

# Off to the races: Greenwich Polo Academy is ready to open up the world of polo to Greenwich's youth

By Susan Shultz

(Ad) As an equestrian his whole life, for Greenwich resident Christian Perry, it was only natural for horses to become a family fixture.

"My son is 11 years old, and my daughter is 10. Polo has always been a presence in our family's life. We have a horse outside right now in my backyard," he said.

As a real estate agent with Sotheby's, Perry even takes clients on town tours in his horse and carriage.

While his son was interested in horses, he wasn't really a fan of horse jumping. But then he was introduced to polo - and was a huge fan. However, despite there being the Greenwich Polo Club in town, Perry had to drive an hour and a half away for his son to participate. This started to become a challenge with everyone's busy schedule.

"That was when I started thinking it was crazy we didn't have a feeder program for polo in town," he said.

Perry started the process two years ago. He partnered with Gardnertown Polo to help bring youth polo programming to Greenwich, secured a location through Peter Brant and the Greenwich Polo Club, and assembled a dedicated board of local parents committed to building a program designed not only to succeed, but to endure for years to come.

And one of the first sponsors was The First Bank of Greenwich.

"I told Bank President Frank Gaudio that was finally happening. And he said, 'I love it.' And thanks to Frank, we have all the materials and equipment," he said.

The First Bank of Greenwich is a lead sponsor of the academy, and Human Resources Manager Paulette Bannon said Gaudio



***"The First Bank of Greenwich was a key component to helping this get off the ground. Without them, it might not have happened," said Greenwich Polo Academy founder Christian Perry, right, pictured with bank president Frank Gaudio.***

is a fervent sponsor of the Greenwich community and its nonprofits.

"This is one of those natural homegrown types of community events, especially since it is for children. And it also supports the Greenwich Riding and Trails Association, which is a very big community around here," she said.

"It is great to be able to participate in something that is new and unique and being introduced into the community. And Christian is certainly well-versed in marketing this kind of concept. He's the perfect spokesman for this wonderful initiative he's created," Bannon said.

"The First Bank of Greenwich was a key component to helping this get off the ground. I need to know that there was support right off the bat, and The First Bank of Greenwich and Frank provided that. Without them, it might not have happened," Perry said.

**First clinic June 19**  
The first clinic of the

Greenwich Polo Academy, which is open to kids aged 5 to 18 (still in school) is June 19.

Players will learn the "ABCs" of polo, including how to hold a mallet and how to ride - no experience on horses needed.

"I am literally buttoning up the insurance, making sure everything is being put together. For me, this is just a passion project, a not-for-profit. I want my son to have his team. That is really the driver," Perry said.

The inaugural Children & Youth Polo Camp will take place on June 19 and will feature two sessions designed for young riders of varying experience levels. Best of all, no prior polo experience is necessary.

As Greenwich Polo Academy grows, The First Bank of Greenwich looks forward to seeing the impact this program will have on local families and the broader community.

In addition to the bank, sponsors include I Love Greenwich, White Birch, and Christian Perry Real Estate.

To learn more and register for the June 19 camp, email [info@greenwichpoloacademy.com](mailto:info@greenwichpoloacademy.com), visit Greenwich Polo Academy @ <https://greenwichpoloacademy.com>, or text 818-321-0539.

## About The First Bank of Greenwich

The First Bank of Greenwich is committed to celebrating the arts and culture of the area and recently committed to partnering with Stamford's Avon Theatre's extensive renovation and road tour.

For more information on The First Bank of Greenwich, visit [greenwichfirst.com](http://greenwichfirst.com).

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