



Eastern Connecticut State University

# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Leaders Are Born At Eastern**

**Willimantic, Conn.** – This fall, student-athletes at Eastern Connecticut State University can participate in a new leadership training program. Eastern’s Leadership Training 101 was designed by Softball Coach Diana Pepin. The program’s goal is to cultivate a crop of future team captains and leaders by helping student-athletes develop and enhance leadership and teamwork skills. All of this will happen through a series of constructive workshops over the next two months.

Participants in the program were identified and recommended by their coaches, who saw leadership potential in them. What makes a good leader? Pepin says “good beliefs, doing the right thing, doing what you say you’re going to do, and integrity” are essential. A good leader, she says, is “a role model who influences others, sets the tone for everyone on the team.”

The program was developed as a response to the need to build stronger leadership skills among Eastern students. Coaches teach in all areas of athletics, however leadership skills are not given the time needed in order to develop effectively. Coach Pepin felt the need to guide athletes in the right direction and give them the tools to become great leaders.

Data collected from a survey suggest that athletes have an idea of what it takes to be a leader but lack the tools necessary to be great at it. Says Pepin, “We’re just trying to better prepare our potential leaders and captains. We want to get them the tools they need to meet the needs of our teams on and off the field.” The tools will be selected presentations delivered to the future leaders during hour-long biweekly sessions. Speakers will include people like Eastern Chief of Police Jeff Garewski, and will cover topics such as “Characteristics of a Leader,” “Leading off the Field,” and “Setting the Tone for Your Teammates.”

Friends, fun and food are three other incentives of the program. All participants will be awarded a certificate at the completion.

At present there are approximately 30 student-athletes participating, an representative group consisting of five seniors, 12 juniors, four sophomores, and three freshmen. Ideally, the program will focus on the underclassmen as they prepare for the future. While this is the program’s first iteration, Pepin says she would love to have it annually or per semester. It looks like sunshine in the forecast for athletics at Eastern.

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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.

It is the policy of Eastern Connecticut State University to ensure equal access to its events. If you are an individual with a disability and will need accommodations for this event, please contact the Office of University Relations at (860) 465-5735.

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