



Eastern Connecticut State University

# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Eastern and Windham Charged Up About Electric Vehicles**

**Willimantic, Conn.** – On Sept. 16, Eastern Connecticut State University will celebrate National Drive Electric Week™ by hosting an event showcasing an electric vehicle (EV) and how it is charged. Further indicators of Eastern’s commitment to increasing the state’s infrastructure for electric vehicles and promoting public awareness include installation of an electric vehicle charging station on campus this past winter, and Eastern President Elsa Nuñez’s recent signing of the “Workplace Charging Challenge.”

The event on Sept. 16 will be held on campus and is free and open to the public. It takes place from 5–7 p.m. on the sidewalk between the new Fine Arts Instructional Center and the Student Center (next to the student center patio).

Eastern is teaming up with the New England Electric Auto Association and the Town of Windham to participate in National Drive Electric Week, a celebration to raise awareness of the growing availability of electric vehicles (EVs). National Drive Electric Week is a nationwide celebration organized by Plug In America, the Sierra Club and the Electric Auto Association.

Electric vehicles will be exhibited and EV owners will be available to share their experiences and the benefits of driving electric versus traditional vehicles.

The Town of Windham will feature their newly purchased 2015 Nissan Leaf. The car was purchased for \$30,000, in part through an \$18,000 grant from the Connecticut Green Bank. The town will also be receiving \$3,000 from the Connecticut Hydrogen and Electric Auto Purchase Rebate Program (CHEAPR). Building Official Peter W. Zvingilas will use the car for on-the-job trips. Along with its no-cost public charging station at the Windham Town Hall, this new purchase will further increase Windham's energy efficiency.

On Sept. 2, President Nuñez signed the EV Everywhere Workplace Charging Challenge. The challenge is an initiative of the U.S. Department of Energy to encourage employers to provide EV charging and build our nation's plug-in electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The initiative was made in tandem with President Obama's 2011 EV Everywhere Grand Challenge to make the United States the first nation in the world to offer EVs at a price comparable to traditional gasoline vehicles. Motivation for the challenge comes from its projected benefits: a full transition from gasoline to electric vehicles could decrease dependence on foreign oil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 60 percent.

"Over the years, Eastern has worked to become a leader in sustainability," noted Nuñez upon signing the Challenge. "Our initiatives have helped us become more cost-effective and energy efficient here on campus and serve as an example for our students, other campuses and Connecticut's communities. Support for electric vehicles and participation in the Workplace Charging Challenge is the next logical step in further reducing greenhouse gas emissions."

In 2007 Nuñez signed the American College & University President's Climate Commitment to eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to stabilize the earth's

climate. In 2009 Eastern drafted a Climate Action Plan. In November 2014, Eastern installed a public, no-cost EV charging station in its Cervantes Parking Garage. The campus has four “LEED” buildings (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a rating standard for sustainable buildings). Eastern’s new Fine Arts Instructional Center, scheduled to open in spring 2016, has also been designed to LEED Silver standards.

Off-campus visitors for the Sept. 16 EV exhibit can park in the Cervantes and Shakespeare Parking Garages. For more information, visit [driveelectricweek.org](http://driveelectricweek.org) to learn more about National Drive Electric Week.