Not guilty

At Eastern Connecticut State University's University Hour Wednesday, the topic was 'wrongful conviction.' Speaking here, is Fernando Bermudez. He served more than 18 years in New York State prisons following his wrongful conviction of murder, until he was proven innocent in 2009 with the assistance of pro bono attorneys. He now tours the country and abroad giving lectures and taking questions about how wrongful convictions happen and that innocent, incarcerated people often don't have the ways or the means to take on the judicial system. He was accompanied by his wife. They commented on their daily efforts to readjust and the difficulties for all family members. The couple said Bermudez is not the man or father he used to be prior to his incarceration. Recently he completed his bachelor's degree.

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Eastern’s Relay for Life is this weekend

By AKAYA MCELVEEN
Chronicle Staff Writer

WILLIMANTIC/MANSFIELD — It's that time of year again where Eastern Connecticut State University will host its annual Relay for Life event. The event will take place at the ECSU Athletic Complex, actually located in Mansfield, on Saturday starting at 11 a.m. and lasting until the same time Sunday morning.

It is part of the Connecticut Public Colleges and Universities Make a Difference Week.

Relay for Life is sponsored by and is a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society.

“Quite a few Eastern teams signed up,” said Kim Silcox, director of Eastern’s Center for Community Engagement (CCE).

Those teams include Eastern’s CCE, housing department, students and other staff members.

Although hosted at Eastern Connecticut State University, Silcox said the event is a large community event not just for the Eastern community.

Eastern has been hosting the fundraiser for 19 years.

The fundraiser involves volunteers forming teams of 15 people or less, and walking the length of the track.

Silcox said many people choose to stay overnight.

“There will be entertainment, games for kids, food and basket drawings,” Silcox said.

Silcox said participants can register online on the CCE’s web site or the American Cancer Society’s web site, relayforlife.org and enter Eastern’s zip code — 06226.

Participants can join existing teams or form their own.

Silcox said there are about 230 teams signed up so far, already exceeding the American Cancer Society’s goal.

A luminaria will take place at the complex starting at 8:15 p.m. All lights will be off as the complex illuminates with luminaria bags lighted by candles.

The bags are dedicated in memory of someone who lost the battle to cancer, those who are battling cancer, or anyone who has overcome cancer.

Names of those dedicated will be read off at this ceremony.

According to the CCE web site, “each year, more than 4 million people in over 20 countries raise much-needed funds and awareness to save lives from cancer through the Relay For Life movement.

“The event is a relay and occurs overnight honoring its three themes: Celebrating survivors and caretakers, Remembering those lost to the disease, and the Fight Back to find a cure and beat it.”

For more information, contact Silcox at silcox@easternct.edu or (860) 465-4426.