**UConn CSCH Podcast Episode Transcript:**

**The State of Social Emotional learning in Connecticut**

Helene Marcy: Hello and welcome to the CSCH podcast. My name is Helene Marcy, Program Manager for the UConn Collaboratory on School and Child Health, or CSCH. The CSCH mission is to facilitate innovative and impactful connections across research, policy and practice arenas to advance equity in school and child health. CSCH is committed to anti-racist work that prioritizes inclusion, reduces disparities, and creates systemic change. I invite you to take a look at our website at csch.uconn.edu. Recently, CSCH Co-Director Sandra Chafouleas spoke with several guests about the state of social emotional learning in Connecticut. Her guests were Jeana Bracey, Associate Vice President of School and Community Initiatives at the Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut; Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Executive Director of the Connecticut After-School Network and founder of SEL4CT; and Zachary Munroe, Assistant Principal at Maple Hill Elementary in Naugatuck. Here is their conversation.

Sandra Chafouleas: Welcome, everyone. Today, our conversation focuses on the state of SEL in Connecticut. Because there's been some recent confusion over what SEL, or social emotional learning, means let's start with a quick overview. SEL is the process through which children and adults learn to monitor and regulate their thoughts, feelings and behavior. And what that all really means simply is that we're learning strategies to catch our feelings when we aren't our best, how to calm ourselves so we don't do things that we might later regret, and connect with others as a way to help us feel our best. There are lots of simple strategies that are part of SEL, like belly breathing, movement, or stretching, seeking social support, or expressing gratitude. Being able to use SEL strategies are important to support well-being and to help us cope with all the uncertainties that are going on, certainly something that each of us has encountered through this COVID 19 pandemic. So today, we thought we'd look at the state of SEL and Connecticut from a few different angles. So let's jump right in. First, let's talk about some of the key issues that are driving your work in SEL. Michelle, would you like to begin?

Michelle Doucette Cunningham: Sure, SEL4CT, the Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Connecticut came together in 2018 to help people connect who are implementing social emotional learning in their work—both inside and outside the traditional classroom, such as in after school and summer youth programs and also for those working on public policy issues related to supporting the expansion of SEL in Connecticut. Decisions that are made at the state level, such as those made by the state legislature or the State Department of Education can have a big impact on how SEL is implemented at the local level. And I've been focusing on these issues such as funding guidelines, model programs, best practices, and professional development education, so that we can also move ahead on the local level. And importantly, also, educating the public about what SEL is and why it's important, because there's a lot of misinformation and I'm so happy to be with you today to provide that important perspective.

Sandra Chafouleas: Wow, that's a lot of roles. For sure. Lots of great work in SEL. Jeana, do you want to tell us some of the key issues that are driving your work?

Jeana Bracey: Sure. So I work at the Child Health and Development Institute and our role is as an intermediary organization. So we often work sort of between the state agency funders and partners, and the districts and the students themselves that are implementing this work. And so my approach is a little bit different, similar to Michelle's, in terms of it is sort of big picture. But we really work at that systems level sort of across districts statewide, and focusing on a systems approach to expanding a comprehensive trauma-informed and equitable model of school mental health. And the approach that we take really value social emotional learning as a strong foundation for overall well-being and healthy development. And this approach is really important because we know that many schools operate from a crisis driven approach. And so that's one of the real key issues that we're focused on is this comprehensive systems approach to school mental health.

Sandra Chafouleas: Zach, let's turn it over to you.

Zachary Munroe: So I'm an assistant principal in the Naugatuck school district at an elementary school, K4 elementary school. So some of the key issues that are driving our work currently in SEL, you know, related to our school and our school community and some of the changes that we've gone through not only over the past two years because of the pandemic, but just in general in the way that we interact, communicate, process information, you know, as a society. This includes, you know, emotional regulation for adults and students alike. So the landscape of how we as a society communicate and interact has changed far more quickly than we're able to adapt to. So how can we help students and members of our community process information, feelings, events in an appropriate and meaningful way? What tools do community members need in order to effectively communicate, process emotions and navigate social situations? SEL allows us as educators to develop a roadmap for addressing student and community member needs. So that's one of the big ones that we do see. We want to make sure that we have equitable access to the resources that we have for students and the curriculum. Disparity amongst the subgroups that we've noticed has increased over the past couple of years because of the pandemic, as well as has been an issue that we are addressing in the schools as well.

Sandra Chafouleas: Wow. So when I think about all of your answers together SEL is, is really a lot of things. Right. It's, it's a foundation to to a lot of the work that we're doing in schools and how we're how we've really adapted, as Zach says, the way we communicate the way we interact socially, and how we address these challenges that certainly have, increased tremendously as we as we're dealing with this pandemic. So let's talk more broadly then about the state of SEL in Connecticut in relation because we're now over two years into this pandemic. And some activities for children and adolescents seem to be resuming with, you know, some normality. Although, you know, certainly the pandemic continues. Jeana, based on your work, could you start by sharing how how would you say children and adolescents are faring? What strengths and challenges are you seeing?

Jeana Bracey: That's a great question, Sandy, as you know, our work at CHDI again, is at the system's level. So we're most in touch with providers and schools to monitor how things look at that 10,000 foot level across the state. So while while the levels of activity have largely resumed in terms of in-person, school, and sports and clubs and activities, and in-person services, the acuity or the intensity of the challenges reported by kids and families has really remained at very high levels, particularly compared to pre pandemic. We're seeing higher levels of care like emergency departments still being over utilized for behavioral health issues. Mobile crisis and outpatient services are seeing continued high rates of referrals. And school-based support staff as well as community-based staff that are providing these services are reporting overwhelming caseloads well above the recommended students and staff ratios. We've also seen rates of suicide attempts and completions at alarming rates. So, you know, to say it quite simply, we're in a behavioral health crisis, still, at this point, and you know, there's still a lot to be done and a lot of needs to be met. However, I don't, I don't want to paint the picture that it's all doom and gloom, we do also see incredible examples of resilience and innovation. And, you know, going back to sort of that systems level comprehensive approach, we know the key components of a framework that can help address these needs, at the school and community levels. And we know what services and supports are effective for treating students and young people that have this increased anxiety, increased depression, and increased rates of trauma. And we've seen it work, and particularly in districts like Naugatuck, I'm really happy to be here together with them today representing the work that's being done. And look forward to hearing more examples about some of the strengths and the positive things that are really happening out there.

Sandra Chafouleas: That's a great turn to Zach.

Zachary Munroe: Yeah, to to kind of add on to what Jeana was saying, you know, young adults, and you know, young, and young children are resilient, right. So they're able to adapt to different situations. When things shut down, when the pandemic started, they were able to find different ways to stay connected, to engage, to play. You know, they look to the adults in their lives and the adults in the community for guidance and direction. And I, you know, I kind of see that adaptability of the students as a strength. With that being said, a lot of the students didn't really have a voice, you know; the young, the young adults in our community didn't have a voice of their own when the pandemic began, they certainly couldn't independently process, you know, why they couldn't see their friends why they couldn't, why they had to learn over a computer screen, why they couldn't go to baseball practice or dance. They needed and still need that reassurance that you know, everything's gonna be okay, that they haven't done anything wrong, that that's why you know, we're doing the things that we're doing. I think that the adults in their lives don't necessarily have the tools to always answer those questions for them. So us as schools, we're stepping up to try and make sure that we can provide not only the students, but also the adults in their lives with those resources to effectively address those issues as they come up. For us, delays and emotional development, you know, are a big concern at this point in the schools. You know, for a reference point, our third graders, the last normal school school year that they had was kindergarten, for any student below third grade, they haven't had a regular school year at the elementary level, they've had you know, pandemic influenced impacted years.

Sandra Chafouleas: So in your, in your response , Zach, you talked a little bit about, you touched a little bit on the caregivers, the home caregivers, in particular. I think, I think we should highlight that and put a little more emphasis on our caregivers, both at home and at school. So based on your work, how how are the important adults in our kids’ lives doing?

Zachary Munroe: Yeah, so you know, the past two years have been especially difficult on on families, you know, between the sense of isolation from peers and colleagues to the changing landscape of teaching and learning, you know, we went from being virtual and a lots of families really took on a support role with their with their students at home, which and more so than we've ever asked them to do. Student engagement interactions outside of school are a tremendous important indicator of performance in school, both socially and academically. So realizing this, you know, we have made a point in Naugatuck in our school, to focus on the well-being of families. You know, although we're unable we were unable to meet in person for much of the past two years, we found ways to engage through video calls, phone calls, communication platforms, such as parents were became vital to, you know, us connecting with with our families when we needed to, you know. More recently, we have started opening the doors up where parents are coming in. We're hosting parent engagement events. We're doing starting to do field trips again. We’ve started reaching out and having doing visits to family family houses, you know, that have either requested it or that we know, we know, there's concerns with students and things like that just to kind of provide support where we can. Sometimes we just have families come in and play games with their, with their children, just so they can have that sense of community again, and be able to see the teachers and walk in the building. It’s –It made a huge impact on the relationships that we've had, and, I think positively impacted some of the relationships with the families over the past couple of months that we've been able to do that.

You know, I would say that our staff, as the adults in the children's lives every day, they've completely risen to the challenge in this changing landscape. We've had to adjust and pivot several times since March of 2020. You know, in my experience, since being at the school I’m at now, I have not heard a single teacher or a staff member say enough, I'm done. No one said that once. The most common thing that I've heard the adults in these kids’ lives at the school level saying is what can we do? There's educators—whether it's the teachers, specialists, para-educators, resource teachers, task staff, custodians, secretaries, nurses, especially—right all those people in these kids’ lives, you know, they're, they're more tired and stressed than any other time in my professional career that I that I can remember. However, hearing them say, what can we do? you know, what's what's next? How do we help? That remains the first thought on all of their minds. You know, a certain first mentality after everything we've collectively been through, speaks volumes about the character resilience of the 21st century educator, in my opinion.

I do think, that we, you know, have to do more for our educators in regard to supporting their emotional and physical well-being. You know, as we look, think about the students and think about children and families, I think an often overlooked aspect of all that is staff. You know, burnout rates, I think are higher than they probably ever been in education. So, you know, I don't know, where outside of school or even within in some respect, we started addressing that issue. But, you know, their emotional and physical well-being is certainly vital to the continued success of all of our grander ideas and projects and initiatives that we're working on.

Sandra Chafouleas: Wow. Okay, so I'm thinking about all that. And I'm thinking about when we define caregivers, we really have to define caregivers very broadly—we have our family and our home caregivers, we have our school caregivers, we have our community caregivers, and everyone has taken on a lot of challenge and we're tired, we're all weary and a little bit stressed. And I found it really interesting how you said that your staff rises to the challenge to ask what can we do? What can we do more of in terms of supporting the family caregivers and the children in our schools and how you rally around, really making sure that school becomes a social community, as we emerge into whatever this new normal is. The school is the social community that really buffers against some of the emotional challenges that we're each dealing with.

Let's shift a little bit though. And Michelle, let's let's get your take as co-chair of the SEL taskforce in Connecticut. Are there immediate priorities that you see for the state of CT based on how children caregivers and the overall workforce are doing right now?

Michelle Doucette Cunningham: I think we're exactly on target when we're talking about the adults in children's lives because everyone's been struggling not only the children and parents, but the caregivers, everyone. Zachary's right, we've asked a lot from our educators and caregivers. But we also have to recognize that it does take a toll. I live in the country where we have well water and to use that as a metaphor: you can't keep on drawing from the well without some rain to replenish the well. And it's— sometimes it feels like we're in a bit of a drought right now. We've been giving and giving and giving. And it takes a lot out of the adults, even sometimes when we don't realize it, sometimes our immune systems are lower. So I think that we really need to think about— for each of us—need to think about our own sphere of influence. If you're a legislator, you have a different sphere of influence than if you're working within a building as a frontline staff person, but what can each of us do to help replenish our own well, as well as the wells of others. So for example, you can support your staff and help them to take mental health days off. Pay attention to when they might need one and recommend it. Adjusting your personnel policies to be more flexible. This is about more than just providing bagels on Teacher Appreciation Day, which is very welcome, don't get me wrong. But it's also about listening and adjusting where we can. We need to keep asking ourselves—all of us, all day, every day. Is there a way I can do this differently that will make it easier for parents easier or less stressful for kids or better for my co workers? I'm worried that we hold ourselves to such high levels of achievement, that we don't give ourselves a little bit of grace, we just need a little bit of space to breathe.

Sandra Chafouleas: That's a great way to describe it as this sphere of influence whether you're the assistant principal, the legislator, or the community service provider, making sure that you're understanding what your sphere of influence is and and being a good listener to understand how you can best influence that sphere with grace Of course, I love that you said that as well. So, So Jeana institutes and organizations and social services agencies are working hard to support children's social emotional development. What do you see that's going well? And what are some of the challenges that the organizations are facing?

Jeana Bracey: I'll pick up that question where Michelle and Zach both left off in some way, I think, you know, those that are able to take those innovations to scale that were able to be creative and flexible and pivot and to say, “what more can we do?” are the ones that have found themselves better positioned to be able to sustain this work over time and think, again, sort of flexibly in terms of how do we do this long term. Because at first it was all let's get through the pandemic, or first it was let's get through these two weeks of quarantine. And then it was okay, that's two months. And now it's two years. So how do we continue to do this long term in a way that doesn't burn all of us out, and ultimately works towards positive outcomes for the students and families that we're serving? You know, and we actually have heard that from the districts that we work with specifically thinking about school districts: that those that had sort of this comprehensive sort of approach in place before the pandemic hit, were much better positioned to be able to pivot and to be flexible, and to work off of the infrastructure that they had already built. And so not to say that it was seamless, and that there weren't any bumps and bruises and challenges along the way, because you all have experienced that. But again, just feeling like there's some level of capacity already built there. And so, you know, one of the things Zach had already mentioned, it was about the workforce issues, right. And so one component of this approach is a healthy workforce. So it's not all about the students and families. Without a healthy workforce being able to support them, all of this falls down, right. So I think we can all agree that that's a critical need right now, when we're talking about the school-based workforce or the community-based and service provider workforce. And so I think, you know, taking advancing those positive practices into systems and policy that can be sustainable is really important. And I think, you know, we are, we are at the place right now, we are in a moment where state and federal funding, as well as state legislation is very supportive of school mental health. But we know that’s short term. So thinking about, you know, what's going to be most sustainable, you know, how are we monitoring the progress that we've made? How are we? How do we know where the areas of needs are, and where we're doing a good job of meeting those where the gaps still are, where larger gaps are, have even been created, that we didn't know exist? And, you know, how are we then leveraging those resources to best support this moving forward. And finally, you know, I would say that we also know that the value and the importance of grounding this approach in a manner that strengthens family, school and community partnerships. So the goal here is really promoting equity and health out— healthy outcomes for all students. And so again, by linking those community-based providers that specialize in trauma informed social, emotional, and behavioral health services in local community, that that can really expand the capacity of schools to meet their students’ needs. And so those are some of the key things that we've seen working. You know, there are works in progress in some areas, they're doing well in other areas. But again, sort of the more we can all kind of align with that and think about a common approach. I think, the better we'll be able to kind of support each other in— in that process moving forward.

Sandra Chafouleas: Sure, you you touch for a second there on actions or steps that are promoting access and inclusion in the work. Zach, I was wondering if you could highlight some examples of those steps.

Zachary Munroe: So I think that we've done quite a bit in regards to promoting access and inclusion to this work. You know, we have SEL lessons that we provide to our students that we try to ensure are inclusive of all children. We take into account different cultures, students’ ages, different abilities that students might have. So we know we have a diverse community, and we want to make sure that we include all aspects of that community in what we're providing to our students. In regards to that, you know, we align our expectations for social emotional learning with our multi-tiered systems of support.

In regards to how we think about SEL, and Naugatuck, specifically, we incorporate and think about all those aspects, you know, are we ensuring that our students are able to be successful once they leave the school building, not just academically, but emotionally, socially, as well. Over the past few years in Naugatuck, we've engaged in equity training, so we've worked on different aspects, and teaching our staff and working with our community to ensure that we create an equitable environment and equitable community of learners, and a community in general. You know, part of that work that we do is engaged in our hiring process. So as part of our application process for all potential hires, they answer questions about implicit bias. And they actually are asked to take an implicit bias assessment, just so they can get understanding about what our focus and what our priorities are in Naugatuck. In addition, there are equity questions that we include in the application process as well. So anyone who applies to a job at Naugatuck, especially a certified position, we ask them to speak about the different components of their work and their experiences that demonstrate, you know, they understand what equitable learning is, what equitable learning environments are. You know, we also have a full-time social worker, a psychologist, and a counselor, and they are able to provide our students with, you know, opportunities that perhaps, you know, other districts might not be able to. You know, we see that SEL piece is so important to the academic success; if we're not socially emotionally in a good place, we certainly aren't going to be able to be successful as academic learners. You know, we are still fine tuning and looking at our systems to ensure that we, you know, we are able to address all issues with all students, and more generally all members of our community when they arise and in a timely manner.

Sandra Chafouleas: So, Zach, and Jeana, I find it really interesting that what you're both talking about is that those social emotional strategies that we're teaching and learning is really the foundation to what we what we I guess we would talk about is whole well-being for both children and adults in the settings, so the caregivers. And what's been interesting to me is to hear how you talk about it really permeating. And how consistency is really key across the systems because, you know, it helps you not only prepare for the crisis, but also kind of plan, plan better for the that long-term prevention. So there's just thanks for sharing all those great thoughts. So Michelle, let's kick it back to you now, then. And so from your perspective, in what ways do the current state policies support the work that Jeana and Zach are talking about? And what ways would you suggest that our policies need to be improved?

Michelle Doucette Cunningham: Well, I know the State Department of Education has really started to invest time and resources into social emotional learning and supports for teachers and districts and families in the communities who work with kids along these issues. So, for example, they have a great webpage of documents and resources. And it includes their kindergarten through grade three social emotional and intellectual habits framework. And they're in the process of upgrading that to also include grades four and on. And that's really important to be able to have some theoretical foundation to work on from that. So I think there's really investing time and energy in that and certainly some of the American rescue plan dollars that are at their disposal.

In addition to that, the state legislature just wrapped up and passed three wide-ranging measures that would expand access to and boost resources for children's mental health. And some lawmakers really called it the defining issue of this year's legislative session. And it was thrilling to see the types of conversations that were being had by our policymakers about what we need and how we need to move ahead. And there's three bills in particular, I'd like to call people's attention to if they really want to dive in deep. And it's Senate Bill 1, which is about expanding physical and mental health services in schools, Senate Bill 2, which is about expanding those services for preschool, and then House Bill 5001, which is about the types of mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse disorder treatment services for children and making sure that there's services necessary to address needs as they come up. So it was really exciting to see the focus this year, come through on that. Certainly also, some of that, for the preschool included some wage supplements to try and avert a crisis in early childhood, because there's so many people leaving the field, after giving from themselves so much for two years to still be making minimum wage with no benefits. In cases like that there, there has been some money put forward to shore up a system that's at risk of of dire failure in the next year. The problem is, is that a lot of that is one time money, it's federal money that's coming to help us recover from COVID. And we as a state need to take what was done this year, and really invest in this sustainably over time. Zach mentioned having school counselors and school psychologists and social workers in every building, that would be fabulous. If we had enough people on hand to do what we needed to do in schools. I don't know that there's any school in the state that would say they have enough people to do what they need to do; we do the best we can with what we can get. But as someone who had the political side of the school board fights for school budgets, we could double our budget tomorrow, and be able to spend it all immediately if there were people in the pipeline ready to come and teach and support kids in our schools. And that would include things like a full summer program; that would include things like before and after school so that parents don't have to worry about where their kids are after work; it would be almost a full community partnership model of that we could envision. We're not near that. And we're hopefully moving in that direction. So thinking about the whole child, and the way that SEL does also requires us to think about the whole community and the role of the school in that whole community. And we need to step up and for the sake of our broader society, invest in schools, invest in the professionals that make schools happen. Invest in the community partners that can help leverage some of those dollars and make things happen so that you've got things happening during the summer and after hours, too. So there's a lot more that we can do. And it's going to take a lot of political willpower to make that happen.

Sandra Chafouleas: Michelle, thanks for pointing us to those great resources that the SDE, the State Department of Education has set up for us that that's a really helpful resource, and thanks for the summary on the bills that have recently passed on them that really do seem to address or begin to address in our state, these whole child needs, whether that be physical, behavioral, workforce issues. So I hope that and I'm encouraged that our legislators are listening with their sphere of influence to think about how that becomes sustainable in the future, as Jeana has pointed out to us is so critically important. As our last question, maybe we should wrap up by just saying, you know, is there is there a call to action that each of you would like to share?

Michelle Doucette Cunningham: I have to, I have to so I'm going to jump right in, I was thinking about that one of them's really short. One is that we need to talk about what children need with each other, and especially with people outside of our professional lives. We have to help them understand that social emotional learning is not a threat to any one's values or way of life. Certainly some national organizations have chosen SEL as a boogeyman that they can claim is being used to indoctrinate their children in values that they wouldn't support. But in reality schools and after schools, and childcare centers have always taught social emotional learning, it's been called lots of different things. In my day, it was called character education. But it's just better understood now and we're really able to target it and do it so much more efficiently. But we need people to understand that its importance is so critical, especially in times of great stress, like we're in right now. But we need everybody. We need all of the parents, but all of the people who are just regular voters and may not be connected to the school systems—we need them to see that SEL is helping students to become good people, good citizens, good friends and learning to be good to themselves. And I think we can all agree that the world needs a little more kindness right now. And teaching children the skills they need to be respectful and kind to one another and themselves can only be a good thing. And then my second call to action is that we need people to write to their local school boards in support of social emotional learning and to speak at school board members. Because that's where a lot of decisions are being made. And I'll be honest, very few people get involved, we see the same people week after week, month after month at those tables. But we don't want only the squeaky wheels, making policy for everyone. And having a parent come and say, “This is important, and it helped my kid” has made a huge difference. So even even sending one email to the board of education can help make a big difference, because we don't hear from that many people.

Sandra Chafouleas: Those are two big ones. So Zach, sure, Zach jump right in there.

Zachary Munroe: I'd love to piggyback off of that. And just say you know, I think that from the school level at the community level, you know, we need to be more proactive. We need to have all stakeholders in education be willing to have uncomfortable conversations about difficult topics. You know, mental health—I feel that was something that was taboo wasn't—we didn't talk about it specifically, we included it in in pieces that we did, but it wasn't something that we said this is going to be part of our curriculum, this is something that we're going to be doing. The fact that we're doing that now, I think is so important, I think, you know, as Michelle was saying, you know, there are those naysayers that say that we're indoctrinating children with things, but it is such an important aspect and component of, of the health and well-being of individuals. You know, I remember myself growing up, there was that national movement for physical education and PE and health and the cafeteria, right. So to me, my call to action would be that, you know, we need to have that same that same sense of urgency, that same sense of how important that was, this needs to be more important because this is something that is impacting us currently. You know, I believe that we have to continue to make SEL a priority. It's so important that we have those conversations, because if we don't, you know, I think that we're doing our students, our children, and then again, that greater society a disservice.

Sandra Chafouleas: Jeana, how about you?

Jeana Bracey: Yeah, so I would add that, you know, I'd say a call to action is really around alignment and measurement. And so what I mean by that is, you know, we just talked about the the importance of need for really defining SEL, right. So distinguishing it yet linking it with behavioral health and academic functioning. So how does it relate to overall well-being a behavioral health, but as well as the impact of positive SEL, on development and academic outcomes? And I think we only get there by measuring it, aligning all these various efforts and measuring it. And so we actually know what's working well, what's what's not going so well, and are moving forward those things that are as I talked about sustainability before. So again, I think, you know, we we, I agree with Michelle groundbreaking legislation, this session, and the state is identifying, you know, funding in various ways, in ways we've never seen and likely will never see again, like this is a real moment in time that we do have to capitalize on for those of us that really care about this work. And our pass— are passionate about this. So you know, get leveraging those federal funds from the ESA and the American Recovery Act, things like Project AWARE federal funding that Naugatuck is engaged in, together with us and other districts. But again, it's that alignment piece is not doing individual pieces in isolation, but really building towards that systems level approach for identifying school mental health, social emotional learning, quality and sustainability at the school and district levels. With all of those great ideas that Michelle and Zach both gave as well, it's really, how do we then make sure that those are that everybody starts to do to do those, and we're seeing a collective move forward that is working towards equity for all students.

Sandra Chafouleas: Those are some excellent calls to action, I have to say, and I and I think it's really important to just end on the note that Zach had started us out with by saying that, you know, SEL, is stuff we've been doing for a long time in schools, particularly in early childhood and in more recent years in an adolescent and with our adults and our other caregivers, because it's really about monitoring and regulating how we think and feel and what it is that we're doing, to make sure that we have a positive and productive society. I love the calls to action that Michelle and Jeana were emphasizing about really making sure that we figure out how we can be advocates, every single one of us, in our sphere of influence, to figure out how do we strengthen what we're doing in our efforts to help us address the current challenges that we're experienced experiencing as a result of the pandemic and then help us be prepared to sustain for that long term so that we result in a in a healthy and well society. I want to thank each of you for your time today and most importantly for your for your efforts in influencing your own spheres of influence. And I wish you all the best.

Zachary Munroe: Thank you

Michelle Doucette Cunningham: Thank you.

Jeana Bracey: Thank you so much for having us.

Helene Marcy: Thanks for listening to our podcast episode. We'll add links to some of the work that our guests described in the podcast description and a reminder to our listeners that you can find information about the collaboratory, at our website csch.uconn.edu. You can also follow us on social media @UConnCSCH. Thanks for listening.