

# ECSU senior honored for service

**TRACI HASTINGS**

CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

WILLIMANTIC — A student at Eastern Connecticut State University is firmly “Root”-ed in college traditions of civic involvement and leadership.

Katelyn Root of Stratford, a junior at ECSU, was named a recipient of the Newman Civic Fellowship earlier this month.

The fellowship, through a national coalition of colleges known as Campus Compact, is awarded to students who demonstrate public service and a potential for public leadership.

The fellowship is named for Frank Newman, who helped found Campus Compact and who advocated for collegiate students to become more involved citizens.

It is funded by the KPMG Foundation and Newman’s Own Foundation.

Root, who is majoring in both elementary education and in liberal studies, is a student leader at ECSU’s Center for Community Engagement, and helped develop a volunteer program with the Windham Recovery Community Center.

She leads job-readiness training, resume-building workshops and group sessions at the center and has recruited more than 60 other student volunteers in the last two years.

Root was one of just six students who received the fellowship from Connecticut and the only student who attends one of the state’s universities.

In all, there are 262 students receiving

## Special Neighbor



**Eastern Connecticut State University junior Katelyn Root was recently named a recipient of the Newman Civic Fellowship, which is awarded to students who demonstrate public service and a potential for public leadership.** Contributed photo

the fellowship from the United States, Greece and Mexico this year.

She will be mentored during her fellowship by Kim Silcox, the director of

the Center for Community Engagement, while honing her leadership skills.

She will also attend the 2019 convention of the Newman Civic Fellowship in Boston this fall. Root was nominated for the award by ECSU President Elsa Nuñez.

“Katelyn has been a vocal advocate for the recovery community and has created a welcoming and understanding corps of volunteers who support the center’s staff and guests,” said Nuñez. “She has worked effectively to reduce the stigma associated with addiction, and to support individuals in recovery.”

This is not Root’s first recognition for her efforts within the community.

In 2017, she received a Strengthening Communities award from the Center for Community Engagement and, in 2018, she was named the Volunteer of the Year by the Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery.

“Volunteering in the Willimantic community has changed me entirely,” said Root.

“Working at the recovering center has allowed me to impact the lives of many adults facing recovery from drugs, alcohol and other addictions.

“I’ve had an overwhelming number of guests approach me with news of interviews, second interviews and job offers after my sessions.

“Without these experiences, I would not be the person I am today.”