

Jamaican Educators Graduate with Bachelor Degree



“Success isn’t determined by your position or pay scale, but by what you do best. Maximize the value of your education and engage it with your passion. You can make a difference!” That’s what keynote speaker Charlene Russell-Tucker, associate commissioner of the Connecticut State Department of Education, told 45 educators from Jamaica who graduated on Aug. 4 from Eastern Connecticut State University with bachelor’s degrees in sociology. This year’s graduates are the program’s third cohort of students.

The ceremony was held at Eastern for the first time since its inception in 2006. The two previous Commencement ceremonies were held in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

In giving his charge to the graduates, Michael Pernal, Eastern’s executive vice president, congratulated the students for their diligence and reminded them never to lose their thirst for knowledge. “This degree is a gift that can be turned around and used as another gift,” said Pernal. “Give it to your community and your countrymen, and your education will have value not only for you, but whomever you touch in the future as well.”

The program for the Jamaican educators allows them to complete courses in their home country and on Eastern’s campus in Willimantic. The program is offered through Eastern’s School of Continuing Education in collaboration with the Hanover Education Foundation in Jamaica.

“This day represents a new chapter in our lives and will bring new forth new challenges,” said graduate Veronica Samuels-Rhoden. “It is an opportunity to access new accomplishments and to achieve them as inventors of the future in both our personal and professional lives.”

“Participants in this program are given an excellent opportunity to advance their education and career goals. In addition, the program makes it possible for them to excel in the classroom, community and in their own personal development,” said Shelly Gimenez, dean of the School of Continuing Education.

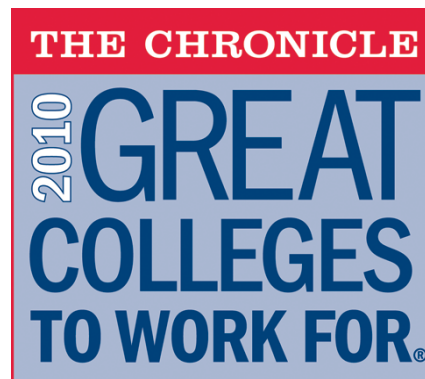
The inspiration for the Jamaica program came from the late Reverend Collin Bennett '81. Bennett, a prominent Hartford-area businessman, wanted to establish a mutually beneficial link between Eastern and Jamaica, so he encouraged Eastern to develop a relationship with the Hanover Education Foundation in Jamaica. Beverley Anderson, former dean of Eastern's School of Arts and Sciences and a native of Jamaica, established initial contact with the Hanover Education Foundation, gained support on campus and launched the program.

Reverend Father Percival Lynch, chair of the Hanover Education Foundation and one of the founders of the program, traveled from Jamaica to attend the ceremony. "I am humbled and grateful to work with a University like Eastern that understands the importance of education," said Lynch. "With Shelly Gimenez, the Bennett family and Eastern, we have seen the program grow tremendously. The cohort helps to provide more training for our educators who will use their experience at Eastern and bring them back to the island of Jamaica where everyone will prosper."

David G. Carter, chancellor of the Connecticut State University System, also spoke at the ceremony. "Always remember that the lives you have touched will touch children whose lives have yet to be born. You have made your rich Jamaican heritage very proud. "

Eastern Named "A Great College to Work For" Two Years in a Row

For the second year in a row, Eastern has made the list of "Great Colleges to Work For" released by The Chronicle of Higher Education. ModernThink LLC, an independent research company, surveyed 275 colleges and universities and more than 41,000 employees at those institutions to develop its findings. Only 97 colleges were awarded the prestigious honor, as opposed to 247 last year. The program is the second largest workplace recognition program in the country, after Fortune Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" program.



Between 400 and 600 employees were surveyed at each college or university and each institution was also asked to fill out an organizational questionnaire. In addition to being recognized as a "Great College to Work For," Eastern placed in the top 10 among medium-sized colleges in the category of "Collaborative Governance." Eastern was also noted for the president's bi-annual semester meetings with teachers and students to discuss campus issues.

"We are honored to be included in 'Great Colleges to Work For' two years in a row," said Eastern President Elsa Núñez. "Receiving this national recognition from The Chronicle of Higher Education is very gratifying. I am especially pleased to see that we were again ranked in the top 10 among institutions our size for having shared governance at Eastern. The spirit of collaboration that exists on our campus gives us a heightened capacity to better serve our students and the State of Connecticut." For complete survey results, visit: <http://chronicle.com/section/The-Academic-Workplace/156>

Eastern Named to List of Best Colleges in the Northeast

Eastern is one of the best colleges in the Northeast, according to The Princeton Review. Eastern is one of 218 institutions that The Princeton Review recommends to prospective students in its “Best in the Northeast” section on PrincetonReview.com.

“The University community is honored to be included in The Princeton Review’s ‘Best Colleges in the Northeast’ for the second time in three years,” said Eastern President Elsa Núñez. “What is most gratifying is that much of this recognition can be attributed to the survey of our students that The Princeton Review conducted. Our students seem to appreciate the residential, liberal arts experience that we offer — small classes, personal attention from faculty and a vibrant campus life. The fact our students feel Eastern is affordable is also important to families in these challenging economic times.”



“We’re pleased to recommend Eastern Connecticut State University to readers of our book and users of our site as one of the best schools to earn their undergraduate degree,” says Robert Franek, Princeton Review’s Senior VP/Publishing. “We chose it and the other terrific institutions we name as ‘regional best’ colleges mainly for their excellent academic programs.”

Student comments on Eastern included “a smaller school with smaller classes”; Eastern’s “thorough liberal arts curriculum” is conducted within a “comfortable learning environment”; and “I went to academic advising and was amazed about how fast I was helped; it actually made a positive difference in my work.” The campus life was also highlighted: “There are always activities going on, such as movies, parties, crafts and comedians. You will never be bored at this school.”

Eastern Featured in 2011 College Access & Opportunity Guide

Eastern has been recognized in the Center for Student Opportunity’s (CSO) 2011 College Access & Opportunity Guide, a comprehensive college guidebook designed to help low-income, first-generation college-bound students make their college dreams a reality. According to the College Board, high-achieving students from low-income families have about the same chance of enrolling in college as low-achieving students from wealthier families. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education indicates that eight out of 10 students expect to attain a bachelor’s degree or higher. Despite these aspirations, low-income students and those who are the first in their families to pursue higher education are severely underrepresented on college campuses.

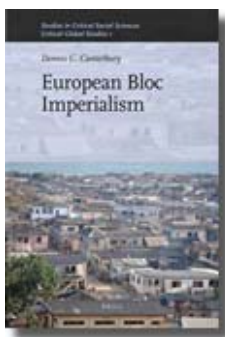


Furthermore, those who do make it to college are not finding supportive college environments or graduating. A recent USA Today article notes that 89 percent of low-income, first-generation students leave college within six years without a degree.

“One of our University’s core values at Eastern is ‘inclusion,’” said Eastern’s President Elsa Núñez, “and we are fundamentally committed to ensuring that students from all walks of life have access to a college education. We are pleased to be included in the 2011 College Access and Opportunity Guide. I know that the information found in the guide will be very helpful to families and prospective students need when considering what college is best for them.”

For more information about the Center for Student Opportunity visit www.CSOpportunity.org.

Professor Canterbury Publishes New Book



Sociology Professor Dennis Canterbury has published a new book, “European Bloc Imperialism.” The book focuses on the means by which Euro-American capital is currently spread around the globe and the different ways it pillages the wealth of the developing countries in African, Caribbean and the Pacific.

Eastern Professor Wins Google Grant

Benjamin Pauley, assistant professor of English, along with Brian Geiger, director of the University of California-Riverside’s Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research (CBSR), have received a \$50,000 grant from Google to provide more precise bibliographical identification of books scanned at sites like Google Books and the Internet Archive. Their proposal was selected to be among the first 12 projects exploring ways to leverage the massive scale of the Google Books archive for new directions in digital humanities research. Google’s Internet database contains more than 12 million books in more than 400 languages.



By providing Google with authoritative identifications of the works they have scanned, the project will improve the metadata for thousands of texts at Google Books, bringing a new level of accuracy to a resource that millions of people use every day, allowing Google to improve the search results they present to their users.

“This is a really exciting opportunity where we can potentially involve Eastern’s students, either in the form of undergraduate research projects or pre-professional experiences,” said Pauley. “Working on a project like this would be enormously beneficial for students hoping to attend graduate school in English, history or other humanities disciplines.”

New Resources Available for Early Childhood Development Center



The Center for Early Childhood Education has added new audio and video podcasts to serve as helpful tools for early childhood professionals. Denise Matthews, associate professor of communication, has produced five video podcasts in the “e-clips” educational video series.

The latest, “Observing Young Children,” features Sudha Swaminathan, professor of education, who describes different observations in the early childhood classroom and discusses how to plan observations so children receive the most beneficial results. Four additional early childhood teachers, including Eastern’s Patricia Gardner, discuss their formal and informal observation strategies to help respond to the needs of children.

Ken Measimer, production specialist for the Center, along with several Eastern communication students, also has developed a new audio podcast series, “Early Childhood Insights.” The first three podcasts are related to teaching preschool children conflict resolution skills; using technology with young children in early childhood classrooms; and cultural differences in children’s play.

For more information on the audio and visual podcasts, visit www.easternct.edu/mt-static/early_childhood_education.

Textbook Rental Program Coming to Eastern



Eastern will be offering students a new cost-saving option when they return to classes this fall. A textbook rental program is being launched that will allow students to rent textbooks for 45 percent of the cost of purchasing a new textbook. Textbook purchases typically cost students hundreds of dollars each semester. (All four Connecticut State Universities are involved in the project.)

Books that are available as part of the new rental program will be identified in the bookstore and online; more than 200 titles are to be included in the program this fall at Eastern.

“I am very pleased that our students now have this rental option to significantly reduce the cost of their textbooks,” said Eastern President Elsa Nunez. “This partnership between our faculty and Barnes & Noble Booksellers is welcome news to families as they manage the costs of their sons’ and daughters’ college education.”

For more information about the textbook rental program, please contact Benjamin Blake at (860) 465-5283.

Eastern Professor Displays Art on Display in New York

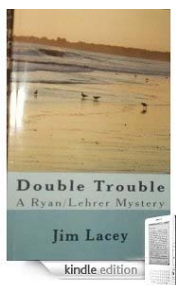


Sharon Butler, associate professor of visual arts, is being featured in an art exhibition, titled “On Display,” which opened on Aug. 6 and runs through Aug. 26 at STOREFRONT in Brooklyn, NY.

The three-person exhibit features new perspectives on abstraction along with the similarities of key elements of visual arts portrayed by the artists. “ArtCat, The Opinionated Guide to New York Art,” has selected the exhibition as a ‘Top Pick’ for the week.

“Having my work included in an exhibition in the heart of the international art world is an honor for me, but more importantly, it speaks to the excellence of the entire Visual Arts Department,” said Butler. For more information about the art exhibition, please contact Sharon Butler at (860) 465-4345 or e-mail her at butlers@easternct.edu. Above left, “Brightly Colored Separates 2,” 2010, oil on canvas, 30” x 40” and right, “Brightly Colored Separates 6,” 2010, oil on canvas, 30” x 40.”

Former Eastern Professor Publishes Mystery Novel



Jim Lacey, professor emeritus and former director of Eastern’s honor’s program, has published a mystery novel, “Double Trouble.” The novel tells the tale of a couple amateur sleuths who try to locate a professor who disappeared off a Connecticut shore. However, the pair gets into deeper trouble throughout their journey. Lacey has also published a novelette, “Witch Children,” that appeared in Galaxy, a science fiction magazine. His book is available at Amazon.com in both paperback and Kindle formats.

Eastern Sports

Zachary Stoltenberg, 6, of Tolland was one of 170 youngsters participating in the Eastern Connecticut Summer Basketball Clinic, which concluded a two-week session at the Eastern Sports Center on Aug. 6. The clinic is under the direction of Eastern head men's basketball coach Bill Geitner and his coaching staff and players.



Eastern in the News

- On Aug. 11, Sociology Professor Dennis Canterbury, Math Professor Bonsu Osei and Eastern student Sonchery Hall discussed their recent research in Ghana, West Africa on WILI-AM with radio host Wayne Norman.
- The Aug. 5 edition of The (Willimantic) Chronicle ran a front-page story on the graduation of 45 educators from Jamaica who earned their bachelor's degree in sociology.
- On July 27, Education Professor David Stoloff, director of Eastern's Center for Educational Excellence, and future teachers Kelly Alicia Jimenez from Windham Tech and Chrisann Johnson from Bloomfield High School, discussed Eastern's Summer Institute for Future Teachers on WILI-AM radio.
- The Aug. 1 edition of the Jamaica Observer reported that the 45 educators from Jamaica were set to graduate from Eastern with bachelor's degrees in sociology.
- The Aug. 10 edition of the Hartford Courant reported on Eastern's participation of "Labor History Day," organized by the Southeastern Connecticut Labor Council.

Mark Your Calendars!

From Aug. 26 through Oct. 7, the Julian Akus Gallery will present the art of Sheila Pree Bright, Dave Cole and Amin Swessi in the exhibition, "A Candid World: American Visions." For more information, call (860) 465-4659 or visit www.easternct.edu/akusgallery.

On Oct. 17 and Oct. 23, from 1 to 4 p .m., the Office of Admissions will hold two Open House sessions for prospective students. For more information, call (860) 465-5286 or visit the website: <http://www.easternct.edu/admissions/>