

OPENING REMARKS FOR “ON CIRCUIT”
CONNECTICUT SUPREME COURT
DR. NÚÑEZ
OCTOBER 19, 2022

Good morning! I am so happy to greet all of you today, and to extend a warm welcome to everyone in attendance for the Connecticut Supreme Court “On Circuit”.

To Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson, the associate justices, your staffs, the legal teams and all those who come here today seeking justice: On behalf of Eastern’s administration, faculty, and students, let me tell you how proud we are that you are here today, and how honored we are that Eastern was selected to host the first session of “On Circuit” since prior to the Pandemic.

The history of the Supreme Court dates back to its creation in 1784, although at that time it was comprised of the Lieutenant Governor and members of the upper chamber of the General Assembly. A decade later the Governor was added as a member of the court. Then in 1806, the governor, lieutenant governor and legislators were replaced, the membership of the Supreme Court was expanded from five to nine, and all of the members also served as judges in the Connecticut Superior Court. While the Supreme Court’s decisions were no longer directly influenced by the political leanings of its members, its rulings could still be overturned by action of the General Assembly. The Supreme Court did not become a truly separate branch of state government until 1818, when the Connecticut Constitution provided for an independent judiciary, with the Supreme Court of Errors established as the state's highest court.

I believe it is fitting that the Supreme Court resumes the “On Circuit” program here at Eastern -- a public university – for I believe with all my heart in the transformative power of public higher education.

But let us also remember that today, the highest judicial court in our state comes to Connecticut’s public liberal arts university. Why is this significant? It is significant because we believe that liberally-educated persons present the greatest safeguard to preserving our great American democracy!

