

## **REMARKS FOR EASTERN MAGAZINE ISSUE 39**

**DR. NÚÑEZ**

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### **A GENERATION OF HOPE**

The day following Eastern's 133rd Commencement, I announced my plan to retire as president on July 1, 2024. I fell in love with Eastern the first time I visited campus, for it was then that I knew that Eastern was more than where I wanted to be. Eastern was where I was destined to be. I was honored and humbled to be selected as Eastern's sixth President, and I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve this vibrant university community for eighteen years. I wish to thank everyone who took the time to send a note, email, or text. Your kindness only reminds me of how difficult it will be to leave.

Throughout my presidency, Eastern has continued to build upon a commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship that has been decades in the making. It features three fundamental, interrelated elements, including an academic arm (the Center for Sustainability Studies), a public outreach operation (the Institute for Sustainability) and a commitment to sustainability on campus (the Green Campus Committee and its programs). Through this multi-pronged approach, Eastern has established itself as a national Green Campus and a leader in sustainability in Connecticut.

This role is more important than ever, as the pace of climate change accelerates, and the lack of equity between the wealthiest and the poorest becomes more life-threatening to those who are most vulnerable.

Earlier this year I participated as a panelist for a program on the climate crisis, and I was asked what initiative, action or discovery gives me the most hope for a sustainable future. I imagine the audience though that I would say the annual global climate summits, or even the climate-related provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act. It was neither, and I think my response may have surprised some, for you see, Generation Z gives me hope!

