

Eastern Students Win National Documentary Award



The outstanding work of students enrolled in Communication Professor Denise Matthews documentary production class has resulted in a first-place award for Best Student Documentary Short in the National Broadcast Education Association 2011 Media Festival Awards. The award will be presented in Las Vegas in April 2011.

The documentary, "The Child Left Behind," was created by a production team in fall 2009 of Michelle Jarvis '11, Dan Young '10, Jason Wadecki '11 and Estelle Crews. The project was completed by producer Katelyn Forster during her spring 2010 internship under the supervision of Professor Matthews. Education Professor Maureen Ruby, a reading specialist hired by the Putnam Public School District, brought the story idea for The Child Left Behind to the class. The documentary tells the story of Putnam parents of middle school children with special needs who protested that their child had not been taught to read. Parent advocacy led the school system to hire Ruby, who revealed that inadequate data on children with disabilities may short-change the students when it comes to reading skills. Ruby produced remarkable results in the training she provided to the school system. Visit http://66.135.33.137/apps/xhnpplay7hd7cpjltm/InfluxisPlayer_20100909081450/InfluxisPlayer.html to see the award-winning documentary.

The Lingering Effects of Slavery

On Feb. 9, an Eastern student, faculty member, staff member and Connecticut state commissioner used Owen Alik Shahadah's award-winning documentary, "500 Years Later," to discuss the atrocities of the African slave trade and its impact on modern society. The panel concluded that the slave trade was one of the most tragic and disturbing episodes in the history of mankind.

Emmanuel Achigbu, a senior mathematics major from the Imo State of Nigeria; Christopher Ayeni, professor of communication; Susan Heyward, director of the academic advising center; and Glenn Cassis, executive director of Connecticut's African American Affairs Commission, constituted the panel for the film, which was brought to campus by Sociology Professor Dennis Canterbury.



Heyward said slavery has left a scar on the soul of African Americans, but that it would never crush their spirit to be free. Ayeni said, "Africans did not come to America on a cruise ship. We came in chains, unlike any other group." He noted that more than 200 million Africans lost their lives during the Atlantic Slave

Trade by European colonists. Cassis, said, “We can’t continue to live a lie,” noting that the Jim Crow laws of old are vibrant today as African Americans are prevented from fully participating in the decision-making process of many organizations. He also reminded the audience that there are more African American males incarcerated than in college.

Eastern President Elsa Nunez asked how the University could make students understand slavery, and the panelists recommended the University establish an Africana Studies and Research Center on campus.

Eastern Visits UN



Michael Pernal and Elizabeth Peterson



Ingrid Feddersen

Three Eastern Connecticut State University students joined Executive Vice President Michael Pernal and Akus Gallery Director Elizabeth Peterson on Jan. 29 for the inaugural Arts for Peace Salon at the Millennium UN Plaza Hotel in New York City.

The salon was presented by Arts for Peace, an initiative of the World Association of Former United Nations Internes and Fellows (WAFUNIF, www.wafunif.org).

The Eastern students’ band, The Phantoms, was awarded the 2011 United Nations Arts for Peace Emerging Artists Award for their humanitarian work this past January, when they volunteered in Haitian orphanages and spread their message of love and peace through music.

Band members include Jordan Lorrius, a senior communication major from Stamford; Matthew Grosjean, a senior political science and economics major from Ellington; senior Donald Palardy, a computer science major from Jewett City; and Christopher Brechlin ’10 from Meriden.

The Phantoms performed “Ayiti Kanpe,” which means “Stand up, Haiti,” and “Volim te New York,” which draws parallels between the NATO bombings of Belgrade, Serbia, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers.

Lorrius and Jourdan Urbach, a sophomore at Yale University who is both a violin virtuoso and philanthropist, were also named United Nations Arts for Peace Goodwill Ambassadors.

On display during the salon was the exhibition “Haiti Rising: Selections from the Stanley Popiel and Ingrid Feddersen Collection of Eastern Connecticut State University.” The late Stanley Popiel and his wife, Ingrid Feddersen, donated more than 240 Haitian paintings and sculptures to Eastern in 2000. Feddersen spoke at the Arts for Peace Salon about her and Popiel’s frequent visits to Haiti between 1975 and 1999, when they collected art and worked with the Haitian Health Foundation (www.haitianhealthfoundation.org).

Students Present “Fab Fables”

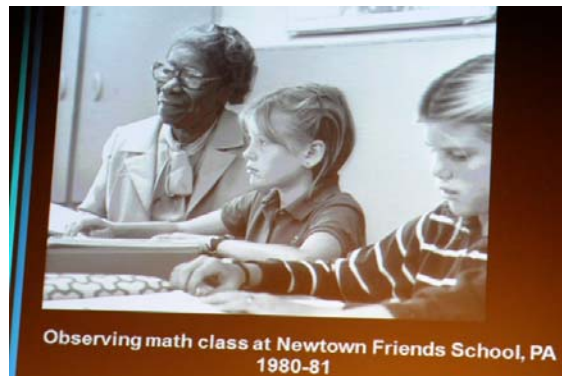
On Feb. 10, students in the Children’s Theatre class taught by Ellen Faith Brodie, professor and director of theatre, presented “Fab Fables,” their final project, which represented the collaborative imagination of students as directors, cast, crew, designers and playwrights. American tales were the starting point and magic became the theme. “The Goody Witches of Killingworth,” written by Jeff Himmelman, and directed by student Max Loignon with assistance from Stephanie LaPointe and Katharine McManus, was “inspired by a snippet of a letter” written in 1783 and gave audiences a glimpse into Connecticut’s folklore.



Above, Lumberjacks Sarah Dillon and Munroe Carter tremble while the Goody Witches Shannon Delahanty and Kerri Panciera taunt them from behind their trees.

The other featured short play, “Wiley and The Hairy Man,” written by Susan Zeder and co-directed by LaPointe and McManus, took audiences deep into Louisiana. Original entre-acts were written by Sarah Dillon to tie the two shows together as if the audience was on a “road trip” from the Northeast to the Southeast. Fab Fables will tour eastern Connecticut schools this spring/summer with portable sets designed by student Luke Reinwald, make-up by Blaine Tetlow and props designed by Craig Harlow. Fab Fables represents the Theatre program’s ongoing commitment to giving students hands-on, real-world experiences.

Close Discusses Connecticut’s First African American Professor



Observing math class at Newtown Friends School, PA
1980-81

On Feb. 16, as part of University Hour, History Professor Stacey Close discussed the historical significance of Juliette Phifer Bursterman, the first African American professor in Connecticut. Bursterman accepted a position as assistant professor at what was then Willimantic State Teachers College in 1948. In 1959, she was promoted to the rank of full professor and remained at Eastern until her retirement in 1974.

Bursterman received a Bachelor of Science degree from Winston-Salem Teachers College in 1929 and her Master of Arts in Education in 1933 from the Teachers College of Columbia University in New York City. During the 1933-34 school year, Bursterman taught at the Newbold Training School, which was associated with the State Teachers College in Fayetteville, NC. In the 1934-35 school year, she took leave from the Fayetteville Teachers College to serve as state supervisor of adult education at the Federal Emergency Relief Program in North Carolina. The following year, she returned to the Newbold Training School as principal and remained there until 1946. Bursterman received her doctorate from New York University in 1948.

Let It Snow! Let it Snow!



The blizzard-like sleet and rainy icy conditions we've experienced the past two months made one forget how beautiful and peaceful New England snow looks in the winter. Most of the nation has never seen anything quite like it. Mother Nature set records with her snow and ice storms, bringing down power lines and roofs, causing power outages for hundreds of thousands, and killing chickens, horses and humans.

Through it all, the crews in Eastern's Department of Facilities Management and Planning worked around the clock, plowing or shoveling heavy wet snow to

make sure Eastern could continue to operate. "We have a group of snow volunteers from all departments in Facilities who work on snow removal," Nancy Tinker, director of facilities management and planning. "Everyone from custodians to electricians is out there shoveling to clean up the campus."

Eastern student-athletes from all sports and coaches and athletic staff and administrators also pitched in, shoveling more than a foot of snow off the synthetic track and turf field at the Mansfield Athletic Complex.

Eastern Answers the Call for Blood



Above, Kellie Labrecque '14 and technician Frank Savona work together as Labrecque gives blood.

Recent newscasts announced that blood supplies in Connecticut were at a 10-year low, due to all the bad weather. Eastern students, faculty and staff responded to the call on Feb. 7–18, when the University hosted its third blood drive of the year in the Betty R. Tipton Room. Though February is a month when many people get sick, 171 students, faculty and staff donated 132 pints of blood, making the drive one of the best February drives ever.

Over the years, Eastern's blood drives have featured many student volunteers who can't donate but want to help out. This drive was no exception, with 29 volunteers donating 48 hours of their time — helping

with check-ins, flipping pancakes at the canteen, and making the donors feel relaxed and comfortable after their donation.

The next blood drive at Eastern will take place on April 18 and April 19 from 10:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. in the Betty R. Tipton Room. People interested in donating may visit www.redcrossblood.org (sponsor code: Eastern), or contact Irene Cretella at cretellai@easternct.edu.

Native American Artist Courtney Leonard



The Julian Akus Gallery is presenting “Cur.rent Car.ri.er,” through March 10. Artist Courtney M. Leonard presented a talk on Feb. 10, which was followed by a reception in the gallery. In “Cur.rent Car.ri.er”, Leonard, a member of the Shinnecock Nation and recent graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, explores the evolution of language, image and culture through mixed media pieces of video, audio and tangible objects.

“As an Indigenous woman, I navigate three worlds – the first world is that of indigeneity; the second world is one of Western Imperial construction; and the third world is where these two meet in dynamic reaction and adaptation,” said Leonard. She reinterprets traditional Shinnecock clay vessels, which act as the carriers of historical narrative through the currents of present cultures and on to the next generations. “The only way to truly know a people is through the people themselves, objects hold only pieces of time – we carry the rest.”

Eastern Professor Produces “The Screen Project”

June Bisantz, professor of digital art and design, and Harrison Judd, photographer and digital archivist to Maurice Sendak, produced “The Screen Project,” Connecticut’s first Urban Screens event, from sunset to midnight each day from Feb. 11 to 21. The event was held at five locations on Main Street in Willimantic, including Cafémantic, the Willimantic Public Library and the former Nassiff’s for Sports facility.

The Urban Screens concept used architectural surfaces as “canvases” for creative work. Bisantz and Judd connected eastern Connecticut to the global art community with “The Screen Project,” using downtown Willimantic as their setting. The project included video, animation, moving text and poetry by New York City artists Holly Anderson, Caroline Beasley-Baker and Flash Rosenberg; Texas artist Sev Coursen; and Connecticut artists Sue Berg and Rachel Siporin, as well as Bisantz and Judd.



The ECSU Design Group, a team of 10 student artists from Eastern Connecticut State University’s Digital Art and Design program, designed promotional materials and billboards for the event and also exhibited. The Screen Project’s animated logo was created by Design Group member Paula Hansen. Billboards promoting the event in Willimantic and Putnam were designed by Hansen, Kaitlin Butler and Trevor Shaw-Mumford, a senior visual arts major from Manchester. A still image from Butler’s “Screen Project” video appeared in the February issue of “Connecticut Magazine.”

Energy Savings Forum



The Institute for Sustainable Energy hosted a Windham “Neighbor to Neighbor” organizational meeting on Jan. 27. “Neighbor to Neighbor” is a community energy program designed to engage communities to work together to reduce energy waste, save money and preserve the environment for future generations. Fourteen communities are participating in the challenge, including Lebanon, Mansfield and Windham. For more information about “Neighbor to Neighbor,” contact Laurel Kohl, ISE energy education specialist, at kohl@easternct.edu or call her at (860) 465-0256.

Osborn Receives Recognition from CASE

Ed Osborn, director of university relations, received the Quarter Century Circle Award at the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District I Annual Conference in Boston on Jan. 26. The award recognizes advancement and communications professionals who have served for 25 years or more for higher education institutions and other educational nonprofits. Osborn has directed the Office of University Relations at Eastern since October 2003.



Ed Osborn receives the Quarter Century Circle Award from Tim Laylor, CASE District I chair.

Prior to coming to Eastern, Osborn was the head of College Relations and Marketing at Austin Community College in Austin, TX. He began his career in higher education marketing and public relations at Moraine Park Technical College in Fond du Lac, WI, in 1984.

A Taste of Natural Healing



On Jan. 31, John Furlong, a naturopath physician, visited Mary Kenny’s Medical Anthropology class to discuss the origins of naturopathic medicine and its approach to prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness. Students learned about the healing power of plants, and were able to experiment with a variety of plant remedies used to treat different ailments. The students tasted a variety of herbs, but Taylor Abelli (left) and Danielle Bourne, (right,) don’t seem to find them very tasty!

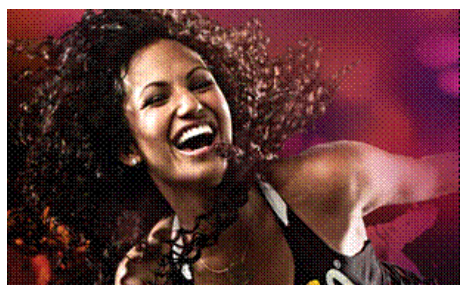
Willimantic Orchestra Performs Winter Concert

The Willimantic Orchestra presented a concert on Feb. 27 in Shafer Auditorium. The orchestra performed its featured selection, Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," a jazz concerto for piano and orchestra. Other performances included Bock's "Fiddler on the Roof" symphonic dances, Waldteufel's "Skater's Waltz" and Meacham's "American Patrol," among others. Annette Shapiro, local piano virtuoso, played with the orchestra.



The Willimantic Orchestra is a nonprofit orchestra made up of local community members committed to authentic orchestral music. David Vaughan, part-time professor of performing arts, conducts the ensemble.

ZUMBA!



Students, faculty and staff can party themselves into shape by taking free classes in ZUMBA, an aerobic workout set to Latin/international rhythms running through March 16. Classes take place on Mondays from 5:30 to 6:30 p. m. in Room 104 of the Sports Center, and on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Mead Commons B. ZUMBA organizers say if you can walk, you can Zumba! You don't have to be a dancer to enroll in class, just bring a good attitude and a sense of adventure. ZUMBA classes are

sponsored by the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, Intramurals and Recreation.

Kohn Cited For Academics

Jamie Kohn, a junior guard from Columbia on the Eastern Connecticut State University men's basketball team, has become the program's first selection to the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) Capital One College Division Academic All-District 1 team. "This is an award that is truly well deserved," praised head coach Bill Geitner. "Jamie has combined an unparalleled work-ethic, time management skills and a commitment to excellence to achieve success in the classroom and on the basketball court. He epitomizes what a true student-athlete is all about. It has been an honor to work with Jamie the past three years."



A Health and Physical Education major with a 3.96 overall GPA, Kohn has been named to the conference academic honor roll in both years of eligibility and will be receiving an Eastern/E-Club Outstanding Scholar-Athlete Award this May in his first year of eligibility.

Bierly Makes History



Denise Bierly, Eastern's head women's basketball coach, became the coach with the most wins in program history on Feb. 19 when the Warriors defeated the University of Southern Maine, 60-53 in overtime on the final day of the regular season. Now in her 17th year, Bierly surpassed Eastern Hall of Fame coach Bob Miller with her 333rd victory. Miller coached 19 seasons, compiling a record of 332-149 in 19 seasons. Bierly headed into the Little East Conference playoffs with a record of 333-135.

Published!

History Professor Stacey Close has published a chapter in "Handbook of African American Health," published by Guilford Press. In its January edition, the American Journal of Nursing named the book as its "2010 Book of the Year."

Catherine Carter, a graduate student in the School of Education and Professional Studies, has been published in Middle Level Learning, which is part of the larger national journal, Social Education.

Mark Your Calendars!

Graduate Division Open House

On March 12, the Graduate Division is hosting an open house from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Student Center. The event is designed to share information with potential graduate students on Eastern's master's degree programs in Education and Organizational Management. For more information, call (860) 465-5292 or visit www.easternct.edu/graduate.



Eastern Seeks Volunteers for Special Olympics



Eastern is looking for volunteers to help more than 200 athletes who will take part in the 32nd Annual Windham Invitational Special Olympics Swim Meet on March 12 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Windham High School. Eastern Chemistry Professor Charles Wynn, who has been the swim meet director for the past 16 years, says he expects more than 350 volunteers will be needed to make the event the most successful Special Olympics Swim Meet in Connecticut.

"Volunteers will be needed for sports clinics, food service and water safety, said Wynn. "Clinics also are offered in various sports, aerobics, and arts and crafts."

This event is approved for community service credit. For more information, please contact Charles Wynn at (860) 465-5258 or Geri White at (860) 455-9196.

Aardvark Jazz Orchestra to Perform



The Aardvark Jazz Orchestra, led by music director Mark Harvey, will perform “Celebrating Mary Lou Williams, First Lady of Jazz,” at 7 p.m. on March 16 in Shafer Auditorium. The performance is part of Eastern’s 10th Annual Arts and Lecture Series.

Eastern’s Concert Chorale, led by Director of Vocal Studies David Belles, will join the orchestra for “Gloria,” while the Eastern Jazz Ensemble, directed by Joseph Tomanelli, will join the orchestra to perform “Roll ‘Em!”

The event celebrates African American and Women’s History Months and honors the legendary Mary Lou Williams, an African American composer who rose to prominence in the pre-Civil Rights/pre-Women’s Rights era. Dubbed the “First Lady of Jazz,” Williams (1910–1981) composed and arranged music for many leading bands, most notably Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington.

In addition to free admission to Eastern faculty, staff and students, admission to Arts and Lecture Series events is free to all middle school, high school and college students. Admission for the general public is \$10 per ticket; tickets can be reserved by calling (860) 465-0036 or e-mailing tickets@easternct.edu. For information on the 2010-11 [Arts and Lecture Series](#), visit www.easternct.edu/artsandlecture/.



Eastern in the News

- On Feb. 11, History Professor Anna Kirchmann and her colleagues discussed the history of the Pulaski American Citizens Club on the Wayne Norman Show on WILI-AM Radio.
- On Feb. 7, The (New London) Day reported on History Professor Stacey Close’s lecture at the Groton Public Library on the history and significance of the civil rights movement.
- On Feb. 7, Art Professor June Bisantz and Harrison Judd discussed “The Screen Project,” Bisantz’s latest public art project, on the Wayne Norman Show on WILI-AM Radio.
- On Feb. 5, Lourdes Ardel, manager of compensation and training and a United Way volunteer, spoke about the United Way’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program on El Show de Analeh on Univision, the Spanish language network.
- The Feb. 1 edition of PR Newswire ran a story on the “Neighbor to Neighbor” program held at Eastern. The program teaches Connecticut homeowners how to conserve electricity.
- The Jan. 27 edition of The (Willimantic) Chronicle ran a story on author Shari Aaron’s presentation on green careers.

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- The Jan. 20 edition of the Hartford Courant ran a story on Eastern's February Film Series featuring Jack Lemmon.
 - The Jan. 16 edition of the Norwich Bulletin ran a story on the 12-part television series on the life of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. created by Dwight Bachman, Eastern's Public Relations Officer. The story also appeared in the New London Day, the Hartford Courant, the (Willimantic) Chronicle, the Manchester Journal Inquirer and the Reminder News.
 - The Jan. 15 edition of The (Willimantic) Chronicle ran a story on Eastern's participation in "College Goal Sunday."
 - The Jan. 9 edition of the Courant.com reported on Eastern's Dual Enrollment program.