The New BA in Journalism
Bridging Practical Training and Academic Scholarship

What gives CCSU’s new BA in journalism program its distinctive quality? Associate Professor of English Vivian Martin, director of the program, asserts confidently: “In terms of a different flavor, we are doing some of the more innovative things that journalism programs are moving toward: encouraging students to integrate computer science and entrepreneurship/business courses into their studies and allowing students to customize their programs somewhat in order to specialize in various subject areas if they desire. We are aligning ourselves with CCSU’s mission in international education, and that will be reflected in speakers, course offerings, and other activities.”

The program features both traditional and 21st-century approaches to connect sound journalism principles with contemporary practices. For example, Martin is teaching a course, From the BBC to Page 3 Girls: The Highs and Lows of British Journalism, this semester. She and 10 students will use a wiki online collaborative tool to work with journalism students at the University of Hertfordshire, continued on page 2
Solid Foundation of Program
At the foundation of the degree’s innovative approaches there will remain a strong and continued commitment to emphasize what Martin terms “the kind of public affairs/watchdog journalism that is at the core of the journalistic role.” She stresses, “The mission of the BA in Journalism is to prepare students for positions in journalism and related information fields.

To do this, we also serve the broader CCSU community with courses that can help all students become aware of journalism’s role in society and the importance of the First Amendment for all citizens in a democratic society.” Martin elaborates that journalism, in its search for truth, must embrace accuracy, fairness, and the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences.

Skill Sets and Requirements
The new journalism degree, granted licensure by the Board of Governors for Higher Education in May 2009, builds on the successful minor in journalism housed in the English Department for the past 24 years. Graduates of the program will be prepared not only in the traditional skills of information gathering, reporting and writing, editing, and an awareness of public affairs, but will be schooled to create news stories using sophisticated new technologies as digital media is integrated into the curriculum.

To ensure the program conforms to best practices in the field while being grounded in a liberal arts and science foundation, it has been designed in accordance with standards established by the national Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). Currently, the University of Connecticut, Quinnipiac University, and Southern Connecticut State University award the BA or BS in journalism.

There are 40 credits in the journalism major at CCSU, including 22 core requirements. Students choose one of two tracks, print or broadcast, with all receiving instruction in multimedia reporting. Students can also elect courses offered in the Communication Department.

Strengths: Customized, Interdisciplinary, Close Advising
One strength of the program is the opportunity for students to customize their degrees, using an interdisciplinary, hands-on approach to navigating the curriculum. “We will be doing close advising,” says Martin, “so that if, for example, a student wants to be a science or business writer, we can discuss how to incorporate appropriately related credits or look into doing an internship in the subject area.”

Martin explains that interdisciplinary minors (IDM) are an important component in the program. In our world of multiple perspectives, a journalist needs knowledge of history, political science, business, and many other subjects. I like students to take a minor in American Studies, in order to gain a broad view of American culture.”
Undergraduate Jessica English is enthusiastic about the new degree program. She states, “I feel confident in my decision to change my major to journalism in my junior year. In March, I will be studying abroad in London with my journalism class. I have become treasurer of the Society of Professional Journalism student interest group, and I am thoroughly enjoying my classes and professors.”

Placing the program in a broader context, School of Arts & Sciences Dean Susan Pease addresses the concern that newspapers—those tangible, foldable, black-and-white disseminators of information—are fading. She says, “The manner of getting news may change, but our students will learn to do cutting-edge journalism using web and electronic techniques. Whether people get news from cable, the internet, or a cell phone, we will still need well-trained journalists to report the news with skill and integrity to help preserve the future of democracy.”

— Geri Radacsi

CCSU Student Wins Connecticut Collegiate Business Plan Competition

The Connecticut Collegiate Business Plan Competition, held under the auspices of the Entrepreneurship Foundation, judged the plan of CCSU student Stephanie Wurtzel (right) to be the winning entry in the Small Business Category. CCSU Professor of Management and Organization Drew Harris (left) served as her faculty advisor. Wurtzel’s “company,” Shred & Bed, uses recycled shredded paper material to provide eco-friendly and affordable bedding material for animals. Wurtzel received a cash prize of $1,000 and has been invited to participate in the spring 2010 finals, where grants for start-up funding will be awarded.

Megan Stack Talks Journalism

Megan Stack (below), Moscow Bureau Chief for the Los Angeles Times, gave a lecture on campus at the end of November about her time as a foreign correspondent. Earlier that same day, Stack was interviewed on Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network’s Where We Live program.

CCSU Celebrates the Holidays

CCSU President Jack Miller (above) speaks during the Festival of Lights ceremony held on December 10 near the Student Center. Candles were lit around campus as part of the University’s celebration of the holiday season.
Focus on Scholarship: Stephen Balkaran
Tracing the Steps of the Civil Rights Movement

Stephen Balkaran, at 38, wishes he had lived during the days of the Civil Rights Movement in this country. “Imagine getting to meet Martin Luther King,” he remarks in hushed tones. His students listen intently. “Understand, this man was committed to striving for equality—with drive, persistence, and courage. He faced down bomb threats, assassination attempts, and being jailed for marching peacefully, as well as enduring intimidation by the Klan and white supremacists.”

Balkaran, an adjunct lecturer in philosophy, raises consciousness in his students whether he’s teaching courses in African American Studies, American Philosophy, Philosophy of the Civil Rights Movement, or 21st Century Civil Rights and African American Politics. He declares, “I want my students to feel how vivid and moving the images of the Civil Rights Movement are so they will fully grasp the meaning of segregation as seen in White Only signs, in Rosa Parks refusing to sit at the back of the bus, in news photographs showing police brutality, in James Meredith walking to class at the University of Mississippi in 1962 accompanied by US marshals.”

No Time Limit on Fighting for Human Rights

One day Balkaran described to students how the Montgomery Bus Boycott pressed for a more humane public transportation system. Some 50,000 African Americans mobilized, and the boycott lasted 381 days until the local segregation ordinance was lifted on public buses. A student asked, “Why didn’t they give up after, say, 200 days?” Balkaran asserted, “There’s no time limit on fighting for human rights and freedom.”

Balkaran holds firm convictions about human rights and social justice. Having emigrated from his native Trinidad some 20 years ago, he earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in political science from the University of Connecticut. After receiving a second master’s in international relations in 1997 from UCONN, he worked as a research associate in third world economic development for the United Nations and then as a consultant to the World Bank.

Balkaran’s immersion in civil rights and human rights issues deepened with his role as assistant director of UCONN’s African National Congress project. He archived ANC (Nelson Mandela’s ruling party in South Africa) documents detailing apartheid conflicts.

It was while Balkaran was a research fellow at Yale University (he also was a research fellow at Harvard) that he worked with prominent Civil Rights Movement figure Kathleen Cleaver, former wife of Eldridge Cleaver, a Black Panther Party leader. “I’m indebted to Kathleen for her insights into what it means to be an activist and scholar,” observes Balkaran. Kathleen Cleaver is a professor of law in the African American Studies department at Yale.

Balkaran traveled south in the summer of 2005 to make a personal pilgrimage, retracing the steps of the Civil
Rights Movement. In Montgomery, he felt the palpable presence of Rosa Parks and of King preaching at the Dexter Ave. Baptist Church. In Selma, he imagined the intimidation used to terrify black voters. Finally, at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, Balkaran stood on the balcony where King was assassinated. “Such a journey is haunting every step of the way. Right then and there, I vowed I’d develop a field study course to illustrate in a powerful way the Civil Rights struggle,” says Balkaran.

**One of a Kind Civil Rights Project**

He did just that, developing the Civil Rights Project at CCSU. Balkaran acknowledges the support of Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Joseph Paige in bringing about the week-long course. This summer, Balkaran will guide some 20 CCSU students along a carefully laid out route—from Montgomery to Birmingham, Selma, Memphis, and Atlanta—tracing historic events in the Civil Rights Movement. “To my knowledge, CCSU is the only university in America with a course that literally walks the Civil Rights Movement,” Balkaran says.

In Montgomery the class will follow the footsteps—and strategies—of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, then meet and interview people—both blacks and whites—from the Montgomery community about their experiences and struggles during the historic era. At the Dexter Ave. Baptist Church, students will relive the early stages of King’s long, nonviolent struggles.

After consulting resources of the Civil Rights Museum in Birmingham, students will do research, interview former and current police officials in the Birmingham Police Department, and collect oral histories describing the use of police brutality and the rise of campus security during the period. Patrick Williams, president of CCSU’s Black Student Union, comments, “I’m anticipating a great trip. This class will be one of the best learning tools to see what the people we admire fought for and to see the conditions they were living in. We’ll be able to learn from people who were actually part of the movement. It will be an opportunity to take a walk into history, a history not taught as often as it should be.”

Following the Selma-to-Montgomery March route, students will have the opportunity to imagine what was like to be demonstrators demanding fairness in voter registration. Final destinations for the class will be the Lorraine Motel in Memphis and the King Center in Atlanta. “One of the goals for this Civil Rights Project is for students to consider the tragedy of the death and the affirmation of the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.,” observes Balkaran. “I hope students come away with a fuller understanding of one of the most critically important eras in modern American life, and of the enduring significance of race in the nation’s history.”

—Geri Rádacsi

**Searching for Resolution of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

Professor of History, Emeritus, Norton Mezvinsky (above, left), director of the International Council for Middle East Studies, participated in a debate with CCSU Chief Diversity Officer Moises Salinas (right) in early December. The debate, titled “Options for Resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” focused on whether Israel and Palestine should be combined into one state or formed into two. The debate was sponsored by the Middle East Studies Committee of the CIE, the departments of Political Science and Philosophy, and the Honors Program.

**Sharing Study Abroad Experiences**

Raymond Feliciano (left) and Oake Meise-Munns (right) listen as Andrew Spargo (center) speaks about studying in Japan during a student panel held on Asia Day in early December. Feliciano and Meise-Munns also studied in Japan.
Mary Collins
Examining Culture and Fitness

Why do many Americans sit parked and idling—in spite of prodding from doctors, fitness experts, and the federal government to get moving on a path to improved health through proper diet and exercise?

It’s tempting to blame sloth. Mary Collins, herself a consummate varsity college athlete versatile at running, playing basketball, and biking, admits she once thought a lack of willpower was the root of the couch potato. Then a devastating bicycle accident near Alexandria, Virginia, in 1999 put her into a coma for two days and required back surgery to repair ruptured disks.

“My life changed profoundly,” recalls the CCSU assistant professor of English, specifically creative nonfiction. “I could barely walk a half mile; my mood and my social life were affected. I thought, Why do 60 percent of Americans choose to live this way?”

During her rehabilitation, Collins researched that very question, and her findings appear in a new book, *American Idle: A Journey through Our Sedentary Culture* (Capital Books, 2009). “I discovered in my three years of traveling the country that the lack of movement for most Americans is hardly by choice—their environment and schedules make it nearly impossible to integrate healthy movement patterns into their day.”

She discovered that our lack of spontaneous movement has profound social, cultural, and even moral consequences, not just physical. Simply listing “The Top 10 Ways to Workout” is never going to solve the problem. There must be systemic changes at all levels of society, from adding bicycle lanes on more roads to making it safer for children to walk to school by providing paid patrols.

Wealth of Writing Experience

Collins was amply qualified to undertake research for her groundbreaking book. For some 20 years in Washington, DC, she was a freelance writer and editor and also taught part-time in Johns Hopkins University’s graduate MA in writing program from 1995 to 2007. She holds a bachelor’s in English from Gettysburg College and a master’s from the University of Virginia. She joined CCSU in 2007.

She has written *The Essential Daughter: Changing Expectations for Girls at Home* (Praeger), *National Public Radio* (Seven Locks Press), and *Airborne: A Photobiography of Wilbur and Orville Wright* (National Geographic Books). Her essay on the culture of sitting and the history of the chair for *The Washington Post* (“Don’t Have a Seat”) won the Best Essay of the Year Award from the American Society of Journalists and Authors (ASJA) in 2003. She also won the Best Young Adult Book Award from ASJA. Her articles have appeared in the *Smithsonian Magazine, The New York Times, The Washington Post*, and other major newspapers and magazines.

As Collins set out to discover how a species designed for movement has immobilized itself in homes, offices, and cars, she interviewed health experts, city planners, factory workers, and staff at the National Zoo. She even visited a hunter-gatherer site in the Midwest to understand the movement patterns of humans 10,000 years ago.

Surprised by Finding

She was surprised by her conversation with Bill Sands, director of the US Olympic Center in Colorado Springs. He maintains there is a growing divide between the elite or professional athlete engaged in extreme training and the average sedentary American. “Organized sports, amazingly, do not help kids gain free play skills. They are told what to do but don’t know how to integrate 30–60 minutes of spontaneous free play into their lives. Physical activity has become something we choose to do and something we ‘go to,’ but that’s an artificial construct,” states Collins. Then with a vivaciousness which is her hallmark, she exclaims, “Hey, even the director of the Olympic Center thinks the trend toward organized sports and exercise classes to encourage fitness is all wrong. We
need to shift the conversation from how we’re eating too much and not exercising, to how to integrate spontaneous movement into everyday life again. I was shocked to discover that most people I talked to wanted to integrate movement into their lives—and how difficult American culture makes it.”

What to Do?
Collins suggests that “a systematic solution is needed, involving city planners, employers, and government policy changes,” if spontaneous movement is to be integrated into society. She explains that most townships resurface their roads every 10 years and suggests that requirements be put in place to add a clearly marked bicycle lane.

She recommends pressing the federal government to expand its Safe Routes to Schools program, which has been successful in getting more kids to walk to school. Another suggestion is that the US should follow Europe’s lead, especially Sweden, where a lot of schools have two 15-minute physical movement breaks (for all ages, and it’s not the same as recess). They also have paid movement breaks for employees. The employees do not have to “exercise;” they just have to leave their desk areas.

“Something as simple as access to a shower at work or access to a safe biking trail can increase people’s activity by 25 percent,” she says. “That sort of shift represents millions of dollars in saved medical costs.” She contends, “The changes don’t have to be draconian, just smart. I use a stand-up desk, for example, and never sit for more than about four hours a day.” Collins’ book brings a fresh perspective on how America can change its culture and move forward in the direction of health and fitness.

—Geri Radaci

extra credit

Members of CCSU’s baseball team recently volunteered at John Paterson School in Newington. The student-athletes helped out in the elementary school’s classrooms, as well as in physical education classes and at recess. The athletes worked with the student’s in the classroom to promote numeracy and literacy and also provided guidance during recess activities, such as kickball and four square. The program is designed to support teaching and learning while involving students in activities to promote responsibility, sportsmanship, and fun.

CCSU student Chris Byrka was recently honored with the NF Ambassador Award by the Children’s Tumor Foundation at its 2009 New York City Benefit Dinner. The award is given to those who refuse to let neurofibromatosis define them. This disease can cause deafness and covers the body with tumors.

CCSU student Kari Dalia participated in a national conference focused on keeping students on the path to higher education. Dalia and UConn student Adalis Rodriguez gave a presentation on their experiences working with students in kindergarten through high school.

CCSU men’s a cappella ensemble, Divisi, performed at the Bristol Baptist Church on December 16. The program included contemporary, popular, and holiday selections.

Professor of Anthropology Kenneth Feder’s book Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology was published recently in Japanese. The book has also been published in English, Spanish, and Italian.

In late November CCSU won several awards at the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) Region 1 Conference. Rich Hurley, who graduated from CCSU in 2006 and is now a graduate student working in the Student Center, won the New Professional Award. CCSU took the prize in the Most Informative Entry category.

Associate Professor of Music Brian Kershner’s Sonata for Bassoon and Piano had it’s CCSU premiere as part of a recital, titled “Double Exposure,” held in Welte Auditorium on November 18. The program of music for double reeds, oboe, and bassoon with piano also included pieces by Mozart, Handel, Francaix, and Poulenc. Performers included Kershner, bassoon, and Adjunct Lecturer of Music Oliver Homann, oboe.

Assistant Professor of Economics Brian Osoba was honored with the prestigious Georgescu-Roegen Prize by the Southern Economic Association in late November. The prize is awarded annually for the best academic article published in the Southern Economic Journal. Osoba shared the award with Russell Sobel of West Virginia.

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CCSU Student in the Spotlight: Erika Gore
Internship Leads to Unexpected Learning

Growing up, Erika Gore never pictured herself living or working in Hartford. “Some of the greatest opportunities Connecticut had to offer were within the numerous insurance companies in Hartford, and that wasn’t necessarily what I was looking for,” said the East Hartford native. “Not being raised in the city, you have all these ideas of what it’s like and you hear all these stories—good stories and bad.”

Her opinion changed dramatically however after Gore, a public relations major, got an internship at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. Working in the museum’s marketing and public relations department from late May to early October gave Gore the chance to explore career fields, and it showed her a side of Hartford she had never seen before.

“What surprised me the most about downtown is that there are a lot of young people,” Gore said. “Some young professionals, college students, even high school students. And it wasn’t like they were just there for work, they would actually do things downtown. That surprised me because all of the statistics that I had seen led me to believe that Connecticut is getting older.”

After completing an assignment to distribute marketing materials in Hartford, Gore found herself considering the possibility of starting her career in Connecticut.

She also developed an increased interest in art during her internship. “It’s kind of a running joke that the last time I took an art class was in fourth grade. I did take a watercolor painting class in college, but working at the Wadsworth I learned a lot about painters and their art,” she said. “There was one event in particular which my friends attended, and I took them around the museum. I was explaining paintings and they were impressed and told me ‘Wow, you’ve learned so much.’”

Gore gives a lot of credit for the success she experienced in her internship to her parents and professors. She said her parents have always been supportive of her decisions, including her choice to major in public relations. She thanks the professors she’s had at CCSU for helping to nurture her love of learning. “I’ve found that the professors here are very passionate, and that passion really drives their students to be passionate,” she said.

Mentioning the Communications Department specifically, Gore added, “They really pushed me and always encouraged me in my writing. They gave me positive, constructive feedback that gave me confidence in my abilities and urged me forward to consider things I would not have otherwise.” This feedback on her writing proved especially valuable during her internship when writing press releases for the museum. “With a lot of my assignments, my boss just gave them to me and said ‘Here, I trust you. Just run with it,’” she states.

Gore graduated from CCSU in December and is hoping to start her career in public relations here in Connecticut.

— Heather Lusebrink

SBDC to Offer Workshops for New Entrepreneurs

CCSU’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC) recently signed an agreement with Manchester Community College to offer courses to early-stage business owners and entrepreneurs in Connecticut. These courses will provide the training and support needed to own and operate a successful business, including information on writing business plans, choosing business structures, identifying market trends, and setting goals. CCSU President Jack Miller said, “This gives CCSU the opportunity to extend our resources to those who need them and where they are needed most.” The Institute of Technology and Business Development, which houses the SBDC, supports Connecticut business organizations by providing extensive workforce development programs.

— Sean Fenwick
NASA-funded Program Explores Careers in Aerospace Engineering

High school juniors from New Britain, Hartford, Waterbury, and Bridgeport (above) attended a dinner in mid November as the kick-off event for students selected to participate in the “Go for Aerospace” program. The main objective of the program is to reach out to students with high potential in math and science who are undecided about their college plans and/or choice of major. During the event, organized by Assistant Professor of Technology and Engineering Education Michelle Dischino, students had the opportunity to examine astronaut suits, back packs, and models of shuttles, while several guests from NASA explained how they work. Students were able to try on the space propulsion packs that astronauts wear in space. As part of the program, these same students will participate in field trips designed to increase their interest in careers in aerospace engineering.

Threat Assessment Workshop Held at CCSU

Dr. Marisa Randazzo (right), president of Threat Assessment Resources International, spoke during a Threat Assessment Workshop held at CCSU in November. Threat Assessment Resources International provides threat assessment training, consultation, and research services to the University.

extra credit

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Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice Raymond Tafrate’s new book, Anger Management for Everyone: Seven Proven Ways to Control Anger and Live a Happier Life, was published in October by Impact Publishers, Inc. The book offers practical suggestions for controlling anger and helps to identify problems that can cause anger to get out of control. Tafrate and his book were mentioned in a November 2009 New York Times article on how to remain calm and collected when speaking to customer service. The book was co-authored by Howard Kassinove.
Paula Chapla ’78: Leader in Technology

Paula Chapla ’78 hadn’t intended to study technology. In fact, she’d enrolled at CCSU as a political science major, until a casual incident changed her mind. She remembers the day: “I got involved helping the School of Technology move into its new space at Copernicus and I met industrial arts teachers. They talked about electrical systems, cars, refrigerators. Now that was interesting. I’d always liked hands-on stuff and understanding how things worked. Those professors didn’t think my questions were insignificant, even though I was female, so I decided technology education was for me.” She became one of four women in the technology education program during the 1970s at Central.

Last year, Chapla undertook another “moving experience.” This time for her employer of almost 30 years—Sikorsky Aircraft in Stratford, a United Technologies Company and one of the world’s leading designers and manufacturers of military and commercial helicopters. At Central she had moved boxes.

At Sikorsky as Operations/Transformation Manager, she led operations moving Major Structures from Stratford to Bridgeport. She coordinated all aspects of the relocation with several support departments to ensure quality and readiness—all the while using Lean principles and Achieving Competitive Excellence tools to create the most efficient use of space and to improve productivity. “Did you ever see a goat on top of a beach ball? That was me working to balance everything,” quips Chapla. “At UTC we’re familiar with handling projects of this size to improve business operations. What made this so successful was having great support teams—from Facilities to our experts on the shop floor. I couldn’t have done it without their help.”

Chapla has always shouldered prodigious amounts of work. After graduating from Central, she says, “My life was ruled by minutes from 1980 to 1981.” She worked 90 hours a week, teaching wood shop at Shelton High School during the day and also earning an hourly wage operating milling machines on Sikorsky’s second shift.

After coming on board full time at Sikorsky in 1980, she assumed increasing responsibility in the company and rose through the supervisory ranks. She became manager of Major Components for the company’s Black Hawk helicopter model and was responsible for UH60M and HH60M (Medivac) cabin production. “Picture the New Orleans disaster of Hurricane Katrina. Our Black Hawks and Medivacs played pivotal roles in rescuing people and providing supplies,” she states with pride.

An “Awesome” Honor
Chapla still has strong ties to her alma mater, currently serving on the CCSU Alumni Association Board of Directors and as a member of its Finance Committee. She says one of her goals is to increase the level of alumni support and participation at CCSU. “Alumni support is so important, and donations, whatever the amount given during these tough economic times, contribute to learning, knowledge, and understanding for future generations.” She says she felt honored by the unanticipated recognition of being named CCSU Alumni of the Year by the School of Engineering and Technology in 2009. “That was awesome and such a honor,” she declares.
In spring 2009 Chapla was invited to speak at the first Girls and Technology Expo held by the School of Engineering and Technology in collaboration with the Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund. She spoke to middle school girls from central Connecticut about the importance of women’s roles in technology. She told the girls, “Hopefully, there will be more people who look like us in this environment in the future. If women get into science and technology early in life, their achievements can have a significant impact on the world we live in.”

Chapla credits Central with providing her with an education and giving her the opportunity to learn from “high caliber, dedicated teachers” and to participate in campus activities (she was on the student Board of Governors) that prepared her for a non-traditional career path.

“I look back and I remember how Wells St. used to run right through the middle of the campus,” she reflects. “People at CCSU had the vision to transform the campus into a beautiful environment while keeping focused on education and mindful of the constraints of running a large state institution. Reducing costs while keeping up quality is the same kind of challenge we face at UTC. I can appreciate the growth of the University and how it continues to plan for a bright future.”

— Geri Radacsi

Graduate Student Honored

Graduate student Jessica Jenkins (below, third from right) received a public history scholarship from Betsy Barrett (second from right), Town Clerk of Lisbon and a member of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, on December 3. Also present (from left) were Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement Nicholas Pettinico, Executive Director of the Center for Public Policy Steven Kliger, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Carl Lovitt, and Assistant Professor of History Leah Glaser (far right).

CCSU’s Business Idols

CCSU student Liz Niro (below, right) speaks with seventh-grade social studies students during the Business Idol competition. The competition teamed middle school students from Global Collegiate Academy, New Britain, with CCSU students to create and present business plans. Associate Professor of Management and Organization Sarah Stoekey taught the class of participating CCSU students and helped arrange the competition.
in the news

Associate Professor of Art Mike Alewitz was featured in an article in the Chronicle Online in November for his symbolic mural on the subject of the labor movement of 1919. The mural contains symbols ranging from pigs which represent anti-capitalism to raining black cats which symbolize sabotage. The mural is located on the side of the Centralia Square Antique Mall in Centralia, WA.

An interview with Professor of History Jay Bergman is featured in Harper’s Magazine Online. Bergman discusses the social impact that Andrei Sakharov had on Russia, as well as his influence on the scientific community with regard to nuclear testing. Bergman is the author of Meeting the Demands of Reason, a biography of Sakharov.

Adjunct Lecturer of English Deborah Bradford’s essay “Love Lessons: From Couplet to Couple: A Meeting of the Minds” was featured in a Sunday edition of The Washington Post in late November. Bradford’s first-person account detailed what it was like meeting the love of her life in an English Poetry class and then parting ways until it was right to start their life together. Bradford implies that literary devices, such as foreshadowing, can be seen in real life when it comes to matters of the heart.

Associate Professor of Anthropology Kenneth L. Feder had an op-ed featured in both The Hartford Courant and the Chicago Tribune. Feder discussed the hysteria produced by the film 2012 and noted that the world will not end just because the Mayan calendar ends. He states that the calendar “simply goes back to zero and…starts all over again.”

Associate Professor of English Vivian Martin was featured in a late November article in The New Britain Herald on the future of journalism and how it must adapt to changing times in order to survive. Martin noted that the paper age is on its last legs and soon the internet will be the only way to distribute the news to people.

The Hartford Courant included Blue Devils Head Football Coach Jeff McInerney as one of the Region’s Top 10 Newsmakers: “In his fourth season as head football coach [at CCSU], the South Windsor native has boosted the program to new heights. The Blue Devils won nine games and the NEC title, qualifying for the postseason Gridiron Classic.”

An op-ed by CCSU’s Policy Assistant, Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP), Robert Painter, appeared in mid-December in the The Hartford Courant. Painter discussed the possible positive outcomes that could result from the taxation and regulation of drugs like marijuana. Painter suggested using the money that would be generated by this plan for education, as well as for the treatment of those who suffer from addiction.

An article by Associate Professor of Biology David Spector appeared recently in The Daily Hampshire Gazette. In “Earth Matters: Turkey Pass’ History and the Turkey on Your Table,” Spector examined the history of the wild turkey and the effect that humans have had on the species. He also speculated on the future of the wild turkey.

CCSU student Patricia Taglialavore and Assistant Director of Central Access and Student Development Lila Coddington were interviewed in a November Hartford Courant article titled “Peace of Mind: Groups Sprouting Up to Spread Awareness of Mental Illness.” Taglialavore, a junior studying psychology, is the president of CCSU’s chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and Coddington is the group’s faculty advisor. Both stated the importance of helping students who may be suffering from mental illness.

Former Polish Minister of Finance Speaks at CCSU

The annual Koperksi Lecture was given this year by internationally renowned statesman and economist Dr. Leszek Balcerowicz (right). The former Polish Minister of Finance spoke at CCSU in early December on “The Current World Economic Crisis: Origins and Prospects.” Balcerowicz was later interviewed on Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network’s Where We Live program where he discussed the causes of the global financial collapse and what the world has learned from Poland’s transformation.
Naylor-CCSU Partnership Visits Goodspeed

Associate Professor of Teacher Education Karen Riem organized a trip to the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT, in mid-December as the first part of a foundation-funded project partnering Goodspeed with Naylor-CCSU Community School Partnership. Third- and fourth-grade teachers, support staff, and students from the Dr. James H. Naylor School in Hartford, along with many parents and other members of the community, participated in the event. The visit included a history/overview of the Goodspeed, an interactive puppet demonstration by the actors, lunch, and the play Emmet Otter.

“As part of our long-term partnership, the teachers [at Naylor] are deeply involved with CCSU programs and students. Two CCSU education students—alumna Kristina Wieckowski and Rachel Caldwell, a current CCSU teacher candidate in secondary education—attended as volunteers because of their positive connection to the Naylor-CCSU Community School Partnership,” stated Riem, University facilitator for the partnership. “The next part of this project will bring actors from Goodspeed to Naylor to present a workshop.”

President Miller Publishes Ranking of America’s Most Literate Cities for 2009

CCSU President Jack Miller’s annual survey of America’s Most Literate Cities was announced in late December in USA Today. Measuring a key component in America’s social health by ranking the culture and resources for reading in America’s largest cities, the national survey also, for the first time, compared the literacy rankings with other quality of life measures.

The study—“America’s Most Literate Cities 2009”—identifies the top 10 cities in this order: Seattle, WA; Washington, DC; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; Atlanta, GA; Portland, OR; St. Paul, MN; Boston, MA; Cincinnati, OH; and Denver, CO.

Seattle and Minneapolis have often traded the number 1 and 2 spots over the seven years the survey has been conducted. Washington, DC, makes its highest appearance this year at #2.

The national survey develops a statistical profile of cities with populations of 250,000 or more. The study is available online at www.ccsu.edu/AMLC09.

According to Miller, “This study attempts to capture one critical index of our nation’s well-being—the literacy of its major cities—by focusing on six key indicators of literacy: newspaper circulation, number of bookstores, library resources, periodical publishing resources, educational attainment, and Internet resources. The information is compared against population rates in each city to develop a per capita profile of the city’s “long-term literacy” — a set of factors measuring the ways people use their literacy — and thus presents a large-scale portrait of our nation’s cultural vitality.”

For the 2009 edition, Miller also examined how well the most literate cities fared in other quality of life surveys (see website for details). Miller discovered that “quality tends to be associated with quality,” and highly literate cities often rank high in other quality of life metrics. Cities ranked in the top 10 most literate tend to offer the most active singles’ scenes (Boston, Seattle, Washington, and Atlanta), and are safer (Minneapolis, Boston, Seattle, Portland, Denver, and Cincinnati), more walkable (Seattle, Washington, DC, Portland, Boston, and Denver), and healthier (Washington, DC, and Denver). They are not, however, immune to financial hard times; only Washington, DC, (#2) has even relatively low unemployment.

Population growth led to the addition of four cities to the list this year. New Orleans has rejoined the list for the first time since Katrina’s devastation. Lincoln, NE; Greensboro, NC; and Henderson, NV, extend the list to 75 cities.
Robert James Simeone: Sprinting Toward Success

Born Robert James Simeone, “RJ” was quite the tumbleweed growing up. His father’s position in the Navy caused his family to move from Texas to Florida to Farmington, CT, where he currently resides. Although his home has often changed, his career choice and passion have stayed consistent.

As a young child, Simeone considered his father to be an excellent role model. Simeone’s dream of becoming a Navy Seal has pushed him to be the best he can be, both physically and mentally. A mathematics major in the Honors Program, Simeone, who came to CCSU with 16 college credits accumulated in high school, has managed to push himself to graduate one semester early, with a GPA of 3.52.

Simeone also played a major role on Central’s men’s track team. “Responsible, confident, and competitive,” is how Men’s Head Cross-Country/Track and Field Coach Eric Blake ’02 describes Simeone. Two-time all New-Englander in the 500 meter dash, Simeone possesses a competitive nature. When asked what keeps him motivated, he quickly responds: “If the coach was watching or a Navy Seal, I wouldn’t want them to see me slacking, so I stay focused.” He then laughed at a memory of being chased by a pitbull while on a daily run with one of his teammates. He avoided injury by jumping on a car and waiting for the dog to leave.

Although most track stars are thought to be independent in their events, Blake comments, “RJ is the ultimate team player, and that is demonstrated by his love of relays. As a mid-distance runner he had opportunities to run 4x400, 4x800, and the Distance Medley Relays. He always jumped at any chance to be part of a relay. And he always gave an all-out effort with top results even if it was his second or third race of the meet.”

Simeone is looking forward to attending boot camp this summer where he will begin training for the Navy Seals. “This country has a lot of things worth fighting for…and someone has got to do it. All the guys in Special Operations [Navy Seals] share my values: hard work, motivation, and a love for this country. I love the camaraderie.”

Simeone came to this realization during a trip to Virginia, with a retired Navy Seal, to attend a Navy Seal Reunion Weekend in July 2009. At the reunion he met Captain Richard Phillips, USN, who had been rescued by the Seals from Somali pirates three months earlier.

During the reunion, Simeone was given an opportunity to try the East Coast Seal Team Obstacle Course. He successfully completed the course, with a badly bruised knee as his consolation prize. Simeone also stayed overnight with the family of one of the Navy Seals. He watched as this man in uniform gave a bottle to his newborn and a cupcake to his toddler. This event really humanized the military for Simeone and gave him greater perspective on living as a Navy Seal.

“RJ will be successful in anything he attempts” says Blake. “He is a person who is always going to give one hundred percent.”

—Rachel Pearsall
The Philosophy Club of CCSU sponsored a presentation titled "Can We Live Forever in Robot Bodies? And Other Ethical Challenges Posed by Transhumanism." During his lecture, IEET Executive Director James Hughes, a bioethicist and sociologist at Trinity College, discussed possible outcomes of applying science to cure physical and mental diseases—and whether the ends would justify the means.

Keith Jones, president and CEO of SoulTouchin’ Experiences, gave a lecture on "Disability: What’s Race Got to Do with It?" at CCSU in early December as part of CCSU’s second annual celebration of National Inclusive Schools Week. Jones discussed issues such as race, ethnicity, and disability in classroom settings.

Associate Professor of Anthropology and Public Health at the University of Connecticut Merril Singer gave a lecture on "Drugging the Poor" at CCSU in late November. The lecture, sponsored by the CCSU Anthropology Department, focused on the social effects of psychotropic drugs. Singer, who noted that users often take drugs in an attempt to escape their social class, concluded that these drugs help to maintain an unjust social system.

"Freedom Without Walls," a traveling exhibit—created by the German government—about the Berlin Wall, arrived at CCSU in early November. The exhibit includes photographs of the wall’s fall in the autumn of 1989, as well as informative posters. To coincide with the exhibit’s arrival, CCSU held a panel discussion in Torp Theatre. Titled "Europe 20 Years After the Fall of the Berlin Wall," the panel included Associate Professor of English Matthew Ciscoel, Assistant Professor of History Matthew Specter, Assistant Professor of Modern Languages Jakub Kazecki, and Professor of History Heather Prescott.

Attorney Joshua Rosenthal took part in two events at CCSU in early November. Rosenthal, co-author of a brief in a wrongful death suit involving deceased Guantanamo Bay detainees, spoke on "Guantanamo Bay: Torture and the ‘War on Terror,’" as well as on "Abu Ghraib: Issues of Abuse and Torture." He also answered questions after a screening of the film Standard Operating Procedure, which was directed by Errol Morris and focused on abuse and torture at the Iraqi prison Abu Ghraib.

Warren Clark, former United States Ambassador to Gabon, spoke at CCSU in early December as part of the ongoing Middle East Lecture Series. His lecture, "A Just, Durable, and Equitable Peace in Israel/Palestine?" was sponsored by the Middle East Studies Committee of CIE, the Peace Studies program, and the Political Science Department.

Internationally acclaimed flutist Jadwiga Kotnowska appeared with the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra in a concert held at CCSU in December. Kotnowska performed a flute concerto by Mozart, as well as a suite from the opera Carmen. The concert was sponsored by the Polish Studies Program.

CCSU hosted the state championships of the LEGO League in late January. The competition involves teams of students designing, building, and programming robots, as well as giving five-minute presentations. Team Gearheads, a group of middle school students from Plainville, won first place for Innovative Robot Design this year.

Dr. Mihaela Robila, associate professor of family studies at Queens College, CUNY, spoke about The Status of Women and Children in Eastern Europe during a lecture given in Willard Hall in late November. Robila focused on the socio-political and economic changes in Eastern Europe in the past decade, discussing the major factors which caused families to leave their homes and led to changes in gender roles within families for survival. The event was sponsored by the International Studies Program and the Office of the Provost.

The Ruth Boyea Women’s Center sponsored a panel discussion in early December in honor of World AIDS Day. Participants in “Women Who Are Living with HIV/AIDS: Women and the HIV/AIDS Crisis” shared their stories of contracting and living with the disease in order to educate the audience and provide support for those inflicted with HIV/AIDS.

CCSU student Thomas Cierpik died on December 13, 2009. Cierpik was majoring in history and working towards a BS in education. He was student teaching during the fall of 2009. Before beginning his studies at CCSU, Cierpik attended St. Mark’s School in Massachusetts.

Professor of English, Emeritus, Mary Elizabeth Fowler died on November 21, 2009. Fowler began teaching in CCSU’s English Department in 1946 and continued until her retirement in 1973. In addition to publishing numerous articles in professional journals, she also served as president of the New England Association of Teachers of English. She first taught English at Berlin High School. During World War II, Fowler served as recreation director with the American Red Cross and was based in London during the German bombardment of the city.
The CCSU Courier is published during the academic year to present a variety of news stories of interest to faculty, staff, friends of the University, leaders of Connecticut higher education, state school districts, and the University’s other diverse constituencies.

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