



CT SLRP

Quarterly Newsletter

April 2026

More than just a student loan repayment program.

Celebrating Awardees!

As CT SLRP continues into its second program year, we are proud to recognize the growing number of participants who have already completed their service commitments and successfully paid off the remainder of their qualifying student loan debt. A significant portion of CT SLRP's cohort is projected to finish service in year two with zero outstanding debt, based on repayment trajectories and updated financial verification data.

This accomplishment demonstrates the value of sustained service and the power of long-term workforce development strategies that improve retention across Connecticut's health systems. This milestone represents the transformative impact of CT SLRP—not only for clinicians, but for the communities that rely on their care. *CT SLRP is not just a student loan repayment program.* It is a tool for workforce retention, helping bind highly trained medical professionals to Connecticut and the communities they serve.

To those approaching this exciting moment: if this happens to you, please let our team know as soon as you can. Awardees are always welcome to remain on the CT SLRP "My Portal," continue using our resources, and reach out to our team whenever support is needed. Our goal is to remain a partner to SLRP participants and organizations well beyond the formal term of an award.

Community Engagement

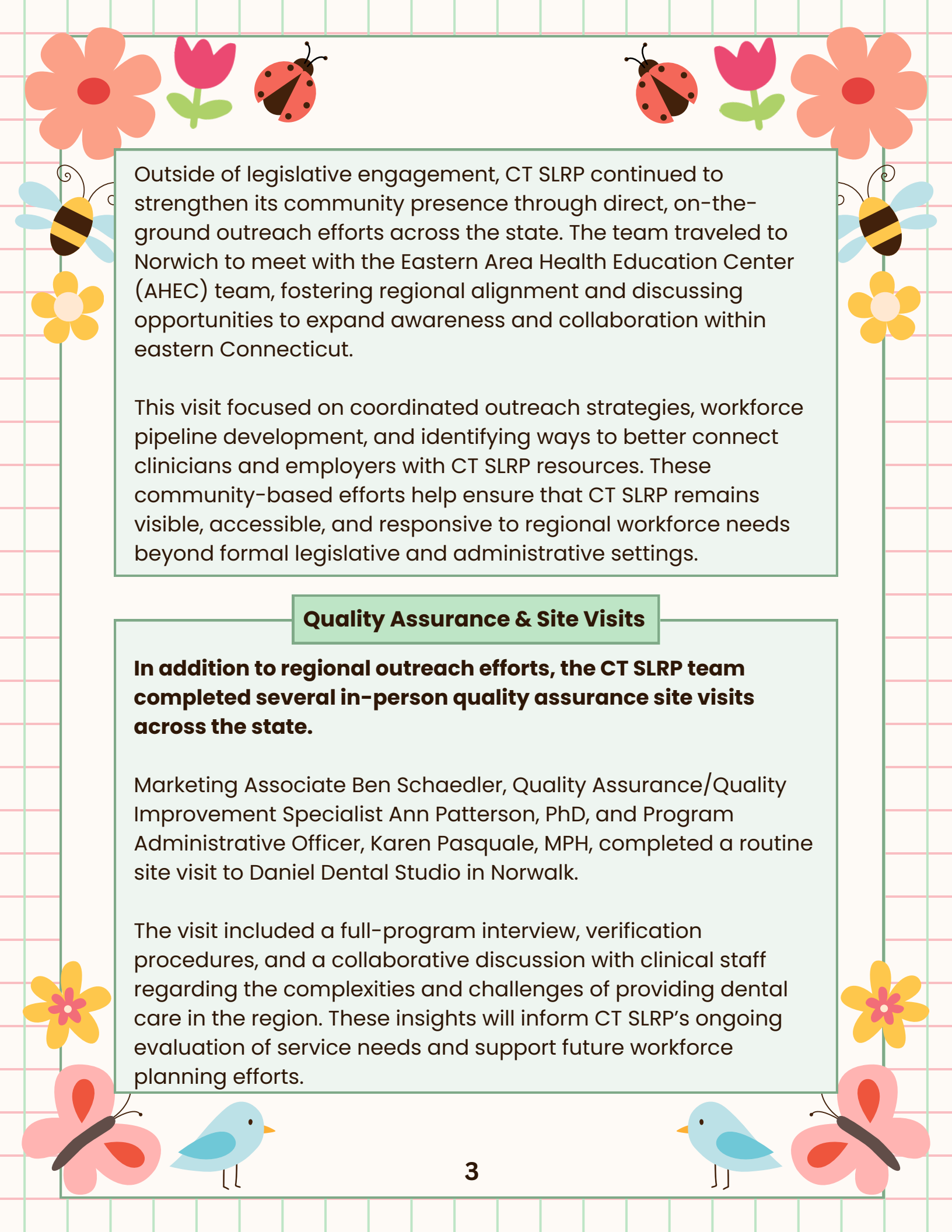
This March, CT SLRP participated in a key moment at the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA), contributing to testimony in support of Senate Bill 85—legislation closely aligned with the program’s statewide reach to strengthen Connecticut’s healthcare workforce pipeline.



Connecticut General Assembly Building in Hartford, CT

Our testimony emphasized the program’s statewide footprint, spanning nurses, dental professionals, primary care clinicians, and behavioral health providers. By highlighting early outcomes from the first cohort, the testimony reinforced how student loan repayment programs directly support recruitment, retention, and long-term system stability in high-need communities.

CT SLRP was proud to stand alongside partners from CHESLA, who delivered testimony of the bill. This alignment reflects a shared commitment to reducing financial barriers for healthcare professionals and expanding Connecticut’s capacity to meet patient needs through coordinated workforce investment.



Outside of legislative engagement, CT SLRP continued to strengthen its community presence through direct, on-the-ground outreach efforts across the state. The team traveled to Norwich to meet with the Eastern Area Health Education Center (AHEC) team, fostering regional alignment and discussing opportunities to expand awareness and collaboration within eastern Connecticut.

This visit focused on coordinated outreach strategies, workforce pipeline development, and identifying ways to better connect clinicians and employers with CT SLRP resources. These community-based efforts help ensure that CT SLRP remains visible, accessible, and responsive to regional workforce needs beyond formal legislative and administrative settings.

Quality Assurance & Site Visits

In addition to regional outreach efforts, the CT SLRP team completed several in-person quality assurance site visits across the state.

Marketing Associate Ben Schaedler, Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Specialist Ann Patterson, PhD, and Program Administrative Officer, Karen Pasquale, MPH, completed a routine site visit to Daniel Dental Studio in Norwalk.

The visit included a full-program interview, verification procedures, and a collaborative discussion with clinical staff regarding the complexities and challenges of providing dental care in the region. These insights will inform CT SLRP's ongoing evaluation of service needs and support future workforce planning efforts.

Building on this momentum, Karen Pasquale conducted an in-person visit with United Community and Family Services (UCFS) in Plainfield on March 26, gaining additional perspective on behavioral health, family-centered care, and service delivery challenges faced by providers in eastern Connecticut. These conversations help ensure CT SLRP remains responsive to workforce needs in both rural and high-need communities.



United Community & Family Services



Daniel Dental Studio

Partner Site Engagement: True Pediatric Dental

The team continued this series of site engagements with a visit to True Pediatric Dental in West Haven on April 2. This visit provided an opportunity to engage directly with pediatric dental providers, review program participation and compliance requirements, and gain a clearer understanding of workforce retention challenges within pediatric specialty practices. The CT SLRP team met with clinical leadership and staff to discuss patient access needs, staffing capacity, and the role loan repayment support plays in promoting long-term provider retention in pediatric dental settings.

Through site visits in Norwalk, Plainfield and West Haven, and in coordination with our regional partner organizations, the team gained valuable insight into oral health disparities affecting children and families in these communities. Providers consistently described growing demand for pediatric dental services, particularly among younger patients, alongside persistent gaps in preventive and long-term oral health education.



The CT SLRP team visiting True Pediatric Dental in West Haven

Clinical partners reported increasing demand for early orthodontic care alongside persistent gaps in awareness and utilization of routine preventive dental services for children. These trends highlight the need for improved alignment between access, patient education, and comprehensive oral health care focused on prevention and long-term outcomes.

Thank you, Amanda!

This spring, our team bids a warm and heartfelt farewell to Amanda Ross, who served as CT SLRP's Administrative Coordinator over the past year. Amanda played an essential role in shaping the efficiency and reliability of our operations during a period of significant program growth.



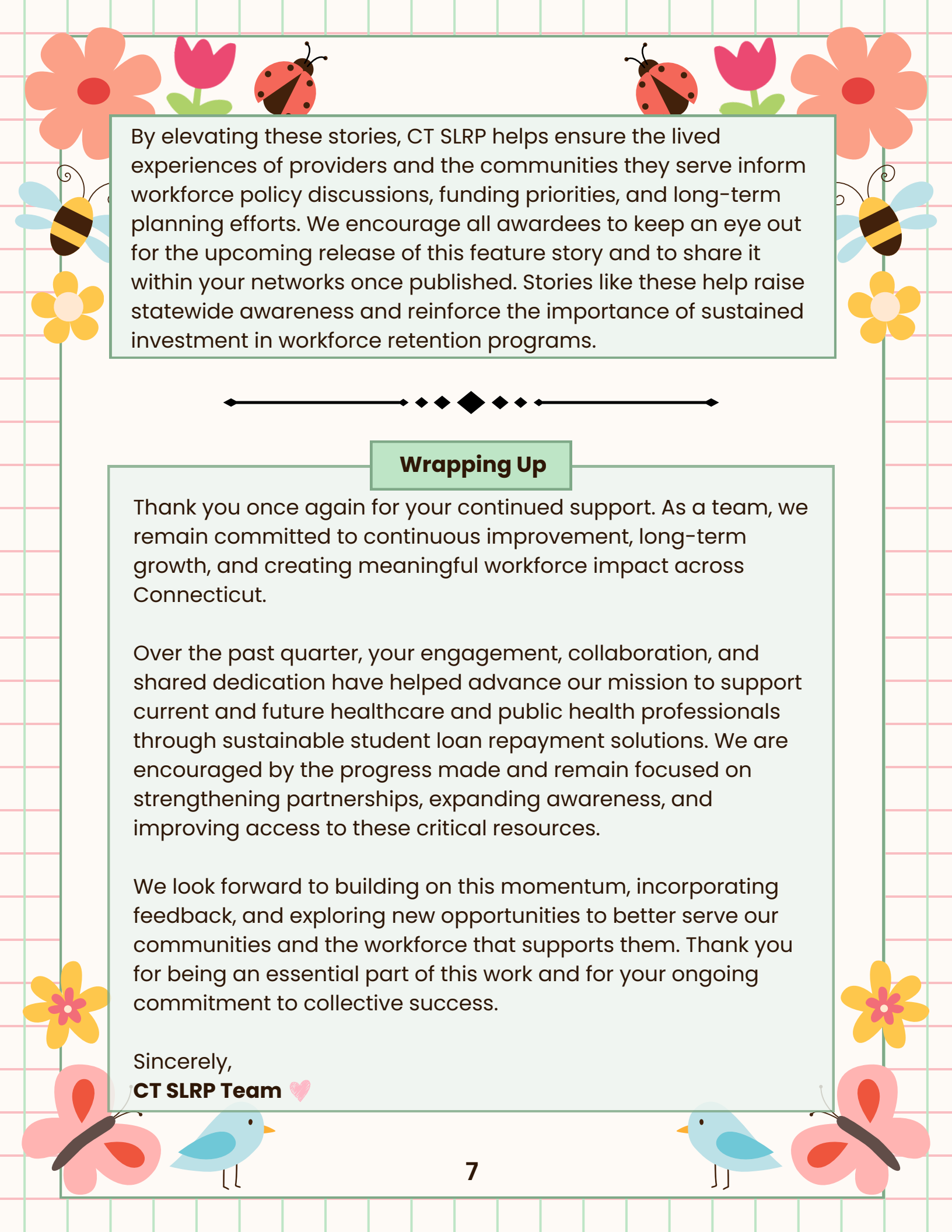
Amanda Ross

During her time with CT SLRP, Amanda served as the primary point of contact for Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) contracting, employee verification (EV) processes, and communication between awardees, supervisors, and human resources partners across our participating organizations.

Her diligence, responsiveness, and organizational clarity helped ensure that clinicians and employers alike had the guidance they needed throughout their award cycle. In addition to her administrative leadership, Amanda was instrumental in maintaining program continuity during a high-volume award period, supporting both internal operations and external partners with professionalism and care. Amanda will be truly missed by the CT SLRP team, and we wish her continued success in this next chapter of her life.

The CT SLRP Story

We are excited to share that *UConn Today* will soon publish a feature story highlighting the work, impact, and mission of CT SLRP. External storytelling plays a key role in building awareness and support for workforce retention initiatives like CT SLRP.



By elevating these stories, CT SLRP helps ensure the lived experiences of providers and the communities they serve inform workforce policy discussions, funding priorities, and long-term planning efforts. We encourage all awardees to keep an eye out for the upcoming release of this feature story and to share it within your networks once published. Stories like these help raise statewide awareness and reinforce the importance of sustained investment in workforce retention programs.



Wrapping Up

Thank you once again for your continued support. As a team, we remain committed to continuous improvement, long-term growth, and creating meaningful workforce impact across Connecticut.

Over the past quarter, your engagement, collaboration, and shared dedication have helped advance our mission to support current and future healthcare and public health professionals through sustainable student loan repayment solutions. We are encouraged by the progress made and remain focused on strengthening partnerships, expanding awareness, and improving access to these critical resources.

We look forward to building on this momentum, incorporating feedback, and exploring new opportunities to better serve our communities and the workforce that supports them. Thank you for being an essential part of this work and for your ongoing commitment to collective success.

Sincerely,
CT SLRP Team 

