We have recently concluded our May commencement ceremonies and, in addition to being a wonderful day for our graduating students and their families, it was a moving reminder of exactly why we are here: to help our students achieve their dreams. On that day, some 1,800 undergraduate and graduate students began the next stage of their lives in which they will become thoughtful, responsible, and successful citizens contributing to the health of our state's economy, culture, and civic life.

The stories of several of our graduates tell what makes CCSU so special. The twin brothers, Jahmar and Kahmar Morgan, for example, excelled in their classes and graduated with honors in finance, no doubt trading on skills they honed in an events management company they founded and operated during their years here. They leave us to join United Technologies Financial Leadership Program. Yolanda Ayala earned a certificate in teacher education while working full time and maintaining the outstanding grade point average that enabled her to graduate magna cum laude. Elizabeth Torres left the mean streets of Hartford via our Educational Opportunity Program and excelled both in and out of the classroom at CCSU. She now begins her work of helping others to dream big and to achieve their goals. David Magnan, described as one of the very best student researchers Central has ever seen, will soon pursue his dream in a Ph.D. training program in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Baylor College of Medicine. And finally, Edmund Grandahl received his Master of Arts in public history at the age of 88 and undeterred by a previous stroke and blindness. These stories of tenacity, the passion to learn, and the desire to make a difference inspire us all to work harder and continually enhance the quality of the educational experience we offer.

You will see in this issue of Central focus the story of a man who is very similar to these students: tenacious, passionate about learning, and strongly moved to make a difference. The man is Anthony Bichum, whose extraordinary generosity will make it possible for more students to pursue their dreams at CCSU, to study and excel, and then go on to make their difference too.

Dr. Jack Miller

President

Commencement 2008