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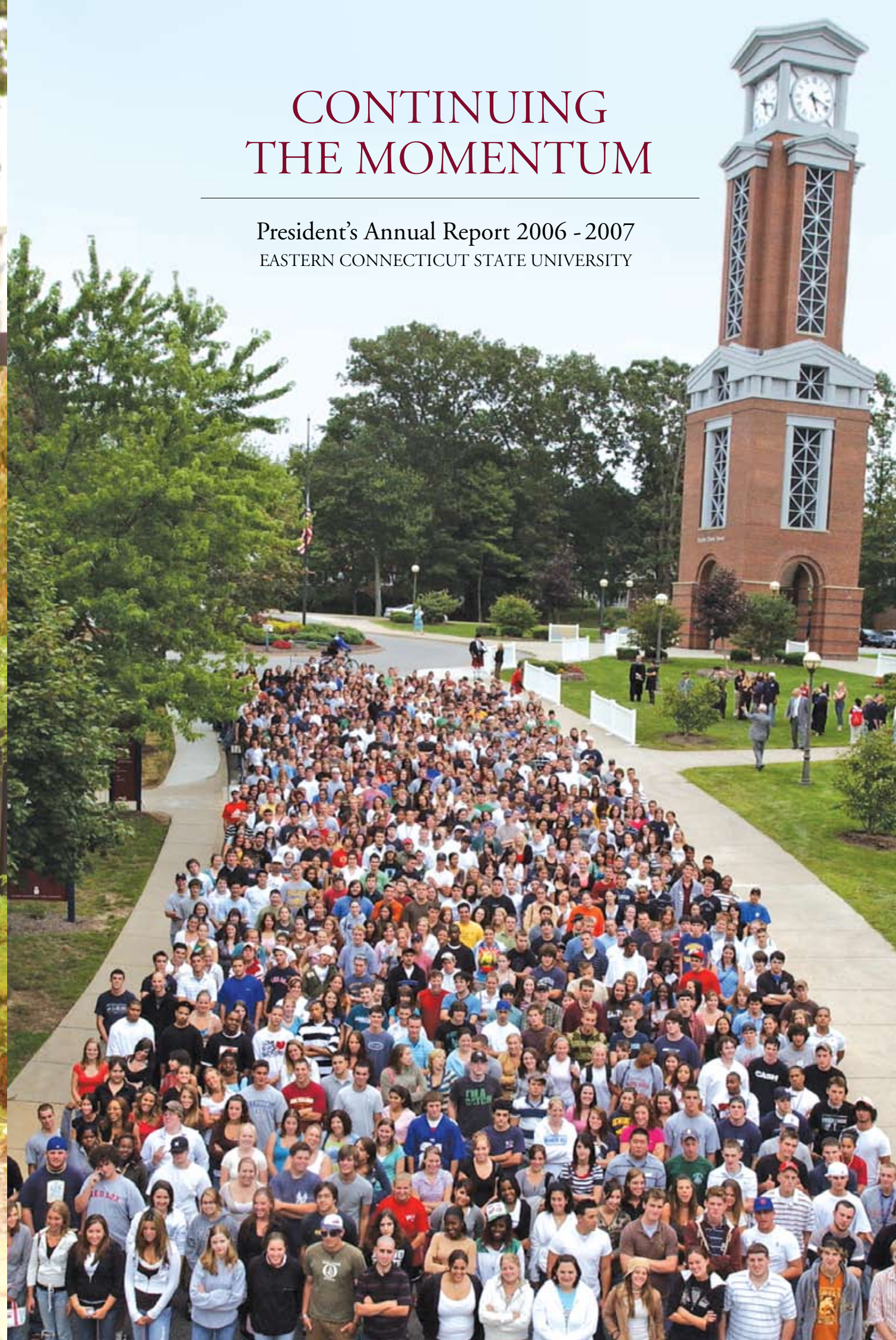
CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM

President's Annual Report 2006 - 2007
EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY



EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

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Continuing the Momentum

I am pleased to share with you my first annual report to the community as the president of Eastern Connecticut State University. Last year marked a successful transition from the 18-year administration of David G. Carter, who ably led the University into the 21st century. As the title of the report — “Continuing the Momentum” — suggests, it is our goal to build upon the progress that has been in evidence since Eastern’s beginnings 118 years ago.

The cover of the report shows the Class of 2011 on their first day on campus. They are living examples of the positive momentum we are seeing at Eastern—applications for this year were up 10 percent; the average SAT scores of entering students are up, as is our graduation rate; and 98 percent of our 2006 graduates say they would recommend Eastern to a potential college student, the highest figure in the Connecticut State University System.

The achievements of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni, highlighted throughout this report, are a further indication that Eastern is on the right path to becoming a premier public liberal arts university. Our students continue to develop and excel under the guidance and encouragement of their professors, demonstrating the University’s continued emphasis on providing students with a strong undergraduate experience.

One of the important opportunities I have had during my first year has been to reflect upon the University’s past: first as a normal school in the late 1880s, then as a teacher’s college, and now as the state’s public liberal arts university. Today, Eastern continues its legacy as an accessible institution that reflects its roots in teacher education while also expanding its scholarly role in the arts and sciences.

Indeed, the Eastern community has been moved by a powerful vision. My administration is honored to carry forward Eastern’s traditions as we continue to strengthen the educational experiences of our students. We are confident that our graduates leave Eastern with analytical skills, able to think critically while being committed to serving others and making a difference in their communities.

Eastern is positioned to build upon the momentum it has created in the past decade. We are in the advanced stages of completing the University’s 2008–2013 Strategic Plan, one that promises to deepen our students’ liberal arts experience. As Connecticut’s only public liberal arts university, our commitment to providing a quality intellectual experience for our students has never been stronger. Your role in helping us continue to advance Eastern’s academic reputation is invaluable. Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elsa M. Nuñez".

Elsa M. Nuñez
President

NEW BEGINNINGS



The J. Eugene Smith Library was the setting to announce Elsa Nuñez's appointment as Eastern's sixth president in May 2006.

A Year of Transition

The year 2006-2007 was one of transition for Eastern Connecticut State University. Following a tenure of almost 18 years as Eastern's president, **David G. Carter** became chancellor of the Connecticut State University System in February 2006. **Elsa M.**

Nuñez was selected by the Connecticut State University Board of Trustees as Eastern's sixth president in May 2006, and took office on Aug. 4, 2006. Nuñez is the first Latina president of a public university in New England and comes to Eastern with a proven administrative



Robert Arpin '06 interviews Elsa M. Nuñez prior to the press conference announcing her appointment as Eastern's sixth president.

record and significant experience as a faculty member at a public liberal arts college.

Committing herself first to getting to know the community, President Nuñez was busy throughout the year as she held get-togethers with faculty and staff; visited residence halls to hear students' ideas and concerns; toured Willimantic's famous Third Thursday Street Festival; met with local, regional, and state officials on a variety of issues; introduced herself to donors and supporters; and attended numerous other local and state functions. At the same time, the new president was delivering on a promise she made during her initial candidate visit in early 2006: "I believe in planning."



Charles R. Webb (left), Eastern's president from 1970-1988, joined President Elsa M. Nuñez to celebrate David G. Carter's inauguration as CSUS chancellor on Oct. 20, 2006.

Planning for Tomorrow

For the past 10 months, President Nuñez has led Eastern in developing the University's 2008-13 Strategic Plan. The Committee on the Future of Eastern (COFE), which includes University personnel as well as members of the local and statewide community, has been hard at work creating a new mission statement, core values, a vision for the future, and a set of strategic initiatives. Currently in draft form, the plan includes strategies for providing Eastern students with a stronger, more unified campus experience; enhancing "active learning" opportunities on campus and in local, state, national, and international arenas; and creating more service opportunities within the local community.



PASSING THE TORCH OF LEADERSHIP

Sunshine beamed brightly into the J. Eugene Smith Library on May 18, 2006, when Lawrence D. McHugh, chairman of the Connecticut State University System's Board of Trustees, held a press conference to announce the appointment of Elsa M. Nuñez as Eastern's sixth president. "We are very excited to welcome Dr. Nuñez to Eastern Connecticut State University and the Connecticut State University System," said McHugh. "She is an outstanding leader and administrator, and the trustees are confident that she will be an exceptional president who will guide Eastern through what we expect to be a continued era of unprecedented growth and improvement."

"Eastern is very fortunate to have Dr. Nuñez as its next president," said Carter. "She is an outstanding administrator, and I am confident that she will excel as president."

Nuñez came to Eastern from the University of Maine System, where she served as vice chancellor from 2003–2006. Nuñez previously had served in similar capacities at Lesley University and The City University of New York.

"Ramapo State College, which is the public liberal arts college of New Jersey, was my first faculty appointment," said Nuñez, in explaining her interest and familiarity with Eastern's mission. "My passion for the liberal arts is very deep."

Eastern's new president received her B.A. in Spanish and English from Montclair State College. She has a master's degree in English from Fairleigh Dickinson University and an Ed.D. in linguistics from Rutgers University.



CSUS Chairman McHugh introduces President Nuñez



Nuñez took over the mantle of leadership from David G. Carter, president of Eastern Connecticut State University since April 1988, who was named chancellor of the Connecticut State University System on Dec. 16, 2005.

Shelley McCauley-Browning '06 and Benjamin Sanborn '07, president and president-elect respectively of the Student Government Association, escort Dr. Nuñez to the press conference announcing her presidency.



ENHANCING THE LIBERAL ARTS

New Programs Meet Student Needs

The strength of any college or university is the initiative of its faculty. Eastern faculty have been busy the past several years developing the University's new Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, supported by a strengthened First-Year Program. The liberal arts core provides a sequenced, three-tiered approach. In the first tier, stu-



Timothy Schroeder, assistant professor of environmental earth science, uses the University's Arboretum as a classroom for Geology of Natural Resources, a course in one of the First-Year Program clusters.

dents learn foundational academic skills they then apply in tier-two courses. A capstone experience, such as an internship or research project, constitutes the third tier. Fundamental to the liberal arts experience is the First-Year Program, designed to introduce entering freshmen to academic and campus life. In the first semester, "learning communities" of 25 students take three classes together as a cohort. Two academic courses

are combined with a third one-credit course that imparts college survival skills such as critical thinking, research, and time management. During the second semester, discussion seminars explore broad, contemporary themes developed from a wide variety of topics so that



Andy Jones, associate professor of art, shown here with a student, teaches the popular First-Year cluster "Art Rocks!" with James Hyatt, assistant professor of environmental earth science.

students can pick one in their chosen major or explore a completely new area of scholarship.

In addition to the new liberal arts core, the faculty has developed minors in Asian Studies; Geography; Graphic Design; Peace and Human Rights; Pre-Law; Public Health Studies; and Social Informatics. A certificate in Public Health Studies also will be implemented in the 2007 academic year. A new Master of Science program in reading and language arts was developed, and the Master of Science in educational technology has been updated. Honor society chapters were established in communication (Tau Nu chapter of Lambda Pi Eta) and health and physical education (Alpha Chapter of Alpha Upsilon Chi).

Associate Professor of Business Administration Elizabeth Scott chats with one of her students. Eastern's residential learning community gives students at Connecticut's public liberal arts university an opportunity for an ongoing dialog with the faculty.





GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Since taking office, President Nuñez has reached out across the Eastern campus, the local Willimantic community, and Connecticut at large to meet and greet students, faculty, and state residents. She has flipped pancakes at the bi-annual Midnight Pancake Breakfast; been a frequent guest on local and statewide news talk shows; and met in other venues with local, regional, and state residents and leaders on a variety of issues.

Along the way, President Nuñez has impressed the University's constituencies with her energy, generous spirit, and commitment to Eastern's liberal arts mission.



(in order from top to bottom): This child listens intently during the president's visit as the featured reader at Eastern's Child and Family Development Resource Center's story hour in September, 2006; With hard hats secured, President Nuñez (second from left) joined Dennis Hannon, vice president for finance and administration (second from right) and Ray Pellerin, project superintendent from Newfield Construction Co., (far right), in March 2007 to inspect construction progress on the expanded and renovated Student Center; The president traveled to WILI-AM radio station on Oct. 4, 2006, to chat with popular talk-show host Wayne Norman; Windham First Selectman Michael Paulhus introduces President Nuñez to Willimantic Chief of Police Lisa Maruzo-Bolduc '87 during a Third Thursday Street Fest.

The World Is Our Classroom

From March 17–24, 2007, 16 Eastern students joined Associate Professor of Anthropology **Mary Kenny** on an adventure to the state of Paraíba, located in northeastern Brazil. They stayed with native host families, studied Portuguese, and immersed themselves in the history, culture, and language of Brazil.

In the past 14 years, Kenny has frequently visited the urban areas of northeast Brazil to observe and document how poverty shapes family and children, an important step toward understanding and solving economic and social inequalities. Her new book, *Hidden Heads of Households: Child Labor in Urban Northeast Brazil*, focuses on the phenomenon of child labor in Brazilian cities.

For almost 40 years, faculty and students in the Department of Biology have conducted field studies in the Greater Caribbean, alternating among the barrier reefs and rainforests of Belize; San Salvador Island in the Bahamas; Jamaica; and Bermuda. In May 2007, Professors Chuck Booth and Ross Koning accompanied 14 students to San Salvador Island to study marine life. Students visited 18th century British plantation ruins; explored a limestone cave; surveyed ancient coral reef and sand dune formations along the coast; and explored underwater coral reefs.

Eastern students **Gabriel Peterson, Saul Rodriguez, Kristin Chemerka, Heather Altier, Jacob Williams, and Julia Herchenroder**



Tropical Biology students explore the ruins of an 18th century British Loyalist cotton plantation on San Salvador.



Heather Altier '07 films a documentary in the tropical rainforest near Veracruz, Mexico, as biologist Alvaro Campos Villanueva of Los Tuxtlas Biology Station narrates.

applied their knowledge of videography to the world of ecology during a visit to the Los Tuxtlas Biology Station in Veracruz, Mexico in late May 2007. They were accompanied by **Jaime Gómez**, chair of the Department of Communication. The students produced a documentary about the rainforest environment and investigated issues related to the preservation of biodiversity.

This past spring, the Native American Cultural Study program visited Arizona to explore and experience Navajo, Hopi, and Yavapai cultures. The group visited reservations, sacred sites, national historic monuments, historic trading posts, missions, museums, cultural centers, and archaeological sites. They also went to Dine College to study Navajo language on the reservation and spent time on a Hopi reservation at one of the few elementary schools. “While we were learning about these new people and sharing new experiences, those indigenous peoples learned about Eastern Connecticut State University and our enthusiasm for other cultures, which is at the heart of anthropology,” said **Christine McDonnell**, adjunct faculty member and the tour coordinator.

Qi Lu '08 uses calligraphy to create Chinese sayings to raise funds for the East Asian Cultures Club.





TRANSFORMING LIVES: THE INAUGURATION OF ELSA M. NUÑEZ

— APRIL 13, 2007 —

Lawrence McHugh, chairman of the board of trustees of the Connecticut State University System (CSUS), led a host of dignitaries attending the April 13, 2007, inauguration of Elsa M. Nuñez as the sixth president of Eastern Connecticut State University. In addition to a contingent of Eastern faculty, administrators, staff, and students, the inauguration also included a procession of 250 dignitaries and university representatives from around the country, dressed in formal academic regalia. More than 1,000 guests attended the event.

With a theme of “Transforming Lives,” President Nuñez’s inaugural address was an inspirational message focused on Eastern’s liberal arts mission and its role as a public university. “I am the proud product of a state university and my first faculty appointment was as a professor at a public, liberal arts college — Ramapo College of New Jersey,” remarked Nuñez. “I share our faculty’s commitment to undergraduate teaching.”

President Nuñez described the education Eastern students receive as a broad-based preparation for a world of constant economic, social, and technological change. “At Eastern we will strive to develop students who are capable of analytical thought and the ability to solve problems, independently or in collaboration with

others. We are not simply, or even principally, training tomorrow’s workforce. We are preparing our students for public life to participate in a great democracy. The public liberal arts education we offer at Eastern brings the tools of citizenship and empowerment to people regardless of class, and has the potential of creating leaders from all walks of life.”

Eastern’s new president also announced the culmination of several major financial donations to the University, including the largest gift of real property ever given to Eastern; the largest gift from a foundation ever received by the University; and the largest gift from a private individual.

Nuñez is the first Latina public university president in New England. “President Nuñez exemplifies the best in higher education,” said CSUS Chairman McHugh. “She is a forthright individual whose practical, results-oriented leadership and inspiring example make her tremendously well-suited to lead Eastern Connecticut State University. We look forward to working very closely with Dr. Nuñez for years to come.”



President Nuñez and CSUS Board Chairman Lawrence D. McHugh listen to the inauguration proceedings.



HIGH STANDARDS YIELD RESULTS

Students and Faculty Excel

Graphic design student **Ashley Crispino '06** of Southington took the top place in the Textiles and Graphics Student Design Challenge sponsored by Industrial Fabric Association International (IFAI). Crispino's winning entry was used as a banner for the IFAI annual convention in Las Vegas in February 2007. **Alan Buck '06** and **Shanda West '06** took second and fourth places, respectively, among hundreds of entries from colleges around the country.

Seniors **Carter Lennon** and **Adam Lachendro** were Eastern's outstanding 2007 Henry Barnard Scholars. Lachendro's favorite volunteer activity was participating in the Special Olympics at Windham High School. He describes the Special Olympians as "athletes with lovable personalities who just enjoyed living in general." Lennon coordinated "ECSU Hits the Streets" for three years in a row, managing hundreds of student volunteers who performed a full-day of community service twice a year in the Willimantic community. "I enjoy doing community service because I believe it is part of the civil society America was founded on. At Eastern, when there is an issue, we form a club or group to help solve the problem."

Kevin Douglas, a junior from Norwich majoring in social work, was named Social Work Student of the Year by the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW/CT). Douglas was honored on June 7, 2007, at the NASW/CT Annual Awards Banquet in New Haven. He serves as vice president of Eastern's International Students Association, is secretary of Amnesty International, and is a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, the national student honor society for college leaders.



Ashley Crispino '06 won first place in a national design contest for the Industrial Fabric Association International.

On Dec. 7, 2006, **Professor Jaime Gómez**, chair of the Department of Communication, premiered his documentary, "Up and Out of Poverty: An Activists Perspective." Gómez's documentary makes the point that homelessness is rooted in the causes of poverty—lack of education and gainful employment. Says Ron Casanova, national advocate for the homeless and the subject of Gómez's documentary, "Building someone a home is nice, but if they don't have the skills or education to maintain that home and their lifestyle, we haven't done them much good."

Elizabeth Cowles, associate professor of biology, and **Eric Martin**, associate professor of management in the Department of Business Administration, were named recipients of an Connecticut State University's Trustees Teaching Award and Trustees Research Award, respectively, at the May 2007 CSUS Board meeting. In all, eight outstanding faculty throughout the CSU System were acknowledged for their research and teaching.

"Up and Out of Poverty" is the latest documentary produced by Jaime Gómez (left), who uses his films to explore social issues.



CHARTING OUR FUTURE

Under President Nuñez's leadership, Eastern has been developing the University's 2008–13 Strategic Plan. The process was launched on Jan. 26, 2007, with the first meeting of the Committee on the Future of Eastern (COFE).



"I am very pleased that Dr. Nuñez asked me to be involved in the University's planning process," said Windham First Selectman Michael Paulhus. "Eastern has always been an active partner in our local Willimantic/Windham

"By the end of this calendar year, we will have a set of strategic directions and measurable goals that will instruct our operational planning and give us a road map for the next five years," said Nuñez, in giving COFE its charge. "I am excited about the prospect of involving our entire campus and other constituencies in the process so that we end up with a plan that truly represents the Eastern community. We want to achieve distinction as a public liberal arts university while preserving our commitment to serving the people of Connecticut."

community. I know that under Elsa's leadership, Eastern will continue to seek ways to better serve the residents of Windham County and the State of Connecticut."

The work of COFE is a highly collaborative effort, and the discussions to date have been lively and productive.

"I am excited about the innovative and substantive ideas that have come out of our progress to date," said Nuñez at the COFE Stake-holders Conference on May 11. "It reflects the best thinking of the campus and external community.



Co-chaired by President Nuñez and Ronald Lowy, professor and department chair of business administration, COFE's 31 members include Eastern faculty, staff, students, administrators, and alumni, as well as representatives from outside the University.

President Nuñez with Windham First Selectman Michael Paulhus at the first COFE meeting.





Congratulating CSUS Award recipients Elizabeth Cowles (middle) and Eric Martin (second from right) are CSUS Board Chairman Lawrence D. McHugh, President Elsa Nuñez, and (far right) CSUS Trustee John A. Doyle.

Professor Cowles was recognized for her ability to motivate students; her skill in using technology in teaching and learning; and her encouragement of students to engage in independent research. **Professor Martin** was recognized for his work in issues related to international development assistance; the evolution of inter-organizational relationships of media development and deployment; the privatization of state-owned enterprises; and refugee return.

Leading the Way to a Sustainable Future

In fall 2006, Eastern received three awards from the Connecticut Quality Improvement Award (CQIA) program, including a CQIA Gold Award for the University's sustainable energy initiative. The initiative comprises the Sustainable Energy Studies minor; the work of the Institute for Sustainable Energy; and the

President Nuñez visits with Henry Barnard Scholars Carter Lenmon and Adam Lachendro.



Proudly displaying a Connecticut Quality Improvement Gold Award for the University's sustainable energy initiative are (left to right): President Elsa Nuñez; Bill Leaby, chief operating officer, Institute for Sustainable Energy; Nancy Tinker, director of facilities management and planning; Professor Fred Loxsom; and Executive Vice President Michael Pernal.

on-campus energy conservation efforts of the University. On June 5, 2007, Eastern was presented with a Green Circle Award from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The Green Circle Award honors 70 Connecticut civic organizations, individuals, and businesses for their efforts to improve the environment.



TAKING RISKS HAS MANY REWARDS



In the process of producing “Ask J. Edgar Hoover,” her award-winning documentary on civil rights in the 1960s, Denise Matthews, associate professor of communication, learned to “have more courage to follow my intuition.” The hour-long film examines racism through the eyes of her friend Sallie Ann Harrison, and investigates the death of Harrison’s father, a liberal white man who advanced the causes of civil rights in Greenwood, MS, despite constant opposition.

refreshing to see a film that captures this time period from a different perspective.”

Initially Matthews’ confidence wavered, because she feared that the subject matter would not resonate with viewers. “I felt different making this documentary. It wasn’t about a historical event but was a very personal story; it felt risky.” She gained inspiration from her subject, Sallie Mae Harrison. “During an interview with Ms. Harrison, I recognized that she was a ‘verbal virtuoso,’ having not only the knowledge and commitment to solve the mystery but the gift to explain verbally what had happened as well.”

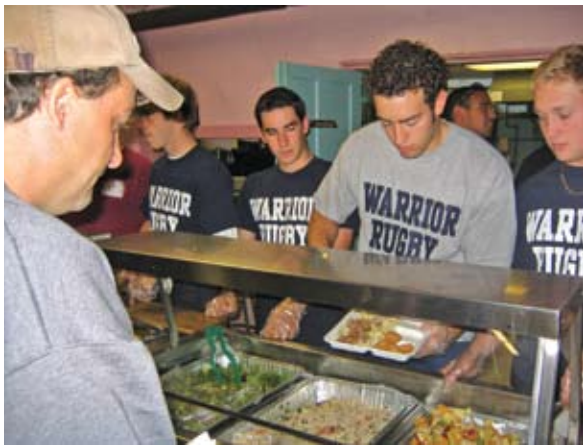
Matthews traveled to Greenwood to investigate the senior Harrison’s death, and encountered a lack of police records documenting the death and little cooperation from local authorities. In the film, Matthews illustrates Harrison’s support for African Americans, which she believes led to his death.

Since the film’s release, Matthews has received several awards, including Best in Festival at the 52nd Annual Convention and Exhibition of the Broadcast Education Association in Las Vegas, NV; the 2007 Popular Culture Association’s Peter C. Rollins Documentary Award; and the prestigious Ron Tibbett Excellence in Film Award at the 10th Annual Magnolia Independent Film Festival in Starkville, MS, in February 2007. Festival Director Charlotte Magnussen praised the documentary: “‘Ask J. Edgar Hoover’ tells a story that needs to be told. The history of the South, and especially the history of Mississippi, is complicated and controversial. It is

Sallie Mae Harrison (young girl in center) with family; circa 1967.



SERVING THE COMMUNITY



"What a fantastic job Eastern's Rugby Team did at the Covenant Soup Kitchen. They were a great group of men and you have much to be proud of." (Paul Doyle, Director, Covenant Soup Kitchen)

In the Wake of Katrina

Six Eastern students, accompanied **Charles Chatterton, Jr.**, professor of physical education, to New Orleans in February 2007, to assist in post-Katrina rebuilding efforts. "No matter what you do, there's nothing that can mentally prepare you to understand what happened in New Orleans until you're down there and it's in front of you," said **Meredith Merchant '08**, sport and leisure management major.

Building Homes. Raising Hope.

Eleven Eastern students participated in Habitat for Humanity's Global Village program this past June, traveling to Guatemala to build two homes. Eastern students on the trip included co-leaders **Kate Delahunty** and **Julia Herchenroder**, who had been members

Shawn Slattery '07 (on ladder) and Matthew Mitchell '09 visited New Orleans to assist Habitat for Humanity in post-Katrina rebuilding efforts.

of Global Village trips previously; **Allison Mangles; Nicole Henry; Shannon Boyle; Allie Willets; Julie Ward; Hannah Lacaire; Matthew Lennon; Patrick Mignault; and Shannon Murphy.** "This is my first trip out of the United States, and it was humbling to see how people live in Guatemala. Constructing cinder block houses is hard work, but it was gratifying to know we were building homes for families in need," said Henry, incoming president of Eastern's Habitat Chapter.

Revitalizing the Willimantic River

Sarah Hemenway '07 received the Volunteer of the Year Award at the June 2007 annual meeting of the Willimantic Whitewater Partnership (WWP) for redesigning the WWP website and creating an online member management system. Eastern also received an award as Volunteer Organization of the Year for its continued involvement to the WWP cause. In addition to **Professor Eric Martin's** membership on the WWP Board of Directors, Eastern student **Jacob Williams** has created a promotional video for the partnership, with the support of **Professor Denise Matthews.** The WWP's goal is to restore the Willimantic River waterfront for recreation, whitewater kayaking, and commerce.



These volunteers take time out from their landscaping on Main Street during the spring 2007 "ECSU Hits the Streets" project, when hundreds of Eastern students gave downtown Willimantic a spring cleaning.



MARKETING STUDENTS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR STEWARDSHIP



Eastern marketing students won two national awards at the 29th Annual American Marketing Association (AMA) International Collegiate Conference, held in March 2007 in New Orleans. Competing against 129 other university chapters, Eastern's chapter captured the AMA's top award for **Outstanding Community Service**, duplicating its national award in 2006. It also garnered top honors in the **Outstanding Chapter Planning** category. Chapter members include **Chelsea Adams, David Kean, Jason Shafiee, Meagan Bannell, Devin Green, Sara Schiavone, Laura Figerle, Taryn Mesaros, Timothy Perkins, Yelena Pilunts, Courtney Poirier, Marcia Saccu, Tara Shea, and John Shugrue.**

"It is a great pleasure to work with these marketing students," said faculty advisor **Katalin Eibel-Spani**. "They organized several community service programs — helping the homeless and participating in blood drives — and contributed more than 623 hours of community service. They are dedicated and highly professional. They have built a fabulous team and it is exciting to work with them. I am very proud of them."

The chapter also coordinated on-campus food and blood drives; assembled Easter baskets for a local after-school program for the children of low-income families; and sold daffodils to benefit the American Cancer Society. In November 2006, the students also worked with Eastern's Business Systems Information Club to coordinate a "Letters of Appreciation" campaign to send more than 1,000 letters to U.S. Marines stationed in Iraq. "We are a small school that does big things," said Chapter President **Chelsea Adams**. "We take a lot of pride in the things that we do."



Chelsea Adams '07



CULTURE IS ALIVE ON CAMPUS

James Earl Jones and Bill Nye the Science Guy Enthrall Eastern Audiences

On Oct. 24, 2006, distinguished actor **James Earl Jones** displayed his world-renowned voice before an audience of more than 2,000 people in the Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium, reading excerpts from three Shakespearean plays. Jones, whose stage, television, and film career has spanned six decades, also provided glimpses of his own life.

Scientist, educator, comedian, and author "**Bill Nye the Science Guy**" encouraged a packed Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium audience on Nov. 16, 2006, to "never lose sight of the passion, beauty, and joy of science!" More than 2,000 people, many of them schoolchildren, filled the gym to give Nye a standing ovation when he arrived.



James Earl Jones entertained a sell-out crowd in October 2006, using his famous voice and stage presence to recite passages from several Shakespearean plays.



"Bill Nye the Science Guy" entertained and informed his Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium audience with photos of Mars; facts about global warming; and his trademark admonition to "CHANGE THE WORLD!"

In 2005–06, the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts (NACTA) brought the Beijing Opera to campus to share its elegant choreography, singing, dancing, and martial art skills. In summer 2006, Associate Professor of Theatre Robert Ritz reciprocated by visiting NACTA in China.



FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS TAKE EASTERN ABROAD



English Professor Lisa Rowe Fraustino spent June through November 2006 as a Fulbright Scholar at Mahasarakham University in northeastern Thailand, working with a newly established graduate program that trains teachers to teach English using children’s books that are printed in English. During her stay, Fraustino also traveled to Bangkok, Laos, and Taiwan, where she visited a number of schools and student centers. Earlier in 2006, Performing Arts Professor Richard Jones-Bamman spent the spring semester as a Fulbright Scholar

teaching and conducting research for the Department of Sami Studies at Umea University in northern Sweden.

“Dr. Fraustino was the second Eastern professor to receive a Fulbright Scholar award this past year and we are thrilled that she could share her extensive knowledge of children’s literature with the people of Thailand,” said President Elsa Nuñez.

Fraustino employed a teaching method known as “Reader’s Theatre” to encourage class participation at Mahasarakham. This method allows students to take virtually any piece of literature, analyze it, and adapt it into a script. This script can then be performed with a minimum of preparation, props, or scenery. “Thai students are more inclined to get involved in classroom teaching via performances including dance, song, or skits versus American students who raise their hands and speak out in class, interacting with their professor. Thai students are not shy about performances — they’ll sing, dance, act, do dramas or storytelling.”

Fraustino and her husband Jeff Meunier, who accompanied her on the trip, made a determined effort to meet local people while in Thailand. “We tended not to go to tourist attractions but to visit the local temples, see their rice fields. When we were in a village we would sit and talk with women who make silk. To me, that was the most important cultural experience — getting to know the people.”



Fraustino is already missed by her Thai colleagues. “Lisa is a wonderful person with a great sense of humor,” remarked her Mahasarakham mentor Wajuppa Tossa. “She has inspired a lot of faculty members and students to pursue academic careers relating to children’s literature.”
(bottom left: Richard Jones-Bamman and Lisa Rowe Fraustino)



Student Performers Delight and Entertain

In November 2006, Eastern theatre students enthralled audiences with *Our Lady of 121st Street*, written by Stephen Adly Guirgis and directed by **Associate Professor David Pelligrini**. The play was one of six selected to compete at the Region I (New England) Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in early February 2007 in Fitchburg, MA. Computer science major **Saul Rodriguez**, a native of Honduras, was proud to have participated in a play that featured actors with diverse backgrounds. “As a student I was able to participate and show what Eastern is all about.”

In April 2007, theatre students returned to the stage, entertaining the campus and local community members with *Ondine*, adapted from myth by Jean Giraudoux and directed by **Ellen Faith Brodie**, director of theatre, with musical direction from Vocal Studies Director **David Belles**. The underwater fantasy set and colorful mask designs were created by adjunct instructor **David Regan**. Guest artists provided inspiration for lighting, sound, and costumes.

In April 2007, Eastern’s Akus Gallery hosted “Wrestling Angels,” an exhibit of the work of artists **Siona Benjamin, Laura Elkins, and Carol Peligian**. The exhibit, which examined social, political, domestic, and cultural conflict from a feminine perspective, featured a variety of media, including oil and enamel on aluminum, gouache and gold leaf, acrylics, and digital art.

(right) Artists Siona Benjamin, Laura Elkins, and Carol Peligian used a variety of media to explore conflict from a female perspective in the April 2007 Akus Gallery exhibit “Wrestling Angels.”
(bottom) Fisherman Auguste (Frank-Thomas Grogan '10; center) and his wife Eugenie (Michelle Chesner '10; right) describe the magical powers of their adopted daughter Ondine to Knight Hans (Michael Lessard '12) during the spring 2007 production of Giraudoux’s *Ondine*.



Our Lady of 121st Street captivated campus audiences in November 2006 and was later selected to compete in the New England Region’s Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.





GAME ON!

When Adam Wurtzel '07 began his Eastern career in fall 2002, he was eager to start his own television show, a concept he had been dreaming about for years. With the guidance of Communication Professor Jaime Gómez, "Eastern Expedition" aired its first episode in 2003. The show pits three contestants against one another at answering popular culture and general knowledge questions in an attempt to win a trip to such places as Six Flags, Hershey Park, and Broadway. All of the show's preproduction, production, and post-production work is done by Eastern students.

Wurtzel and the show have evolved over the years and were honored in 2006 with a third-place national award at the Broadcast Education Association's Student Studio Production Award presentation in Las Vegas.



Wurtzel's love of game shows began at a young age and has grown into what he says is now an obsession. While others sit comfortably watching "The Price is Right," Wurtzel studies its graphics, lighting, and camera angles and fantasizes about becoming the next Bob Barker.

His idea for a game show began in high school, when he doodled pictures of the set and dreamed up the show's title. "Adam has been focused since day one, and that never wavered," comments Gómez. "He is a natural. He is passionate, persistent, and has great communication skills."

Of course, this didn't ensure that Eastern Expedition was an instant success. As its host and executive producer, Wurtzel learned to recognize what changes needed to be made for the show to thrive. He shortened some parts, tossed out others, and added co-host Craig Wise in 2005 for a segment called "Crazy Craig Café." Contestants get a break when Wise comes out to dazzle one and all with his knife juggling and balancing acts.

Wurtzel readily admits how much the show has improved since 2003. "The entire show is much smoother, now that I'm about to leave," he jokes. Poised as ever, he is training Eastern Expedition's next producer and working toward his own professional goals.

"I owe my entire résumé to Eastern," Wurtzel says, when talking about his college education. With such great experiences already, don't be surprised when you turn on the television 20 years from now to see him hosting an updated version of "The Price is Right."



EXCELLENCE ON AND OFF THE FIELD

Athletes Honored for Academics

A record 38 student-athletes (below) received an E-Club Scholar-Athlete Award at the annual Athletics Awards Banquet held May 13, 2007, at Francis E. Geissler Gymnasium. The annual Faculty Athletics Representative team trophy was presented to the women's track and field and cross country team for having the highest aggregate grade-point average of 3.25.



Athletics Highlights in 2006–2007

Three varsity teams qualified for NCAA postseason play by winning Little East Conference playoffs: women's volleyball, baseball, and women's lacrosse. All three programs went undefeated in regular-season conference play. The volleyball team won its second straight conference playoff championship; women's lacrosse its second in three years; and baseball its sixth conference tournament in 11 years. The baseball team also qualified for its 28th NCAA Division III national tournament. The men's outdoor track and field team won its sixth straight conference title. Eleven individuals earned major Little East Conference awards: **Emma Sousa** and **Marianna Capomolla** in volleyball; **Jay Barney** and **Maxim Fantl** in men's soccer; **Michelle Read** in women's soccer; **Edwin Ortiz** in men's basketball; **Dave Carpenter** in men's lacrosse; **Shawn Gilblair** and **Melvin Castillo** in baseball; and **Taylor MacDonald** and first-year head coach **Christine Jeffrey** in women's lacrosse.

Melvin Castillo '10, an accounting major from Danbury, made a huge impact on the Warriors as a freshman, batting .355 and leading the team with 14 home runs and 58 RBIs.

Gilblair '09 was named National Division III Co-Player of the Year in baseball, and was joined on the ABCA All America first-team by **Randy Re '07**. **Sarah Barber '08** won New England championships at the Division II-III swim meet for the third straight year in the 1,000 and 1,650 freestyle events. **Rory Maxwell '07** won the ECAC Division III indoor track and field championship in the pole vault. **Matthew Zagura '07** finished 10th at the Division III national indoor track and field championships in the 35-pound weight competition, and 13th at the national outdoor championships in the hammer.

For the third straight year, swimmer Sarah Barber '08 of Meriden won New England championships at the Division II-III meet in the 1,000 and 1,650 freestyle events.





DIGGIN' IT!



(above) Marianna Capomolla '07 gets ready to serve;
(below) Marianna with her parents and Coach Jolie Ward
on Seniors Night; and (right) Emma Sousa, LEC Offensive
Player-of-the-Year, spikes home a winner.

Volleyball Team Repeats as Champs

In fall 2006, Eastern's volleyball team won its second straight conference playoff championship, going undefeated in regular-season conference play. Emma Sousa '08 of Coventry was named Little East Conference Offensive Player-of-the-Year and Marianna Capomolla '07 was named LEC Defensive Player-of-the-Year for the second year in a row. Capomolla also repeated as the conference tournament's most valuable player and Sousa joined her on the 2006 Division III All-New England Region Team.

Capomolla and her teammates were rewarded for their focus on academics in 2005 when they received the annual Faculty Athletic Representative Award for having the highest cumulative team GPA (3.18) among Eastern's 17 varsity teams; 10 of the 14 volleyball players had GPAs over 3.0.

During her internship this past summer, Capomolla assisted the sports department at *The Stamford Advocate* by attending sporting events and interviewing players. This fall she returns to Eastern as the assistant volleyball coach. As for future career plans, the Sports and Leisure Management major said, "Ideally, I would like to combine coaching and event planning into a career."



FRIENDS INVEST IN EASTERN



(left) Eastern alumnus Fred Hughes '87 and friends helped raise funds for student athletes at Eastern's annual golf tournament, held this past June at the Mashantucket Pequot's Lake of Isles golf course: [left to right] Stephen Pitaniello, director, Navigant Consulting, Inc.; Joe Calabrese, principal of Calabrese Engineers; Hughes, partner, Blum Shapiro; and Jeff Cugno of O&G Industries. (below) The SBM Charitable Foundation has generously provided a \$500,000 leadership gift in support of early childhood education and created an endowed scholarship fund for students in this field. [left to right] SBM Charitable Foundation Board Chairman Laurence Rubinow; SBM Foundation Executive Director Sheila Flanagan; and Kenneth J. DeLisa, Eastern's vice president for institutional advancement.

Fundraising Makes Great Strides

As a result of donor-cultivation efforts, some of which started in the prior administration, the University was able to announce this past April that it is receiving approximately \$10 million in gifts from several estates and private foundations. Of special note is a gift of land and buildings in Ashford, that will become the Joseph and Dorothy Zaring Center for the Arts and Sciences. As a consequence of these major gifts, Eastern's endowment has more than doubled in size. In addition, through the efforts of the Division of Institutional Advancement and the support of Eastern's alumni and friends, the number of donors has increased 19 percent since 2005, and the total amount of private funds raised has increased 38 percent. Faculty and staff support has increased by 12 percent. Grant-writing activity also has increased, with

26 awards generating \$1.4 million in state, federal, and private revenue in 2006-07.

Eastern's annual golf tournament was held for the second year in a row at the Mashantucket Pequot's Lake of Isles golf course at Foxwoods Resort this past June. More than 200 golfers on two courses raised more than \$92,000 to support Eastern's intercollegiate athletics programs.



Cultivating Alumni Support

The Eastern Alumni Association held receptions in Boston, MA; Mystic, CT; Norfolk, VA; Washington, D.C.; and Boulder, CO, to share the latest Eastern news with alumni, while reminding them that investing in their alma mater not only helps current students but also enhances Eastern's academic reputation.



On Dec. 14, 2006, alumni and their guests were hosted by President Elsa Nuñez at her Boston home for Eastern's second annual Boston Area Alumni Reception.

Recently donated by Joseph and Dorothy Zaring, the Church farm in Ashford will become a research and cultural center for the arts and sciences.





PRESERVING HISTORY: BUILDING BRIDGES AMONG PEOPLE

Kim Hatcher-White (Peters) graduated magna cum laude in May 2002 with a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Applied Social Relations. Since October 2006, she has been the executive director of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center (MPMRC), having held previous positions as deputy director and registrar/collections manager since January 2002.

Hatcher-White says she was drawn to the University by the small classes, close commute, and “Eastern’s holistic approach to developing students.” As a single parent at the time, she appreciated the personal attention and caring shown by such professors as John Kilburn. “I also liked him because he instilled the value of giving back to your community in his students. His classes were never boring and he always managed to touch on the relevant issues.”

She also enjoyed gym class, taking an exercise class and bowling. “What was funny about the bowling class was that no one wanted me on their team until I broke out my custom-fitted bowling ball from home. I am not a great bowler, but I can hold my own. I wanted the whole experience.”



Hatcher-White found both anthropology and sociology to be of interest, and interned at the MPMRC in the summer of 1999, conducting ethno-historical research on Samson Occum and the Brotherton Movement and writing a critique on ethno-historical writings and two MPMRC exhibit spaces. “I always enjoyed helping people and sociology was a natural fit. When the opportunity came through the tribe to return to school, I loved the idea of combining traditional western education and culture-specific values.

“I think my job makes a difference from a cultural aspect. It is so important to let the world know that the Pequots do exist — that we are alive and thriving. I think there are many lessons that can be

learned from our story. My job is to make sure that the story continues. I look at the Pequot Museum as a way to open up the dialog between the tribe and the public concerning issues such as diversity, ethnicity, and stereotypes.”



Hatcher-White (left) and members of her family: aunt “Laughing Woman” (Shirley Patrick); cousin Debra LaRosa ’97; and uncle Pedro Johnson, executive director of public affairs for the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation.

ALUMNI SHINE ACROSS THE GLOBE

Chimamanda Adichie's Star Rises

Half of a Yellow Sun, the new novel by **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie '01**, was favorably reviewed in the Sept. 18, 2006 issue of *People* magazine. The magazine called *Half of a Yellow Sun* "powerful," and said Adichie "masterfully" crafts a narrative that is full of "memorable characters." Adichie's first novel, *Purple Hibiscus*, was published in 2003, and met with critical acclaim and several international awards. She also received the Eastern Alumni Association's 2004 Distinguished Alumni Award.



Award-winning novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie '01 (photo credit: Mark Mirko; reprinted with permission of *The Hartford Courant*)

Alumni Keep Relationships Alive

The Office of Alumni Affairs continues to highlight the success of alumni and create opportunities for alumni to share their success with younger graduates. The belief that Eastern alumni are central to the life of the University is alive and well.

Graduates of Eastern's Economics, Accounting, and Business Administration programs were invited to an affinity group presentation featuring two successful Eastern alumni at the Hartford Club in January 2007. **Fred Hughes '87** and **Jeffrey Wolf '99** talked about their experiences in business and how they were able to achieve success in their careers.

President's Jubilee Luncheon

A special highlight of the year was the President's Jubilee luncheon, held in honor of the Class of 1957 on April 12, 2007, as part of the festivities marking the inauguration of President Elsa M. Nuñez.



A copy of her original Willimantic Normal School certificate is shown by Stella Ruddley '30 at the June 21, 2007 alumni reception in Mystic.

Alumni Celebrate With Seniors

On May 19, 2007, nearly 400 graduating seniors, their parents and families, and returning alumni from 1963 and earlier years, participated in the second annual "Eastern Celebrates" event under a festive tent at the University's Mansfield athletics complex. The Eastern community enjoyed a mouth-watering menu of baby-back ribs, Cajun chicken, and lots of delicious BBQ. **Jay Crisante '06**, known locally as "DJ Flip," entertained the crowd with music from the decades. The celebration set the stage for the graduation of the seniors the following day and for an evening of reflection and reminiscing among alumni returning to their alma mater.

Robert "Buddy" Spillane '56, former Boston superintendent of schools and currently director of the CNA Corporation's Education Center; Mrs. Geraldine Spillane '57; and Morris Fishbone, president of the class of 1957, visit with President Nuñez during the Jubilee Luncheon on April 12, 2007.





A LEGACY OF CARING



As a single mother of two teenagers, Liz Thomas '94 knew that going back to college at the age of 40 wouldn't be easy, but the support of Eastern helped her to achieve her goal.

While earning her degree in Public Policy and Government and developing a passion for sociology, Thomas worked in the Office of the President 27-32 hours a week to pay for her education and support her family. The schedule was daunting, but Thomas took advantage of every

opportunity that came her way and enjoyed seeing former President David Carter in action. "What is most memorable about Dr. Carter was his open door policy to students," Thomas recalls. "He made it a point to know students on campus by their first names!"

Thomas continued to work in the President's Office after graduation, and her daughter Kimberly '99 began her academic career at Eastern. Following her graduation, Kimberly spent two years in the Peace Corps and currently teaches French and Spanish at a high school in Alexandria, VA. She is working toward a master's degree in French at George Mason University and shares her mother's passion for other cultures.

As for Thomas, she later worked at Connecticut College, but something inside was pulling at her. On the advice of the late Jean Thorensen, an Eastern professor, who knew that Thomas's true passion lay not in administrative duties but in sociology, Thomas decided to study at the

University of York in England, a place highly regarded for its social policy research program. The trip to England changed Thomas's life. She met her husband there, and the couple now lives on Camano Island in the State of Washington. Thomas is retired but keeps busy with hobbies and volunteering — landscaping, studying comparative religions, and working with hospice patients.

Thomas's philanthropy doesn't stop there. The Eastern graduate also has set up the Elizabeth A. Thomas Endowed Scholarship, to be awarded to a sociology student from Bozrah, CT, who is a single mother. "I wanted to give a single mother the same chance I had, but make it easier," explains Thomas. Her desire for the award winner also to be a sociology student stems from her own continued passion for the subject. "Understanding that we are all one can help the world become a better place."

(in order from top to bottom) Kim and Liz Thomas; surveying the Camano Island, WA, shoreline; working in New Orleans to clean up some of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina; Liz helped reconstruct Salty the Sea Lion, shown here at Cama Beach State Park's education center, after the sea lion washed up on the Washington shoreline in 2002.



A WORLD-CLASS CAMPUS

Science Takes Center Stage

In late 2005, construction workers broke ground on the new \$46 million Science Building, which will consolidate all of Eastern's science and mathematics departments into one 173,509-square-foot facility. The building, which will meet U.S. Green Building Council certification standards, continues to take shape west of the J. Eugene Smith Library. It is expected to be finished in fall 2008. Five floors will be dedicated for academic departments, including biology, computer sciences, environmental earth science, math, and physical sciences. The building also will house a 150-seat lecture hall with state-of-the-art audiovisual systems; a computer science suite; and the Microscopy Center.



The 173,000-square-foot Science Building is being built to U.S. Green Building Council certification standards.

Student Life Focused Under One Roof

The newly renovated and expanded Student Center opened this August 2007 for students and the community at large. The center has grown from 41,000 to 72,000 square feet and features a 4,000-

square-foot fitness center; a 150-seat performance theatre with surround sound; a café; a vibrant food

court; a greatly expanded bookstore; a renovated Betty Tipton Room with capacity for 400 people; eight conference and meeting rooms; and offices for student clubs and organizations.



The Margaret S. Wilson Child and Family Development Complex opened in February 2006, complete with state-of-the-art instructional technology. The preschool wing can accommodate up to 90 children, while the classroom building provides instruction for tomorrow's early childhood teachers.

The building features wireless computer technology, including the outside patio. Vibrant colors; terrazzo, marble, and stone treatments; giant columns; and a grand staircase to the lower level help create a modern, attractive place for students, faculty, and staff alike to congregate. By bringing all student organizations, the Student Government Association, the Multicultural Programs Office, the Office for Women's Programs, the Campus Activity Board, and the Student Activities office together in one central location, the \$18.5 million facility will create a new campus culture in support of Eastern's liberal arts experience.

The newly renovated Student Center (left) brings together all campus student activities, student clubs, and cultural organizations.

