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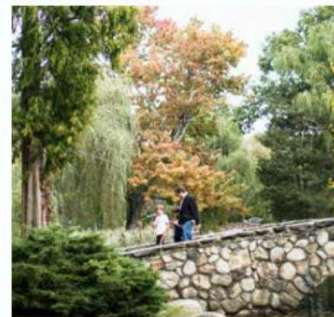
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LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS
SHARE TOUCHING STORIES

GREENWICH

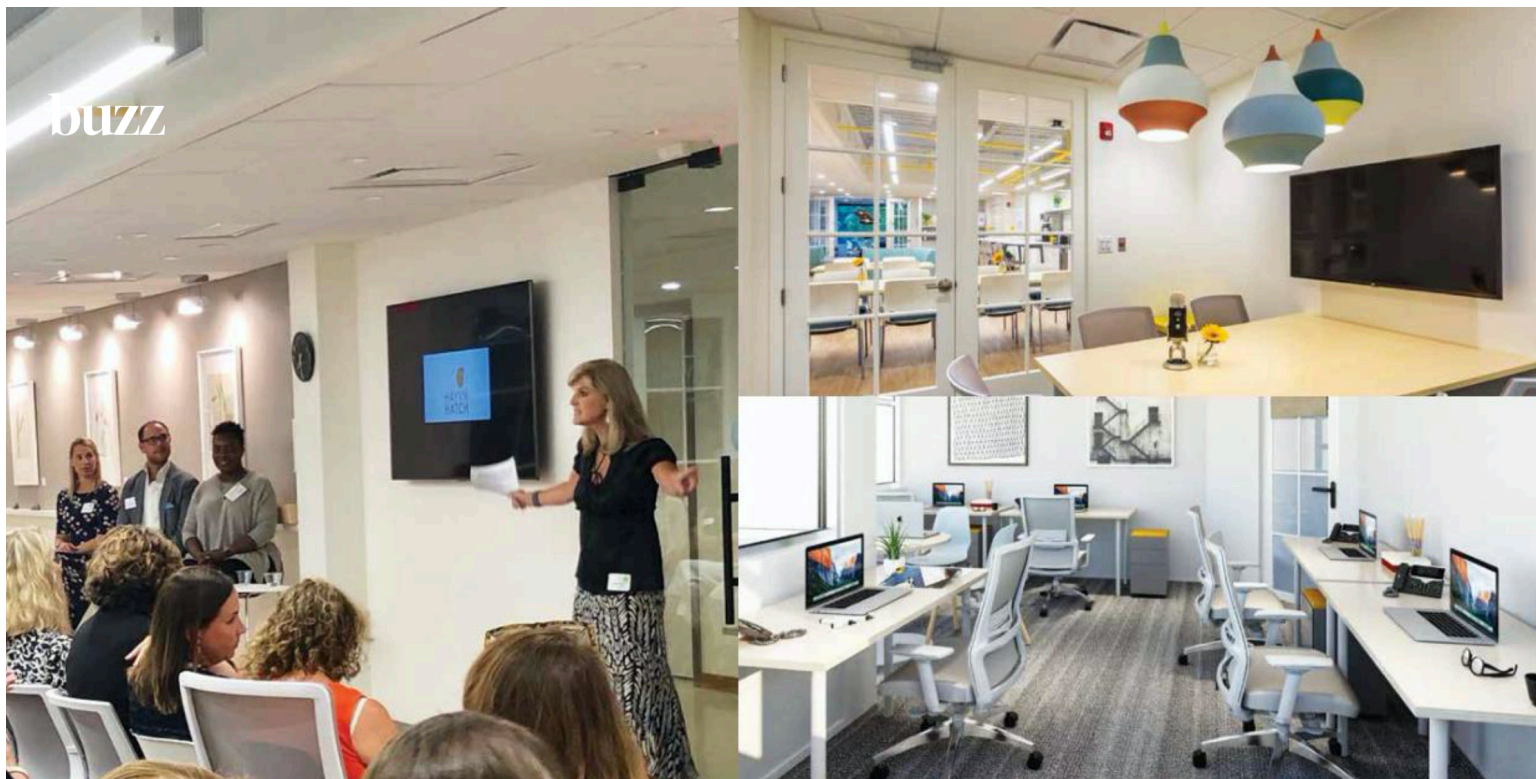


HOPE & HEART

In the face of adversity, it's more important than ever to remember that we have much to be grateful for—the **people, places, businesses and organizations** that make our corner of the world special.



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above: When permitted, HAYVN hosts workshops and other business-supportive events for its members and the public • Plenty of variety of work options for members.

GET TO WORK

HAYVN AT THE CENTER OF COWORKING AND CONNECTING NOW BY ELIZABETH HOLE

For a year, locals needing an escape from their home office or coffee shop “cubicle” jumped into the coworking phenomenon HAYVN. This shared workspace in Darien created for women is having an anniversary, and it continues to thrive despite our temporary climate of school shutdowns, social distancing and other uncertainties.

As soon as COVID-19 forced partial closures, HAYVN set up a “Zoom Room” to assist members and its guests with video conferencing capabilities. Although HAYVN had to postpone a number of events—including Moffly Media’s Women in Business, a Social Media Exchange—the company quickly switched gears and began conducting virtual workshops, called HAYVN HALFTIME.

Founder Felicia Rubinstein, an engineer and marketing expert, says one of the biggest benefits of the work space is “creating

community, because isolation is a dream killer.” Her timing couldn’t be better.

Billed as a “coworking space where women connect, create and get stuff done,” HAYVN is a “haven” for freelancers, remote workers or solopreneurs who miss the camaraderie of an office and the resources that come with it. Since opening in May 2019, HAYVN has held over 120 programs and continues to add more, in addition to providing in-house experts and mentors.

“Magic happens when you are in a community, trust people more and hope to share business opportunities,” says Rubinstein. “We are a mixed audience, inclusive of all ages: older mentoring younger, younger helping older and women in transition. The ‘Y’ in HAYVN is for a ‘yes’ mentality. If someone has an idea, we encourage and try to support it.”

Inspired to create HAYVN while listening to a story about WeWork on the “How I Built This” podcast, Rubinstein sought to fill the

void left by flexible workspaces. “A lot of these companies are focusing on Millennials, but no one is focusing on us,” she explains. “Our programs support the obstacles women encounter to keep their career or business on track.”

Located at 320 Boston Post Road in the newly renovated and rebranded Darien Crossing, HAYVN is filled with light and built to inspire. The 7,000-square-foot office features amenities like a fitness center, event space, art gallery, podcast room, organic café and a shared kitchen stocked with coffee and tea. HAYVN offers food from local caterers such as Carolyn’s Absolutely Fabulous Events, Palmer’s Catering, Nit Noi and Corner Harvest. For special events and meetings, members can use these caterers or bring in their own.

Stepping inside, a community manager provides a warm welcome and presides over all-things-HAYVN.



above: The conference room is wired for presentations • HAYVN draws women to share expertise and opportunities.

She might help with memberships and networking events or opine on the café's best homemade scone. Membership packages vary, with work environments ranging from communal tables and dedicated desks to private offices in varying sizes and meeting rooms. Floating and dedicated desks are other options with storage lockers available. Members can also rent rooms designated for meetings, conferences and podcasts on an hourly basis. For incubators and companies wanting to grow, there's space available within the building.

Members appreciate special touches, such as privacy panels on desks. HAYVN also provides connections to healthcare benefits, business counselors, legal experts, fitness professionals, nail salons and nutritionists. Rubinstein's goal is to help women "streamline their life and focus on themselves and their professions." Safety is another critical feature. There's an ample parking lot with easy building access, a security system and 24/7 entry for members with offices.

When asked if HAYVN welcomes male members, Rubinstein responds: "Absolutely! Men can be members too. Our programming is women-centric, but it is totally an inclusive space. That means we're all about welcoming

everyone into our sanctuary."

Rubinstein spent over a year researching the flexible workspace movement—which she says is increasing at an "average annual rate of 23 percent since 2010"—and searching for the perfect location and design for HAYVN to support the "wellness and work-life balance" of her members. Granoff Architects and Workplace Studio were instrumental in designing the space and managing the build out.

By the end of 2019, HAYVN was awarded "Client of the Year" by the Women's Business Development Council (WBDC) and nominated by *Fairfield County Business Journal* as one of the "Thriving Thirty" Best Companies in the county.

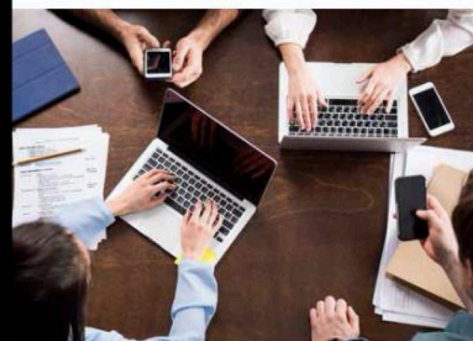
Rubinstein is planning a HAYVN Hatch Capstone—a culmination of all the winners from her popular pitch nights. Sponsored by HAYVN, VentureMom.com and Realist Ventures, these events help women entrepreneurs get funding, exposure and marketing for their businesses.

"Ultimately, when women work in a beautiful space made just for them—where they can come together, collaborate and do great work—a little magic happens," says Rubinstein. "That's HAYVN."



BUSINESS NOW

The space is closed during the health lockdown, with limited access only for people with dedicated desks and private offices. Flex-desk members must contact Felicia for options. You can find updates on its site and through its Instagram posts and stories. You can try its SLACK group and sign up for emails. The VIRTUAL HAYVN COMMUNITY started in March. HAYVN launched HAYVN HALFTIME, for virtual events and gatherings. Tune in at noon for a daily lunch meeting featuring a twenty-minute presentation and a ten-minute question-and-answer period. Also, HAYVN started using the ZOOM teleconferencing platform for virtual events. Initial topics include "Finding Your Day-to-Day Compass in Uncertain Times" and "Getting Emergency Support from the SBA." —Diane Sembrot



above: Shared work spaces can suit small-group meetings, too.

do

IN THEIR WORDS

5 Members of HAYVN on Their Work and Sharing Space



Gregory Papajohn & Suzanne Robitaille

Public Relations, Marketing
& Advisory Services

Gregory Papajohn and Suzanne Robitaille are the husband-and-wife team behind Archie Group, a cooperative of specialists and consultants in public relations, marketing and management. Gregory, who started the company in 2016, dreamed of “working on Main Street in the town where I live” after commuting to Manhattan for nine years. Suzanne was working at an ecommerce startup in the city, but found the commute difficult after their daughter was born. Today, the couple runs Archie Group out of a three-person office at HAYVN.

1 // As a collective with local and virtual employees, how do you utilize your office space?

GP: “We have around twenty consultants, with one-third of them located in Darien and the rest working virtually. HAYVN brings more of our team members face to face and provides a community. The two main seats are for me, the founder, and my wife, Suzanne, who runs the content studio. We reserve the third seat for our consultant pool. It’s great to have a place to accomplish the Three Cs: convene, communicate and build community. They’re so important to our firm’s success.”

2 // Gregory, what led you to start Archie Group?

GP: “I had a classic Jerry Maguire moment back in 2016 while working as the MD at a boutique agency in New York City. I wasn’t feeling great about my work, and I knew I had more to offer in the financial services space. My wife encouraged me to go out on my own, to get back to doing what I love—advising leaders and building reputation capital for their companies. I had a point of view on financial services PR that I wanted to bring to life. And I was looking to create an environment with other like-minded individuals who shared my passions and wanted to create something together.”

3 // How has coworking helped your business?

GP: “I consider Archie a social enterprise, because we’re trying to solve a real issue that women face as they return to the workforce. As a cooperative, we are worker-led. Archie consultants have control of their hours and their projects, and they don’t have to commute or be in an office.”



Katy Kinsella

Natural Products Sales & Marketing

After going on walks with neighbor Felicia Rubinstein, Katy Kinsella was taken by her coworking vision and “the opportunity for women to meet, network, grow and be inspired.” Kinsella, who works for Kerry Group as well as GOpure Pod, worked from home for five years before joining HAYVN.

1 // What is your HAYVN workspace like?

KK: “As a branch member, I have space at any desk or table in the common areas. You can typically find me at the back table along the wall off the kitchen. It’s the perfect spot, as I can see everything going on while being removed enough to stay focused!”

2 // How has coworking helped your business?

KK: “In so many ways! I work for Kerry, a taste and nutrition company. We make a probiotic ingredient, GanedenBC30, that food and beverage companies add to their products for immune and digestive health benefits. I’ve been introduced to a number of contacts within the food and beverage industry through HAYVN. I also help my partner, Kent Atherton, who owns a company that launched the first-ever portable water purifier. It’s called GOpure Pod.”

3 // What is GOpure Pod?

KK: “The Pod removes inorganics, such as chlorine, fluoride, nitrates and nitrites, and heavy metals, from tap water. It fits into any reusable bottle, making it ideal for everyday use. We have GOpure Pod in beverage dispensers at HAYVN. As GOpure grows, I’ve become more involved in signing on local retailers and helping with branding and marketing.”

4 // What’s it like working alongside entrepreneurs?

KK: “The women and men at HAYVN are doers. Everyone is encouraging of each other’s projects and wants to help in any way they can. It truly is a collaborative environment where you want everyone to win. GOpure has been a sponsor of the HAYVN HATCH pitch slams, and it’s amazing to see what people are working on and how creative and passionate they are for what they do. I love being a part of the entrepreneurial environment. There’s an unmatched enthusiasm you feel from a roomful of creative minds, thinkers and executors I love educating and inspiring people and companies to be healthier. Probiotics and water! I’m lucky to love what I do and to be a part of this supportive community. I’m in awe of what Felicia has created and am so grateful to be on the receiving end of her glorious vision.”



Julia Ford & Claudia Wood

Jewelry Brand Owners

Sisters and owners of KVO Collections, Julia Ford and Claudia Wood, create high-quality, unique jewelry at accessible prices—described as “diamond jewelry for women to wear every day.” After finding out about HAYVN, the duo were intrigued and made an appointment. They saw the space before the walls were even up and signed on immediately for a two-person office.

1 // How has coworking helped your business?

JF: “We have the opportunity to talk with other like-minded business owners and gain insight and perspective from them. HAYVN offers seminars and lunch talks in various areas to help your business, and those have been very beneficial. We’ve also made new friends! There is always something going on there, and it’s nice to have a space where we can close our door for quiet and privacy but we can walk out to the common spaces and have people to talk to. One can really feed off the energy in this place.”

2 // What does “KVO” mean?

CW: “KVO are the initials of our mom who died a long time ago—and way too young. She was German and such a beautiful, smart and kindhearted woman who had great style and was forward thinking. Our collection tries to honor her by our style of classic designs with a contemporary twist.”

3 // Have you held any KVO events at HAYVN?

JF: “We’ve had pop-up shopping at HAYVN. We invite other members and businesses to our shopping events, and our customers get excited to experience a new business. Our mission is to use some of our profits to help people with everyday challenges and to support other small businesses. Part of our proceeds go to helping others. We gave money to help families finance adoptions; we bought a braille machine for a blind woman; we purchased computers for disadvantaged children; and we helped someone with medical expenses and car repairs. By donating to small nonprofits and individuals, we can make a big impact.”

4 // Why name jewelry after certain people?

CW: “There are some amazing people we’ve been honored to know in various capacities. They are all badass women and some men who are so special in who they are, how they show up in the world and what they do in their lives. We wanted to highlight them.”