CSU showcased the VHP at two important University-related events during the month of April: the Connecticut State University (CSU) Day on Thursday, April 17, at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, and then at the CCSU Alumni luncheon held on Saturday, April 26. Both days provided great opportunities to educate people on the VHP, to highlight some of the veterans we interviewed and the original materials we collect, and to raise awareness for the project.

At CSU Day, we met and talked with many of our state’s legislators, including the House Chair of the Select Committee of Veterans’ Affairs, Ted Graziani, Rep. Frank Nicastro, and legislative staff members Paul Tarbox and David Kaplan.

Congratulations to Shane Matthews, a Navy veteran and Bristol native on his acceptance into Harvard Law School. An emerging young man who has already earned statewide recognition as a vigorous advocate for our returning veterans, Shane will move to the Boston area with his wife, Natalie, to begin his studies in the fall. Shane discovered an interest in law during his first semester at CCSU in a Business in the Legal Environment course taught by Professor James W. Parker, a Harvard Law Alum who practices in Connecticut. While at Harvard, Shane plans to explore various fields of law, with an emphasis on Constitutional Law. We are all very proud that such an outstanding representative of CCSU will study at Harvard Law, although we will miss him on campus. Shane assures us he won’t forget the meaningful work he has started here in Connecticut: “I fully intend to continue my advocacy for veterans, because it helps give purpose to my legal studies.”

Continued on page 2

Left: Jane Natoli at the VHP table at CSU day at the Capitol
Top right: CCSU alumnus Nicholas D’Agostino and VHP Director Eileen Hurst;
Bottom right: three CCSU alumnae at the VHP presentation during the CCSU Alumni luncheon

Continued on page 2
Everyone was interested in learning about the project and many legislators and visitors to the Capitol took brochures home for themselves or to give to veterans they knew.

At the CCSU Alumni luncheon, VHP director Eileen Hurst presented an overview of the Veterans History Project, and then two students gave presentations on how the project has touched their lives. Jane Natoli, who has been working on the VHP for over a year, said that interviewing veterans has given her a broader perspective and the ability to make informed judgments when she hears about the progress of the current war or of veterans’ issues in the media. A new student working on the VHP, Joshua Randorf, commented on the apparent therapeutic effects being interviewed has on veterans of any generation.

Jane and Joshua produced the samples of the original materials we collect along with oral histories that were used to showcase the VHP. A copy of the primary document poster is enclosed with this newsletter, and we are in the process of posting the slideshow on our website for everyone to enjoy.

"The real and lasting victories are those of peace, and not of war." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

**UPDATE**

- Students in Professor Briann Greenfield’s Public History class participated in the VHP during the spring semester. Oral historians Mary Erdmans (Sociology Professor) and Eileen Hurst participated in a panel discussion with this exceptionally enthusiastic class.
- Three new community volunteers, Jim Lyko, Tia Murphy and Victoria Luiz, have been trained and are assisting in the collection of oral histories. These dedicated volunteers will be highlighted in our next newsletter!
- In a very moving ceremony on April 29, 2007, the Hartford Armory was dedicated and renamed the William A. O’Neill Armory in memory of our former governor.
- The American Warrior organization is sponsoring additional FREE one-day trips to the WWII Memorial in Washington D.C. for WWII veterans. For more information or to apply for the Honor Flight, please contact Chris Coutu, at (860) 857-5762 or P.O. Box 337, 35 Main Street, Versailles, CT 06383.

**WHO’S WHO?**

Can you match these veterans from their war days to their recent photos?

Clockwise from top left: CCSU President Jack Miller welcoming the alumni to campus; CCSU alumnus and Korean veteran Robert Hafner speaking with CCSU student Jane Natoli after the presentation; CCSU alumnus, WWII veteran and former superintendent of Wolcott Public Schools Nicholas D’Agostino sitting in front of the alumni crowd; and Jane Natoli talking about what VHP means to her.
Joshua Randorf, a new Research Assistant and student employee, joins our team as an undergraduate majoring in Sociology with a dual minor in Criminology and International Studies. He says, “Aspiring to become a Professor of Sociology, I find it a great opportunity to be part of the Center for Public Policy and Social Research. I am gaining experience towards my career in academia through conducting research assignments and interviewing veterans for the VHP. Working with veterans will allow me to combine an academic curiosity for differing cultures and a lifelong fascination with military subculture.”

When not working in the office or buried in a text book or other class project, Joshua can be found teaching Martial Arts. “I have been coaching Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Muay Thai Kickboxing now for about 2.5 years.”

Antonio D’Aloia, a sophomore Art major at CCSU, worked on the VHP this past semester. He says, “The Veterans History Project has taught me a lot about what veterans go through when deployed overseas during wartime. It is amazing to hear their stories and learn from their photographs and documents.” Antonio is moving to Florida at the end of this semester to be with his family and to pursue a career in movie animation at Disney.

Briana McGuckin joined the Veterans History Project when she helped document the discussions held at the Veterans’ Summit on Oct. 12, 2007, at CCSU. She most enjoys listening to veterans’ interviews, because she sees that veterans are ordinary people who have done extraordinary things.

A sophomore at CCSU, Briana is an Honors student majoring in Philosophy. She says, “My work on the VHP will help me in my future career as a children’s librarian. I’ve always been a bookish person.”

Tim Jones, an undergraduate student majoring in Political Science who will be working part time on VHP, expressed his enthusiasm for the project early on: “I just joined the Center for Public Policy & Social Research, and I am very excited about the opportunity to learn about the trials and tribulations of our state’s veterans and to assist with many aspects of this exciting project.” When not working, Tim is most likely sitting in his apartment watching a movie and arguing with his roommate.

“The dead soldier’s silence sings our national anthem.” - Rev. Aaron Kilbourn

Did you guess correctly? The answers are on the back page.
Marian E. Thompson, born on June 4, 1923, passed away on April 28, 2008, at Brightview of Avon. After the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Thompson was drawn to join the Army, but thought that she could better serve her country in the future if she attended college and became a teacher.

She finally entered the Army in 1953 when she saw a sign in the teachers’ room for free education for physical therapists to serve in the Army. After her Army schooling, Thompson served in hospitals statewide, as well as two tours of duty overseas: in Japan, she developed a physical therapy program for Japanese people; in Vietnam, Thompson ran a physical therapy clinic and supervised nine other hospitals’ physical therapy programs. When she retired in 1973, Thompson had earned the rank of Colonel, and had received several medals and honors for her skills and dedication.

Albert Anthony D’Amico, a WWII veteran who shared his story with us, died on December 29, 2007. Born in New Britain on March 20, 1923, D’Amico served in the South Pacific Theatre on Landing Ship Tank (LST) 278, which landed Marines on Blue Beach in Saipan and in the Battle of Tinian until it was sunk. After that, D’Amico participated in the battles for Iwo Jima and for Okinawa with LST 399.

D’Amico served as the Coxswain of a Higgins Boat, transporting men (including Joe Rosenthal and Ernie Pyle), materials, supplies and ammunition ashore and evacuating the wounded to hospital ships. He achieved the rank of Motor Machinist Mate 3rd Class and was awarded various medals and honors including the WWII Victory Medal, and the American Campaign Medal with five Stars. After the war D’Amico worked for Pratt & Whitney for 35 years and continued to work as a machinist for several local machine shops during his retirement. He is survived by his wife, Jeanette, four sons, twelve grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

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HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY FROM THE CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH AT CCSU

“Last Monday in May” ©
By John T. Bird

We pause to remember those who died
With so much courage, so much pride

They'll never come back, yet memories endure
To remind us of freedom: fragile, pure

We’re worthy of their sacrifice if we pause each day
Not just on the last Monday in May

©John T. Bird, copyright 2006

ANSWERS TO WHO’S WHO?

A - 4 Katherine V. Tierney Leahy, WWII, Navy Nurse Corps
B - 5 Michael A. Parker, Vietnam, Marines
C - 3 John E. Pease, WWII, Marines
D - 1 Thomas Spada, Korea, Army
E - 2 Vanessa A. Marshal, Vietnam, Army Nurse Corps

As an archive partner with the Library of Congress, it is our privilege to collect and preserve the personal accounts of the service and sacrifice of our Connecticut heroes.

For more information or to participate please contact:

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