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Director of CACE Kenneth J. Poppe counsels Isabelle Endicott, a 2008 CCSU alumna, who was seeking advice on returning to CCSU to pursue a masters degree.

CACE: Helping CCSU Students from the Start of College to the Start of Careers

Two-years young, the Center for Advising and Career Exploration (CACE) has received good marks on its performance. Data collected from students in the spring of 2011 through administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) showed an 86% satisfaction rate by first-year CCSU students who reported their advising experience as being either good or excellent.

Prior to 2009, first-year student satisfaction with advising was 70%, with the national Carnegie class goal being 80%. "In attaining 86%, as reported during the 2010-11 academic year, we know we're on the right track," says Ken Poppe, CACE director. "Our staff has focused on the goal to provide excellent service for students."

CACE was formed when two separate departments, the Advising Center and Career Services, were merged and moved to Academic

Affairs in July 2009—its purpose being to provide new incoming first-time students with a consistent experience.

CACE offers information on various major/career interests, and encourages involvement in clubs or other campus activities for personal growth and professional development.

In a nutshell, Poppe says, "CACE provides academic and career advising to all first-time students, continuing students who have not declared a major, and those who are seeking advice before changing their major."

Joanna Kacprzyk, an elementary education math major, recalls, "My experience with

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CACE Helps Students

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CACE was very good. I was nervous and scared coming in as a freshman, because I didn't know who to go to for help. Then I met Kim Dumouchel-Cody [advising and career exploration specialist]. She was just the support I needed to help me with the application process."

A Chronology for Consistent Advising Support

From the outset, CACE helps students transition from high school to college by contacting all newly admitted first-time students early in the spring before their first semester at CCSU. These students receive the First-Year Guide in April with specific information on registration. The guide also outlines information related to financial matters, health services requirements, First Year Experience, and more.

CACE hosts new first-time full-time students and their parents at advising and registration sessions in June and July where they receive their preliminary schedule of classes, learn about their curriculum requirements, and have the opportunity to modify their schedule.

CACE advises all first-time students, plus all continuing undeclared students in the Ammon School of Arts and Sciences, from the last week in September until the first of December.

During the second semester, students with a declared major transition to their major department or school-based advising center where they will continue to receive academic advising assistance. CACE advisors continue to work with the undeclared student population through the spring advising period.

"A big chunk of our advising caseload is with continuing students — almost 40 percent

who are undeclared or major change students," explains Poppe. "We help them identify an academic and career direction."

Career Exploration

College freshmen and their parents view a bachelor's degree as a necessary ticket to better jobs and a better life, reflects Poppe. Therefore, CACE offers information on various major/career interests, and encourages involvement in clubs or other campus activities for personal growth and professional development. Students are directed to CACE for workshops and assistance on such topics as resume and cover letter writing, interview skills, job searches, and networking strategies. Faculty invite CACE staff to provide classroom workshops for students, and CACE collaborates with school-based centers on campus to support special events and employer recruiting initiatives.

Students interested in pursuing experiential learning through internships and cooperative education meet with CACE advisors and their faculty advisors to develop a coordinated plan.

CACE provides electronic delivery of a wide variety of academic advising and career resources. These include general education requirements, registration calendars, and links to job listings (part-time, internships, cooperative education, full-time) through Central Connections. Special events, employer visits, career fairs, and a wealth of career resource information may all be found through the CACE website at www.ccsu.edu/CACE.

"We help students transition from high school to CCSU and then from the University to their professional lives," declares Poppe.

— Geri Radacsi



Spring Career Fair

The Center for Advising & Career Exploration (CACE) welcomed nearly 40 employers to campus for the Spring Career Fair, including Cigna, Hebrew Health Care, The Hartford, and Verizon Wireless. CACE also offered career fair preparation sessions, where students were briefed on the importance of first impressions, how to prepare a 20-30 second introduction, and networking strategies. At left, CCSU senior Dan Wolfer (left) talks with Matthew Gaughran (right) of MetLife.

Delia González Sanders Exploring Dementia's Cultural Dimensions

"Alzheimer's is heartbreaking," declares Delia J. González Sanders, LCSW, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Field Coordinator. "I've seen how cruelly it impacts my pre-social work and social work students who struggle as caregivers of close relatives with this affliction." At a personal level, she has felt the wrench of these students keenly. Experiencing the pain of seeing members of her own family deal with dementia propelled her into writing her doctoral dissertation at Smith College titled: *Familismo, Resilience and Problem-Solving in Latino Family Caregivers of Dementia-Afflicted Relatives: An Ethno-Cultural Cross-Sectional Study*.

As the population ages and becomes more culturally diverse, social workers will need to understand dementia through the eyes of each ethnic group.

Just this year, Sanders has co-authored with Richard H. Fortinsky, Ph.D., *Dementia Care with Black and Latino Families: A Social Work Problem-Solving Approach* (Springer Publications, 2012).

Sanders' book provides practical guidance for undergraduate and graduate social work students and professionals, and other health care professionals working with Black and Latino families living with the daily challenges of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. "The book is grounded in the interpretation and meaning of dementia in Black and Latino cultural heritages," explains Sanders, "but this particular modality works for everyone, while providing a concrete step-by-step approach for practitioners. Case studies place the material into real-world situations."

The text also includes a problem-solving practice model and an overview of current and projected demographic and socio-economic trends in the Black and Latino populations in the United States. It provides an overview of the different types of dementia based on current evidence, financial and service delivery trends, and the use of technology affecting social work professionals engaged with the book's target population.

Latoya McCalla, a senior social work major who has taken a number of classes with Sanders, remarks, "I felt Dr. Sanders had written the chapter titled 'Target Problems and Problem-Solving Goals' just for me. Taking classes at CCSU, working full-time, and doing an internship, I was not able to take care of my uncle

who had dementia. The book helped me see that I needed to find him an independent living facility."

Sanders' new book is an additional tool for future social workers on the front line in dealing with this devastating health issue. Her wider research interests include diverse caregivers of Alzheimer's disease and related irreversible dementia; eliminating health disparities among Latinos and other ethnically diverse populations; cultural competence in social work; translating social work research into clinical practice; and examining Latino caregiver problem-solving and resilience. Sanders' joint work with colleagues was part of the symposium "Hispanic Family Caregiving" at the 2010 Gerontological Society of America conference in New Orleans, LA, and another abstract recently submitted to GSA for the November 2012 meeting.

In the classroom, Sanders applies a variety of student-centered learning strategies: training; lecturing and explaining; inquiry and discovery; groups and teams; and experience and reflection. She strives to help students acquire demonstrated competencies in accordance with the educational policy and accreditation standards established by the Council on Social Work Education in 2008. Additionally undergraduate social work students are trained in the National Association of Social Work professional (NASW) "code of ethics" and "standards for cultural competence."

Responding to Conditions on the Ground

When Sanders joined the Department of Social Work in 2007, she was aware of only a couple of her students who had relatives suffering from dementia. Since then, she has seen that number more than triple. Her research is driven by the recognition, she says, that "as America's population ages and becomes more ethnically diverse, there is growing need for social workers to treat not only individuals afflicted with dementia and their families but to also understand this illness through the eyes of different ethnic groups."

— Geri Radacsi



Thomas Delventhal Energizing Theatre



All the world's a stage and CCSU Professor of Theatre Thomas Delventhal revels in playing many creative roles — theatre professor, director, actor — with a flair for coaching stage combat, vocalization, dialects, and improvisation. Add to that, he's a community outreach ambassador spreading entertainment for a purpose.

Delventhal, who holds a BFA in acting from Carnegie Mellon University and MFA in acting and teaching pedagogy from the University of Pittsburgh, says he loves having worked in theater since the 1980s. "Because theatre is in the moment and an imaginative act, it is an energizing experience which I believe is essential to all human beings," he asserts.

Since Delventhal joined the Theatre Department in 1998, he has taught such varied subjects as acting, improvisation, speaking and advanced voice development, combat, and professional preparation. He was managing director of the department from 1998 to 2009. During this time he directed at least one main stage show annually.

There's been a new resonance in Delventhal's creative voice, evident in the last five productions he's directed: *The Birds* (Aristophanes), *The Tempest* (Shakespeare), *The Seagull* (Chekhov), *The Kentucky Cycle* (parts 5 & 6; Robert Schenkan), and now *A Dream Play* (Strindberg). "What these plays demonstrate, I believe, is a trend in my direction towards plays that are about the imaginative fringes of human existence causing people to penetrate into an altered state of reality," explains Delventhal.

In 2008, Delventhal directed *The Tempest* at CCSU and also played Prospero. He is a consummate actor and points out proudly that he is still an active member of Actors' Equity Association, the professional actor's union. In 1997 his portrayal of Marc Antony in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* for Pittsburgh's Quantum Theatre earned him a "Best Performance" honor in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's "Best of '97" year-end theatre review. He performed many roles at The Three Rivers Shakespeare Festival, The City Theatre, and The Pittsburgh Public Theatre.

What favorite method spurs his creativity as a director and actor? "In either of those roles, I ask a lot of questions: Why am I here? What am I doing? What's inspired me? Do I understand my real intentions? This technique produces a more nuanced and layered product. I'm interested in being engaged to the depth, not only at the surface."

Literal engagement comes with being a fight coach. "I found fight scene opportunities a means of surviving as a starving actor," he laughs. He prospered doing choreographed staged violence in shows at Carnegie Mellon, The City Theatre, The Three Rivers Shakespeare Festival, The Pittsburgh and Boston Ballet companies, The Metropolitan Opera, The Juilliard School, The Hartford Stage Company, and others.

Delventhal acted in, directed scenes, and coached dialects for *Mystic Voices*, a documentary on the Pequot Wars, which aired on CPTV. He co-wrote and performed in *The Nearly Famous Death Lazzo of Edmund* and created a completely new adaptation of Aristophanes' *The Birds* through improv.

Adding deeper meaning to the term community theatre, Delventhal created the annual "Improv Olympix," an evening of improvisational comedy referred to as "Laugh with Purpose" which benefits the AIDS Project of Hartford and the New Britain Stop Homelessness project. This initiative includes marathon improv competitions held in high schools throughout Connecticut. The winner performs with Laugh with Purpose.

Ever eager to explore ways to channel the excitement theatre can generate, Delventhal has been collaborating with Associate Professor Barbara Clark and Assistant Professor James French, both in Teacher Education. "We've discussed how our respective curricula can overlap so that some of my improv students visit education classes and vice versa," says Delventhal. This cross-fertilization encourages education students to learn the "performance" aspect of teaching, and the theatre students to explore the possibilities of teaching as a profession.

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— Geri Radacsi



Networking Reception Honors Educational Leaders

CCSU's Department of Educational Leadership and the Alumni Association held a networking reception in March, honoring nine award-winning educational leaders. Connecticut Commissioner of Education Stefan Pryor was the keynote speaker and recognized the Central alumni for their excellence in teaching. This year's honorees, shown above, were: back row, left to right, Richard Therrien, Ann Carabillo, Michael Foran, Steven Wysowski, James Quinn; front row, left to right, Zato Kadambaya, Leona Clerkin, Lucille Ditunno, Sally Biggs.

Scholarship recipient Alyssa Mazzarella (right) with CCSU librarian and chair of the scholarship committee Emily Chasse.



Women's History Month

The Women's History Month Luncheon welcomed keynote speaker Julia Chase-Brand (above, right), who is considered "the first true American woman road racer." Chase-Brand defied convention in 1961 when she was the first woman to run in the Manchester Road Race, and ran again last year on the 50th anniversary of her first run. In 1996, at age 53, a grandmother of two, she became the oldest person to receive a medical degree at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University in the Bronx.

Senior **Alyssa Mazzarella**, a biomolecular science major, was awarded the Ruthe Boyea Scholarship during the luncheon. Said CCSU librarian and chair of the scholarship committee **Emily Chasse**, "Alyssa was the perfect candidate for the Ruth Boyea Scholarship. She clearly sees the importance of women's health and has a special interest in helping women maintain a healthy lifestyle."

Community Research Course Engages Sociology Students with Real World Experiences

One of the most important facets of any college course is that it offers students the ability to gain real world knowledge that can be applied beyond the walls of the classroom. This was paramount when the Sociology Department at CCSU began brainstorming for new course ideas, and what emerged was the undergraduate course **Community Research**.

Associate Professor of Sociology Beth Merenstein, who taught and coordinated the project in the fall 2011 semester, stated, "We wanted to get our students to do more service learning and community engagement work, and gain a stronger connection to real world experiences. It's important to be graduating and really understand what some of the possibilities are that you can do with a major in Sociology."

The program is split into two courses that are taken concurrently and are worth four credits each — which might seem like a large number when compared to a typical three-credit course — but the level of work and commitment involved surpasses most courses.

Last fall, students conducted research for the non-profit organization Middlesex Coalition on Housing and Homelessness in Middletown. The organization had awarded small grants to low-income individuals and families who had experienced immediate crises that could lead to homelessness, such as their car breaking down, prohibiting them from getting to work. The students interviewed the recipients of these grants in order to determine the success of the funding. "The idea was that the students would do research for non-profit organizations out in the community that don't have the time or resources to do it on their own," Merenstein said.

Merenstein and Hans Mudén, one of the students from the class who went on to intern in the field, are in the process of analyzing the research and data collected during the course. Mudén had only positive things to say about

his experiences. "This course encouraged me to step outside of my normal comfort zone and realize some of my own strengths and weaknesses as an interviewer and a researcher, and has helped me to realize my full potential as a sociology student." For Mudén, the course served as an introduction to many opportunities he would not have known existed.



Associate Professor of Sociology Beth Merenstein reviews data collected by her students as part of the Community Research course.

In addition to the hands-on investigative work and reporting, students were tasked with more conventional classroom responsibilities like keeping journals and writing final reflection papers, which all added up to one of the best experiences Merenstein and her students have had at CCSU. "It was definitely the most rewarding class I've ever taught, and I've been teaching for over 15 years. To see the students who just soared with this level of learning — as if they had just been waiting for this kind of connection between the real world and what they've been learning in class — was extremely rewarding for me and for them." Some students, like Mudén, were so engrossed by the project that they chose to continue their education in similar fields. Merenstein explained, "One student from the class is continuing to work on the project this semester, two of the students from the class are doing internships in that field because of it, and four of the students are doing their capstone projects based on that course."

Merenstein hopes to establish the course as a regular part of the curriculum. The topic for the fall semester has already been decided. "We'll be working at a homeless shelter that's interested in understanding what makes some clients more successful than others; why some people are able to leave and never go back, and yet some tend to be chronic users. The shelter is trying to understand their own resources, why they're able to help some people but not others." Students will conduct interviews with clients and use the collected data to help evaluate the effectiveness of the shelter.

— Adam Saucier

In the field: Columbus House Family Shelter Director Dave Shumway (left) addresses community members and students from the Community Research class outside the shelter in Middletown.





School of Business Lecture Series Hosts James K. Galbraith

Professor of Government at the University of Texas at Austin, James K. Galbraith (left) presented his lecture, "Inequality and Instability" as part of The American Savings Foundation Endowed Chair in Banking and Finance Distinguished Lecture Series. Galbraith is the author of several books; writes a column for *Mother Jones*, a non-profit news organization that specializes in investigative, political, and social justice reporting; is a senior scholar of the Levy Economics Institute at Bard College; and chair of the Board of Economists for Peace and Security, a worldwide professional network. The lecture was sponsored by CCSU's School of Business.



Warshauer Receives Award for Distinguished Scholarship and Innovative Teaching

The New England History Teachers Association (NEHTA) recently honored Professor of History **Matthew Warshauer** with the Kidger Award for Distinguished Scholarship and Innovative Teaching. The Kidger Award is NEHTA's highest honor and has been earned by many of the nation's top historians. Warshauer was recognized for his scholarship on Jacksonian America, his recent research on Connecticut and the Civil War, and for his coordination and outreach of Connecticut's 150th anniversary Civil War remembrance activities. Presenting the award to Warshauer (center) are Awards Chair Keith Dauer (left) and NEHTA President Amy George (right).

"Burka" Presentation Explores Cultural Tradition

In March, the Ruthe Boyea Women's Center sponsored the photographic exhibit and lecture, "Demystifying the Burka." The presentation, by photographer Nilofer Qaiser-Haider, who is originally from Pakistan, explained the purpose of a burka, worn by women and pubescent girls when outside of the home as a form of modest dress. The event was meant to give a voice to the many women who wear burkas, and to present information about the often misunderstood Muslim religion.

Student in the Spotlight:

Benjamin Kegler Man Enough Initiative

Studies have shown that across the nation, males are entering college in lower numbers, earning lower grades, dropping out more frequently, transferring less successfully, and graduating at lower rates. This trend concerns Benjamin Kegler, a second-year student studying biomolecular science (BMS) with a minor in psychology. Kegler's involvement with the CCSU Man Enough Support Initiative (MESI) gives him a platform to motivate, and be motivated by, other men who want to reshape the current trends. In short, Kegler likes to follow through and finish what he's started, and he knows how to get it done, with grace.

Kegler embraces hard work with a meditative perspective. "One thing that I've realized is there's always going to be a lot of work to do, but if I just relax and keep pushing through, instead of stressing over when things are going to get done, I don't get nervous and it really helps," he says about his full course load at Central. Last semester Kegler carried 18 credits, practiced with the track team, and participated in three clubs.

As a MESI member, Kegler says he "benefits from connections with other men who want to achieve success in school." Kegler's father, a huge influence on his relentless work ethic, passed away when he was 16. "My dad was always working to support our family. He was a dental technician and worked overtime when he could. When he wasn't working he was fixing something or improving something around the house. He was always accomplishing some task, and that inspired me to do the same." Now Kegler can share his father's influence in the Man Enough community.

"Kegler is a scholar and a gentleman. He is a very compassionate young man who has a genuine interest and concern for the well-being of others."

Assistant Counselor William Fothergill, director of MESI, says, "The initiative was developed to address the health, retention, and graduation needs of college men. We believe that a successful student is a healthy student." Man Enough members have a 95% graduation rate. According to Fothergill, "The group explores topics like violence, professionalism, manhood and masculinity, relationships, emotions, education, and fatherhood." Fothergill quotes one of MESI's members saying, "Our main focus is not to develop a men's center, but to develop centered men."



Kegler is one of MESI's centered men. Fothergill says, "Kegler is a reserved, healthy example of a scholar and a gentleman. He is a very compassionate young man who has a genuine interest and concern for the well-being of others. As he learned more about the graduation disparities between college men and women, he has volunteered his time to reach out and support his fellow classmates. Mr. Kegler is a living example of what Man Enough is all about."

One of Kegler's most satisfying achievements at Central is the completion of a 6-credit course designed to train and prepare students to become certified emergency medical technicians. Since Kegler's interview for this profile, he has become nationally certified as an EMT. "You get to interact with patients, and provide interventions to help them." Kegler sees EMT work as an initiation into his long-term goal of being a medical doctor. He also plans to shadow several doctors to gain early experience for medical school.

On campus Kegler can be found sharing motivational words with other Man Enough members, doing homework in the library and James Hall computer lab, and doing independent research in the BMS department working with gene expression in zebra fish. As for his heavy course load, which will soon include writing his thesis for the Honors Program, Kegler says, "I have always worked hard; I believe it is more important than being naturally smart, because everything in life takes work and the more work I put in, the better results are achieved."

– Kate Callahan

Student in the Spotlight:

Inez Vera Passion and Commitment

Inez Vera always knew she wanted to pursue a post-secondary degree, but as a first generation college student, she was not sure where to go to school. She chose CCSU for two reasons: her family and the Latino Connecticut College Access Success (ConnCAS) Program.

Without the support of her loved ones, Vera would not be who she is today. A self-described military brat who moved around constantly, Vera says, "We were a paycheck-to-paycheck type of family and my mom always joked that we weren't rich in money, but we were rich in love. Making my parents proud, and my family proud, is just something that's always motivated me." For Vera, Central was close to home, but far enough away for an independent college experience.

The Latino ConnCAS Program gives students who aren't prepared for post-secondary education a chance to gain regular admission and to acclimate to college-life for five weeks before their freshman year. This program offered Vera the opportunity to attend Central, and later allowed her to work as a counselor and mentor to other Latino students as they began their college careers.

Vera's success is a great source of pride for Professor of Psychology Francisco Donis, the director of the Latino ConnCAS program. "Inez is really a wonderful person. I was amazed at all the things that Inez did in such a short time and still was able to maintain academic excellence. Inez mentored and helped many students, becoming a true leader in the process. I am sure that Inez's positive influence will be felt for many years to come."

When an offensive cartoon, targeting women and Latinos, was printed in *The Recorder*, Vera was inspired to get involved. Her participation in protests against the cartoon led her to become an active member of The Latin American Student Organization (LASO). She served on the executive board for three years, as secretary, vice president, and then president. With LASO, she volunteered with community service projects, including annual participation in Park Street Cleanup in Hartford and working with students in the Pathway/Senderos afterschool program in New Britain.

The list of faculty and staff whom Vera considers mentors seems endless. She and Associate Professor of Sociology Elizabeth Kaminski have a particularly good relationship. "When Inez was a first-year student in my introductory sociology class, I was struck by her passion for learning and her willingness to speak her mind. Not only did she excel as a student, but also she demonstrated a commitment to social justice issues on campus and in the community. Whether it was taking a challenging course, pursuing an internship at the American School for the Deaf, or serving as President of LASO, Inez took every opportunity to learn something new and to apply her skills to help others."



After signing up for an American Sign Language (ASL) class on a whim, Vera interned at the American School for the Deaf. This experience led to a passion and a desire to try new things. But not everything about Vera's college career was enjoyable.

During two of her undergraduate years, her mother was faced with serious medical issues. Because Vera is so family-oriented, she considered dropping out of school and moving home to care for her mother. With the support of her family and many mentors, she was able to continue her studies, and in May of 2011, she received her undergraduate degree in sociology with a minor in psychology.

Today Vera is working toward her master's of science in counselor education with a specialization in student development in higher education. Along with her classes, Vera has a two-year internship with the Student Activities and Leadership Development Office, which pays her tuition in full. Working as a program advisor, she oversees over 20 clubs on campus. Next year, she will work for Student Center Operations. After earning her master's, Vera plans to get her Ph.D. and to continue her studies in ASL.

"Not only does Inez excel as a student, but also she demonstrates a commitment to social justice issues on campus and in the community."

Vera's commitment to serving others has been widely recognized. During her senior year she received the President's Citation and recently received a YWCA Women and Leadership Award. She considers these awards, and every opportunity that she has had at Central, a blessing. Vera has one recommendation for students: to take a class that they normally wouldn't have; it may lead to amazing opportunities.

– Alayna James

Student Athlete in the Spotlight:

Aaron Radden On Track for Success

When CCSU junior Aaron Radden runs on the track, his passion for the sport is as readily apparent as his athletic prowess. What originally began as a warm-up for running cross country has turned into something much more.

"In high school, I originally ran cross country and I did track just for conditioning purposes; I ended up being good at it," says Radden. "Now it's my main sport and I love it."

Radden has been on the track team for the three years that he's been at CCSU, and his list of accomplishments is demonstrative of his exceptional dedication. He was the Men's Most Valuable Performer at the 2010 Northeast Conference Championships; at the 2011 NEC Indoor Championships, Radden won first place in both the 100 and 200 meter sprints; he won the 60 meter event and placed third in the long jump at the 2011 Yale Collegiate Invitational; and since the beginning of 2010 he has competed in over 30 indoor and outdoor competitions, earning high marks in all of them.

"Aaron Radden is a leader. He is not an excellent student and athlete by accident. He puts in long hours, organizes his time wisely, and thinks deeply about his training regimen and his class material."

"Aaron is one of the hardest workers I have ever been around. He continues to improve and excel at not only the 200 meter, but all of his events. He is a fine representative of the University," states head coach for CCSU men's and women's cross country and track teams Eric Blake.

Of all his accomplishments, Radden's appearance at the NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships in March stands out above the



rest. He says, "Seven years of dedication, hard work, and sacrifice finally paid off with an NCAA Division I appearance." His hard work led to NCAA All-American second team honors after he finished tenth overall. The road that led to the competition wasn't easy, but Radden's determination and the support of his coaches earned him the coveted spot.

"Freshman year I missed a spot in the championships by one place – that hurt a lot," Radden says. "After that, I sat down with the coaches, and we made the goal this year to run a national qualifying time, which I just happened to run a week before nationals. That was something special."

To the ever humble Radden, the athletic accolades don't matter as much as the personal and academic accomplishments he has achieved and the connections he has made in the CCSU community. A psychology major with a focus on couples therapy and family relations, Radden balances an intense practice schedule with a full course load, while excelling at both.

One of Radden's most influential instructors, Assistant Professor of Psychology Jason Sikorski ("Dr. J," as Radden affectionately calls him), had only glowing things to say about Radden as a student and a person. "Aaron Radden is a leader. He is not an excellent student and athlete by accident. He puts in long hours, organizes his time wisely, and thinks deeply about his training regimen and his class material. In short, Aaron is a very rare type of student who thinks critically

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Man Enough Awards Presented

On March 8 the CCSU campus community celebrated the Man Enough Support Initiative's Student Achievement Awards. Man Enough is a program of the Counseling and Wellness Center and operates in collaboration with the Office of Recruitment and Admissions, and the Africana University Success Program. The following honorees received the Ebenezer D. Bassett Achievement Medal in recognition of their demonstrated efforts to reach their personal potential: **Bilal Afolabi, Eric Bergenn, Philip Burnham, Noah Cass, Adamski Celestin, Boris Chevannes, Elvis Chidozie, Javier Fernandez, Robin Gagne, Ricardo Gibson, Raul Gomez, Matthew Heck, Benjamin Kegler, Andrew Klein, Joseph Lalanne, Andrew Nave, Dannel Petgrave, Francisco Ramirez** (pictured), **Christopher Richard, Zachary Roy, Thomas Russell, and Anhor Salih.**



Dorm Students Volunteer in DC

Fifty-two CCSU dormitory residents traveled to Washington DC for the last weekend of March to participate in a recycling project at the National Cherry Blossom Festival and Road Race. The students worked with the park ranger of the National Mall to collect bottles and cans and sort trash. The trip was coordinated by Resident Assistant **Jeff Labonte**, and led by the Resident Director of Carroll Hall **Robert Jost** and Associate Director of Residence Life **Ryan Baumann**.

Aaron Radden

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about things he learns in psychology so that he can really use these definitions and concepts to help other people."

Unlike many student athletes, Radden took the initiative to seek out CCSU without any prior scholarships or grants, and with the guidance and support of his family, he gained admittance. "One huge inspiration for me was my Uncle William. If it weren't for him, I probably wouldn't be running track here. He stood up for me and gave me a lot of opportunities, and I'm really thankful for that," says Radden.

In the Athletic Department, Radden has found a network of friends and teammates that inspire him to constantly push himself to be a better person on and off the track. Running for the track team not only gives him personal satisfaction but allows him to stand for a group of people that really matter to him. "To be able to go to Nationals and say 'I'm representing these people' is really important. They're some of the best people I've met in my life and I'll probably know them for the rest of my life. I consider them family."

– Adam Saucier

Grant Fuels Geology Professor's Research

Exploration for natural gas reserves in Pennsylvania is booming, and Associate Professor of Physics and Earth Sciences Mark Evans will be in the middle of it all thanks to a three-year, \$65,000 grant from the American Chemical Society Petroleum Research Fund.

In June, Evans and eight of his students will travel to the central Appalachian Mountains and the Marcellus Shale gas reservoir to study the flow of ancient fluid (oil, gas, and water). For six weeks, they will collect data on rock fracture orientation and mineral samples found in these fractures. The deep crevices once controlled the migration of natural gas, and so, their orientation is important. Likewise, the types of minerals found in the fractures are significant because they will divulge the liquid types trapped inside the rocks for millions of years.

Much of Evans' data will be gathered using microthermometry, a technique that involves studying miniscule bubbles of fluid, or fluid inclusions, trapped in minerals. These bubbles will reveal how and when liquids passed through the rocks and will uncover the location of similar fluids today, thus aiding energy companies in their quest for natural gas. Fluid inclusion samples have already been taken by Evans and one of his co-authors, undergraduate geology student Jeremy Leo.

The fluid inclusions will also aid in understanding the formation of the Appalachian Mountain chain 280 million years ago. Evans will be the first to 'retro-deform' the high-folded rocks of the mountains, essentially revealing what they looked like before they were crumpled. This folding of the rocks caused continuous changes in the composition, temperature, and pressure of ancient fluids. Evans is confident that his research will not only expose how these changes occurred, but will also answer other geological questions.

For Evans, this work is a passion. "I love working in the Appalachians, there are so many neat geological puzzles to solve," he says. He decided to focus his study on the central Appalachians for several reasons. First, he has been researching the area for 25 years and wanted to "develop a complete picture of the geological evolution of the area." Second, it is a "classic mountain belt," he says, meaning that whatever knowledge is gained in Pennsylvania will be applicable to other mountain belts worldwide. Finally, this area holds the Marcellus Shale, one of the top ten natural gas fields in the world, containing enough fuel to supply the US for decades.

His grant-funded research will bring new opportunities to his classroom. "It will certainly provide me with additional experiences to bring to my students and I will be able to develop new lab exercises for my structural geology class. It will also give me many new sites for taking my students on field trips."

Another benefit of the grant, according to Evans, is that he will be able to provide at least eight undergraduate students with research projects over the next three years. "These students will then be able to present this research at professional meetings," he adds.

Preliminary results from the research project will be presented at the Geofluids VII 2012 International Conference at the French Institute of Petroleum in Rueil-Malmaison, France in June.

— Alayna James



In the field, Evans (second from left) instructs Earth Science majors Carolyn Roberts, Stephanie Dansro, and Christopher Conant how to read a geologic map and interpret local geology.

Long-overdue Public Safety Building Construction Begins

• 13

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The Central Connecticut State University Public Safety Building, a construction project proposed more than 20 years ago, broke ground on April 12 at the hands of CCSU President Jack Miller, Board of Regents President Robert Kennedy, Department of Administrative Services Commissioner Donald DeFronzo, and several other special guests.

The ceremony took place at the new structure's building site—a rarely used commuter parking lot at the corner of East and Wells streets on the campus' eastern edge.

"To see this project finally moving forward—to see it actually happening—is really encouraging all of us in our work," President Miller told the audience, as he recited a litany of efforts to keep the project alive over the years. He thanked Chief of Administrative Services Richard Bachoo for his "ability to persevere and to keep the project moving."

The current police station consists of an old, two-story house and a mobile home that was put into use 30 years ago as, what was supposed to be, a temporary facility.

"We've got to give credit to the Police Department staff and their professionalism in making do with the deplorable conditions for so long, and I want to thank Police Chief Jason Powell for his leadership in keeping the morale of his team at a high level. Their work is tremendous," Miller said.

His statement is backed up by the fact that satisfaction surveys of CCSU students, faculty, and staff routinely applaud the police department for the security and services it provides. "So to provide them with a new home—the workspace to do the caliber of work and investigation we need them to do and to provide them with new and improved technology—only seems reasonable," the president said.

DeFronzo, whose Department of Construction Services is overseeing every step of the project, told the assembled crowd that the new police station meets the public's safety needs and those of the University. "This is progress in our community that we should celebrate," DeFronzo said.

Architects specializing in police facility design have conducted space-needs assessments indicating a clear need for the new 12,600-square-foot structure—more than double the space provided by the current police station.

The new building will provide better accommodations for students in need—both victims of crime and those accused of crime—to be

interviewed and to be attended to, in a far more appropriate space where their rights can be protected. It will provide badly needed space to accommodate CCSU's security technology and its communications center; and the building's location offers easy access for both police and visitors conducting business on campus.

The \$6 million construction cost is funded through general obligation bonds.

President Miller heartily thanked Governor Dannel

Malloy for his support in funding and moving the project ahead and for making the rebuilding of state university campuses one of his priorities. This is the second major construction project underway at CCSU. Last fall, the new Academic Building broke ground and is now about 14 months from completion. The new Police Station won't be far behind; it is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2013.

The architect for the project is ID3A, LLC of Glastonbury and handling the construction is W.J. Mountford of South Windsor. DeFronzo, who lives very close to the site, said his daily commute by the site will ensure the project stays on schedule.

— Janice Palmer



Signaling the start of construction for CCSU's new Public Safety Building, President Jack Miller (second from right) is joined in the groundbreaking, on April 12, by President of the Board of Regents Robert Kennedy, Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services Donald DeFronzo, State Senator Terry Gerratana (6th District), CCSU Police Chief Jason Powell, and Chief Administrative Services Richard Bachoo. (Photograph: Rob Heyl)

The architect's rendering of the new Public Safety Building, below.



Everyone's Learning Something New CCSU's Early Learning Program Welcomes Tots, Instructs Students



Luis, a student at CCSU's Early Learning Program, proudly displays the airplane he built.

With the weekend behind them, the 26 children in CCSU's Early Learning Program were very excited to take on a few new Monday-morning projects.

Nayaomi was making a very gooey birthday cake out of flour. Selina was fishing at the water table. And Luis was building a colorful airplane based on something he'd seen in a movie.

The Early Learning Program (ELP), which primarily serves students from ages three to five, is located less than a quarter mile from campus, at 1285 East Street. Nationally accredited, the child-care center gives priority admission to the children of CCSU faculty, staff, and students.

It also provides a place where future teachers, nurses, child psychologists, and social workers can gain first-hand knowledge of child development, under close supervision by the program's staff.

President of the ELP Advisory Board and Professor of Sociology Fiona Pearson said because the program isn't located on campus, many parents are unaware that it exists.

"Not enough CCSU students, faculty, and staff know about this amazing campus resource," Pearson said. "The Early Learning Program's director and her strong team of teachers have created a playful and nurturing educational environment, where children learn while their CCSU parents work, study, or teach nearby."

Professor of Physical Education and Human Performance Jan Bishop sends CCSU students to the center to test the gross motor development of the children.

"Our PE majors are watching the kids kicking, running, and throwing. They are learning to assess students' skills," she said. "It is a tremendous experience. We love going over there!"

CCSU junior Kathryn Carbone has spent about 30 hours volunteering at the center this year, to meet the requirements of a social work class. Carbone, who plans to be a child psychologist, said she appreciated the experience, since the only child she sees regularly is her three-year-old niece.

"When you put children in a group, they act completely differently from the way they are alone," she said. "Some kids will try anything to get attention, while others shy away."

"It gave me an experience I hadn't had before. I figured it wasn't going to be as hard as it was," Carbone said.

"Not enough CCSU students, faculty, and staff know about this amazing campus resource, where children learn while their CCSU parents work, study, or teach nearby."

The Early Learning Program, Inc. is accredited by the prestigious National Association for the Education of Young Children. To qualify, the pre-school must meet some 400 criterion. (To see a video about the program, visit www.ccsu.edu/elp.)

"Our relationship with the university is one of the things that attracts parents," said Director Talhaht Mannan. The highly qualified staff is assisted by many students, providing a great deal of attention for each child.

"The CCSU students are learning and bonding with our students," she said. "Only four college students are allowed to observe or volunteer at one time. Their arrival is usually celebrated by the young children."

Mannan, the director for almost five years and the mother of five adult sons, has very clear expectations for the program.

"Our goal is to make sure these children are socially and emotionally ready for school," she said. "Here, they develop problem-solving skills. They know how to share and they know how to wait their turn. They know how to follow the rules."

"They've realized that Mommy is not deserting them, that she will come back, and in the meantime, they can play with other children," she said. "Then, when they get to kindergarten, they have the skills they need to concentrate on learning."

The two colorfully decorated classrooms in the program include water and sand tables, arts and crafts, a computer (limited to 20 minutes a day), science and math centers, and a quiet cubby.

The Early Learning Program has a carefully designed curriculum with daily skill goals and heavy emphasis on literacy and language development. Yet the curriculum

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CCSU's Early Learning Program will have an Open House on May 30 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Children are welcome, and light refreshments will be served. For more information on the Open House or the program, call 860-827-7018 or visit www.ccsu.edu/elp.

isn't rigid. During a recent field trip to Indian Rock Preserve in Bristol, the children were fascinated with baby animals. So the staff modified their lessons to incorporate information and activities about animals.

"We have the attitude 'What do you want to learn today?'" Mannan said. "The interests of the children guide our curriculum."

Some 32 families have children at the ELP, attending either full- or part-time. The Early Learning Program can accommodate 26 children, and accepts special-needs children. Scholarships are available for CCSU students' children, as well as state-funded, sliding scale fees for New Britain residents.

"We help CCSU students in any way we can," said Mannan, who spends a considerable amount of time applying for grants and funding. She said she is grateful to many companies, large and small, that have donated materials or services to the program.

The Early Learning Program provides breakfast, lunch, and all snacks for the children. Children don't have to be potty-trained to attend, and the center boasts a 30-day success rate transitioning from diapers to bathroom.

"We've never advertised the program, and we've always had a waiting list," Mannan said. She credits her staff for the program's success.

"Our teachers are educated in caring for young children and are passionate about it," she said. The Early Learning Program is governed by a CCSU advisory board and parent advisory committee, and is self-supporting.

In addition to English and Spanish, staff members speak Polish and Arabic. "We believe in keeping the children's culture and language alive," Mannan said.

There is also an after-school program which currently serves four students. That program has tremendous demand, but not enough room to accept more students.



Monica Bidoae, a teacher's assistant in CCSU's Early Learning Program, watches Nayaomi make a "cake" out of flour and water. The students did the activity after reading a story about a man who made himself a cake.

Professor of Social Work Delia González Sanders has been on the Board since 2008. Her sophomore and junior students volunteer five hours a week at a child-care center, and Early Learning Program is their top choice.

"They learn to work with diverse children and families, they support the teaching staff and the director, and can get educational information to the families," she said.

Sanders is a proponent of helping to support single-parent students who need child care.

"I've had people bring infants to class because at the last minute their child-care fell through," she said. "If we are going to be supportive of parents in college, we need to do more to provide for family needs."

Professor of Psychology Laura Levine said she thinks the Early Learning Program is beneficial for all: "The young children there are thriving, and my students are learning all about the stages of development."

– Claire LaFleur Hall

CCSU Students Present at the Columbia TESOL Conference

Eight graduate students from CCSU's TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) program presented their work at New York State's 33rd Annual Applied Linguistics Winter Conference at Columbia University in February. The presentations stemmed from Assistant Professor of Linguistics **Seunghun Lee's** TESOL Research Methods course. From left to right: **Lee, Jonathan Hennessy, Kelly Welch, Deborah Durant, Katherine Prigodich, Erin Moser, Richelle Pinette, Patricia Morin, and Christine Ward.**



Global Environmental Sustainability Symposium

Global Environmental Sustainability Action Coalition (GESAC) Chair and Associate Professor of Geography Charles Button welcomed children, students, and the public to the Fifth Annual Global Environmental Sustainability Symposium in March.

This year's topic, "Global Food, Farming, and Sustainability," was supported by events that addressed concerns about pollution from petroleum-based pesticides and herbicides, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and human-induced climate destabilization.

This year, approximately 600 people attended the various events held throughout the day-long symposium. Over 100 people listened to keynote speaker and founder of Edibles Advocate Alliance Emily Brooks at the luncheon (see related article at right). In the evening, the Town Hall meeting began with

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Commissioner Dan Esty's lecture on Connecticut energy and environmental policies related to food and agriculture. The talk was followed by a question and answer session with the 140-member audience.

Other events included the interactive puppet show, "Fernando's Farm," presented by the Hispanic Health Council; documentary films; and an Eco-Fair with presentations by CCSU students and professors.

Button, who is the father of two boys, says that he organizes these symposiums because he wants his kids to "have a world with clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and healthy food to eat. A world with abundant, diverse plant and animal life. A life that is economically and socially just."

"Orange-cha Glad You're Not a Cheeto?"

One of the presentations during the Global Environmental Sustainability Symposium in March featured three students from Common Ground High School in New Haven explaining processed foods to students in grades 1-7. The presentation compared the journey of a Cheeto to that of an orange before they are consumed. The students discussed what's in a Cheeto versus what's in an orange, noting that many of the ingredients on a Cheeto bag were unpronounceable and unknown. By a show of hands, the kids unanimously agreed that they'd choose an orange over a Cheeto any day.



Common Ground High School student Jackie Falia holds a vial of sugar, representative of the sugar in a 12 ounce can of root beer.



New Director of LALCC Named

Professor of Mathematics **Luis Recoder Nunez** (left) was selected to serve as the next Director of the Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Center (LALCC) starting in July. He also serves as President of the Latin American Association at CCSU, and chairs the Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee. Beginning in summer 2013, he will direct the University Success Program for incoming Latino students.

Chef/Author Advocates Wholesome Eating, Healthy Farming

Chicken nuggets were definitely *not* on the menu. In fact, if you listen to food expert Emily Brooks describe the ingredients in a chicken nugget, and the process involved in creating it, you'll probably never eat another one.

Brooks, a chef, author, and advocate for wholesome eating and healthy farming, was the keynote speaker at the Fifth Annual Global Environmental Sustainability Symposium.

Before a capacity crowd in Alumni Hall, Brooks described the ways that food manufacturers mislead consumers.

For instance, an artificial fruit-snack maker can advertise that something is made with "real fruit," when fruit extract is only used to color the product. Free-range chickens must have access to a door, to meet federal standards, but do not necessarily go outside.

Beef manufacturers can say that their cows are "grass fed" even if that means they only ate grass pellets just moments before slaughter. So-called organic food, she said, can test positive for up to 30 percent pesticide residue.

"They are trying to trick you to think these things are totally wholesome," she said, following the presentation. "If we refuse to buy artificial, unhealthy foods, manufacturers will be forced to make healthier products. Consumers have 100 percent control. You vote with your money — and with your fork."

Brooks, whose undergraduate degree is in chemistry and biology, also has a master's degree and doctorate in holistic nutrition. She predicts that food choice will soon become the key factor in longevity.

"Don't panic," she said, following the presentation. "When you hear these things, it is easy to become an extremist. I have one rule of thumb. If you can make it, you can eat it. So if you know how to make chocolate cake, make it from scratch. If you don't know how to make high-fructose corn syrup or modified corn starch, then maybe you shouldn't be eating it."

"As you evolve to a new mindset, then the trick is to buy as close to where the food came from as possible," she said. "Shop at the apple orchard down the street or get lettuce from a farmer's market."

People are becoming more educated, she said, but it isn't easy to separate truth from fiction. She said she wishes political candidates would be grilled about their agricultural policies and food-labeling laws as vigorously as they are about other issues.

Recipes from Brooks' cookbook, *Connecticut Farmer and Feast*, were featured at the symposium. The buffet, prepared by Sodexo catering staff, included Laurel Ridge Black Bean Soup, John Lyman's Peachy Bean Salad, served in a flower pot, Farmer Tom's Sweet Potato Casserole, Deerfield Farm (vegetable) Macaroni and Cheese, and Patricia's Egg and Butter Poundcake with Millix Farms Strawberry Compote. The majority of the food came from Urban Oaks, an organic farm, in New Britain.

— Claire LaFleur Hall



Polish Medal of Merit Awarded

In March, Professor of History **Mieczyslaw Biskupski** (right) presented the Polish Medal of Merit to Mary Mazurek Heslin (center) and Purdue University History Professor James S. Pula (left), recognizing their individual achievements and contributions to Polish and American communities. Heslin, an active member of the Polish Culture Club of Greater Hartford and an affiliate of the nationwide organization American Council of Polish Culture (ACPC), is a retired secondary school English teacher, and served as a deputy mayor and councilwoman in Hartford. Pula is a noted historian, specialist in ethnic and immigration studies, author of many books, member of various Polonia organizations, and serves as treasurer for the Polish American Historical Association (PAHA) and editor of its journal, *Polish American Studies*.



Connecticut Vietnam Vets Finally Welcomed Home

A capacity crowd attended Connecticut's Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans celebration on March 31 at the Governor William A. O'Neill Armory in Hartford. It was likely the largest gathering of Vietnam veterans since the war, with more than 1,400 guests taking part in the festivities.

The event, organized by the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs and Central Connecticut State University Veterans History Project, was a tribute to a generation of veterans who, more often than not, were ostracized when they returned home from duty. In 2010, Connecticut was the second US state to officially designate March 30 as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.

"The night was just incredible," says Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs Linda Spoonster Schwartz. "In planning this evening of entertainment and camaraderie, our goal was to finally give these men and women the thanks they deserved nearly four decades ago, and our mission was successful. I wish to thank Eileen Hurst and a small group of volunteers who worked tirelessly for the last eight months to make it a night these vets will remember for years to come."

Hurst, director of the CCSU Veterans History Project, worked with the Commissioner's Office, CCSU students, and veteran volunteers who sought donated food and raffle items and



raised more than \$40,000 in donations to cover the expenses of the celebration so the Vietnam veterans could attend the event for free.

The program began with the impressive Posting the Colors as ordered by General William J. Begert, US Air Force, retired. The four-star general, who flew 300 missions in Vietnam, is Pratt & Whitney's Vice President for Military International Programs and Business. Governor Dannel Malloy and Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman welcomed the huge crowd. The USO Liberty Bells performed patriotic and Vietnam era songs, and DJ Mark the Shark volunteered his services to provide music throughout the evening.

Among the highlights of the evening were presentations by Assistant Professor of English Mary Collins and her student Jesse Duthrie. As a contribution to the Welcome Home effort, Collins worked with her Advanced Creative Nonfiction class to tell the personal stories of local Vietnam veterans in a magazine they published just in time for the event. Collins unveiled the magazine, copies of which were given out free of charge, while Duthrie read a poem written by one of the veterans.

Pratt & Whitney was the major donor for the event, while other significant contributions came from Farmington Bank and the History Channel. Donations were also made by Connecticut Light & Power, Monaco Ford, Ensign Bickford, Mohegan Sun, and a number of veterans' organizations and private citizens.

Photos from the event are available on the website: www.ccsu.edu/welcomehome.

— Janice Palmer



A capacity crowd attended the "Welcome Home" event.



Veterans who attended the "Welcome Home" event received a keepsake quality magazine called *In-Country and Back*. The magazine contains pieces written by students in the Advanced Creative Nonfiction course, taught by Assistant Professor of English Mary Collins (far left). Ron Farina (second from left in front row), a Vietnam veteran, read from his essay, "A Keyhole," at the event.



In April, CCSU Peace Studies, Political Science, Religious Studies, and Philosophy sponsored the lecture **America and Iran: What's Next?** The event was presented by Stephen Kinzer, author of *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*.

CCSU hosted the **Association of College Unions International (ACUI) Region 1 Recreation Tournament** in February. The event, also held at Central in 2011, was organized by senior Frank Colaninno, the Student Center's Breakers game room operations manager. The tournament included competitions in 9-ball, table tennis, and video games and attracted students from other universities associated with ACUI. CCSU senior Sean Clayton won 10 rounds of men's 9-ball and qualified to compete in the ACUI International Recreation Tournament to be held later in 2012.

The **Center for Africana Studies film series** was held in April, featuring *Cointelpro 101*, the FBI acronym for a series of covert action programs directed against domestic groups; and *The Black Power Mixtape*, footage shot by Swedish journalists in the 1960s and 1970s that hadn't been released until 2011.

Staceyann Chin, recipient of the 2007 Power of the Voice Award from The Human Rights Campaign, performed her poetry on campus in March. Chin is also the co-writer and original performer in the Tony Award winning "Russell Simmons Def Poetry on Broadway," and has been featured on the "Oprah Winfrey Show," "60 Minutes," and in the *New York Times*.

CCSU and WNPR presented a panel discussion as part of WNPR's **"Coming Home" Project** to be broadcast on the show "Where We Live." The event was moderated by John Dankosky, the Robert C. Vance Endowed Chair in Journalism and Mass Communication, WNPR News Director, and host of "Where We Live," and featured conversations with veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars about their transition when coming home.

In March, the International & Area Studies Committee, the Center for International Education, Peace Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, and the Ruthe Boyea Women's Center sponsored the lecture, **"Hawaii to Palestine: Indigeneity and the Politics of Occupation,"** presented by Associate Professor of

American Studies and Anthropology at Wesleyan University, J. Kehaulani Kauanui. Kehaulani Kauanui is the author of two books about colonialism and indigeneity, the host and producer of the radio show, "Indigenous Politics: From Native New England and Beyond," and is an elected member of the council of Native American and Indigenous Studies Association.

The Ruthe Boyea Women's Center sponsored five **Health Talks** during the fall and spring semesters, covering a range of topics geared toward improving women's health. Included in the classes were tips on overcoming a sugar addiction, facts about the food/mood relationship and how some foods can naturally increase energy, and lessons on 10 of the proven most important healthy lifetime routines.

The CCSU South Asian Students Association (SASA) hosted **Holi, the Hindu Festival of Colors**, on campus in April. Holi marks the end of winter, welcoming in the bloom of springtime with 'abeer' and 'gula', colored powders which are thrown into the air and painted on faces and bodies.

In March, the Latin American Student Organization (LASO) hosted four events, all part of **Latin Week**. The week started with Helado Day, with free ice cream, music, and dominoes games in the Student Center Circle. Other events included a Latino-style jeopardy game, and a pool party in Kaiser Hall, complete with a DJ. The week wrapped up with an event co-sponsored by Women Involved Now featuring a motivational speaker, Tio Louie, and a screening of the film *Latina Confessions*.

The CCSU Carter G. Woodson African-American Studies Lecture Series held the panel discussion, **"Liberty and Justice for All? The Case of Trayvon Martin and the Sanford, Florida Police Investigation."** Professor of Political Science, African-American, and African Studies Walton Brown-Foster was the moderator, while half a dozen professors discussed the Martin case.

The Brian O'Connell Fund, Institutional Advancement, and the Computer Science Department sponsored the fourth annual **Brian O'Connell Event** in April, presenting Albanian violin prodigy Brunilda Myftaraj with accompaniment by pianist Nathaniel Baker.

The Peasant and The Priest, a documentary about two Italian men in their eighties, was presented in April. The film follows a priest and a farmer, and the parallels in their lives to a 14th century fresco by Ambrogio Lorenzetti. After the viewing, the film's director and producer, Esther Podemski, and Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Health Leonard M. Lee held a question and answer session.

In April, Polish Studies sponsored the lecture **"Polish Missionaries among South American Indians,"** presented by Jan Gać. Gać is recognized in Poland as an authority in archaeology and the history of Christianity.

The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP) hosted the conference **"Social Justice: Exploring Unheard Voices"** in March. The conference, which was attended by over 150 people including students, policy makers, social justice advocates, and faculty and staff, allowed the opportunity to hear empowering stories and to use these stories as an inspiration for community improvement. The all-day event featured two break-out sessions, various speakers, and a panel discussion. Topics of conversation ranged from sexuality to immigration to homelessness.

Take Back the Night, an international program that allows and encourages survivors of sexual assault, rape, domestic violence, and sexual abuse to share their stories in a safe environment, met in April in the Student Center. The event also welcomes the support of non-victims in an attempt to spread awareness of the topic.

In April, CSU Professor of History, Emeritus Norton Mezvinsky, gave two lectures: **"Who is Jesus to the Jews?"** and **"The Syrian Uprising: Will Assad Regime Survive?"** Mezvinsky, a renowned scholar of Middle East history, has traveled to Syria and met with government officials and religious leaders. He also interviewed Syria's President Bashar al-Assad, and has been in touch with scholars and Syrian officials throughout the current uprising. Both lectures were sponsored by Middle East Studies, Peace Studies, and CCSU's Center for International Education.

extra credit

The CCSU Art Galleries in the S.T. Chen Fine Arts Center in Maloney Hall hosted the exhibit "Capstone 2012 in April and May. The exhibit featured the work of graduating studio art majors **Kate Anderson, Kalin Bucholz, Ashley Burke, Matt Gallant, Kathryn Inferrera, Eggie Jovaisa, Brenda Marousek, Roger Pappineau, Robert Powell, Zoe Nicole Shaw, John Shields, Victoria Spadaro, Faria Sultana, and Anna Zatorska.**

The **CCSU Cheer Squad** placed first at the New England Cheerleaders Association (NECA) competition in March. Central's all-female cheer team has 20 members and the new, co-ed team has two male and 11 female teammates. Both teams are scheduled to compete at the National Cheerleaders Association/National Dance Alliance (NCA/NDA) Cheer and Dance Collegiate Championship in April.

During spring break, four creative writing students attended a weeklong creative writing workshop at Sweetbriar College in Virginia. Seniors **Casey Coughlin, Jesse Duthrie, and Lauren Hathaway,** and junior **Adam Kassel** honed their writing skills in workshops with students from top undergraduate creative writing programs throughout the country.

Blue Devil **Kristin Daamen** has been recruited to play on the Netherlands women's national basketball team this summer. Enjoying her break-out junior year at Central this winter, Daamen

ranked 17th nationally as a shot blocker and averaged 2.6 blocks per game, effectively doubling her career total.

In March, the Geological Society of America, Northeastern Section, held its 47th annual meeting in Hartford, with more than 1,100 geoscientists in attendance. Associate Professors of Physics and Earth Sciences **Mark Evans** and **Michael Wizevich** were the technical co-chairs, while Assistant Professor of Physics and Earth Sciences **Jennifer Piatek** was a volunteer coordinator for the event. Eight undergraduate students from the Earth Sciences program at Central gave nine presentations and two talks during the three-day meeting.

Professor and Chair of Physical Education and Human Performance **David Harackiewicz** recently led the Newington-Berlin high school hockey team to victory in the Division III state finals. Harackiewicz, who has coached the Newington-Berlin team since 1996, is also the assistant coach of the U.S. American Amputee Hockey Association team.

CCSU librarian **Nicholas G. Tomaiuolo's** article, "Aloha Encyclopedia Britannica Print Edition," was featured on infotoday.com in March. His piece discusses the final print edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and the pitfalls and benefits of the ever-expanding world of digitization.

IN THE news

Associate Professor of Economics **Carlos Liard-Muriente** was interviewed on Fox CT about the importance of researching a college major before declaring. The Economics Chair explained that this would help students avoid becoming part of the national student debt crisis.



Crafts 2012 Exhibit

The complex weaving of Judith Laffey was featured along with the handicraft of New England artists Mark Del Guidice, Peter Greenwood, Takashi Ichihara, and Joy Raskin at the CCSU Art Galleries presentation of Crafts 2012. The exhibit ran during March and April and displayed contemporary craft pieces including furniture, glass, jewelry, and ceramics.

Peszke Named Distinguished Polish-American for 2012

Michael A. Peszke recently accepted the 2012 Distinguished Polish-American Award. Peszke, often referred to as the father of Polish Studies at CCSU, is a historian, with a specialization in Polish military history and WWII, and a retired professor of psychiatry at the UConn Health Center. Peszke serves as member of the Advisory Committee to the S.A. Blejwas Endowed Chair in Polish and Polish American Studies at CCSU. Peszke, center, receives his award from president of the Kosciuszko Foundation New England chapter Carolyn C. Topor, left, and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland Marek Lesniewski-Laas, right.



“Elevator Pitch” Draws Record Number Entries

In March, CCSU hosted its annual “Elevator Pitch” event, its largest event to date with 43 entries. CCSU students had the opportunity, in 60 seconds or less, to present their original business ideas to a panel of judges that included lawyers, investors, and entrepreneurs. Winners were chosen based on clarity and enthusiasm of presentation, strength of concept, and the likelihood of the given idea’s success. Senior **Gregory Migdal** won the Scalable Venture prize for his idea of a real-time weather reporting wristwatch. Senior **Jennifer McCann** won the Personal Venture prize for her plan for a custom-cupcake catering and en route service truck. Senior **Sergine St. Felix** won the prize for Outstanding Presentation for his pitch for a talent development and management agency. All three winners received cash prizes as well.

IN THE community

CCSU Joins New Britain Groups in the War on Poverty

Assistant Professor of Teacher Education **Jacob Werblow** joined more than 25 community partners at the South Congregational First Baptist Church in New Britain in March to discuss ways to combat poverty. The program, consisting of presentations about change, impoverishment, homelessness, and education and youth, allowed service providers and community members to work toward breaking the cycle of destitution in New Britain.

Athletic Department Receives Grant

In February, the Athletic Department received a \$50,000 grant from The Walmart Foundation. Assistant Athletic Director **Stephen Villanti**, who requested the grant last fall, put the money to work in the University’s education-through-athletics program. The program works with local elementary schools to increase interest in reading and post-secondary education, provide mentoring, and increase awareness of the benefits of physical activity and sports. During the spring semester, the grant funded activities for National Girls and Women in Sports Day, and The National Education Association’s Read Across America Day, among others.



In February, CCSU hosted an open round of the 2012 North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad, organized by Assistant Professor of Linguistics **Seunghun Lee**. To continue with CCSU’s community engagement efforts, many students from HALS Middle School in New Britain participated in the competition (above, pictured with Lee at left). The event was sponsored by the English department.

Alum Jeff Focht '90 Shares Advice with Marketing Students: "Live with 'An Attitude of Gratitude,' Push Your Ego Aside"



"Central changed my life. I got very involved in activities on campus. I had lots of opportunities from my professors and other campus leaders, and I loved it... It was the catalyst for some great opportunities in my life."

"Power is a gift. Be sure to use it wisely," CCSU alum Jeff Focht '90 told students in Professor David Fearon's Fundamentals of Management class recently.

Focht, a former adjunct professor at CCSU, is now Vice President for Academic Affairs at Northampton Community College in Bethlehem, PA. His presentation to a class of sophomores was about marketing, human resources, and American business.

But at least a tiny part of that message came from an experience he had as a junior at CCSU, taking part in a Marketing Club trip to Beijing.

There, he saw many students like himself—bright, excited, committed, optimistic, eager for change. They gathered in peaceful protest in Tiananmen Square, seeking economic reform and liberalization from the Communists. They waved a mock Statue of Liberty. They peered inside a small bus full of CCSU students and gleefully shouted, "America!"

Just two days later many of them—hundreds, maybe thousands—were massacred by their own country's military. The horror of it all still resonates with Focht today.

"The experience was life-altering. It gave me a new appreciation for my own life and the freedom we have that we often take for granted," Focht said. "I came back with a softened heart. The Chinese students and the Chinese people were the kindest, most gracious people I'd met."

On the day of the massacre, Focht and the CCSU contingent—nine other students and two faculty members—had moved on to a different part of China. Because the television stations had shut down, they had only bits of information until they returned to the US, but knew something terrible had happened in Tiananmen Square.

When they arrived at Kennedy Airport, "there were TV cameras all over the place," Focht said. The CCSU students had no idea that their parents and college administrators were panicking over their safe return.

For Focht, that 1989 trip was his first out of the United States. "I came back a changed person," he said.

"If I Can Do It, You Can Too"

Focht grew up in Monroe, CT, and was the first in his family to go to college.

"I can identify with the students at Northampton, many of whom are first generation to attend college, or have little financial backing. I try to give them as much encouragement as I can," he said. "I say, 'If I could do it, you can do it too. Don't give me excuses. Don't rest on the past, but look to the future.' I understand their plight."

Focht earned his bachelors degree in marketing from CCSU in 1990, where he also received the President's Citation for Outstanding Leadership. He then earned his masters in liberal studies from Villanova University in 1995 and his doctorate in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania in 2010. Of all his educational experiences, CCSU was paramount, he said.

"Central changed my life. I got very involved in activities on campus. I had lots of opportunities from my professors and other campus leaders, and I loved it. Central afforded me an opportunity I would never have had otherwise. It was the catalyst for some great opportunities in my life. It is very fond in my memory."

Former CCSU President Dick Judd was among his mentors, as was Professor of Management and Organization David Fearon.

Focht said Fearon was inspirational. "I recall his Management of Innovation class and being so intrigued by his teaching and the way he engaged his students," he said. "I remember looking at him and thinking, 'I hope I can be in higher education someday.'"

Fearon said that for his marketing students to meet a successful alum, who once sat in their seats, is more powerful than anything he can say. He describes Focht, and many of his former students, as bright people with more "heart" and compassion than most.

Owning Retail Stores a Seven-Day-A-Week Job

After graduation, Focht spent five years as a sales representative and then account manager for Unilever/Chesebrough-Ponds USA. He then developed an "entrepreneurial twinge" and became the owner of two Dollar Plus stores in New Jersey in the mid-1990s. He brought them from start-ups to businesses that, combined, netted \$1 million a year in revenue.

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"I made a living, not a killing," he said. "It taught me that as a small business owner, you have to become an expert in everything, from finances to hiring. It was a 7-day-a-week job," he said. He enjoyed the experience, but then realized he wanted to focus energy on teaching, so he sold the business in 2000.

He embarked on his teaching career at CCSU, first working as an adjunct and then in a temporary teaching position. While at Central, he was nominated for an Excellence in Teaching Award.

Focht later taught at University of New Haven, Post University in Waterbury, and University of Bridgeport. He taught marketing at Northampton for a year and a half before becoming Dean of Business and Technology in 2003. Seven years later, he became Vice President for Academic Affairs.

"I love it. Northampton is a great place. I have a big affinity for community colleges and what we do," he said. "We have 11,000 students, so it is a big place with a great reputation."

As the chief academic officer, Focht provides academic leadership, strategic direction, and innovation in the planning, development, and delivery of courses. He has 700 employees reporting to him.

He told the CCSU marketing students that a leader must have a clear vision and deliver it with a positive attitude and sense of excitement, in order to motivate employees and reach goals.

"You can't overlook how each and every person matters in helping attain your goal," he said. "Push your ego aside. Power is on loan. Don't flaunt it; use it for good."

Live with "an attitude of gratitude," he told the students. Focht, 44, was accompanied by his wife, Wanda, who also works at Northampton. They have three children and three grandchildren and are very family-focused, he said.

"We Have to be More Entrepreneurial in Higher Education"

Northampton Community College's largest programs of study are general studies, education, business, and criminal justice.

Focht said he believes higher education is a more complex business than ever, with education changing rapidly. Students are searching for accelerated education. They want to complete their education quickly and get into the workforce, he said. Community colleges are a gateway for students, many of whom come to get a certificate or credential and later return for a degree.

"I think colleges and universities have to be more strategic than ever. We have to look out 5 to 10 years. We have to look for innovative programs of study. For our students it is about getting in, getting an education. We are creating innovative programs that offer transferability (to other colleges) or a job at the end."

– Claire LaFleur Hall

ALUMNI news

Three CCSU alumni were recently noted for their success before the age of 40 in *Connecticut Magazine's* article, "40 Under 40." **Israel Caro III** '01, co-founder of the full-service woodworking company Cronus Construction, works with CIL, a nonprofit affordable housing company, to provide equal opportunity housing to low income families, and with Connecticut LAMPP (Lead Action for Medicaid Primary Prevention) to remove lead hazards from homes where children are at risk for lead poisoning. **Roger Wierbicki** '98 has worked in communications with several high-profile corporations, including Polygram Label Group and Island Records. He also worked for Bon Jovi Management and with the New Jersey Nets during the NBA Finals at the end of the 2002 and 2003 seasons. **Kinga Evans** '04, who emigrated from Poland when she was 18, has had a successful career in the insurance and banking industries in Connecticut. In her spare time,

Evans serves on the board of Meriden's Cove Center for Grieving Children.

Stepney Elementary School teacher **Donald M. Casey** '86 and his students were awarded an educational grant from the Alcohol and Drug Awareness of Monroe, CT Allocations Committee. The grant will be used to promote Fit Kids, a project encouraging a healthy lifestyle through participation in exercise, creative arts activities, and experimental learning.

Associate Professor of Education at Nevada State College **Kevin Graziano** '00 was recognized as the Regent's Teaching Award recipient during the March Board of Regent's meeting, and is the first among his coworkers to receive this honor. Graziano has also been appointed as a Visiting Fellow to the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, Australia, and as a Visiting Fellow to the Marino Institute of Education in Dublin, Ireland.

Correction: Assistant Professor of Geography Eric Samson was incorrectly identified in a photograph in the March issue of the *Courier*. We apologize for the error.



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June Baker Higgins Gender Studies Conference - May 11-12

The Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program will host its 21st annual June Baker Higgins Gender Studies Conference, May 11-12. This year's program, "Women, Leaders, and Leadership," will feature keynote speakers Susan Campbell, writer for the *Hartford Courant* and author of *Dating Jesus*, and Anne Stanback, former executive director of Love Makes a Family. The conference takes place from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Friday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Saturday. Tickets are \$25 and include breakfast on both days and luncheon on Friday. Students interested in complimentary tickets should contact Associate Professor of Psychology Carolyn Fallahi at fallahic@ccsu.edu.



Women of Influence Gala - May 12

On Saturday, May 12, at 6:30 p.m. the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program will host the inaugural Women of Influence Gala to honor women who have had a positive impact on CCSU or the wider community; have made a significant contribution in the lives of women; have diligently promoted women's rights; or have worked tirelessly to educate women. The gala, which will take place in Alumni Hall, is black tie optional and will include dinner, dancing, and a silent auction. Tickets are \$100 per person or \$175 per couple; proceeds will benefit the June Baker Higgins Scholarship and other scholarships for women. To register for the event, log on to www.ccsu.edu/gala or contact Associate Professor of Psychology Carolyn Fallahi at 860.832.3114 or at fallahic@ccsu.edu.



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