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For Immediate Release
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American Legion Boys State at Eastern to commemorate Hugh C. Graham

Willimantic, Conn.—Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) will host nearly 300 Connecticut high school juniors as well as state legislators, lawyers, police officers, and government officials during the 64th American Legion Boys State. This will be the eighteenth annual Boys State at Eastern dedicated in memory of Hugh C. Graham, a long-time supporter of Boys State. He was the department commander of the American Legion and involved with the Boys State conference for more than 30 years. The conference will be dedicated in his memory and an award will be given in his name.

Student delegates will arrive on campus Sunday, June 26. Boys State officially begins with formal opening ceremonies at 7:30 p.m.

The week long program is formatted to educate students on how state and municipal governments operate. Participants will set up and run mock town, city, county and state elections. Students will engage in role-playing where towns are represented, mayors will lobby, and representatives and senators will debate and enact legislation.

Joseph Tarrant Jr., chairman of the American Legion Boys State Commission, praised Eastern for hosting Boys State over the years. “Eastern makes the summer program a very positive experience for young people who cannot help but return to their communities with a desire to make a positive contribution,” said Tarrant.

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Phillip Haddad, chairman of the American Legion Post 19 in Willimantic, agrees. “Boys State can be a turning point in a youngster’s life. We look forward to coming to Eastern every year.”

A number of state legislators and senators have been invited to speak throughout the week. This year’s guests include Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, who will discuss issues Connecticut faces today; Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz, who will give an address on Monday, June 27, at 11:00 a.m.; and Lieutenant Mary Beth Curtis of the Willimantic Police Department, who will provide a workshop on sexual harassment in the workplace.

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Eastern Connecticut State University is part of the Connecticut State University (CSU) system and is the state’s public liberal arts university. ECSU serves more than 5,000 students each year on its Willimantic campus.