

MIDDLETOWN

# 3 New Horizons Shelter Activists Honored

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Three former leaders of the New Horizons domestic violence shelter — including the shelter's founder — were honored last week by a state organization seeking to end violence against women and children.

Nancy Archer, the woman who founded New Horizons about two decades ago, received the prestigious President's Award from the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence during its 20th annual meeting Thursday at the Holiday Inn in Cromwell.

Archer, who recently moved to Alabama, was a determined woman

also responsible for rebuilding the shelter in the mid-1970s after a fire destroyed the first building. The fire was set by an angry boyfriend.

"She was just someone who had a vision," said Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald, the shelter's current director who nominated Archer and accepted the award on her behalf. "Thankfully, we're still servicing women and children."

Two former directors of the shelter were also honored at the banquet. They received certificates of appreciation for having a significant impact on local domestic violence programs over the years.

Shawn Lang, the shelter's director during the 1980s, was credited for

greatly expanding the shelter's programs by obtaining significant federal and state grants.

Jaci McDaniel-White, the shelter's director in the early 1990s, was credited for her broad vision and commitment to improving services for victims.

The Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence is a membership organization committed to ending domestic violence by changing social conditions, beliefs and actions that perpetuate abuse against women and children.

New Horizons, located in Middletown, is one of 18 domestic violence

shelters in Connecticut. The 11-bed shelter serves all the towns in Middlesex County and boasts a 75 percent success rate for clients breaking the domestic violence cycle and getting back on their feet.

The shelter has been operating at more than 95 percent of its capacity since April, Dayton-Fitzgerald said.

The shelter is looking for a new location to expand its bed space and programs, Dayton-Fitzgerald said. The shelter also recently started offering a 24-hour toll-free hot line for domestic violence victims. The number is (888) 774-2900.