ECSU's Núñez is appointed to national survey

WILLIMANTIC — Eastern Connecticut State University President Elsa Núñez has been appointed to the National Advisory Board of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Her membership is effective immediately and will extend through January 2017.

"Dr. Núñez is an outstanding addition to the board," said Alexander McCormack, survey director and associate professor of educational leadership and policy studies at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind.

Núñez came to Eastern in 2006 with more than 20 years of experience as a senior administrator at such institutions as the University of Maine System and City University of New York. Since her arrival, she has firmly established Eastern's role as Connecticut's public liberal arts university.

Academic enhancements have ranged from providing additional support for faculty and undergraduate research and travel, to the development of new majors such as health sciences and new media studies.

Community service is recognized

WILLIMANTIC — For the fifth time in the past six years, President Obama has recognized Eastern Connecticut State University for its community service and engagement work.

Eastern was again named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Since 2006, the honor roll has recognized institutions of higher education with exemplary community service programs that have measurable outcomes and develop campus-community partnerships.

"Community service has always been a hallmark at Eastern," said Eastern President Elsa Núñez. "Over the years, and since the creation of the Center for Community Engagement in 2009, our commitment to service and ties to the Willimantic community have only grown.

"To again be recognized by President Obama as a university that exemplifies such service is something that everyone on our campus is proud of."

In the past year, nearly 2,800 students completed approximately 158,000 hours of community service in a variety of capacities. "In providing thousands of hours of service a year to dozens of social agencies and nonprofits, Eastern students are demonstrating their social responsibility while learning valuable professional and organizational skills," said Núñez.

Eastern's service work is facilitated through the center as well as through student-run clubs and academic departments. "In the past year, Eastern has a firm commitment to creating engagement opportunities that enhance the learning experience of our students while striving to be a key partner in addressing the issues affecting our nation, state and local community," said Kim Silcox, director of the center.

Students actively volunteer at a number of local organizations, including Windham Public Schools, Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery, Covenant Soup Kitchen, Windham No Freeze Hospitality Center and others.

Student clubs such as Best Buddies, People Helping People and Habitat for Humanity dedicate manpower and fundraising efforts to a number of causes within and beyond Willimantic.

Faculty in the business, sociology, education and other departments also assign "service learning" projects that are mutually beneficial to students and the community.