

Project Leader Name - Jennifer Lacker

Group/Organization Leading the Project - **Bike Stonington**

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Crowdfunding campaign launched for Mystic Area Cycling Without Age program

\$7,500 goal to receive matching grant from Sustainable CT's Community Match Fund

Bike Stonington has launched an initiative to bring a Cycling Without Age chapter to the Stonington & Mystic community. This is a program that is part of a global movement striving to improve mental health and change the system of social isolation and loneliness so prevalent in our older and less mobile population. The goals include creating social interaction and intergenerational connections by providing active outdoor experiences for people of **all ages** and **abilities** on bikes.



Operated entirely with volunteers, the program will offer bike riding outings to the elderly and those challenged with disabilities in specialized tricycles with electric assist and a relaxing, comfortable front seat. Local volunteers called 'pilots' or drivers, will be trained and organized to ride up to two passengers per scheduled outing. They will visit care homes and senior centers around the community and offer residents an opportunity to be a passenger on the trishaw – to experience freedom and independence they ordinarily would not be able to have.

The project's organizers are calling on the community to join this initiative by donating to a crowdfunding campaign or volunteering in the effort. If the campaign reaches its **\$7,500** goal by its fundraising deadline of **October 14**, 2021, the project will receive a matching grant of **\$7,500** from Sustainable CT's Community Match Fund, which is an innovative funding resource for public, community-led sustainability projects. For project details and to donate, please visit: www.Patronicity/MACWA

"Every dollar donated will be matched by Sustainable CT because they believe in the positive change that this program will have towards making our community more inclusive, healthier, and sustainable" said Alison Zack Darrell, volunteer pilot and co-founder of the program. We're thrilled to be eligible and participate in Sustainable CT's Community Matching Fund program, and we're confident our community will provide the support needed to bring this program to fruition. There's awareness among rehab centers, and senior living residences of the possibility of getting their clients out for rides, and we're anxious to bring them the experience. By having the opportunity to experience their town, be in nature and engage in conversation with others, the trishaw rides will offer new horizons for the elderly and less able citizens in our community one bike ride at a time!

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