



Center for Community Engagement & Social Research

Monthly Newsletter



Upcoming Events:

- 3/2- Center for Africana Studies Annual Conference
- 3/7- Be Entrepreneurial Final Pitch
- 3/8- Business Career Fair
- 3/20- AAPI Festival Day
- 3/25- Admitted Students Day
- 3/29- Faculty Workshop: Integrating Community Engagement and EJI (Equity, Justice, and Inclusion)
- 4/13-4/15- **Squid Game and Beyond Conference**
- 4/17-4/22- Earth Week
- 4/29- Hoops for Homeless

For detailed information on upcoming events, click [HERE](#)

FEBRUARY 2023 EDITION



CCESR Events & News

On February 1st, CCESR attended the Friendship Center's opening of the Hope Connection Center, a 7-day/week drop-in center for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Read more in our Community Partner Highlight Section!

On February 21st, CCESR attended the Greater New Britain Chamber of Commerce's 3rd Annual Mardi Gras Raffle event. (See photos to the right).

On February 22nd, CCESR co-sponsored the Junior Achievement event, Be Entrepreneurial. Read more about the event in the School of Business Section. (Bottom right photo).

On February 23rd, CCESR co-sponsored the Center for Africana Studies "Start with A Dream College Exploration Day". The event invited students from East Hartford, Meriden, and Waterbury Public Schools to visit campus. Students were given a tour, provided information on financial literacy and different resources available, and heard CCSU student stories.

This month, CCESR's Executive Director, Beth Merenstein, became a new member of the Rotary Club of New Britain-Berlin. The service club works to raise funds for its scholarship program, local community projects, and the efforts of the Rotary Foundation worldwide.



CCESR WELCOMES OUR NEW WILLIAM A. O'NEILL ENDOWED CHAIR

CCESR is proud to announce Ed Vargas as the next Governor William A. O'Neill Endowed Chair in Public Policy and Practical Politics at CCSU. Vargas was appointed after a national search by the University and will begin his tenure on Friday, February 4th. Vargas has a wealth of knowledge and experience to bring to the position with over 45 years of experience in public service. He was a teacher in the Hartford Public School System before being elected to the CT House of Representatives in 2012, a position he held for five terms. In 2020, he was appointed Deputy speaker of the state House. Throughout his professional career, Vargas has also served on a number of boards and commissions and held a variety of leadership positions. The Center could not be more excited to welcome him and cannot wait to see the great work he will do.

Community Engagement Around Campus

CAROL A. AMMON COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Dr. Diana Cohen from the Political Science Department is working with CCSU students on an exciting collaboration between CCSR and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). For the remainder of this calendar year, students will be playing a vital role in data collection for the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Currently, three undergraduate students are working with Dr. Cohen to help design a new survey that seeks to understand the behaviors and attitudes of visitors to Connecticut's outdoor recreation areas. Students are also involved in the distribution of numerous surveys associated with the SCORP. We look forward to updating the CCSU community on this powerful community partnership!



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Junior Achievement (JA) is an organization dedicated to educating K-12 students about entrepreneurship, work readiness and financial literacy through experiential programs. On 2/24, the JA, Be Entrepreneurial Challenge was held at CCSU. Seven teams of high school students from various schools created and presented business ideas correlating to the event's theme of sustainability. Four teams will be moving on to the next round on March 7th. There was an impressive lineup of CCSU professors who volunteered. Dr. Keshab Acharya, Dr. Chris Lee, and Dr. Beth Merenstein did an excellent job planning and running the event. In addition, Dr. Hyoun-Sook Lim and Dr. Ran Liu taught different sessions to the high school students, and Dr. Chris Lee, Dr. Hyoun-Sook Lim, and Dr. Richard Zhang served as judges. Eric Francis, CEO of Trifecta Ecosystems and CCSU alum also served as a judge and delivered a speech on his experiences and entrepreneurship. Prof. Mike Nicastro also recruited a number of CCSU students who played a crucial role serving as mentors. CCSR was happy to be a part of the planning and execution of this successful event.



Community Engagement Around Campus

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Last November, Dr. Timothy Scott from the Social Work Dept., along with two current social work students who are veterans (Tom Alfano and Bernie Sykes) and one former student (Matt Dionne), initiated a statewide group for veterans who are social workers/social work students. Two weeks ago, the group became a standing committee of the National Association of Social Workers- CT (NASW-CT). They currently have a dozen members who are BSW and MSW students and practicing social workers around the state. Together, they are developing plans to engage in advocacy and education work with veterans, recruit more veterans into the social work profession and support them along the way, and provide a space where they can have a shared sense of purpose and belonging. They will be presenting at the NASW-CT conference in June, and have submitted a proposal to present at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Meeting in Atlanta next October.

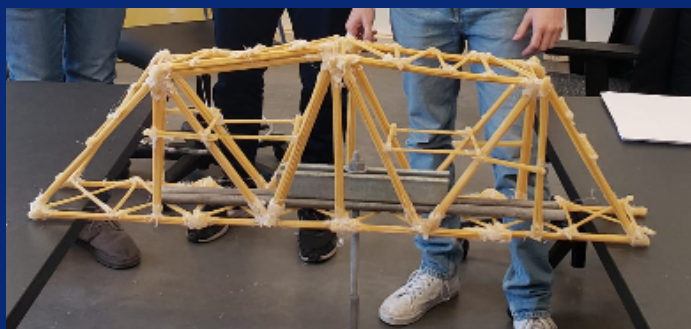
VETERAN SOCIAL WORKERS OF CONNECTICUT

We are military veterans who are social workers

We are united in maintaining a life of meaningful purpose through our shared histories and ongoing commitments of service to each other and our local communities based in social work values

Join us if you are a military veteran who is currently a social worker or a student veteran who is interested in becoming a social worker

Email: VetSocialWorkers.ct@gmail.com



SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING, SCIENCE, & TECHNOLOGY

CCSU celebrated Engineer's Week from February 19-25. There were a number of events throughout the week for students and faculty to get involved in. Among these activities including presentations on various topics, a mini Engineering & Technology Career Fair, an Alumni Panel, the 5th Engineering Design Challenge, and a High School Introduction to Engineering & Technology. To the left you will see the winners of the Engineering Design Challenge and their Spaghetti Bridge. Learn more [here!](#)

Community Engagement Cont.

ATHLETICS

The CCSU National Girls and Women in Sports Day celebration occurred on Feb. 4th. Organized by Associate Director of Athletics, Amy Strickland, and Assistant Director of Athletics, Molly McCarthy, the Blue Devils welcomed around 50 girls from K-6th grade. The event began with a sports clinic that introduced the participants to the Division 1 athletic programs, as well as dance and cheer, that CCSU sponsors. Athletes taught drills and skills to the girls, who were able to experience soccer, softball, lacrosse, track and field, and volleyball. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed pizza and made posters for the women's basketball game they watched later on. After a thrilling win, the CCSU Women's Basketball team signed autographs for the girls. Read more [here!](#)



COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

The Friendship Service Center

Since 1968, the Friendship Service Center (FSC) has been a place where the hungry are fed, the homeless are sheltered, and everyone is welcome. The agency provides a continuum of services ranging from emergency shelter, to transitional living programs, permanent supportive housing options, and more.

On February 1, they opened the Hope Connection Center, a drop-in location open 7 days/week providing resources and referrals for those at risk of homelessness or those currently experiencing homelessness. CCESR was honored to attend the ribbon cutting event and show our support. With this exciting new opening, they are in need of some additional items and are seeking donations. Click [here](#) to view their wish list.

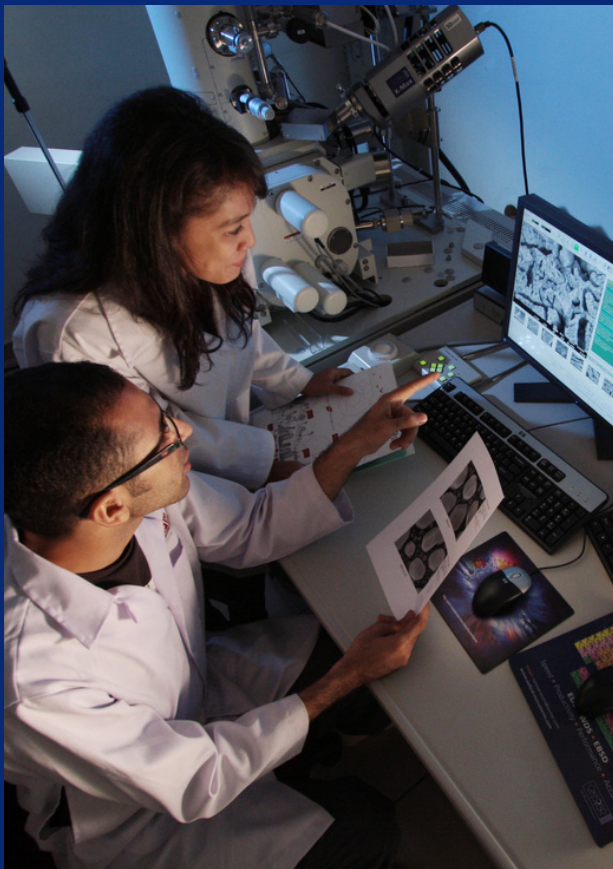
To learn more about the FSC, visit their [website](#) or check out their [newsletter!](#)

CCESR Faculty Resources

SERVICES OFFERED

CCESR is committed to increasing Community Engagement (CE) and research opportunities for students, faculty, and the surrounding area. Our Center can help in a number of ways including, but not limited to:

- Help you create community engagement courses.
- Find and develop community partners.
- Integrate a service-learning component into your class.
- Locate internship, volunteer, and engagement opportunities for your students.
- Find grant opportunities for your research interests that connect with the community.
- Support applied community-based research projects.
- Provide resources, support, and funding for events and activities you would like to host on campus.
- For more information on funding opportunities click [here](#) or submit a [funding request](#).



JOIN OUR FACULTY RESEARCH LIST

The Center provides affordable, state-of-the-art research, analysis, and consulting services to enhance the quality and delivery of public and non-profit services in CT. Not only can we assist you in your own research projects, but community partners often contact us willing to pay faculty members to help with their research projects.

If you would like to be informed of these research opportunities, email Beth Merenstein at merenstein@ccsu.edu

collaboratory®

Collaboratory is a searchable, online database that collects information about these activities to help us understand the extent of CCSU's engagement in and with community.

If you were involved in the planning and implementation of a community engagement or public service event, program, or course, fill out this brief **Microsoft Form** to have it added to **Collaboratory** or find more info on our **website**.

For questions, contact Victoria Richards, at **vrichards@ccsu.edu**.



CONTACT OUR TEAM

If you would like to promote a community engagement or research project in our newsletter, contact MacKenzie Gould (see below). For other information on how CCESR can assist you, see our contact info below or visit our **website!**

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