Robert N. Aebersold, Ph.D., has been the interim president of CCSU since July 1, 2004. He was a former president of Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, a former interim chief academic officer for the Connecticut State University System, and a former interim president of Springfield College. Dr. Aebersold was affiliated with Slippery Rock for nearly 30 years, also serving as a professor in the physical education department and as vice president for academic affairs. Dr. Aebersold has a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland, an M.S. from Ohio University and a B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan.

Richard O. Belden, representing the 113th House Assembly District since 1975, has held many leadership positions in the General Assembly and is currently Dean of the House and Deputy Minority Leader At Large. He is a ranking member of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, a member of the Labor and Public Employee and Legislative Management Committees and a member of the State Bond Commission. He is a member of the Shelton Republican Town Committee since 1964, and a Corporator of Griffin Hospital, Hewitt Memorial Hospital, to name a few of his civic commitments.

Mary Broderick has been a member of her local school district since 1989, serving as chair for three terms. She currently serves as president of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, where she’s also held a number of other positions. Mary has been very active in her local community, including serving as chair of the board of the East Lyme Youth Services Association, the Local Advisory Committee on Quality and Diversity in Education, and the board of the regional educational services center. She currently works for the Graustein Memorial Fund, working to improve quality and quantity of early care and education.

John DeStefano, Jr. was sworn in as New Haven’s 49th Mayor on January 1, 1994, and was recently re-elected to his sixth term in office. Under Mayor DeStefano’s leadership, the City has celebrated several milestones and witnessed achievements that have gained local and national acclaim. New Haven has been awarded the highly regarded “All-America City” prize twice during DeStefano’s tenure, in 1998 and in 2003. In 2002, Governor Rowland asked Mayor DeStefano to chair Connecticut’s Blue Ribbon Commission on the Property Tax Burdens and Smart Growth Incentives. The commission outlined a detailed proposal for reform, and its’ recommendations are being championed by chief elected officials serving as liaison to eleven communities throughout the state. Reflecting his commitment to organizing for social change on this issue, DeStefano founded an advocacy group - 1000 Friends of Connecticut - that is bringing together statewide officials, businesspeople, and grassroots activists to push for continued reform. Mayor DeStefano is a lifelong New Haven resident.

Cynthia Farrar, Ph.D., is director of Urban Academic Initiatives and Lecturer in Political Science and Ethics, Politics, and Economics at Yale University. She directs a project on deliberation and local governance at Yale’s Institute for Social and Policy Studies (ISPS). She coordinates the Citizen Deliberations for MacNeil/Lehrer Productions’ By the People project and organizes the Greater New Haven Citizens Forum on behalf of the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. Farrar both explores and pursues strategies for energizing citizenship, particularly at the local level. Before she assumed her present position, Farrar served as Assistant Vice President of Yale for Urban Policy Development.
Jim Finley, Jr. is associate director of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, leading advocate of municipal interests in CT. With CCM for 24 years, Jim is responsible for public policy development and advocacy, including the development and execution of CCM's annual state and federal legislative programs, and advocacy before state regulatory agencies and the courts. Jim serves on a variety of state commissions and task forces. He earned a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Connecticut (magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa) and an MPA from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

Shelley Geballe, J.D., M.P.H., is co-president and co-founder of CT Voices for Children. She is also a Lecturer in the Yale Medical School (Department of Epidemiology and Public Health), a Tutor in Clinical Studies at Yale Law School, and a member of the Law, Policy and Ethics Core of the NIMH-funded Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS at Yale. She directs CT Voices’ State Fiscal Analysis Initiative project, in partnership with the Washington DC-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Her work at Voices currently focuses on the state budget, child welfare, children’s mental health and juvenile justice. Attorney Geballe received her law degree from Yale Law School and her public health degree from Yale Medical School.

Joseph H. Harper, Jr., M.P.A., M.S., just retired as the vice president for External Affairs at CCSU, where he had administrative authority for the University’s regional economic development nonacademic outreach programs. Mr. Harper has over twenty-three years of experience in government at the municipal level, as a state legislator and in the executive branch as Assistant State Treasurer before joining CCSU in 2001. During his tenure in the State Senate, he chaired the budget-writing Appropriations Committee, co-chaired the Commission to Reorganize State Government (known as the Harper-Hull Commission), and was also a leader in the development of the fiscal reforms enacted in 1991, which included the adoption of a state income tax.

Steven J. Kliger serves as executive director of the Center for Public Policy and Social Research (CPPSR) at CCSU, designated a Connecticut higher education center of excellence by the Connecticut State University Board of Trustees. The William A. O’Neill Endowed Chair in Public Policy and Practical Politics and the Institute of Municipal and Regional Policy are housed in the Center. Mr. Kliger oversees the development and implementation of the CPPSR’s archival and oral history, applied research and outreach programs. The CPPSR provides an array of information, training, research, and consulting services to communities, municipal and state government and non-profit organizations. Prior to joining CCSU, Mr. Kliger worked in the office of the House Speaker and the Education Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly, where he conducted research and helped develop legislation for a wide range of state education issues. He holds a B.A. and J.D. from the University of Connecticut.

W. David LeVasseur currently serves as the Undersecretary of the Intergovernmental Policy Division of the Office of Policy and Management of the State of Connecticut. He served previously as the first selectman of the Town of Killingworth from 1995 – 2001. He has been a member of the Connecticut Bar Association since 1979 and served in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps from 1979 – 1983. He serves as the representative of OPM Secretary Marc Ryan on many commissions, taskforces, and organizations, including the Municipal Finance Advisory Commission; the Advisory Commission of Intergovernmental Relations, and The Blue Ribbon Commission on Property Tax Burdens and Smart Growth Incentives. He is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and Western New England College/School of Law.

LeAnn Luna Ph.D. is an assistant professor of accounting at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington. Her primary research interest is state and local tax policy with a particular focus on sales and use taxes and the corporate income tax. She has published articles in Journal of the American Taxation Association, National Tax Journal, Tax Advisor, Journal of MultiState Taxation and Incentives, and State Tax Notes. She has also worked in both private and public accounting. She received a Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Tennessee.

Joseph McGee is vice president of public policy and programs of SACIA, the Southwestern Area Commerce and Industry Association of Connecticut. Mr. McGee joined SACIA in 1996. He works extensively with the business community and government officials in the areas of economic development, transportation, work-
force development, and tax and fiscal policy. Before joining SACIA, he was Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic Development during the Weicker Administration and was vice president at People’s Bank between 1979 and 1990. Prior to joining People’s Bank, he served as Staff Director for Congressman Stewart McKinney, from 1971 to 1978.

Susan B. Mendenhall has been the Mayor of the Town of Ledyard since 2003. From 1995 until 2003 she was a member of the Ledyard Town Council. Active for many years in Republican politics, she is also a stock trader for a boat brokerage firm that is a member of the New York Stock Exchange. She has been the Chair of the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy Advisory Board since 2003.

Anthony V. Milano, Distinguished Professor of Public Policy, under the William A. O’Neill Endowed Chair at CCSU. Professor Milano served Governors Ella T. Grasso and William A. O’Neill from 1977-1991 as Secretary of the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the Governor’s staff agency responsible for assisting State agencies and municipalities in implementing the Governor’s policy decisions, and preparing, implementing and monitoring the State’s budget. He also served the Metropolitan District Commission from 1994 to 2003 as chief executive officer and as a Special Assistant to the CEO. Active in many philanthropic causes, Professor Milano was awarded the Papal Honor of Knighthood in the Order of Saint Gregory, The Great, in 1992 by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport, CT.

John R. Rathgeber serves as executive vice president and secretary for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA, Connecticut’s largest business organization, represents about 10,000 companies. The Association works to promote a healthy business climate, which encourages economic growth and job creation in the state. Mr. Rathgeber is in charge of CBIA’s overall public policy operations including its legislative, regulatory, communications, research and public affairs activities. He also serves as corporate secretary of the CBIA Service Corporation and the CBIA Education Foundation. Mr. Rathgeber is a graduate of Colgate University and Suffolk University Law School, where he earned his law degree with honors.

Douglas B. Roberts is the director of the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR) at Michigan State University. He holds more than 28 years of experience in Michigan government, including ten years as state treasurer, time as director of the Senate Fiscal Agency and as deputy superintendent of the Department of Education. He also served for two years as a vice president with Lockheed Martin IMS. He holds doctorate and master’s degrees in economics from MSU and a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Maryland. He has been affiliated with the IPPSR since the beginning of 2003. During his tenure as the IPPSR’s director, his primary goal is to heighten public awareness of the Institute’s valuable resources, such as faculty research developed to provide nonpartisan information to the state.

Robert Santy is president of the Regional Growth Partnership. The Partnership is the not-for-profit collaborative economic development corporation serving the fifteen communities that make up South Central Connecticut. Prior to joining the RGP, Mr. Santy was Vice President of the Connecticut Capitol Region Growth Council and project director for the MetroHartford Millennium project. From 1992 through 1995 Mr. Santy served as deputy commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Economic Development. Prior to joining DED, Mr. Santy was director of Government Relations and Small Business Affairs for the international accounting and consulting firm Deloitte & Touche in Washington, DC. He participates in numerous professional and voluntary activities.

Maria R. Simao is the manager of the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy at CCSU. She started her career as a community organizer in Hartford and New Britain, and subsequently became the executive director of the Friendship Service Center of New Britain. At Trinity College, she was the first project director of the Trinity Center for Neighborhoods, and then joined the team that created and executed the $200 million neighborhood initiatives under President Evan Dobelle. Ms. Simao was also the director of LISC’s Hartford Support Collaborative, a technical assistance provider and funder of community development corporations in Hartford. She is a graduate of Connecticut College (B.A.), Springfield College (M.Ed.) and the University of Connecticut School of Law (J.D.).
Kevin B. Sullivan is Connecticut’s 106th Lieutenant Governor and the first to serve from West Hartford. First elected as a State Senator in 1986, he led the State Senate as President Pro Tempore from 1997 to 2004. He has been nationally recognized for his work on mental health and for his work in education and fiscal reform. He has chaired the national Senate President’s Forum, been active in the National Legislative Leaders Foundation and was nationally selected to participate in the University of Virginia’s Program for Emerging Political Leaders. As a Vice President at Trinity College in Hartford, he oversees the college’s community and institutional initiatives and lectures in public policy. He is a graduate of Trinity College and the University of Connecticut School of Law.

Peter Thor is director of municipal negotiations for Connecticut Council 4 of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO. He has held several other positions for Council 4 including director of municipal negotiations, with 20 years as a union negotiator before joining Council 4 of AFSCME.

Lewis J. Wallace, Jr. serves Danbury’s 109th House Assembly District and is House Chairman of the Planning and Development Committee. He also serves on the Appropriations and Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committees. Rep. Wallace remains active in the Danbury community and has been recognized for his contributions by the Connecticut State Dental Association, the American Cancer Society and the Connecticut Association of the YMCA’s, among others. Representative Wallace is a Principal and Certified Financial Planner™ with Money Concepts Financial Planning Centre at Jackson Hewitt. He received his BA from the University of Pennsylvania and his MBA from the College of William and Mary.

Lyle D. Wray, Ph.D., is executive director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments. He was most recently director of the Ventura County Civic Alliance, Ventura, California. Mr. Wray served for 11 years as executive director of the Citizens League, a regional and statewide public policy organization based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Before that, he worked as County Administrator and Human Services Director in Dakota County Minnesota. He teaches graduate courses in metropolitan government, outcomes measurement for public services, e-government or web-enabled public services, and public service redesign. Mr. Wray earned a doctorate in psychology from the University of Manitoba.