Bank goody bags stocked with donated treats from Crumbs Together Bakery, Aarti at Le Rouge Chocolatier and gift cards from The Granola Bar, Saugatuck Sweets, Adam Broderick Salon, and Delivery.com! The result was an evening of joy, laughter, and remembrances that raised over \$100,000.

Looking forward, the Dorans and their team will continue to play an active role in the organization as it gets off the ground. Utilizing their strong network of family, both in friends and neighbors, they plan to use their diverse skill sets to provide as much support as possible to families who are going through the unthinkable.

According to Alan, “Rach’s Hope is inspired by our daughter who was always there for her friends and family. It is no coincidence that our friends and family in Westport and beyond really pulled through to support us when we really needed them. These kindnesses, large and small, have laid the foundation for our work ahead. The kickoff event was a celebration of community and an important step in our collective efforts to enhance supports for families of critically ill children.”

Supporters can donate to Rach’s Hope by going to [kickoff19.givesmart.com](http://kickoff19.givesmart.com). To learn more about Rach’s Hope, follow them on Facebook and Instagram. Rach’s Hope Inc. is a Connecticut nonprofit corporation in process for 501(c)(3) status.



Alan, Lisa and Ellie Doran



Attendees at Rach’s Hope kickoff event entered bids for auction items using a mobile app.



Attendees at Rach’s Hope kickoff