

## Wayne Barneschi

Wayne Barneschi is a 1979 graduate of Lyman Hall High School who has risen to become a Distinguished Alumnus through his innovation, vision, and philanthropy. Wayne is the founder of the nationally recognized Trail of Terror, a legendary haunted trail tucked in the woods of Wallingford. While the Trail is legendary, even more remarkable is the man behind the *Trail* and the benefits his work provides to the community.

In the early 1990's, Wayne Barneschi, who holds many Haunt industry certifications and who was a founding member of the Haunted Attraction Association, created a small backyard haunt that gained such tremendous popularity that he, his wife, Christy, and a few friends decided to do it for a cause. In 1995, they expanded to an old house with a half acre of land. This expansion led to the creation of the *Trail of Terror*, an attraction that partnered with the local chapter of The American Red Cross. Over the next 13 years, the *Trail* grew and raised over a **half million dollars** for Red Cross programs.

When the local chapter of the Red Cross closed, Wayne was undeterred. He had experienced first hand the *Trail's* potential and the good it did not only in providing funds to worthy programs, but also in bringing people together building something special that had no other purpose than to entertain and help others. He eventually formed Scare Crew Productions, Inc., a non-profit that has operated the *Trail of Terror* ever since. Now in its 31st year, it operates with more than two hundred volunteers per night and more than three hundred volunteers per season. The *Trail* draws 20,000+ visitors annually from around the world and has won multiple local and national awards, including best walk-through haunt, most intense walk-through haunt, most unique haunt, and overall best haunt in the country.

The charitable impact of Wayne's vision and persistence is huge. To date, his endeavor that started with a small group of family and friends has donated nearly **three million dollars** to local charities and people in need. Donated funds helped build the Wallingford Emergency Shelter for families experiencing temporary homelessness. The funds saved an historic Meriden building from demolition, with future plans for an indoor haunted attraction, escape rooms, and a theater. The funds have supported the work of the Coalition for a Better Wallingford. The funds have supported C.R.E.W., a student organization from Mark T. Sheehan and Lyman Hall High Schools that provides humanitarian aid in areas where it is most needed.

Wayne Barneschi's mission, however, is about much more than the charitable donations. His true passion is fostering creativity and helping others gain skills they can take with them into their everyday lives. As volunteers work together to build, perform, and execute the *Trail*, under Wayne's leadership they enjoy an inclusive, fun, and educational space where they problem solve and learn skills ranging from carpentry, makeup artistry, sound engineering and so much more. He creates a welcoming, eccentric, and close-knit family atmosphere where people of all ages come together and thrive.

Wayne Barneschi is, indeed, a most Distinguished Alumnus of our schools.