Rhythm and blues singer David Foster of Windham is partnering with Eastern Connecticut State University to sponsor a special series of four fundraising concerts this season, including a concert featuring Foster’s band, the Mohegan Sun All-Stars, on Saturday.

Jazzin’ it up for a good cause

Eastern Connecticut State University

WILLIMANTIC — Rhythm and blues singer David Foster of Windham is partnering with Eastern Connecticut State University to sponsor a special series of four fundraising concerts this season.

“Jazzin’ it Up at Eastern” will feature four acts in support of a scholarship fund for Windham High School graduates to attend ECSU.

“We are so pleased to partner with David Foster on this project,” said Eastern President Elsa Núñez. “Giving Windham’s young people the financial support to attend Eastern will be a life-changing event for these students.”

The Kevin Crosbie Memorial Scholarship, established in honor of the late publisher of the Chronicle, was created by David and Marilyn Foster, Crosbie’s widow, Patrice Crosbie, and Eileen Ossen of the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation.

“Kevin was a great friend and a tireless advocate for our local community,” said Foster. “The scholarship fund we created in Kevin’s memory is a way to keep his legacy alive. He would be pleased to know that we are helping local students achieve their dream of a college education. This concert series will significantly add to the Crosbie Scholarship endowment.”

Foster’s band — the Mohegan Sun All-Stars — will open the series on Saturday at 8 p.m., at the concert hall in ECSU’s Fine Arts Instructional Center.

The band’s show marks the 45th anniversary of the Shaboo Inn in Mansfield, where Foster showcased a who’s who of famous musical acts from 1971-82, including Dire Straits, BB King, Muddy Waters, AC/DC, Aerosmith, Elvis Costello, the Police and many more.

Foster began his career as a singer at age 14.

In 1979, he assembled a group of musicians to form the Shaboo All-Stars. Today, Foster and his friends are still cranking out their trademark rhythm and blues as David Foster and the Mohegan Sun All-Stars.

In addition to Foster and his band, three veteran jazz acts will complete the series — Grammy Award-winning trumpeter Arturo Sandoval, renowned guitarist Pat Metheny and legendary jazz quintet Spyro Gyra.

Sandoval will appear Nov. 5, Metheny and his band will play Jan. 13 and Spyro Gyra will complete the series May 20. All shows begin at 8 p.m.

A protege of the legendary jazz master Dizzy Gillespie, Sandoval began studying classical trumpet at age 12, but it didn’t take him long to catch the excitement of the jazz world.

He has since evolved into one of the world’s most-acknowledged guardians of jazz trumpet and flugelhorn, as well as a renowned classical artist, pianist and composer.

Sandoval has been awarded 10 Grammy Awards and has also received six Billboard Awards and an Emmy Award.

By the age of 15, Metheny was working regularly with the best jazz musicians in his hometown of Kansas City, Mo.

He first burst on the international jazz scene in 1974, crafting a playing style that blended the sound of horn players with an advanced rhythmic and harmonic sensibility.

Over the years, Metheny has won countless polls as best jazz guitarist. He also produced three gold records, “Still Life (Talking),” “Letter from Home” and “Secret Story,” and won 20 Grammy Awards in 12 different categories.

From their beginnings in Buffalo, N.Y., Spyro Gyra has earned an international audience over its 40-year career, selling more than 10 million albums and playing more than 5,000 shows on five continents.

Tickets for the Mohegan Sun All-Stars are $30 for regular seats and $50 for VIP seats. Ticket packages for the entire series are also available.

All ticket proceeds for the concert series will benefit the Kevin Crosbie Memorial Scholarship.

To purchase tickets or for more information, visit www.easternct.edu/jazzinitup, call the box office at (860) 465-4979 or e-mail concerts@easternct.edu.