As we chart our course for the future of Connecticut’s State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) system, this has been a particularly exciting time for the Board of Regents for Higher Education, as we are about to embark on a transformational journey that will place our 17 institutions on the path to becoming Connecticut’s world-class system of higher education.

Transform CSCU 2020, launched by Governor Dannel P. Malloy, is a strategic plan and investment in our institutions to improve student experience and degree completion, expand academic and workforce training programs, and build stronger partnerships with the state’s manufacturers and business community.

Our 17 colleges and universities are educating the state’s next generation workforce, partnering with business and industry to give our students real-world experience, deepening student appreciation for learning, and graduating some truly exemplary leaders. As we look to ConnSCU’s future, we share the common goal of building on the system’s most successful programs and initiatives and — keeping true to our mission of accessibility — ensuring all of our students enjoy the highest quality learning environment.

With input from faculty, staff, students, and campus leaders, we are well on our way to establishing a new era for ConnSCU — one of responsibility, accountability, innovation, and most importantly, student success that is so integral to training the state’s workforce. Transform CSCU 2020 — our plan to build a world-class system of higher education — will provide the blueprint for moving forward and will be the key to better preparing our students to compete and thrive in the 21st century.

Although we have much hard work ahead of us, we have strong, committed teams in place at our colleges, universities, and at the system office. Transform CSCU 2020 will put our system on the path to excellence — expanding our academics, modernizing our infrastructure, and most importantly, ensuring the highest quality learning environment for our students.

NICHOLAS M. DONOFRIO
Chairman, Board of Regents for Higher Education

GREGORY W. GRAY, Ed.D.
President, Board of Regents for Higher Education
features

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Supporting the Military at the Community Colleges

Victory Media Inc., the premier media entity for military personnel transitioning into civilian life, named eight community colleges to the 2014 Military Friendly Schools list.

The community colleges designated as 2014 Military Friendly Schools are: Asnuntuck, Capital, Manchester, Middlesex, Norwalk, Quinebaug Valley, Three Rivers and Tunxis Community Colleges. The list was compiled through extensive research and a survey of 10,000 schools nationwide approved for VA tuition funding.

The list honors the top 20 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools doing the most for students vets and providing programs, discounts, scholarships, clubs and networking opportunities.

Norwalk Community College (NCC) is helping veterans adjust to civilian and academic life through the federal Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership VITAL Program and is the only college in the state to sign onto the initiative. VITAL will work to help veterans succeed in college and inform them of the VA programs and resources. NCC has opened a veteran’s lounge and hired a veteran’s service associate.

Norwalk Community College

Workforce Opportunities for Veterans

Ten military veterans from Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) are embarking on corporate careers after graduating with certificates in project management and information technology, while others are continuing their college education.

WCSU prepared veteran-students for professional management by participating with Workforce Opportunity Services — a nonprofit company for young adults in inner-city, rural and under-served areas that provides opportunities through scholarship programs. The two-semester, six-month training program also matched students with corporations where they received on-the-job training. Students are now encouraged to enter a bachelor’s degree program paid for by Workforce Opportunity Service or the employer corporation.
**A Conference for Veterans**

The Board of Regents (BOR) for Higher Education in partnership with Eastern Connecticut State University sponsored the 2013 Veterans Stakeholder Conference hosted by Manchester Community College.

U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel David Vacchi was the keynote speaker, with remarks by Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman and BOR President Gregory Gray.

The conference focused on supporting Connecticut’s student veterans in higher education and the workforce. Participants heard presentations from national and regional experts about the needs of student veterans, statewide initiatives, and current efforts to streamline benefit and enrollment procedures.

**Central and Eastern Rank Among Top Universities for Military Veterans Services**

U.S. News & World Report has named Central and Eastern Connecticut State Universities as two of the top regional universities for serving military veterans in the North.

This is the first year that U.S. News ranked colleges based on their services to veterans. Eastern ranked 8th, and Central ranked 9th among the public regionals in the North, which includes 11 states from Maine to Maryland.

To qualify for the Best Colleges for Veterans rankings, schools had to be certified for the GI Bill and participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program – two federal initiatives that help veterans reduce the cost of school. They were also required to be members of the Servicemembers Opportunity for Colleges Consortium, a group that works to simplify credit transfers and give veterans credit for military training and national tests.

**A Tribute to Commitment**

U.S. Marine Corps LCpl. Jason Fincher, a Three Rivers Community College alumnus who earned an associate’s degree in criminal justice, was featured on the cover of the 2013 Winter/Spring issue of Sigma Alpha Epsilon’s The Record in a story titled “A Tribute to Commitment.”

**“8 Keys to Success” for U.S. Veterans**

U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) met with student veterans and Gateway Community College administrators to discuss the college’s implementation of the Obama Administration’s “8 Keys To Success” challenge. They lauded Gateway for its leadership and work with veterans. Gateway is the first academic institution in Connecticut to sign on to the program, and is among 250 community colleges and universities nationwide to implement the program. This U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs initiative challenges higher education institutions to adopt best practices to educational success for returning service members.

**A Veterans Oasis at Three Rivers**

Student Veterans at Three Rivers Community College utilize the Three Rivers Veterans Oasis Center to study, use computers, watch television or relax. The Veterans Oasis Center can accommodate up to 100 veterans.
Southern Helps Coastal Communities Prepare for Future Storms

Two Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) faculty members and their students are analyzing the effect that Superstorm Sandy had on the coastlines of East Haven and West Haven in an effort to help those communities better prepare for future storms.

James Tait, associate professor of science education and environmental studies, and Ezgi Akpinar Ferrand, assistant professor of geography, have been examining beach erosion that occurred from Superstorm Sandy. The bulk of their efforts have been focused on East Haven with some analysis of West Haven’s coastline, and they expect to look at other coastal communities in the future. In West Haven, analysis will determine where the beach sand has gone as a result of the storm. This information that can help West Haven plan for beach revitalization including the addition of beach sand in the hardest hit areas.

Tait will make a full report on the assessment and recommendations will be made to East Haven officials. “These two projects have the potential to benefit the two communities, as well as give our students an opportunity to participate in real-world research,” Akinpar Ferrand said.

Mark Paine Jr., assistant to the commissioner of public works in West Haven, thanked SCSU, noting that the city could not possibly have conducted the extensive research that is being conducted by the university. “It’s truly a win-win situation, and a perfect example of the type of collaboration our state and municipal entities would benefit by engaging in. It is my hope that this is the first of many such partnerships with SCSU,” said Paine.

A patented approach to fighting cancer

Sarah Crawford, professor of biology at Southern Connecticut State University, and her former student, Erin Boisvert, were awarded a patent for an extract made from the Christmas fern that demonstrated anti-cancer properties in pre-clinical testing conducted by Crawford and her students.

The extract was tested as part of a three-component cocktail — carmustine, a chemotherapy drug used to treat brain cancer; curcumin in the spice turmeric that has anti-inflammatory qualities; and polystichum acrostichoides, the Christmas fern’s technical name. Tests showed the cocktail was effective in killing nearly half of the cancer cells in tiny tumors created in the Biology Department lab — far more effective than use of any of the three substances alone.
BOR Receives SCUP 2013 Award for Institutional Innovation and Integration

The Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) was awarded the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) 2013 Award for Institutional Innovation and Integration. Gail Coppage, BOR’s director of Innovation & Outreach, accepted the award on behalf of the BOR at SCUP’s 48th annual international conference.

The award was given for the BOR entry, “Manufacturing Centers Initiative” in recognition of the three new advanced manufacturing centers launched at Naugatuck Valley, Housatonic, and Quinebaug Valley Community Colleges. The award honors the achievement of higher education institutions whose work has demonstrated integrated and innovative thinking, planning and implementation; and is driven by the institution’s vision, mission and academic priorities.

“This award is a great recognition of the collaboration between our campuses, system, state agencies and private sector to ensure that the new Advanced Manufacturing Centers are helping train and educate students for advanced manufacturing jobs in Connecticut,” said Coppage.

Charged Up at ConnSCU

Thanks to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Central and Western Connecticut State Universities and Norwalk Community College will have electric vehicle (EV) charging stations on campus with the awarding of grants for 56 charging stations in 42 locations statewide.

The grants, which range from $1,000 to $5,000, are part of a $135,946 grant awarded to 36 municipalities, businesses and organizations based on the specific requirements of each project and technology being used.

The EV units, which can fully charge a vehicle in two hours, will be available free of charge to both the campus communities and general public.

“Our goal is a network of charging stations that allows anyone driving an electric vehicle to travel anywhere in our state with total confidence that they will be able to recharge their car battery when necessary,” said Governor Dannel P. Malloy.

QuickBooks at NCCC

The Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut, Inc. awarded a $540 Draper Foundation Fund grant to Northwestern Connecticut Community College’s (NCCC) Center for Workforce Development.

The grant is designed to help NCCC outfit a computer lab with up-to-date QuickBooks software and schedule QuickBooks courses to train adult learners in electronic bookkeeping processes. NCCC partners with the Torrington Workforce Investment Board to provide customized QuickBooks training to Workforce Investment Act eligible individuals.

HCC’s Programs Get Support

The Fairfield County Community Foundation awarded Housatonic Community College (HCC) $15,000 to support its peer docent program with the Bridgeport Public Schools.

HCC’s nationally acclaimed Early Childhood Laboratory School received a $35,413 state Department of Education grant to spruce up the facility and upgrade recreational equipment.

Walmart also donated $53,000 as part of the company’s State Giving Program in order to continue improving HCC’s English as a Second Language program, “Stepping Stones to Language and Employment.”
With an award of $12 million from the U.S. Department of Labor, seven of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, have partnered to offer academic programs, training and job placement assistance to allied health and life sciences students through the Health-Life Sciences (HL-SCI) Initiative. Eastern Connecticut State University, Charter Oak State College, and Capital, Gateway, Middlesex, Manchester and Norwalk Community Colleges will work together to help educate and train residents for the 11,000 jobs expected to open in the health and life sciences field over the next eight years.

“This program will help ensure that our state has enough workers educated and trained for careers in the health and life sciences — a particularly vibrant area of growth in our state,” said Michele Barnett, director of the Health-Life Sciences Initiative, coordinated through Norwalk Community College. “Because it’s an initiative that was launched by the Board of Regents, we are truly able to reach out on a statewide basis.”

Last summer at Eastern, the Health and Life Sciences Initiative Summer Undergraduate Research Program gave students an opportunity to gain critical knowledge of and experience with basic laboratory skills that will position them to compete in Connecticut’s health and life sciences job market. Students worked directly with Eastern faculty who teach in the health and life sciences fields.
From Internship to Workforce: Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium Helps Students Find Jobs

The Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) — a division of Charter Oak State College — employs about 20 student workers at its Call Center to assist CTDLC in providing technical and academic support to students, faculty and staff. More than 100 institutions utilize the CTDLC’s Help Desk to provide support for their products and services, including learning management software, eTutoring and financial aid.

“We try to match our students to the projects that they are most interested in and potentially be employed in, post-graduation,” said Cathy Bergren, director of CDLC’s Service Delivery. Blake Vanderjagt began work at CTDLC’s Call Center in 2010, graduated with an MIS degree from Eastern Connecticut State University in 2012, and was hired by Partners in Publishing in Glastonbury. The CTDLC’s Call Center was already providing inbound technical support for Partners in Publishing, and when Vanderjagt graduated, CTDLC let clients know he was available for employment.

“The knowledge I gained as a technical support associate at CTDLC gave me the confidence and experience to pursue my future endeavors at Partner in Publishing,” he said.

Southern Receives Record $3 million Gift to Boost Science Education and Research

Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) announced a $3 million donation to the university to facilitate coastal and marine studies.

The September 2013 donation from the Werth Family Foundation is the largest donation in the university’s 120-year history, and the first donation of more than $1 million. The funds will be used to create and sustain a Werth Center for Coastal and Marine Studies at SCSU and two pilot research programs.

“In this highly competitive job market, it’s not what you know but what you can do with what you know that matters,” said Vincent Breslin, professor of science education and environmental studies and co-director of the Werth Center. “This gift enables us to provide hands-on experience to students, who will be out in the field and in the lab conducting research with state-of-the-art instrumentation. As a result, our students are much more competitive in the job market.”

ACC Breaks Ground on New Facility

Asnuntuck Community College (ACC) held a groundbreaking for a new state-of-the-art on-campus welding and fabrication facility. The 5,600-square-foot, $2 million facility will provide ACC’s Manufacturing Technology Center with almost four times the space available to them. The project is expected to be completed by April.

Funded through the October 2011 jobs bill legislation introduced by Governor Dannel Malloy and approved by the state legislature, the new facility will expand current ACC programming. “This facility insures our ability to provide training and education annually to more than 125 youth and adults for future employment in some phase of the advanced welding and metal fabrication industry across Connecticut,” said Frank Galluni, director, ACC’s Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center.

CCC and HCC to Aid Workforce Development

Comprised of Capital Community College (CCC), Housatonic Community College (HCC), five other northeastern community colleges and two national organizations, the Northeast Resiliency Consortium (NRC) was awarded $23.5 million from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career and Training (TAACCCT) program to develop programs designed to creating a highly skilled and resilient workforce.

CCC was awarded a $2.3 million grant to enhance programs related to information technology, public safety, construction and emergency responders; and HCC was awarded a $2.2 million grant to train trade-impacted workers, veterans and others for high-skill, high-wage jobs in the information technology and health care fields.

The NRS is led by Passaic Community College in New Jersey, and includes Achieving the Dream and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
Dr. Gregory W. Gray, president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR), is poised to transform Connecticut State’s Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) into a world-class system of higher education.
Gregory W. Gray began last July as president of the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR), the governing body of the state’s four universities, 12 community colleges and Charter Oak State College.

“Our state colleges and universities are very good — now we have to make them great,” said Gray. “ConnSCU is truly the state’s system for higher education. Ninety-six percent of our students are from Connecticut and 80 percent of our graduates remain here to live and work, so it is critical that we are providing a strong, relevant educational foundation that our students can take into the workforce.”

Dr. Gray kicked off his tenure with a 17-campus tour to meet students, faculty, staff and business leaders. He recently joined Governor Dannel P. Malloy, BOR Vice Chair Yvette Meléndez, Connecticut Department of Education Commissioner Stefan Pryor, Manchester Community College President Gena Glickman, legislators, students, and business leaders, to launch Transform CSCU 2020, a strategic plan to invest an additional $134.5 million into the ConnSCU system.

“We know that 70 percent of jobs in 2020 will require postsecondary education. That’s why it is imperative that we garner support for these necessary investments in our students,” said Governor Malloy. “This is a multi-year, multi-layered investment that will unite our 12 community colleges, four state universities, and single online college into one system. It will help colleges adapt to student needs and offer the kind of dynamic higher education experience that students want and employers expect. Let’s move our state university and community college system into the 21st Century.”

Transform CSCU 2020, the blueprint for bringing the 17 ConnSCU institutions together as a system and strengthening how BOR delivers higher education in Connecticut, aims to boost enrollment over the next several years, increase the system’s online learning capacity, and better align coursework to meet the demands of the 21st century job market.

“The right partnerships with the business community and state agencies will prepare our students to compete, and help the state meet economic and workforce development goals,” said Gray. “Student learning is our top priority, but higher education also plays an important role in economic growth and expansion, so our plan must both improve how we invest in and deliver education, and link us more strongly to Connecticut’s industry sectors.”
In keeping with the system’s mission of accessibility, the plan will establish a long-term tuition model and scholarships so students are able to better afford higher education. To further keep costs in check and ensure students complete degree coursework on time, the plan will provide seamless credit transfer within system schools and streamline administrative processes like registration, admissions, and financial aid.

He previously served as chancellor of the Riverside Community College District in California, served as president of Miami Dade College’s Kendall Campus, and spent eight years as the chancellor of the Fayette Campus for Penn State University. Gray holds a bachelor’s degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, a Master of Education degree from the University of Pittsburgh, and a Ed.D from Penn State.

**AN EXPERIENCED LEADER**

“Dr. Gray is the forward looking, strategic thinker we need to head our system,” said Board of Regents Chairman Nick Donofrio. “He is an enthusiastic and effective advocate on behalf of our institutions, working to build partnerships that support student success, learning and workforce development.”

Gray’s 35-year higher education career in two-and four-year institutions across the country make him well-suited for the task of transforming Connecticut’s system of higher education. His experience includes expanding early college programs at community colleges, education-workforce preparation, private fundraising, and institutional development.

As the system’s new president, Gray embarked on a fall tour of ConnSCU 17 institutions where he got a first-hand look at the college and university campuses and operations, and had an opportunity to sit down with faculty, staff, students, as well as local business and community leaders.

“We’ve begun a planning effort that will guide us over the next 25 years,” said Gray. “It is a collaboration that requires college and university faculty, students, and presidents to share their individual experiences — what’s working, what needs to be better, and most of all, how we can better function as a system to support our 121,000 students. The plan must be responsive to student needs certainly, but also cultivate the unique mission of each institution.”

Under the plan, Gray would create a Center of Excellence at each of the four state universities that would highlight a signature program area. All of the universities would continue to offer a broad curriculum, but as a Center of Excellence, the university would further raise its visibility, attract corporate partners, and provide a wide range of coursework for degree-seeking students and professional development.

“‘It is a collaboration that requires college and university faculty, students, and presidents to share their individual experiences — what’s working, what needs to be better and most of all, how we can better function as a system to support our 121,000 students.’

**CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AND WORKFORCE PREPARATION**

"It is a collaboration that requires college and university faculty, students, and presidents to share their individual experiences — what’s working, what needs to be better and most of all, how we can better function as a system to support our 121,000 students.”
At the state’s 12 two-year community colleges, a focus on the five fast-growing career clusters will better prepare students for careers in their chosen field. Data by the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Department of Economic and Community Development identifies insurance and financial services, allied health, advanced manufacturing, tourism and hospitality, and information technology as fast-growing industries in need of a talented workforce. The community colleges are uniquely positioned to react rapidly to these workforce demands, expand existing coursework, and successfully prepare students or retrain incumbent workers to respond to industry need.

REACHING MORE STUDENTS

With a goal to enroll an additional 10,000 students over the next several years, the Board of Regents will examine new strategies to attract and retain students. Currently the system is home to 92,000 full- or part-time students and more than 29,000 continuing education students.

“Data trends highlight the importance of higher education in preparing for the future,” said Gray. “In Connecticut over the past decade there was a six percent decrease in degree attainment, but employment trends show that by 2020, 70 percent of employers will require workers to have successfully completed degree programs — and the wage gap between college graduates and high school graduates becomes even more pronounced. Our plan will help ensure Connecticut residents are strongly positioned to compete for these good jobs.”

The strategic plan will bolster enrollment at institutions across the state by focusing on several key demographics. With strategies to reach adults who haven’t yet completed a degree and returning military personnel who can articulate military experience into college credit, the system will add more “non-traditional” students — learners who will also bring a great deal of experience into the classroom. Additionally, through a stronger credit transfer system and a new scholarship program, community college students will be better prepared to meet degree requirements and incentivized to transfer into one of the four state universities.

In addition, expanding the system’s early college programs will reach more students while they are still in high school, giving them experience with college coursework and credits they can use to meet degree requirements. Early college may help bolster enrollment by encouraging students who might not otherwise be on a college track and makes obtaining a degree or certificate more affordable.

Enrollment is also expected to benefit by the expansion and system-wide integration of online learning. Charter Oak State College (COSC), Connecticut’s only fully-online public institution, has been an important part of the state’s higher education landscape for 40 years. Building on that strong history and expertise in distance learning, the plan will better integrate ConnSCU’s online college to benefit students across the entire system. From providing additional sections of core courses to offering alternative courses to students who are working full-time, COSC is poised to play a more active role in serving students in all of the state colleges and universities.

“Charter Oak State College has great potential as the hub for distance learning and system-wide online education,” said Gray. “We can better integrate online learning, help our students meet degree requirements more expediently and connect with working adults by expanding the reach of online learning. Charter Oak State College is an important resource for the state and a major component of building a world-class system of higher education.”

Gray expects to submit the plan to the legislature for approval as part of the BOR 2014 legislative package.
The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) and the University of Connecticut announced a new pre-pharmacy curriculum at Eastern, Western, Southern, and Central Connecticut State Universities that will allow ConnSCU students interested in attending UConn’s highly competitive School of Pharmacy to take required courses at their home schools.

The courses are designed to prepare students for entry into UConn’s Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree program, and were made possible through a joint agreement between ConnSCU and UConn that was signed last fall. The UConn School of Pharmacy is an upper division program — students complete two years of coursework before entering the four-year professional program. Upon completing the program, students earn a Pharm.D. degree which allows graduates to become a licensed, practicing pharmacist.

“The Board of Regents applauds this innovative collaboration with UConn’s School of Pharmacy,” said Ted Yunglas, Principal Academic Affairs Officer at the Board of Regents for Higher Education.

“This new program offers our students an excellent opportunity to prepare early for the rigors of the UConn program — and these academic partnerships will help Connecticut’s higher education institutions contribute to a strong statewide workforce.”

-Ted Yunglas, BOR Principal Academic Affairs Officer

>Manchester Community College Named One of the Top 150 in the Country

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program named Manchester Community College (MCC) as one of the nation’s top 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the 2015 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and $1 million dollars in prize funds. MCC is the first Connecticut Community College to be nominated.

“Being one of 150 community colleges nationwide invited to apply for an award of this caliber is a distinct honor and celebrates MCC’s commitment to our students and their success in higher education,” said MCC President Gena Glickman.

The Aspen Prize, awarded every two years, is the nation’s signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America’s community colleges.
Celebrating the completion of two new student-centered facilities, Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) held dual ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the Math Emporium in the Higgins Hall Annex and the Learning Commons in the Westside Classroom Building.

The 3,500-square-foot Math Emporium with 88 learning stations was renovated to provide a state-of-the-art technological center for mathematics education adapted to the learning pace of each student and designed to combine software-based learning tools, traditional lecture instruction and one-on-one tutoring. Senan Hayes, associate professor of mathematics and coordinator of the Math Emporium program, taught a pilot intermediate algebra course and introduced the new instructional approach for 100-level mathematics courses.

WCSU’s Ancell School of Business (ASB) opened the Learning Commons after Assistant Dean and Associate Professor of Management Information Systems Emilio Collar piloted an intervention program called “Business-Focused, Strategy-Based Advising” for students on probation. This program dramatically improved GPAs, but highlighted the need to provide tutoring and other services as an adjunct to advising. WCSU then created the Learning Commons to provide tutoring, advisement and other programs designed to enrich the academic experience for ASB students.

Western Offers New Educational Options

Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) announced the largest gift in its history. Dr. Erland Hagman and Irene Hagman pledged a $1.25 million gift that will grow to $1.65 million if the university reaches certain goals within the next five years. Dr. Hagman is founder and owner of Ergotech Inc. in Danbury.

Part of the pledge will endow full scholarships in the names of the Hagmans’ two daughters to a psychology and biochemistry students, while the majority of the funds will be an unrestricted gift to the university. Veronica Hagman was a psychology major who died in her senior year, and was awarded posthumous graduation. Melissa Hagman graduated in 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in biology.
Leader Colleges >

Capital and Norwalk Community Colleges were two of eight colleges nationwide to receive recertification status as a “Leader College” by Achieving the Dream (ATD), a national initiative dedicated to helping more community college students stay in school and earn a college degree or certificate.

The designation reflects ongoing efforts at both community colleges in implementing strategies to close achievement gaps and promote student success. Norwalk and Capital originally attained Leader College status in 2010 and represent the second cohort of ATD Leader Colleges.

ATD cited Capital’s data on two student success measures: the number and percentage of students successfully completing developmental course requirements in two years and persistence from one term/year to the next. This designation recognizes Norwalk as a leader in the national “completion” movement, which aims to help more community college students reach the graduation finish line and complete a degree, certificate or industry credential.

Early College Education Task Force >

Board of Regents President Gregory Gray and State Department of Education Commissioner Stefan Pryor convened an Early College Education Task Force to study early college learning and make recommendations on expanding early college programs in Connecticut.

The task force will examine ways of modeling early college learning with the ultimate goal of having early college programs operating in all Connecticut community colleges. The 16-member task force is co-chaired by Quinebaug Valley Community College Interim President Carmen Cid and State Department of Education Chief Academic Officer Dianna Roberge-Wentzell.

“Early exposure to college coursework and university-level study will ensure our young people arrive at college ready to succeed,” said President Gray. “This is an innovative way to give students a head start and a solid academic foundation before they get to college, and it reduces the need for costly developmental education courses that can delay a degree or certificate.”

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation granted accreditation to Capital, Northwestern Connecticut, Quinebaug Valley and Three Rivers Community Colleges for their early childhood education programs. Asnuntuck Community College’s associate degree program in Early Childhood Education received continued NAEYC accreditation. ACC received initial accreditation in 2011 in which NAEYC praised the college for providing exceptional attention to the early childhood education needs of surrounding communities.

NAEYC Grants Accreditation to Community Colleges >
Gateway Community College Receives “Smoke-Free Campus” Designation

Gateway Community College (GCC) recently became the first public college in Connecticut to receive national recognition as a “Smoke-Free” campus by the State Department of Public Health and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

GCC joins the ranks of 1,182 colleges and universities across the nation designated by Americans for Nonsmokers’ Rights (ANR) as a nationally recognized “smoke free” campus. GCC implemented the campus-wide policy when it moved to its new downtown New Haven campus in August 2012, making it the first of Connecticut’s state colleges and universities to ban smoking in indoor and outdoor areas across the campus.

Board of Regents Chairman Named and New Member Appointed

Governor Dannel P. Malloy selected Nicholas M. Donofrio of Ridgefield to serve as chairman of the Board of Regents for Higher Education, and appointed JoAnn H. Price of Avon to serve as a board member.

Donofrio has served as a board member since the launch of the Board of Regents on Jan. 1, 2012. From 1997 until his retirement in 2008, he served as IBM’s executive vice president for Innovation and Technology. He also served as vice chairman of the IBM International Foundation chairman of the Board of Governors for the IBM Academy of Technology, and was elected an IBM Fellow. He holds a master’s degree from Syracuse University and a bachelor’s degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Price is a co-founder and managing partner of Fairview Capital, a private equity investment managing firm in West Hartford. Before co-founding Fairview, she served as president of the National Association of Investment Companies in Washington, D.C. She is a graduate of Howard University.

A New Fine Arts Center at Eastern

Eastern Connecticut State University broke ground on its new $62 million Fine Arts Instructional Center last summer.

The 117,990-square-foot, four-story facility is scheduled to open in fall 2015 and will combine teaching, performance and exhibit space for the Performing Arts Department (music and theatre programs) and Visual Arts Department. It will also include a new art gallery, general purpose classroom, three performance venues, two state-of-the-art digital design labs and studio space. The building will also serve as a public resource for the Willimantic community.

“This facility will benefit all of our students. Beyond the issue of curriculum, it is also important to remember the role that the arts play in all our lives,” said Eastern President Elsa Núñez.
Construction and Expansion at the Community Colleges

Middlesex Community College recently began construction on Founders Hall, a $1.55 million, 4,000-square-foot addition to its student lounge and cafeteria. The new building would provide a covered outdoor area, flexible classroom sizes and help the college address space needs due to increasing enrollment.

Tunxis Community College also celebrated the opening of a new, $12.6 million classroom building extension at an open house last summer. The three-floor, 600 Classroom Building extension adds 56,000-square-feet of space designed to enhance learning and support new teaching approaches. The extension consists of 20 classrooms, two computer labs, a writing lab, math lab and early childhood education program classroom.

Manchester Community College recently renovated the East Parking Lot which includes 260 new parking spaces, high efficiency LED lighting, rain gardens, safety and security improvements including lighting and emergency phones and an enhanced school bus drop-off area Great Path Academy middle college high school. The project also includes the infrastructure for electric vehicle charging stations.

SCSU Building on STEM

Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) broke ground for a 103,608-square-foot academic and laboratory science building that will expand SCSU’s science programs, and educate a larger number of students in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. “By producing more graduates with much-needed expertise in the fields of science and technology, Southern will be meeting a vital area of workforce demand and continue to be a key player in Connecticut’s economic revival,” said SCSU President Mary A. Papazian.

The LEED-Silver certified building will include teaching and research labs for physics, earth science, environmental science, molecular biology and chemistry. The Werth Center for Marine and Coastal Studies, the CSU Center for Nanotechnology and a saltwater aquaria room with a touch tank will be a centerpiece of outreach to area schools and the community. The project is expected to be completed in spring 2015.

The $31 million Buley Library construction project is also underway. It includes the renovation of the 98,000-square-foot older wing, and the addition of a new 12,000-square-foot area with an atrium and skywalk connecting two sections of the building on the first and third floors. When added to the 135,000-square-foot addition completed in 2008, the library will encompass 245,000 square feet.

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C CSU Earns Prestigious A A C S B A C C red i t >

Central Connecticut State University’s School of Business joined the ranks of prestigious institutions, including Yale and UConn, in earning accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

To earn the mark of excellence, the School of Business, under the leadership of Dean Siamack Shojai, undertook a rigorous self-evaluation process and then implemented a series of improvements and initiatives during the past seven years. The school recruited highly qualified faculty, implemented a strategic management plan to more effectively operate the school and pursue new endeavors, and expanded student services and programs.

Dr. Michael Gargano Appointed ConnSCU Provost

Dr. Michael Gargano was appointed Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs for the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities. Dr. Gargano will lead efforts to strengthen academic program development and provide leadership on curriculum, policy and research, faculty and student affairs and developmental education.

Dr. Gargano is vice president for Academics, Faculty, and Student Affairs and Dean ad interim for the School of Health Professions at the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio. He was vice president for Student and Academic Support Services and chief of staff, Louisiana State University System; vice chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life, University of Massachusetts Amherst; and associate vice president, Student and Academic Support Services, George Washington University. He holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from the University of Hartford and an Ed.D in Higher Education from George Washington University.

NVCC Nursing Graduates Have State’s Highest Success Rate >

The Nursing Program at Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC) continues to produce top-quality nurses.

According to the most recent report by the National Council of State Boards for Nursing, 97 percent of NVCC nursing students passed their NCLEX-RN licensing exam between April and September 2013, making the program the most successful in the state and placing it in the top 5 percent nationally.

The historic pass-rate this year comes at the same time the program graduated 97 potential nurses, the most in NVCC’s history. Approximately 95 percent of nursing program graduates secure employment in the state of Connecticut after passing the licensure exam.

A Fulbright Scholar in Residence >

Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Oonya Kempadoo of Grenada is teaching Caribbean literature/creative writing at Naugatuck Valley Community College, and unveiled plans to launch a larger all-campus writing project. Kempadoo’s new book, All Decent Animals, was listed number six on Oprah Winfrey’s 2013 summer reading list; and her other books, Buxton Spice, and Tide Running.
Outstanding Performance as a Dean

Karin Edwards, dean of Student Services, at Three Rivers Community College, received the regional Scott Goodnight Award for Outstanding Performance as a Dean, and is now nominated for the national award. This award is given to a dean for sustained professional service in student affairs work, high-level competency in administrative skills, innovative response in meeting students’ needs, effectiveness in developing junior staff members, and leadership.

Charter Oak Awarded Prestigious National Grant

Charter Oak State College is one of seven colleges and universities nationally to be selected by EDUCAUSE, the League for Innovation in the Community College, and Next Generation Learning Challenges, to study new models for improving both productivity and student outcomes. The program, Breakthrough Models Incubator, is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Charter Oak State College received $150,000 in grant support to participate in the program.

MCC President Appointed to Commission on Research, Technology and Emerging Trends

Gena Glickman, president of Manchester Community College (MCC), was appointed to the Commission on Research, Technology and Emerging Trends with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) for a three-year term through June 30, 2016. This commission acts in an advisory capacity to the AACC board of directors in areas that reflect the association’s work on behalf of the nation’s community and technical colleges.

A Lifetime Achievement

Elsa M. Núñez, president of Eastern Connecticut State University, received the Eleanor M. McMahon Award for Lifetime Achievement from the New England Board of Higher Education.

During her seven years at Eastern, Núñez has launched a program that allows the university to predict the academic success of its students and target support programs toward students. Eastern also has the highest percentage of minority faculty among all public and private colleges in Connecticut.

Tunxis Professor Honored by Connecticut Campus Compact

Fran O’Neil, professor of psychology at Tunxis Community College, received the Faculty Engaged Scholarship Award at Connecticut Campus Compact’s 15th Anniversary Awards Breakfast attended by dignitaries and representatives from 23 Connecticut colleges and universities. O’Neil, who has researched and taught the history and culture of Native Americans of the Southwest for over 15 years, was one of three Connecticut faculty awarded at the event.

Charter Oak State College staff visited the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in Seattle as part of receiving a prestigious national grant.

Excellence in Diversity

For the second consecutive year, Capital Community College (CCC) received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) award from Insight into Diversity magazine. As a winner of the HEED award — a national award honoring U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion — CCC was featured along with 55 other recipients in the magazine’s November 2013 issue. CCC is the only institution in the state and one of only a handful of community colleges in the country honored with the award.

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Manufacturing Innovation and Achievement

The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities honored industry partners, staff and students of the state’s four Advanced Manufacturing Centers for innovation and exemplary achievement in the field of advanced manufacturing at the 2013 Advanced Manufacturing Awards Ceremony. Speakers at the Legislative Office Building included Governor Dannel P. Malloy; Elliot Ginsberg, President and CEO of the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, Inc.; and David Levinson, Board of Regents Vice President for Community Colleges. Awards were given to outstanding students Darlene Blumenthal, Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC); Ian Bothur, Quinebaug Valley Community College (QVCC), Christopher Heun, Housatonic Community College (HCC); and Pedro Rivera, Asnuntuck Community College (ACC). Awards were also given to Gail Coppage, BOR director of Innovation and Outreach, for innovation; Frank Gullini, director of ACC’s Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center for leadership; to industry partners; and to the presidents of the Advanced Manufacturing Centers at ACC, HCC, NVCC and QVCC.

GCC Recognized for Mental Health Programming on Campus

Gateway Community College is among the first colleges and universities in nation to be recognized for its comprehensive mental health programming with the JedCampus Seal from The Jed Foundation, an organization working to promote emotional health and prevent suicide among college and university students. The seal recognizes schools that exhibit comprehensive mental health promotion and suicide prevention programming on campus.

WCSU Earns NEASC Reaccreditation

Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) was praised by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) for its commitment to students. The report forms the basis for the consideration of reaffirmation of accreditation for WCSU by the association’s Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, which will occur in the spring. The report concluded a two-year review process and cited WCSU’s “high-quality academic programs that continue to improve” and praised the university’s administration, faculty and staff.

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Professor Honored for Helping Low-Income Youth

Professor Lynda George of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Central Connecticut State University, received the Mario Peña Award by College For Every Student for helping low-income youth prepare for, gain access to, and succeed in college.

A Top Professor

Andrea Pizone-Novia, associate professor of mathematics at Norwalk Community College, was ranked in the top 25 nationally among junior and community college professors according to the annual rankings from RateMyProfessor.com, a website where students score and comment on their professors. She was also named to mtvU’s annual list of Top 25 Junior and Community College Professors based entirely on student input. Pizone was the only professor from Connecticut to make the list.

100 Most Influential Blacks at ConnSCU

The Connecticut State Conference of NAACP Branches recently named four individuals at the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities as being among the “100 Most Influential Blacks” in the state: Felton O. Best, CSU Professor of philosophy, history, African-American and religious studies and director of African-American Studies; Stacey Close, interim associate vice president for Equity and Diversity at Eastern Connecticut State University; Jane McBride Gates, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Western Connecticut State University; and Dorsey L. Kendrick, president, Gateway Community College.
1. Asnuntuck Community College’s (ACC) radio station, WACC 107.7, was relocated and the studio was updated with state-of-the-art equipment. ACC’s Institutional Research Director Qing Mack was in the studio during the ribbon cutting ceremony last fall.

2. Eastern Connecticut State University’s Child and Family Development Resource Center unveiled indoor and outdoor climbing walls to help preschoolers learn motor skills and problem solving, while providing experiential opportunities for Eastern students studying early childhood education.

3. Dr. Merle W. Harris, Charter Oak State College President Emeritus, Board of Regents member, and founder of the Women in Transition Program at Charter Oak State College (center) with Women in Transition program alum Rachel Leipold (left), and student Kajuauna Dailey (right) at a Women in Transition fundraiser at the Governor’s Residence in Hartford. The program helps underserved single mothers complete their college degrees.

4. Middlesex Community College students (left to right) Dan Dalhstrom, Hollie Kinney, and Andrew Saxe, with college Film Industry Training Program graduate, Kerey Viswanathan, won the Best Writing Award and Audience Award for short film John & Clara from the 48 Hour Film Project — the oldest timed film competition in the world.

5. Three Rivers Community College President Grace Sawyer Jones with students kicked off the expansion of public transportation between Groton, New London and the college in partnership with the Southeast Area Transit District.
6 Western Connecticut State University hosted “TEDxWCSU” that featured discussions about creativity, compassion and technology, the arts, education and youth activism. Musical compositions were also featured performed by WCSU music and audio production major Dale Osterman and the WCSU jazz group.

7 The Central Connecticut State University team — (left to right) Andrew Rose, Aaron Zamojski, Melissa Mulcahy, Paul Pioselli — won The Hartford Technical Case Competition that paired student teams with mentors from The Hartford to create solutions for real-world business problems.

8 Pulitzer Prize-winning author Junot Díaz — kneeling with students — visited Naugatuck Community College on his international book tour to promote his latest work, This is How You Lose Her. NVCC was the only community college stop on his tour.

9 Twenty-three educators from the People’s Republic of China, representing ten of China’s top-ranked universities, visited Manchester Community College to learn more about the financial management of the community college.

10 Norwalk Community College celebrated the International Day of Peace last fall with community activities and a two-mile Peace Walk.
A welding student in class at Asnuntuck Community College.