



Student Centered





“Eastern’s core values support a student-centered environment that encourages active learning and personal initiative.”

This year’s Annual Report cover features Eastern’s beautiful Student Center, which re-opened in August 2007. In 2007–08, our students adopted this remodeled and expanded facility and made it their own “living room,” with the special spirit and enthusiasm that is unique to a college campus. More than 2,250 events were held in the Student Center in its first year, demonstrating that it has truly become the hub of campus life.

While this report’s title, “Student Centered,” is a reference to the new student center, it also is a declaration that Eastern remains focused on our students, to ensure that they have the skills, confidence, and experience they need to be successful in a rapidly changing world. This focus starts in the classroom, where our faculty blends theory and practical application to teach a broad liberal arts curriculum that supports more than 30 majors and 50 minors. Outside the classroom, student academic life is enriched by on-campus cultural events ranging from ethnic performances to world-class lecturers and artists from foreign lands.

Eastern’s focus on students extends beyond our campus, with students conducting field research with their professors; participating in

internships in private businesses, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations; taking advantage of study abroad opportunities; and working in University offices to gain real-life experience.

Our students come from all walks of life, but all share the same opportunity to be transformed by the power of a liberal arts education. The result, as you will see in this report, are examples of students receiving statewide and national awards; alumni achieving success in Connecticut and beyond; and faculty members who are being recognized locally and internationally for their expertise and scholarship. As you read these personal success stories you will also gain a better understanding of how Eastern is moving ahead to become a University of First Choice. Our new Strategic Plan, forged through an inclusive, campus-wide process in 2007 and now in the early stages of implementation, is serving as our guide to the future. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy reading this report of the progress we made in 2007–08.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elsa M. Núñez".

Elsa M. Núñez, President



New Science Facility. Dominating the skyline, the new \$56-million Science Building, which consolidates all of Eastern's science and mathematics departments into one 173,509-square-foot facility, opened its doors in September 2008. Five floors are dedicated for academic departments, including biology, computer sciences, environmental earth

Left, CSUS Chairman Lawrence McHugh; Commissioner Raeanne Curtis of the Department of Public Works; Eastern President Elsa Núñez; CSUS Chancellor David G. Carter; Student Government President Sulthana Sayed; and Paul Bryant, acting vice president of student affairs, cut the ribbon at the Student Center Dedication.

Below, student manager Curtis Ehler '09 listens as music director Frank-Thomas Grogan '10 describes the digital equipment in the new student-run radio station studio.



Building for the Future

Eastern's facilities provide students a safe and attractive learning environment where they can acquire a world-class liberal arts education. The campus is the result of a long-term commitment by the State of Connecticut to provide students with the physical resources necessary to reach their full potential.

Continuing that commitment, the renovated and expanded Student Center opened its doors in August 2007, enhancing the quality of campus life Eastern students already experience. The project continued a campus facelift that has seen a library, residence halls, and other new facilities built in the past decade.

Excitement filled the air when Connecticut State University System Board of Trustees Chairman **Lawrence McHugh**; Department of Public Works (DPW) Commissioner **Raeanne Curtis**; **David G. Carter**, chancellor of the Connecticut State University System (CSUS); and other state officials joined President **Elsa Núñez** and the campus community on Sept. 25, 2007, to dedicate the new student center. The ribbon-cutting ceremony took place on the plaza in front of the facility.

The new center has grown from 41,000 to 72,000 square feet, and features a café with a fireplace; a new food court; a renovated Betty R. Tipton Room; an expanded bookstore; a 4,000-square-foot fitness center; a 150-seat

performance theater; eight conference/meeting rooms; open lounge areas; and office space for staff and all student clubs and organizations. By bringing student government and other student organizations, student activities, and cultural programming together in one location, the \$18.5-million facility is creating a new campus culture in support of Eastern students' liberal arts education.

At the dedication, President Núñez thanked Governor **M. Jodi Rell**, the Board of Trustees, and the Connecticut Legislature for their leadership in making the Student Center a reality. The president said the real power of the facility will be the memories students build and carry with them after they leave Eastern.



At left are CQIA Award recipients Karen Schroeder, university assistant, and Energy Specialist Laurel Kohl, both from the Institute for Sustainable Energy; Patricia Kleine, dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies; Jeanelle Day, associate professor of education; Catherine Tannahill, associate professor of education; William Leahy, chief operating officer of the Institute for Sustainable Energy; and President Elsa Núñez.

The South Residential Village (below) received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification this past year from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Award-Winning Innovation. Eastern was also awarded a Silver Connecticut Quality Improvement Award (CQIA) Innovation Prize from the Connecticut Quality Improvement Award Partnership. Eastern won for its numerical results-directed innovation — CTEnergyEducation.com: Developing an Educational Program through Collaboration. This open access web site was created after the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund asked Eastern’s Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE) to create a statewide high school energy education program to address both local and global issues concerning climate change and energy efficiency. The web site can track users and downloaded lessons to ensure

science, math, and physical sciences. The building also houses a 132-seat lecture hall with state-of-the-art audiovisual systems; a computer science suite; and the Microscopy Center. The building’s energy-efficient, environmentally sensitive design is being reviewed for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

Residential Village, composed of Constitution, Nutmeg, and Laurel Halls, provides on-campus, apartment-style housing for 750 students. The three residence halls total more than 270,000 gross square feet of space and all three include computer labs, lounges, study rooms, and recreation/game rooms.

Eastern’s commitment to the environment includes a sustainable energy studies minor, a green building initiative, and an outreach institute.

Going Green. In other environmental news, Eastern’s South Residential Village housing complex was awarded LEED® certification by the USGBC. The South Residential Village project received points for the certification based on such categories as site selection; availability of alternative transportation, alternative fuel refueling stations, and bicycle storage; reduced site disturbance; rate, quantity, and treatment of storm water management; water efficient landscaping; water use reduction; and ozone protection. The South





that teacher's needs are being met; offers the most current information and resources on emerging topics; addresses eight of the nine required framework standards in the state of Connecticut; and has 26 online lessons.

Hands-on Learning. A new all-digital studio for the student-run radio station opened its doors this past spring, enhancing Eastern's ability to provide students with hands-on learning. The new studio features a large window to the outside and an observation deck for pedestrians to increase the station's visibility on campus.

Students in the Sustainable Energy Studies minor use an on-campus solar and wind laboratory to learn about alternative energy sources. Eastern students also assisted the University's Institute for Sustainable Energy

this past year in conducting a study of the use of renewable energy by state agencies as part of the Connecticut Climate Action Plan.

Thinking Strategically

Eastern Connecticut State University's vision to create an "unparalleled college experience" moved full-steam ahead this year when student, faculty, staff, and community volunteers began working to implement the University's 2008-13 Strategic Plan, which was approved by the University Senate and CSUS Board of Trustees.

The plan represents the efforts of more than 250 faculty, students, staff, administrators, alumni, and friends of the University, who invested more than 10,000 hours to create the visionary plan.

The strategic plan implementation steering committee was diligent in working to ensure broad participation, leadership, and collaborative processes while also encouraging creativity and thoughtful research. 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.

Setting Benchmarks. Sixty-three benchmarks representing 18 strategic initiatives have either been approved or are currently under review. Highlights include a proposal to implement an advising and support program with the creation of an Academic Services Center; a Master Plan to further develop the University's facilities and campus environment; expanded

student decision-making in Student Center operations; additional recreational opportunities for resident and commuter students; development of a pre-professional requirement (i.e. internship, research project) for all graduates; proposals that would increase the percentage of students living on campus; further implementation of the Liberal Arts Core and the First Year Program; and promotion of a more diverse campus culture.

Above left, Jasmine (Sweet) Morton '04 shares her thoughts at a meeting of the Windham/Eastern Community Action Network (W/E CAN) Town-Gown Committee, which works to effectively address quality of life issues in the Windham community.

Above right, members of the Class of 2008 join with their classmates in celebrating their graduation at the May 18 commencement exercises.

“Eastern continues to advance its new strategic plan through a dynamic, collaborative implementation process begun in spring 2008.”

*Margaret Martin, Executive Assistant
to the President for Planning*

Expanding Our Horizons. Additional initiatives call for the creation of a Center for Community Engagement and the implementation by fall 2010 of an “Expanding Horizons” graduation requirement that may include study-abroad, student exchange programs, military service, or formal off-campus service programs. The goals of this initiative are to cultivate intercultural competencies, provide an understanding of diverse cultures, and prepare students to be both local and global citizens. The University is already off to a fast start. In 2007-08, 137 students traveled abroad through courses or programs.

Project Compass. In an effort to increase student academic success at Eastern, the ECSU Foundation, Inc., successfully applied for a grant from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation (NMEF) to participate in the foundation’s Project Compass, an initiative designed to increase the number of young people from underrepresented populations who graduate with four-year degrees. One of six universities chosen in 2007 to receive initial planning grants of \$100,000 to support a year of planning and capacity building, Eastern was informed by NMEF in September



Education: Everyone’s Business. In March, more than 200 people — area and regional residents, public school officials, teachers, town officials, and business owners — gathered in the Betty R. Tipton Room of the Student Center and participated in a town hall meeting to discuss the role education must play in Connecticut’s economic future. Titled “Education Now, Prosperity Tomorrow. Growing Connecticut’s Future,” the meeting was one in a series of four meetings on all four Connecticut State University System campuses. It was sponsored by a statewide coalition of more than 20 state agencies and organizations and the Connecticut State University System. Panelists included Diane Randall, director of the Partnership for Strong Communities; Chandler Howard, president and CEO of Liberty Bank; Sally Boske, vice president of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education; and New London Superintendent of Schools Christopher Clouet. Veteran broadcaster Ann Baldwin moderated the panel discussion. The audience explored numerous educational issues, including the high school dropout rate; the lack of basic skills of many college graduates; bilingual education; community involvement; the disparity between high-income and low-income college graduation rates; and financial resources for public education.



2008 that the University will receive an initial program implementation award of \$200,000 and will be eligible for renewed implementation awards for up to four years. Eastern will use the funds to increase staffing in the new Academic Services Center, which will expand support for students in math and writing with the goal of improving student performance and retention.

"We are thrilled to have been awarded this Project Compass planning grant," said President Núñez. "We will use these funds to support initiatives in our new Strategic Plan that are designed to improve the retention and graduation rates of underrepresented students, including the development of a comprehensive, stage-based advising program for all Eastern students."

"The extraordinary effort, enthusiasm, and creativity being put forth by Eastern's faculty and staff to enact our vision are truly inspiring."

President Elsa Núñez

Above, Eastern students Sara Toomey, Brittany Johnson, Clara Juncadella, and Solana Cofield-Rivera toured the Castillo de Santa Barbara fortress in Alicante, Spain, as part of the 2008 Summer Study in Spain program.

Saying "Farewell" After 37 Years. Every four years, the Math and Computer Science Department hosts a "quadrennial" reunion for graduates, faculty, staff, and friends. This year's reunion was a special one, as it also marked the retirement of Professor Stephen Kenton after a career that spanned 37 years at Eastern. More than 400 people attended the reunion and dinner reception, which was held in the Student Center Atrium. In addition to faculty colleagues and several hundred alumni, Kenton was fêted by President Núñez, CSUS Chancellor David G. Carter, and other honored guests.

Laughter was the dominant theme of the night, as light-hearted stories about Kenton's time in the Peace Corps, in the classroom, and in the community were shared by a number of speakers. Special awards were also presented throughout the evening, including a trophy given to the alumnus who had traveled the farthest distance and a "Pi plate" (a dish emblazoned with the symbol that represents the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter) awarded as a door prize.

At the conclusion of the event, a procession of students paraded through the room with oversized photos depicting Kenton through the years. "It's the personal connections that made teaching so enjoyable, and it is these reconections that are so welcome at our reunions," said Kenton.





A Master Plan. In October, President Núñez will present a new Master Plan to the Board of Trustees, one that she says “will enhance the campus as an educational village and residential experience, a pedestrian campus with its own aesthetic, character, and purpose.”

In support of Eastern’s vision as a “University of First Choice,” Núñez noted, “This plan is grounded in our values and I believe the entire campus community is behind it. These times demand innovation and accountability. We have it.”

Above, Kenneth McNeil, associate professor of English, reviews a composition with English major Lori Beechinor ’08. McNeil was Eastern’s winner of a 2008 CSUS Trustees Research Award.

A Community of Scholars

Eastern faculty also demonstrated their own scholarship in 2007-08. **David Stoloff**, professor and chair of the Department of Education, spent six weeks in December and January on a Fulbright faculty exchange program at Chiang Mai Rajabhat University in Thailand. While in Chiang Mai, the largest city in northern Thailand, Stoloff taught workshops on Internet resources for English as a Second Language to high school teachers; lectured on online learning and teaching for university faculty; and taught classes on U.S. cities, American family life, U.S. government, and the American educational system. In the fall, Stoloff’s host, **Anchalee Wongla**, spent a month at Eastern, participating in Education Department classes and conferences on multicultural education and educational technology. At the end of her visit, Wongla’s husband,



CSUS Teaching Award Winner. Lisa Rowe Fraustino, associate professor of English, was named the 2008 recipient of the Connecticut State University System’s (CSUS) Teaching Award. A Fulbright Scholar and an internationally respected children’s book author, Fraustino was honored for her creation of a writing minor and courses for the new liberal arts curriculum at the University; her attentive and effective advising and mentoring of students; her support for learning beyond the classroom; her work with local high schools; and her pedagogical contributions as a Fulbright Scholar.

“Dr. Fraustino believes that excellent teaching means mentoring students, and she starts by being an excellent faculty advisor,” said Eastern President Elsa Núñez. “Students frequently request her because of her reputation as an attentive and effective advisor. Professor Fraustino’s contributions go far beyond her own classroom to impact the entire University community. As popular and supportive as she is on campus, Dr. Fraustino’s national and international reputation is equally outstanding.”

According to Fraustino, her most life-changing experience occurred in 2006, when she spent a semester at Mahasarakham University in northeastern Thailand. She lectured and taught courses in children’s literature and American poetry and consulted in the development of a new graduate program in children’s literature. She also traveled around northeastern Thailand conducting workshops for K-12 on the use of children’s literature to teach English.

Fraustino said she is honored to receive the teaching award, adding, “Not many have that chance but many deserve it. I feel lucky.”

Fraustino is on sabbatical for the 2008-09 academic year and is teaching in the Graduate Institute of Children’s Literature at National Taitung University in Taiwan.



At left, Chemistry Professor Charles Wynn presents the 2008 Distinguished Professor Award to Marsha J. Davis, professor and chair of the Mathematics/Computer Science Department.

published by Black Lawrence Press in December. He has received numerous Pushcart Prize Special Mentions and is also the author of a collection of short stories. **Mary Kenny**, associate professor of anthropology, also authored a new book, titled "Hidden Heads of Households: Child Labor in Urban Northeast Brazil." Published by Broadview Press, the book explores how poverty shapes family and children in Brazilian cities.

Visual Arts Professor **June Bisantz** and Adjunct Professor **Samantha Pinckney** collaborated on the exhibition "About Face: The Relevance of Portraiture in the 21st Century," held at the Guilford Art Center's Mill Gallery in March and April. Pinckney also served as guest curator of the event. Bisantz also displayed her work, titled "True Life Story," at South Street Seaport Pier 17 Mall in New York City throughout this past June.

Marsha Davis, chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, was named Eastern's Distinguished Professor for 2008 at the May 2008 University Meeting. The award is presented annually to a faculty member whose excellence in classroom teaching and devotion to scholarship bring recognition to the University and positively impact the lives of students.

At the meeting of the Connecticut State University System (CSUS) Board of Trustees in April, **Lisa Rowe Fraustino**, associate professor of English, was named the recipient of the CSUS Trustees Teaching Award. A Fulbright Scholar, Fraustino was honored in part for her

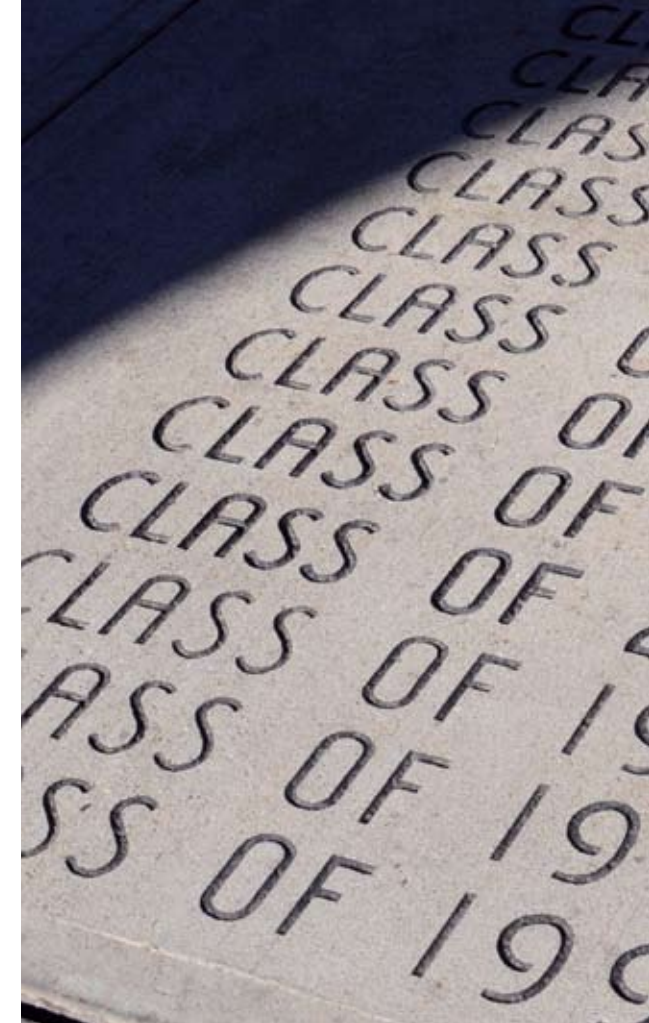
creation of a writing minor and courses for the new liberal arts curriculum at the University and her attentive and effective advising and mentoring of students.

Kenneth McNeil, associate professor of English at Eastern, won a university-level Trustee Award honoring his research. He has been nationally and internationally recognized for his work in English literature and the British writers of the Romantic period, including writers of the Scottish Highlands such as Sir Walter Scott and women authors such as Ann Grant and Queen Victoria.

Ken Bedini, acting dean of students, received a 2008 Diamond Leadership Award from the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) this past April in Atlanta, GA. The national award is given annually to approximately 10 student affairs professionals from throughout the United States for lifelong achievements in higher education. Bedini was nominated by Briana Seigny and was presented the award by Jean Paratore, president of the ACPA Foundation.

A Decade of Progress

Enrollment at Eastern is on the rise, as the University continues to be the institution of first choice for a growing number of students from Connecticut and across the United States. In 2007, the number of applicants—those officially seeking acceptance to the University—soared. Applications for full-time admission totaled 4,556, a 10 percent increase over the previous year and the largest number in at least a decade. Overall, applications have increased 90 percent since 1997. Sixty-two percent of those who applied in 2007 were offered admission to Eastern.



Applications from freshmen climbed by 10 percent between 2006 and 2007 as well, reaching 3,740 in 2007. Fifty-eight percent of first-time freshmen applicants in 2007 were admitted. The average SAT score of incoming students has been steadily rising as well. The mean SAT score in 2007 was 1022, an increase of 74 points since 1997.

The number of new full-time students enrolled in fall 2007 was 1,261, bringing the total of students enrolled at Eastern last fall to 5,137. Students of color accounted for 16 percent of all undergraduates.



In keeping with Eastern's public liberal arts mission, all first-time, first-year students will be enrolled in the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum as of fall 2008. The core, which uses a sequenced, three-tiered approach, includes study in methods and concepts, synthesis and application, and independent inquiry. By 2013, all graduating students will have completed the LAC requirements.

Supporting Student Success

Winning Awards. In October, Eastern's Organization of Latin American Students (OLAS) was awarded the "Outstanding Student Organization Award" by the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute at the Eighth Annual Northeast Latino Student Leadership Conference (NLSLC). OLAS was presented the award for the work it has done on campus and within the community.

Seniors **Kevin Douglas** and **Jenna Germain** were Eastern's outstanding 2008 Henry Barnard Scholars. Douglas, a social work major from Norwich, traveled to New Orleans to work in the post-Katrina cleanup and to South Carolina as part of a select group of Habitat for Humanity volunteers from the United States and Canada. In March, he spent his spring break helping to build homes in West Virginia with Habitat for Humanity. Germain, who was also named one of Connecticut's Outstanding Future Professionals, volunteered at the Special Olympics in Windham, teaching basketball activities to participants; helped out at Jump Rope for Heart; and taught "resistance band lessons" to special needs campers at Camp Horizons in South Windham.

Also recognized at the Barnard Scholars ceremony were Eastern graduate **Jeffrey Warzecha '07** and freshman **Jacqueline Gray**. Warzecha was awarded the 2007 Leslie Leeds Poetry Prize, while Gray, a psychology and pre-early childhood education major from Wolcott, received the T. Clark Hull Public Service Scholarship.

Two Eastern students were honored this past academic year with awards from the American Humanics alliance. Seniors **Juliann Cappa** and **Katarina Russo** each received a \$4,500 Next Generation Nonprofit Leaders Program



(NextGen) award. The scholarships enabled them to complete 300-hour internships at a nonprofit organization. Russo, a Business Administration major, completed her hours in volunteer management for the American Red Cross Connecticut Blood Services Region in Farmington in fall 2007. Cappa, a Political Science major, attended the Institute on Philanthropy and Volunteer Service this past summer in Washington, DC, where she completed two courses at Georgetown University and interned at a nonprofit organization in the city. Out of 2,000 student applicants from more than 65 universities nationwide who applied through American Humanics, only 200 are selected for the NextGen Leaders award. Eastern is the only New England university with an American Humanics Student Associa-

tion program on campus. President Núñez also sits on the American Humanics Board.

Kristin Schroeder, a senior from Manchester majoring in environmental earth science, was awarded third place in the undergraduate student poster award competition at the 2008 Northeastern Section Meeting of the Geological Society of America, held in Buffalo, NY. Schroeder's entry, which examined the geomorphology of land use that has driven erosion, sedimentation, and landscape development in the Providence Canyon State Park in southwestern Georgia, reported on the efforts to create interactive digital learning

Above, President Elsa Núñez poses with 2008 Barnard Scholars Jenna Germain and Kevin Douglas.



Mead Hall wins first-ever Dean's Cup. This year, Mead Hall walked off with first-place honors in Eastern's first-ever Dean's Cup competition. On May 3, more than 200 students from the six freshman residence halls participated in the culminating event — the "Hall Olympics," which included a volleyball tournament, relay race, water balloon toss, egg toss, and a tug-of-war. An enthusiastic "spirit cheer" took place at the end of the day's events, with all halls showing support for one another.

Each freshman residence hall spent nine months in the race for the Dean's Cup, participating in such events as a block party in September, the Spring Career Fair, and various Arts and Lecture events throughout the academic year. Participation in each event garnered points for each residence hall. Other points that counted toward winning first-place honors included the highest cumulative GPA among the halls; the greatest amount of blood donated at blood drives; the quickest time in which all community service was completed; and the most money raised for the dean's charity. Proceeds were donated to the "No Freeze" shelter located in Willimantic.

"It was truly a great event and one that ties into our strategic plan for developing a campus culture in the tradition of a liberal arts experience," said Ken Bedini, acting dean of students. In 2008-09, it is planned that all 12 residence halls, housing both freshmen and upperclassmen, will participate in the Dean's Cup.

tools that explore these geomorphic principles in ways that relate to state education within middle school science standards.

Two groups of Eastern students placed first and third in a statewide public service announcement contest sponsored by the Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut. The

award ceremony was held at Eastern on May 7 as part of the University's annual video and animation festival. The topic for the contest was "Renewing the Spirit of Connecticut: Tackling Underage Drinking." The contest was announced in January 2008 and was open to any Connecticut college student. Students were required to create, film, and



edit a 30-second television PSA designed to curb underage drinking. Eastern's Red Team, composed of television production students **Jeffrey Cullen, Steven Reyes, and Tiana Garcia,** and advertising students **Edyta Orzel and Laura Kolar,** won first place for their video. The Old School Productions team, composed of television production students **Matthew Fletcher** and **Jessica Barbieri,** placed third.

Seniors **Adam Brzozowski** and **Sarah York** were among eight Connecticut State University System students recognized for their outstanding academic achievement on April 9 by the Connecticut State General Assembly.

Specialized Internship. Eastern students also presented at national conferences and were selected for specialized internships. Among them were psychology major **Erika Harrington,** who presented her research project, "Perceived Racism as a Predictor of Depression, Anxiety, and Cultural Mistrust,"

at the Council for Undergraduate Research Posters on the Hill Conference in Washington, D.C.; and alumna **Jessica Giordano '07,** who presented her independent study project, "Associations Among Female Sexual Behavior, Body Image and Feminist Ideology," at the annual conference of the Eastern Psychological Association in Boston.

Juniors **Andrew Powaleny** and **Tori Saulnier** were selected to represent Eastern this past summer at the Institute of Political Journalism at Georgetown University. They were chosen from a pool of nearly 1,000 applicants from all over the country to participate in the program. The institute is regarded as one of the country's premier internship programs in the nation.

Above, Physical Education major Justin Brown '10 describes his project, "The Effects of Arthritis on Exercise Programming," at the annual Excellence Expo.

On the National Stage. Also in March, Theatre majors **Jaclynn Hart, Bradley Conners, Michelle Tubby,** and **Kelly Schreier** were honored at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, held at Fitchburg State College in Fitchburg, MA. For the second year in a row at the festival, Schreier was also selected as the alternate for the National Critic's Workshop, held in April at the Kennedy Center.

Junior **Allison Kelley** lived out the first phase of her dream to become a comedian by attending a comedy studies program at Columbia College in Chicago, offered in conjunction with the Second City Entertainment Company. The school has turned out some of

America's best-known improvisational comedians, including John Belushi, Dan Aykroyd, Gilda Radner, and Bill Murray.

Kelly Looke made news around New England when she was named to the cheerleading

Below, Sarah York '08 and Adam Brzozowski '08 were recognized on April 9 by the Connecticut State General Assembly. With York and Brzozowski are Vice President of Academic Affairs Rhona Free and Acting Vice President of Student Affairs Paul Bryant.

Right, English major Tanya Stone '08 provides an analysis of "Medieval Art Found in Christian Pilgrimage" at this year's Research and Exhibition Conference.



squad of the New England Patriots professional football team. Looke was on the sidelines at Arizona's University of Phoenix Stadium in February when the team played in Super Bowl XLII.

An Eastern business student brought home the first-place trophy in the Connecticut Venture Group's Elevator-Pitch Competition, held April 4 at Yale's Lawn Club in New Haven. **Henry Fournier** of Hartford, representing organic recycling company Green & Grind, competed in a field of eight students representing eight different schools from across the state in the four-minute business plan presentation competition.

Exhibiting Excellence. Hundreds of Eastern students, each with a faculty sponsor, participated in the School of Arts and Sciences' Annual Research and Exhibition Conference, and in the School of Education and Profes-

sional Studies' Excellence Expo. They presented research on such topics as "Alzheimer's Disease and Neurofibrillary Tangles in the Cingulate Gyrus," "An Analysis of Medieval Art Found in Christian Pilgrimage," "Women and Leadership: Lessons from Burma," "Records of Eroded Sediments in Human Induced Canyons in Southwest Georgia," "Logo Design for the Willimantic Whitewater Partnership Trail, Parks, River Initiative," and "Verbal and Visual Cues as Predictors of Color Choices."

The Excellence Expo featured a poster session, a gallery photography exhibit with a color slide show and framed prints, marketing plans, and research presentations, public service announcements, master's comprehensive portfolios, and economics.

A Mandala for Peace. The Eastern campus and guests from surrounding communities were captivated by an intricate demonstration of sand art in the University's Akus Gallery when Tibetan monks from the Dalai Lama's Namgyal Monastery in Ithaca, NY, arrived on campus and spent six days in early December 2007 creating a traditional sand mandala for peace and compassion. The mandala creation is a painstaking process of carefully placing grains of colored sand to construct an intricate geometric illustration; each mandala is unique. Large audiences, which included bus loads of schoolchildren, visited the gallery throughout the week and learned about the prayers and rituals of Tibetan Buddhist culture.

President Elsa Núñez hosted a reception for the monks in the gallery on Dec. 3. They presented a lecture and demonstration during Eastern's weekly University Hour on Dec. 5. On Dec. 9, the final day, the monks dismantled the delicate mandala and, along with Eastern students, faculty, and members of the community, proceeded to the Flower Bridge, where the sand was tossed into the Willimantic River, accompanied by prayers for peace throughout the world.



A Campus Rich in Culture

As Connecticut's public liberal arts university, Eastern promotes intellectual curiosity among its students inside and outside the classroom. Professor Emeritus **Charles Prewitt** sponsored a series of four lectures related to peace and human rights in fall 2007. The lectures focused on topics such as "Education and Peace" and "The Nation and Peace," and were presented by such speakers as State Representative **Denise Merrill** and CSUS Chancellor David G. Carter.

On Nov. 7, Eastern students, faculty and staff, and area residents were treated to an afternoon of lectures, a dance performance, and dramatic representations of 17th-century religious intolerance in a presentation of "The Witching Hour." The production was a unique

cultural and historical theatrical reenactment of Connecticut's 17th-century witch trials, as performed by the Judy Dworin Performance Project. An afternoon symposium, "Witches Among Us: A Reconsideration of Witchcraft Studies," featured both Eastern faculty and international experts on the 17th-century witch hunts and related gender issues. The event was co-sponsored by the ECSU Foundation, Inc. and the Connecticut Antiquarian and Landmarks Society.

The Eroica Trio, one of the most sought-after trios in the world, lived up to its reputation in November as a group that "thrills audiences

Above, Mayra Santos-Febres, noted Puerto Rican author and university professor, gave an entertaining lecture on women in Caribbean literature on April 8.



with flawless technical virtuosity, irresistible enthusiasm, and sensual elegance.” The group performed in Shafer Auditorium, demonstrating their skills on piano, violin, and cello. Other guest artists and lecturers during the seventh annual Arts and Lecture series included veteran actor **Mel Johnson Jr.**, *The Capitol Steps*, oceanographer **Robert Ballard**, and internationally acclaimed Latin jazz master **Poncho Sanchez**.

During National African-American History Month in February, Women’s History Month in March, and Latin-American Awareness Month in April, the University presented a wide array of events and activities to its students and the community. Noted author and prominent legal theorist **Charles J. Ogletree Jr.** presented the African-American History Month Distinguished

Lecture, “Racial Fatigue and Racial Amnesia: Is Brown v. Board of Education Still Relevant?” Eastern also hosted “Fuerza Latina” (Latin Power), a conference that encouraged middle and high school students to attend college; presented Puerto Rican author, poet, and scholar **Mayra Santos-Febres**, one of the most provocative and vibrant voices of contemporary Puerto Rican and Caribbean literature; and hosted **Kirsten Holmstedt**, author of the book “Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq.”

This past year, the **David T. Chase Free Enterprise Institute** brought federal officials and business leaders to campus from the highest levels of government to discuss timely issues. They included **Pamela Jones-Harbour**, commissioner with the U.S. Federal Trade Commis-

sion; **Robert Cusick**, director of the U.S. Office on Government Ethics; **Jeffrey Fuhrer**, executive vice president and director of research for the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston; **Stuart Ishimaru**, commissioner of the U.S. Equal Employment Commission; **Richard Russell**, associate director of the White House Office of Science and Technology; and Boston Red Sox vice president **Charles Steedman**. Later in the year, the Red Sox graciously visited campus to showcase their two World Series trophies. Eastern was one of only three Connecticut sites to display the two trophies. **Raymond P. Necci**, the University’s Distinguished Business Executive in Residence for 2007-08, also lectured on campus.

Eastern students proudly display their artwork in the University’s Akus Gallery, in other galleries, and in public buildings.

Fourteen students from the Department of Performing Arts presented “Body and Sold” in March in the Student Center Theatre. The show, directed by junior **Jenna Podeswa** with senior **Kaitlyn Kociela** serving as costume director, was sponsored by Soroptimist International of Willimantic to make audiences aware of the exploitation and trafficking of children in contemporary American society.



Above left, on April 24, Stuart J. Ishimaru, commissioner of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, discussed major discriminatory and regulatory issues related to the U.S. economy.

Above, Visual Arts student Courtney Cutler displayed her acrylic-on-canvas artwork, titled “Anna Nicole,” at the Senior Art Exhibit held in the Akus Gallery in May 2008.



of “John Brown’s Body” for their final class project. The show was adapted from the Pulitzer Prize-winning poem of the same name, written in 1928 by Stephen Vincent Benét. It was directed by Brodie with assistance from Performing Arts Adjunct Professor Jerry Winters.

Left, Michael Lessard (as Curly) sings “The Surrey With The Fringe On The Top” to Shelly Barnett (as Aunt Eller) and Jillian Robbins (as Laurey) in the Performing Arts Department’s theatre production of “Oklahoma” in April.

Below, the women’s volleyball team celebrates an improbable Little East Conference Championship after being seeded fifth in the tournament.

Excellence on the Field—and Off

In 2007–08, Eastern’s 17-sport intercollegiate athletic program harvested a number of team and individual honors at the conference, regional, and national levels.

Eastern teams received six NCAA Division III tournament bids, and won a total of eight Little East Conference regular-season and/or postseason championships. Individual athletes were recognized at the national level eight times and at the regional level 34 times for their athletic and academic accomplishments. Eastern athletes also won 11 conference individual championships, and seven individuals were recognized with major conference awards.

Theatre students returned to the stage in April to entertain the campus and local community with a production of “Oklahoma!” The play was directed and choreographed by guest artist **Greg Ganakas**, who has directed plays at the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven and the Goodspeed Opera House in East Had-dam, as well as opera performances throughout the country. Ganakas was assisted by **Drew Franklin** as guest associate director and choreographer. Musical direction was provided by Music Professor and Performing Arts Department Chair **David Belles** and university

assistant **Eric Ouellette**. Performing Arts Ad-junct Professors **Jerry Winters** and **Brad Roth** served as acting coach and dance coach, respectively. Assistant Professor **David Regan** designed the sets and, along with community member **Shelly Barnett**, acted in the ensemble. Associate Professor **Chase Rozelle** served as technical director and constructed the set with students.

In May, students in Performing Arts Profes-sor and Director of Theatre **Ellen Faith Brodie’s** Reader’s Theatre class staged a production



The men's soccer, women's volleyball, women's basketball, and women's lacrosse programs all earned automatic bids to NCAA tournaments by winning their conference tournament championships, while the softball and baseball programs received at-large invitations to their NCAA tournaments. In addition to capturing conference post-season championships, the men's soccer and women's lacrosse teams also won their regular-season conference titles. The men's lacrosse team also claimed its regular-season championship and the softball team shared its regular-season title.



Above, distance runner Nadia Gonzalez Lopez '09 of Cromwell is a biochemistry major when not competing on the track.

ics Awards Banquet held May 11. Nineteen Outstanding Scholar-Athlete and 16 Scholar-Athlete awards were presented at the banquet, which was also the stage for a number of other academic and athletic awards. The annual Faculty Athletics Representative team trophy was presented to the women's basketball team for having the highest aggregate grade point average.

Sarah Barber put the finishing touches upon a standout swimming career by becoming the second Eastern swimmer to win the prestigious Kay Fromer Award, which is presented to the senior with the most career points at the New England Intercollegiate Swimming and Diving Association (NEISDA) Division II-III Championship Meet. This year, Barber won the 1,000 yard freestyle for the fourth straight season and was second in the 500- and 1,650-yard freestyle.

Thirty-five student athletes received an E-Club Scholar-Athlete Award at the annual Athlet-

Eastern's student-athletes

demonstrate academic discipline, teamwork, dedication, leadership, integrity and spirit.



Eastern's 2008 Scholar All-America.

The academic and athletic accomplishments of long-stick midfielder Jon Snedeker landed him a spot on the United States Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (USILA) 2008 Scholar All-America Team.

Snedeker was among 61 seniors in Divisions I, II, and

III to earn a spot on the team. The USILA Scholar All-America program was initiated in 1989 "to recognize student-athletes from USILA member institutions who have distinguished themselves academically, athletically, and as citizens of their communities."

This past spring, Snedeker was named to the All-Little East Conference team for the fourth straight year, and also earned an Eastern/E-Club Scholar-Athlete Award for the second time in his two seasons of eligibility. With an overall grade-point average of 3.33, Snedeker graduated in May with a degree in business and minor in marketing. "Jon illustrates all of the attributes of a great student-athlete," said Eastern men's lacrosse head coach Justin Axel.

Snedeker becomes Eastern's second selection to the USILA academic squad and the first since John Rubano was named in 2000. A total of 14 student-athletes from New England institutions were named to the 2008 scholar team, with Snedeker the only selectee from either a state-supported institution or from the Little East Conference.

In June, Snedeker traveled to Australia to represent the United States in the international Down Under Cup competition. "It truly was a trip of a lifetime," he said.

Right, 20 members of Eastern's Habitat for Humanity chapter raise awareness of homelessness.

Senior soccer goalkeeper **Jay Barney** repeated as the LEC conference's Defensive Player-of-the-Year, was named tourney MVP in leading the Warriors to their first-ever conference playoff championship, and earned a spot on the National Soccer Coaches Association of America all-region team. Women's basketball player **Ashley McFetridge** was named the conference Player-of-the-Year and tournament MVP.

Eastern baseball player **Tristan Hobbes** and softball player **Kim Church** were recognized for their academic and athletic successes by earning spots on the ESPN The Magazine/College Division District I 2008 Academic All-District Team by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA). Hobbes, a Communication major, and Church, a Physical Education major, were the only selections from among the eight Little East Conference institutions.

Six members of the field hockey program also earned a spot on the National Field Hockey Coaches Association Division III National Academic Squad: seniors **Amy Lampe** and **Kim Spreda**, juniors **Meagan Puzacke** and **Jaime Seligmann**, sophomore **Casey Mugavero**, and freshman **Jillian Stanley**.

On the women's lacrosse team, Eastern featured the conference's Offensive and Defensive Players-of-the-Year award-winners in **Megan Gloster** and **Taylor MacDonald**.



Changing the World One Person at a Time

Eastern students, faculty, and staff continued their long and distinguished record of giving back to the community, with 244 community service activities sponsored in 2007–08. Eastern students actively participate in the life of Willimantic, volunteering in excess of 25,000 hours annually to work with more than 40 social service agencies and non-profit organizations. They tutor schoolchildren, work in soup kitchens, build homes for Habitat for Human-

ity, and participate in a number of downtown revitalization efforts.

Braving cold November temperatures, approximately 20 members of Eastern's student chapter of Habitat for Humanity spent 24 hours in cardboard boxes outside the Student Center. The annual event is held to raise awareness of Habitat's mission to eradicate substandard housing. More than \$1,000 was raised to support the local Windham Habitat affiliate and help fund the club's trip to West Virginia in the spring.

For the fifth year in a row, the Offices of AccessAbility Services and Counseling and Psychological Services adopted a family for the Christmas holiday season. With donations collected from across Eastern's community, Stop & Shop gift cards and gift items were purchased and presented to the family.

Political Science major **Andrew Powaleny** spearheaded a fund-raising effort in February to help those impacted by devastating tornados at Union University in Jackson, TN. Powaleny's relief efforts included every resi-



dence hall on Eastern's campus. The collection effort netted nearly \$4,800. According to Randy Ford, communications director for U.S. Rep. John Tanner (TN), Eastern was the first university in the United States to acknowledge and send relief to assist Union University students affected by the tornado.

In March, nearly 300 volunteers from Windham High School, Windham Technical High School, and the Willimantic and Eastern Connecticut State University communities played a key role in making the 29th Annual Windham Invitational Special Olympics Swim Meet at Windham High School a success. Chemistry Professor **Charles Wynn** has coordinated the local meet since its inception.

Also in March, more than 120 Eastern students, faculty, staff, and University friends participated in the ECSU Foundation, Inc.'s annual bowlathon at WilliBowl in North Windham. The event generated more than \$15,000 for the Community Youth Scholarship program.

Lourdes Ardel, manager of compensation and training, received the Maurice Heon Sr. Volunteer of the Year Award at the Windham Region United Way's annual meeting on

Above, Political Science major Andrew Powaleny '09, second from left, displays a check for \$4,800, the total sum of his collection efforts for tornado-relief at Union University in Jackson, TN. With Powaleny are, from left, Michael Pernal, executive vice president; President Elsa Núñez; and Kenneth DeLisa, vice president for institutional advancement.



Day of Giving. More than 400 local residents were treated to a special meal at Eastern's "Day of Giving" on Nov. 21, thanks to the determination of one Eastern student and the support of the entire campus community.

For those individuals who could not afford a full-course Thanksgiving dinner, the University provided a nourishing meal with all the trimmings — huge helpings of moist, delicious turkey; garlic potatoes; cranberry sauce; vegetables; and dessert.

"A university exists to serve its community, and I want to tell you how happy I am that we can share Thanksgiving with you this year," Eastern President Elsa Núñez told the crowd.

The event was conceived and organized by Jason Budahazy, a junior from Bridgeport. "Our community has many issues, and one of them is hunger and homelessness," Budahazy said. "I wanted to do something large scale that would help people less fortunate than us. I got very emotional hearing some of those people tell me how grateful they were."

Patrons of local soup kitchens and food pantries, as well as families subsidized by the Willimantic Housing Authority, were invited to the Day of Giving. Transportation was arranged by Eastern and the local social service agencies. The event also was supported by Sodexo Food Service, which donated the food; the University's student clubs, including Eastern's Student Government Association; Eastern faculty and staff; ProForma, a Massachusetts-based T-shirt company; the ECSU Foundation, Inc.; and local grocery stores. A campus-wide canned food drive netted 10,000 cans to complement the dinner.

Budahazy hopes the event will become statewide and held at all of the CSUS campuses. "A woman came up to me and said if it wasn't for Eastern she would not be able to share a Thanksgiving meal with her son, and she started to get emotional," he said. "That's what makes all the hard work and time worth it."



April 9. The award was given in recognition of Ardel's outstanding volunteer service to the community.

Eastern's energy-conscious campus observed Earth Week with an entire month of activities of events and lectures around campus to raise public awareness of biofuels, global warming, and many other energy-related issues. The Earth Day Three-Mile Trail Run and Earth Semester Challenge at Mansfield Hollow State Park kicked off the celebration.

Eastern students, faculty, and staff have a long and distinguished record of giving back to the community.

More than 200 student volunteers from Eastern hit the streets of Willimantic on April 26 to clean streets, pick up trash, and paint buildings throughout the community. The campaign, called **"Eastern Hits the Streets,"** is in its fifth year. Representatives from more than 14 local nonprofit organizations joined Eastern students in the clean-up which is also done each fall.

People Helping People (PHP), a student-based community service group at Eastern, hosted an on-campus tour and luncheon for St. Joseph's Living Center residents on May 5. It was one of a series of programs that PHP offers each month for St. Joseph's residents, including movie nights, bingo, trips to Wal-Mart, a men's club, and musical events. Eastern

students have developed and assisted in a number of these programs, which are geared towards improving the quality of life for the residents. "PHP helps students explore career options while finding people to help and give back to the community. It's all about promoting personal growth," said sophomore **Chelsea Williams** of Torrington.

On May 20, **Neville Brown**, assistant director of financial aid, was awarded the Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (EASFAA) "Outstanding Volunteer

Award." This award recognizes individuals for outstanding service performed for EASFAA as a non-elected volunteer.

Making an Investment, Transforming Lives

2007-08 might well go down in Eastern history as a year when several large philanthropic gifts literally "transformed" the University. Two of the gifts were bequests, the largest in school history, while the other

gift was the most significant donation from any living individual(s).

When you drive along Mansfield Road in Ashford, you can't help but notice the Church Farm property — a stately, historic home, complete with Doric columns, surrounded by acres of well-preserved woodlands, meadows, and gardens, accented by a well-kept barn built in 1895. The property's visionary owners, **Joseph and Dorothy Church Zaring** of Washington, DC, made the donation to the ECSU Foundation, Inc., possible and also





made a financial contribution. The total gift is in excess of \$2 million.

Funds received will be used to renovate and upgrade the property, transforming it into the Church Farm Center for the Arts and Sciences. The land will be used to enhance teaching and field research while showcasing creative activities.

Carmen Cid, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, sees the property as the perfect place for science classes to explore and for

visual arts and creative writing classes to follow their inspiration. "There is even a sunken garden that will be perfect for performing Shakespeare," she said.

Above, the Church Farm Center for the Arts and Science in Ashford, a gift from Joseph and Dorothy Zaring of Washington, DC, will be used for field work (shown here) as well as for cultural events and to support other goals of the University.

Investing in Students is Good Business. Tom Sweeney '83 has used his bachelor's degree in mathematics from Eastern as a steppingstone to a successful career in information technology that has spanned more than two decades. His path has led Sweeney to his current position as chairman and CEO of Incentra Solutions, Inc., in Boulder, CO. Incentra provides information technology and storage management solutions to mid-range enterprises and managed-service providers in North America and Europe.

The Incentra leader has continued his relationship with Eastern by providing internship opportunities. In the summer of 2007, he hosted three Eastern students as interns at Incentra. In 2008, he provided opportunities for four additional students. As of fall 2008, two Eastern alumni have become full-time Incentra employees.

Sweeney notes that the hiring market for talented young people in the financial and business analysis fields is highly competitive: "With our business growing so quickly, I wanted to expand our internship program. Hiring some students from Eastern who could represent themselves and the University made sense. The kids are highly motivated and are doing great work while they are here, so it helps them and it helps our business."

Sweeney plans to continue the internship program with Eastern, and encourages other alumni to find similar opportunities at their own places of business. "Being an advocate and a resource for students is a wonderful way to thank Eastern for what they have given me," he explains. "You get to say, 'Maybe I helped a little bit,' and knowing the students represent my University means we are all heading in the same direction."



In 2005, Deloitte and Touche named Incentra Solutions the 55th-fastest growing information technology company in the country; in 2006, the company was the fourth-fastest growing firm.

Dorothy E. Brown passed away two years ago and left her entire estate to the University, including a Victorian home on Bolivia Street, land, and a stock portfolio in excess of \$4.5 million. The total value of the gift, including matching funds from the State of Connecticut, is \$6.25 million. Brown's home on Bolivia Street has already been named the Brown Faculty Residence and is being utilized as a guest house for visiting University guests. Dorothy's mother, Doris, attended Eastern in the mid-1930s, leaving to work as a bookkeeper in her husband's furniture and appliance store located on Main Street in Willimantic.

Right, these youngsters at the Child and Family Development Resource Center are benefiting from the support received from the SBM Charitable Foundation and other generous donors.

Below, the Brown Faculty Residence is used as a temporary residence for visiting University guests.



"A gift of this magnitude will have a tremendous impact on the University and will greatly enhance Eastern's ability to provide multi-year scholarship commitments for deserving students," said **Kenneth DeLisa**, vice president of institutional advancement.

The estate of **John C. Hicks** is valued at \$1.3 million, including \$500,000 in matching funds from the State of Connecticut. The gift will fund an endowed chair in biology. This brings to three the number of endowed chairs at

Eastern and coincides with the opening of the new Science Building in fall 2008.

The **SBM Charitable Foundation** continued its generous support of Eastern in fiscal year 2008 by providing \$15,000 in scholarships for students with unmet financial need. This was the second straight year the SBM Charitable Foundation provided scholarship assistance and comes on the heels of two \$250,000 leadership gifts in support of the Early Childhood Education program.



Lost in Translation. More than 130 Willimantic-area business people, educators, civic officials, Latino community members, and other local leaders attended “Lost in Translation,” a two-part seminar held at Eastern. The events, which were held in October and May, were designed to foster better communications between people from different backgrounds and cultural groups while helping to support small businesses in Willimantic.

“Once we understand one another better, we can begin to work more closely in the business arena and as a community,” Eastern President Elsa Núñez said in her opening comments in October. She described Willimantic as a unique community, where a Latino population that began in the 1950s when Puerto Ricans were recruited to work at the

Hartford Poultry Co. and American Tread Co. has grown rapidly with a recent influx of Mexican and Central American immigrants.

The general session, presented by Bauza & Associates Hispanic Marketing of Hartford, detailed a few of the cultural, religious, and language differences between the Anglo and Latino communities, and encouraged the attendees to seek avenues for bridging these barriers. According to the organization, gaining sensitivity to such differences is the first step to coming together to solve common community issues. Business leaders in the audience were encouraged to align their brands with the local culture and environment; to connect by appealing to a person’s heart as well as to the intellect; and, most important, to create trust within the marketplace.

“Grassroots relationship-building is very important to the Latino community,” explained Wilson Camelo, a Willimantic native and one of the principals of Bauza & Associates.

Following the general session, breakout workshops were held on a number of topics, including leadership skills, marketing, intercultural communications, and Hispanic Small Business Development, to name a few. In one workshop, Regional Manager Nereida Braasch and commercial lender Steve LaFlamme, representatives from the Savings Institute Bank and Trust Company, discussed “Financing Your Small Business/Organization,” where it was noted that many banks hire Spanish-speaking tellers to develop a rapport and generate trust within the Latin-American community.

In the October session, luncheon speaker Rob Simmons, Connecticut’s Business Advocate and former U.S. Representative for Connecticut’s Second Congressional District, described ways in which the state is supporting small businesses. The May session featured a keynote and lunch presentation by Hector Bauza, principal of Bauza & Associates, who spoke about changes occurring in Spanish language and Latino market media based on the nation’s growing Hispanic population.



Eastern Alumni are Spreading the Word About Eastern

In alumni news, the list of high achievers is impressive. A small sampling includes **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie '01**, who won the 2007 Orange Prize for Fiction (Britain’s top literary prize) for her second novel, “Half of a Yellow Sun.” **David Poulin '93** was selected as the 2007 Outstanding Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year by the Alaska Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. He also received the Removal of Attitudinal Barriers Award, presented by the Alaska Governor’s Committee

on Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities. **Janice Mayeran '86** was selected as the Connecticut Elementary School Physical Education Teacher of the Year at the annual conference of the Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (CTAHPERD).

Above, from left: CSUS Chancellor David G. Carter and President Elsa Núñez congratulate Marie Love Johnson, a long-time University supporter, who received the 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award at the Minority Alumni Recognition Banquet last October.



Paying it Forward. When Sharon Mendes '04 attended a community college after graduating from high school in 1972, she quit shortly after her first semester began. After 25 years, she decided to make a second attempt and enrolled in classes at Eastern as a part-time, nontraditional student. She juggled motherhood and work, eventually becoming a full-time student before graduating in 2004 with a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Applied Social Relations.

While pursuing her studies, she was the recipient of both the Jarrell Cuyler and Angelica Padilla Memorial Scholarship and the Ellen L. Lang Endowed Scholarship. Mendes so values the assistance she received that she now donates to these very scholarships. On donating to the same scholarships she received as a student, Mendes says, "I think giving back is important simply because of what one was given to start with – it is almost like replenishing supplies for the future. Giving back expresses appreciation for those supplies."

Mendes, who received her master's degree in counseling (with a concentration in student development and higher education) from Central Connecticut State University in 2006, is employed as an academic advisor at the Academic Center for Exploratory Students at the University of Connecticut.

Mendes and her husband, Frank, live in North Windham and have four children: Jennifer, 30; Keith, 27; Anthony, 20; and Rachel, 18. Anthony is a senior at Eastern and is an American Studies major. He is also on the University's cross-country and indoor and outdoor track teams.



Sheree Shields-Farrell '04 made headlines when she was named Mrs. Connecticut USA in June 2007. The Mrs. Connecticut competition recognizes outstanding married women who manage to juggle family, home, career, volunteerism, and future goals. Shields-Farrell, who competed at the national competition in Arizona in September, is the first African-American winner in the Connecticut pageant's 69-year history. Shields-Farrell's degree is in Communication.

Above, President Elsa Núñez congratulates Elise Cofield, Psychology Professor Margaret Letterman, and Michael McKenzie '08. Each were honored with a 2008 Dr. Martin Luther King Distinguished Service Award.

The evening of Oct. 27 was a special time at Eastern when more than 250 alumni, friends, and supporters enjoyed the elegance of the renovated Betty R. Tipton Room in the University's Student Center to attend Eastern's first Minority Alumni Recognition Banquet. Alumni and guests joined President Elsa Núñez and CSUS Chancellor David Carter in dedicating the **Arthur L. Johnson Unity Wing** of the Student Center in honor of the late journalist and Eastern professor. President Núñez presented the 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award to **Marie Love Johnson**, Arthur Johnson's widow and a longtime supporter of the University. The University also bestowed alumni awards in honor of **Gloria Marie Caliendo '82** and **Doris Powell Glass '48**.



Above, Sheree Shields-Farrell '04 poses with Mrs. USA at the national competition.

Michael McKenzie '08, Psychology Professor **Margaret Letterman**, and New Haven community worker **Elise Cofield** were honored at Eastern's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Service Awards Reception, held Feb. 27 in the Paul E. Johnson Sr. Community Conference Room of the J. Eugene Smith Library. McKenzie was honored for his volunteer efforts in the community, which included serving as president of the MALES (Men Achieving Leadership, Excellence, and Success) Student Club, as a member of the Campus Activity Board, and as a student orientation counselor. Letterman was recognized for her passion for helping students and her volunteer work with numerous student programs and activities, including Thursday night dinners at the Knight House and a First Year Program cluster, both of which she organized. Cofield was honored for her long-time efforts with the AIDS Interfaith Network.

Eastern presented awards to three distinguished alumni, a retired professor, and a friend of the University at the President's Leadership Dinner Gala held March 26 at the Bushnell Center for Performing Arts in Hartford. **RoseAnne D. Bilodeau '70** and **Colonel Charles A. Campbell '83** were honored with Distinguished Alumni Awards; **Margaret C. Toner '42** received Eastern's Distinguished Service Award; and **Professor Emerita Jacqueline Abbott** and **Madeline Bernstein**, a longtime friend of Eastern, were presented Hermann Beckert "Friends of the University" Awards. Visual Arts Professor **Imna Arroyo**, local community leader **Yolanda Negron '99**, and recent graduate **Julisa De Los Santos '08** received the University's Latin-American Distinguished Service Awards on April 16 in the Paul E. Johnson Sr. Community Conference Room of the J. Eugene Smith Library. The evening's keynote speaker was **Bobby Gonzalez**, a nationally-renowned multicultural storyteller, poet, and motivational speaker.

Sharing Memories of Eastern. Alumni from Florida gathered to make new friends and share old memories at receptions in Tampa, Orlando, and Fort Lauderdale in February. Eastern President Elsa Núñez updated alumni on all the latest University news at the Tampa and Orlando receptions. The Fort Lauderdale reception was hosted by Professor Emerita Jacqueline Abbott. Alumni receptions will continue to be scheduled for major cities around the country in 2008-09.

Fourteen alumni from the Class of 1958 gathered on Eastern's campus on May 2 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their commencement from what was then Willimantic State Teachers College. Representing about one-third of the living members of the gradu-



Eastern Welcomes Norwich Free Academy. Approximately 650 sophomores from Norwich Free Academy (NFA) visited Eastern's campus on March 19 to learn more about Connecticut's public liberal arts university. A group of Eastern professors, faculty, and students addressed the visiting NFA students on a variety of topics ranging from campus life to how to fill out financial aid forms.

Eastern President Elsa Núñez gave the opening address. "Over the next two years you will be asking yourself, 'what's the right college or university for me?'" she said, adding "Eastern is an ideal choice. We do not have big lecture halls; 96 percent of our classes have 20 students or less; and the professors will get to know you personally. We will enhance your ability to speak and write."

Nancy DeCrescenzo, acting director of career services, and LaQuana Price, assistant director of admissions, talked to the NFA sophomores about achieving their goals. Martin Levin, First Year Program coordinator and professor of Biology, stressed the importance of balancing schedules. "It will make it easier for your transition to college," he said. "You will be making decisions that will affect your collegiate career."

In addition, Chris Dorsey, assistant director of admissions, took the NFA visitors through a virtual tour of Eastern's campus. Kenneth Briggs, assistant to the director of financial aid, lectured the group on the importance of filling out financial aid forms. He stressed to them the difference between a loan and a grant, and reminded them to be sure to send in their financial information early to ensure eligibility for aid.

Located in Norwich approximately 20 miles southeast of campus, NFA is Eastern's primary feeder school. Recently, Eastern's Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management and School of Continuing Education partnered with NFA to create the College Pathways Program, which offers the high school students the opportunity to take selected courses for Eastern credits.

ating class, classmates came from as far away as California to celebrate the milestone.

More than 100 graduating seniors and their families joined with visiting alumni from the five-year classes of 1938 through 1983 to enjoy the **Third Annual Eastern Celebrates** barbeque, held May 17 at the Mansfield Sports Complex. In all, more than 700 people gathered under a big tent to enjoy music from DJ Flip (**Jay Crisante '06**), a tasty barbeque meal, and one another's company.

In May, **Tom Sweeney '83** served as the keynote speaker at Eastern's 118th annual commencement ceremony. Sweeney, a graduate



"Eastern taught me how to teach myself, and for that, I will forever be in debt," he said.

"More than 25,000 Eastern alumni across the globe are living testimony to the value of Eastern's liberal arts education," said Kenneth DeLisa, vice president for institutional advancement. "We are so very proud of the many important contributions they are making to their communities, their families, and their place of work."



of the Department of Mathematics/Computer Sciences, is the founder and CEO of Incentra Solutions, Inc., based in Boulder, CO. In 2006, Incentra was the fourth-fastest growing ITS company in the United States, and was named "Company of the Year" in 2007 by VAR Business 500. Sweeney told the graduating seniors that Eastern helped give him the self-confidence to start up companies, manage people, and sit for national interviews.

Left, Tom Sweeney '83 was Eastern's 118th Commencement speaker.

Above, the Class of 1963 returned to campus to enjoy each other's company at the Alumni Reunion on May 17.

Right, Claire (Donohue) Hicks '48 visits with classmate Doris Powell Glass '48 at the Eastern Celebrates barbeque on May 17.





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