



Eastern Connecticut State University

NEWS

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Eastern Named to Presidential Honor Roll For Community Service

Willimantic, Conn. –The Corporation for National and Community Service honored Eastern Connecticut State University on Feb.9 with a place on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to America’s communities.

“We thank the Corporation for National and Community Service for recognizing the significant contributions our students and faculty are making in our local community and throughout Connecticut,” said Eastern President Elsa Núñez. “Being selected to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll is a mark of distinction that we are very grateful to receive.”

Launched in 2006, the Community Service Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement. Honorees for the award were chosen based on a series of selection factors including scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.

For years, Eastern students have been involved in the local community through academic classes, residence life, clubs and organizations, and the University’s Office of Community Service.

Recently, in November 2008, Eastern served a Thanksgiving dinner to more than 400 people at its annual "Day of Giving." Students also collected more than 20,000 nonperishable items for local social service agencies that help poor people, donations that are expected to serve the community for at least 20 months. Each year, Eastern's students support Habitat for Humanity by using their spring break to visit communities along the eastern seaboard and help build homes for needy families.

More than 100 students participate regularly in People Helping People, a student-led organization that has coordinated projects in the community in the areas of human service, education, the environment, social activism, health care and global issues. One such program brings student volunteers to Lyon's Manor in Willington, a home for individuals who do not need full-time nursing staff, but who cannot live alone and who would otherwise be homeless. Spearheaded by senior Jessica Dybdahl, students visit on a weekly basis, bringing crafts, sports, games and humor. Lyon's Manor staff say the students have created a sense of community among the residents that did not exist previously. Ms. Dybdahl has been awarded the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Service Award at Eastern for her volunteer activities at Eastern.

"In this time of economic distress, we need volunteers more than ever. College students represent an enormous pool of idealism and energy to help tackle some of our toughest challenges," said Stephen Goldsmith, vice chair of the board of directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees the Honor Roll. "We salute Eastern Connecticut State University for making community service a campus priority, and thank the millions of college students who are helping to renew America through service to others."

Overall, the corporation honored six schools with Presidential Awards. In addition, 83 were named as Honor Roll with Distinction members and 546 schools as Honor Roll members. In total, 635 schools were recognized. A full list is available at www.nationalservice.gov/honorroll.

The Honor Roll is a program of the corporation, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation. The President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll is presented during the annual conference of the American Council on Education.

"I offer heartfelt congratulations to those institutions named to the 2008 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. College and university students across the country are making a difference in the lives of others every day – as are the institutions that encourage their students to serve others," said American Council on Education President Molly Corbett Broad.

Recent studies have underlined the importance of service-learning and volunteering to college students. In 2006, 2.8 million college students gave more than 297 million hours of volunteer service, according to the corporation's "Volunteering in America 2007" study. Expanding campus incentives for service is part of a larger initiative to spur higher levels of volunteering by America's college students. The corporation is working with a coalition of federal agencies, higher education and student associations, and nonprofit organizations to achieve this goal.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. The corporation administers Senior Corps; AmeriCorp; and Learn and

Serve America, a program that supports service-learning in schools, institutions of higher education and community-based organizations. For more information, go to www.nationalservice.gov.

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Eastern Connecticut State University is part of the Connecticut State University (CSU) system and is the state's public liberal arts university. ECSU serves more than 5,000 students each year on its Willimantic campus.

It is the policy of Eastern Connecticut State University to ensure equal access to its events. If you are an individual with a disability and will need accommodations for this event, please contact the Office of University Relations at (860) 465-5735.

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