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For Immediate Release

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Incoming Students Welcomed at ECSU

Willimantic— Before they begin taking their first regularly scheduled classes of the fall semester, incoming students at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) will take part in a first year orientation week full of events and activities aimed at making their successful transition to college quick and easy. Lecturers ranging from descendants of President Thomas Jefferson Julia Jefferson and Shay Banks-Young, to Jerry Greenfield, half of the duo of Ben & Jerry's Homemade Inc., will help develop student's awareness of this year's theme, civic responsibility.

That week, August 25 – 29, the first year students will be grouped into small teams where the first relationships of college will be formed. Most of the many aspects of campus life will be learned of in these groups, from housing policies to an introduction to the library system. Presentations concerning diversity and being socially responsible, as well as plenty of fun activities will round out the students' first campus learning experience.

Each small group will be headed by a SOC (Student Orientation Counselor), usually a junior or senior, who will talk about the school freely to his/her group and can answer any questions that come up. Icebreaker activities will help the students to become more comfortable with one another. Although many of the lectures and activities are

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attended in the groups, there will be an abundance of interaction among the thirty groups. During this week, students can become better acquainted with their roommates, their neighbors, housing staff, including RAs, (Resident Assistant) and the rules of the hall, their home for the upcoming year.

“The Affairs of Race in America,” presented by descendants of President Thomas Jefferson is the first of many lectures scheduled. Shay Banks-Young is an African American who is a descendant of children President Jefferson had with his slave, Sally Hemings, according to genetic testing. Julia Jefferson is a light skinned descendant of Jefferson and Heming’s. During their presentation, the two women bring an honest dialogue to the very important issues, especially race relations, we face as a society.

Jerry Greenfield is another of the distinguished guests who will make an appearance during first year orientation week. Greenfield is half of the team responsible for Ben & Jerry’s Homemade, Inc., a business now worth \$160 million. The team made social responsibility and creative management an integral part of their business. Greenfield will speak about following one’s dream, and of how to reach it while helping society.

During the week, comedian Jim Matthews will present his show “Beer, Booze, and Books.” The performer will cover some of the issues students will be confronting for the first time.

To further develop the civic responsibility theme, a group of actors will present “Sex Signals,” an audience-interactive performance that seeks to inform the viewers about sexual harassment and abuse. Various scenarios are enacted, and the audience decides what behavior is appropriate and what’s not, followed by a discussion on why.

In addition to the speakers, there will be plenty of opportunities for the incoming students to enjoy themselves and meet their classmates. A wild wild west-style casino night will take place, when participants will have a chance to walk off winners. Televisions and DVD players are just some of the prizes up for grabs. A drive-in movie night is planned when the summer blockbuster *The Matrix Reloaded* will be projected onto a screen in the green in front of Hurley hall. In addition, inflatable chairs will be given away to viewers. “Battle of the Sexes” will pit an all-male team against an all-female team. The members of the winning team will win a trip to the Bahamas.

And then, after all the excitement of this first week, students will begin classes on Tuesday, September 2.

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the Connecticut State University (CSU) System.