A close-up portrait of Leymah Gbowee, a Black woman with a serene expression. She is wearing a vibrant green and white patterned headwrap and a matching patterned top. Her red lipstick is a striking contrast. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

Leymah
Gbowee

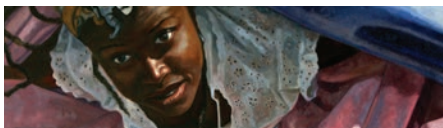
TEACHING THE
PROCESS OF PEACE

THE CUPOLA

Spring 17

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

SAVE THE DATE



Women's Work, on through March 12:

An exhibition of 12 women artists who have completed a residency at the Vermont Studio Center within the past five years. The exhibition features poetry and prose, painting, printmaking, sculpture, mixed media and installation art. Through these various art forms, the artists embrace and challenge gender roles and stereotypes often associated with women's work.

Art Gallery, Visual and Performing Arts Center, Westside campus



Public Talk with Leymah Gbowee

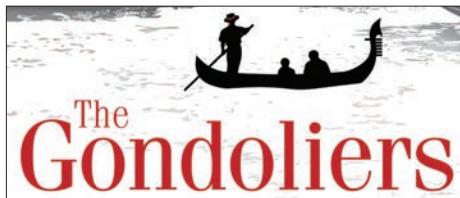
Feb. 24: Join engaged PeaceJam participants from across Connecticut for an inspiring public talk at 6:30 p.m. by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Leymah Gbowee, a Liberian peace activist, trained social worker and women's rights advocate. For tickets, visit wcsu.edu/tickets.

Ives Concert Hall, White Hall, Midtown campus

2017 PeaceJam Connecticut Youth Leadership Conference, Feb. 25 & 26:

This two-day event will feature Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Leymah Gbowee and hundreds of engaged students from across New England. Gbowee received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her leadership of a nonviolent women's movement that unified Christians and Muslims to end the 14-year civil war in Liberia. For more information or to register, visit <http://wcsu.edu/peacejam>.

Multiple Locations, Midtown campus



"The Gondoliers," March 24 – 26:

The WCSU Opera Ensemble will present "The Gondoliers" by Gilbert and Sullivan. Directed by Margaret Astrup. For tickets, visit wcsu.edu/svpa/events.asp.

MainStage Theatre, Visual and Performing Arts Center, Westside campus



"Violet," March 29 – April 9: The WCSU Department of Theatre Arts will present "Violet." Set in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement, this awe-inspiring musical explores the true meaning of beauty and the courage of a young girl who embarks on a journey of self-discovery during one of the most turbulent times in American history. Directed by Tim Howard. For tickets, visit wcsu.edu/svpa/events.asp.

Studio Theatre, Visual and Performing Arts Center, Westside campus



Career Fair, April 5: WCSU Career Services will host the 22nd annual Career Fair from 1 to 4:30 p.m. More than 80 employers are expected to attend the fair, which will be free and open to WCSU students, alumni, faculty and staff only. For more information, visit <http://wcsu.edu/career-services/> or call (203) 837-8263.

Feldman Arena, O'Neill Center, Westside campus



Jazz Festival, April 20 – 22:

The 22nd Annual WCSU Jazz Festival will include three 7 p.m. evening concerts. For tickets, visit wcsu.edu/svpa/events.asp.

Veronica Hagman Concert Hall, Visual and Performing Arts Center, Westside campus



Commencement Ceremony, May 21:

WCSU will host its 2017 Commencement Ceremony at 10:30 a.m. in the Webster Bank Arena at Harbor Yard, 600 Main St. in Bridgeport. Students who will receive undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees will be recognized during the ceremony. For more information, go to <http://wcsu.edu/commencement/>.

Webster Bank Arena at Harbor Yard, 600 Main St., Bridgeport

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ALUMNI



Students in Dr. Tom Philbrick's Plants & Society course demonstrate how an apple press makes cider and explain science concepts to passersby.



Teaching biology, culture and communications with a cider press

On a sunny October day outside the Midtown Student Center, Western Connecticut State University Plants and Society students made fresh apple cider with local apples, giving away free samples to delighted passersby. The students also presented posters with apple facts, lore and culture, practicing their skill at explaining science to non-scientists.

Dr. Tom Philbrick, professor of Biological and Environmental Sciences, explained that Plants and Society is for non-science majors, teaching human culture and lore around plants and helping students understand and convey science basics. "Especially today," Philbrick said, "it's vital that non-scientists be able to communicate science with others."

Class learning activities include bench work, field trips and a supermarket lab where the students research and investigate ingredients, especially in terms of health, nutrition and sustainability. The students make plant-based

treats including cider and chewing gum, and learn about plants as dye and fiber sources.

Israel Kabemba, a business communications major, said that Plants and Society taught him to be a better communicator to a wider range of people. "I learned to explain complex ideas clearly," he said. "It also taught me to do better research — to go out and get facts, to weed out what is not true."

Katherine Joseph, a psychology major, explained that the class taught her vital information about medicinal plants, herbs and spices, including for pain management and alternative medicine.

Robert Gavlik, a biology and secondary education major who plans to teach biology, said that the class helped prepare him to be a better teacher and music major Oscar Godoy said he learned vital team working skills, as well as giving him a useful grounding in hands-on, practical science.

Students' business plan wins top award in statewide competition

Western Connecticut State University students Rachael Karp and Helen Christie Roberts earned the Best Oral Presentation Award for their pitch of Karp's product innovation, "On Board," at the Connecticut Business Plan Competition. They prevailed over 10 other student teams from Connecticut colleges.

Karp, a Hamden resident who is pursuing a dual major in technical theatre and marketing, originated the concept to develop "On Board," a modular headboard system designed to customize college students' use of their dormitory beds as study space by providing accessories including a cup holder, book light, charger for electronic devices and storage pouch.



Congratulations to the cast and crew of 'The Drowsy Chaperone'

"The Drowsy Chaperone" was the 2016 musical production of the Department of Theatre Arts. Tim Howard, assistant professor and coordinator of the Musical Theatre program, directed and said, "You cannot go to the show and walk out without a smile on your face and humming the tunes." The cast staged the play again in January when the Region One Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival was hosted on the Westside campus in the Visual and Performing Arts Center.



21st Century Classrooms initiative brings iPads to Honors students

In September each Honors student received an iPad as part of the 21st Century Classrooms initiative by the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system. The initiative funds the creation of advanced learning environments using information technology. Honors students will use the iPads throughout their WCSU career, returning them at graduation or transfer.

Honors Program Assistant Director and alumna Jessica Lin explained that students use the iPads to improve their productivity with efficiency and organizational applications such as Bryte Wave, Evernote, Google docs, GoodNotes and others. “Many students use the iPads for audiovisual production apps like Loop, Logic Pro X, Auxe, Adobe Sketch, Nanologue, Garage Band and more,” Lin said.

WCSU President Dr. John Clark, working with Interim Chief Information Officer Dr. George Claffey and Dr. Christopher Kukk, director of the Kathwari Honors Program, decided to loan a total of 320 university-owned iPads to Honors students during the 2017 academic year. WCSU is the first school in the CSCU system to take on a project of this magnitude.



Nursing ranks with best in U.S.

Western has once again earned accolades for its nursing program – ranking as one of the country’s top nursing schools and in the top 20 schools in New England.

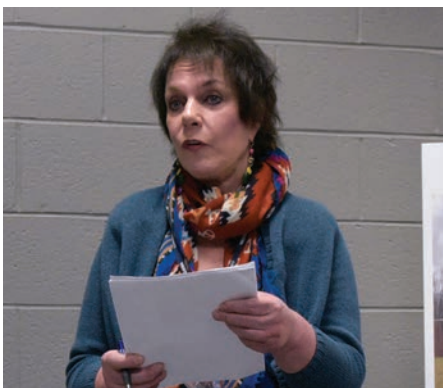
The Nursing Schools Almanac recently completed an inaugural ranking of U.S. nursing schools after collecting data on more than 3,000 institutions nationwide. WCSU’s nursing program was ranked 20th among nearly 150 schools in New England.

The WCSU Department of Nursing currently graduates 40 to 50 students annually from its pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. WCSU nursing students have achieved a NCLEX pass rate that has ranged from 94 to 100 percent every year over the past six years. The school’s RN-to-BS program is offered at two satellite locations: Naugatuck Valley Community College and Norwalk Community College. The department also has Master of Science in Nursing programs for certification as a nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist (CNS), both of which are designed for part-time study with evening courses. WCSU also has a collaborative doctoral program in nursing education.

“Health care facilities in Connecticut seek out our graduates because they are well prepared to enter the job market as graduate nurses,” said Dr. Joan Palladino, professor and Nursing Department chair. “We have grown in number while maintaining smaller class sizes, which helps students develop closer relationships with faculty.”



(above): WCSU President Dr. John B. Clark and CSCU President Mark Ojakian hosted state legislators on campus to learn more about the Center for Entrepreneurship, Research, Innovation and Creativity, and its new space, nicknamed "The Garage." (below): Dr. Pauline Assenza, associate professor of Management and the center's director. (right): Students Michael Iadarola, Korinna Lane and Nash Simcoe explained how they use the center to develop new business ideas.





ERIC: an experience for entrepreneurs

"ERIC will become a clearing house and resource hub where talented people come to try things out, make connections, start new ventures or reconfigure old ones. We are anticipating the 'creative collisions' that WCSU can facilitate."

– John Clark, President, WCSU

The nearly finished space created for the Center for Entrepreneurship, Research, Innovation and Creativity, or ERIC, was opened for Connecticut legislators to tour in January.

Entrepreneurship students Michael Iadarola, Korinna Lane and Nash Simcoe discussed projects they have undertaken in the program and Dr. Pauline Assenza, an associate professor of Management and the center's director, explained the project's purpose.

The ERIC space is in the Westside Classroom Building and is nicknamed "The Garage" to reflect the many enterprises that have begun on a garage workbench and blossomed into well-known and successful companies.

Assenza described The Garage as able to meet the needs of the community, which includes students, faculty, staff, alumni and anyone in the greater Danbury region who wants help creating, launching, reconfiguring or sustaining a new or ongoing venture.

The intent is to create connections among resources to better provide support to entrepreneurs and innovators, startup and growth stage businesses, and partnerships between private industry and institutions to support economic growth.

WestConn will become the connector in the region, attracting talent from surrounding areas and combining education and partnerships with business and industry to support students and established entrepreneurs. ■

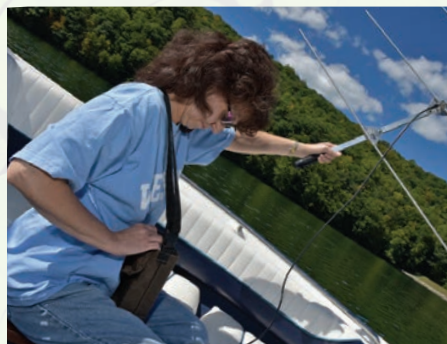


Which cyanobacteria is not like the other?

Dr. Edwin Wong, associate professor of Biological and Environmental Sciences, collects samples of blue-green algae from Candlewood Lake several times every summer. The algae, also known as cyanobacteria, is a scourge of lakeside communities because its appearance often leads to beach closings. Algae blooms sometimes emit poisons that can sicken swimmers and animals. Not all cyanobacteria produce poison, however, and Wong is testing the DNA of the batches he collects to find out if he can determine with certainty which are potentially poisonous and which are only disagreeable to look at – but make harmless swimming companions.

In search of grass carp

The state released 3,800 sterile weed-eating grass carp into Candlewood Lake in 2015 and they disappeared – at least to the naked eye. Last summer, WCSU students and Dr. Theodora Pinou, professor



of Biological and Environmental Sciences, were part of a team that added 50 more carp to the lake. These had small radio transmitters implanted in their abdomens, allowing Pinou and her students to track their travels. They found the fish often travel long ways from their release point, but once they find a delicious bed of watermilfoil to eat, they tend to stay there. The project is overseen by the Candlewood Lake Authority and includes community volunteers. The carp were bought using money from the matching \$50,000 grant the state awarded the authority in 2014. The equipment was purchased by the Goldring Family Foundation.



Bio research in New Fairfield: Students of Dr. Theodora Pinou's Vertebrate Zoology course spent the day on undeveloped land to find and identify local amphibians and reptiles. They assessed conditions on the property in autumn.



Bio Blitz at Weir Farm: Several WCSU professors, graduate students and volunteers helped Weir Farm assess biodiversity at the Ridgefield park. They identified more than 120 species of plants, insects and other invertebrates.



For two weeks in August, high school juniors and seniors navigated their way through college-level biology, history, communication and sociology instruction, while earning three college credits. Summer STEAM — Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics — was the brainchild of WCSU graduate Ben Wild, who went on to earn a master's degree in Education from Harvard. "I want other students to know that there's a great education waiting for them — right here in Danbury," Wild said.

WCSU's Jane Goodall Center receives environmental award

Western's Jane Goodall Center for Excellence in Environmental Studies was named a 2016 Environmental Champion by Aquarion Water at an awards ceremony at Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo in early June. The public water supply company selected winners from entrants whose volunteer efforts have protected or improved Connecticut's natural resources: air, water, soil, or plant and wildlife communities. Winners were determined in five categories: Adult, Youth, Small Business, Large Business and Nonprofit Organization. The Jane Goodall Center took the top prize in the Nonprofit category. Sen. Richard Blumenthal presented the award.

In an online description of the award recipients, the Aquarion website stated: "A new and unique partnership combining the academic and research prowess of Western Connecticut State University and the Jane Goodall Institute, the center has done literally ground-breaking work through a focus on the interconnectivity of people, animals and the environment. ... Last fall Jane Goodall traveled to the campus to visit her namesake institution and dedicate the [university's permaculture] garden. In front of an audience of 800 she expressed her delight at not just the sustainable garden but for the way the

Western Connecticut campus has itself become a garden, nurturing sustainability practices throughout the area, and harvesting their many benefits."

As a result of its selection, the Jane Goodall Center will receive a \$2,500 award, which will be used to pay a garden intern, according to Dr. Laurie Weinstein, chair of the Jane Goodall Center.

"During the summer, we need help with the garden, but because it's summer, you can't count on enough students being around to help," Weinstein said. "The award will go toward the garden manager's salary, which is extremely helpful since we rely entirely on donations from supporters to keep the garden going."

Intern Ashley Kenney not only managed the garden, but also worked to involve students and the community in the permaculture movement. She solicited donations of live plants from local nurseries, created a series of "farm for yourself" lectures on campus that will continue next year, and organized the campus and community volunteers who help maintain the garden's crops.

— Sherri Hill



WCSU saves gas and the environment

A Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) grant has helped bring four Nissan Leaf electric plug-in vehicles to Western Connecticut State University.

"We anticipate that the electric vehicles will save the university more than \$10,000 in fuel costs per year," said WCSU Chief Facilities Officer & Associate Vice President for Campus Planning Luigi Marcone.

In February 2016, DEEP announced funding to reimburse municipalities and state agencies for fleet electric vehicle (EV) purchases and/or workplace charger installation. With funds made available through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, DEEP provided up to \$15,000 per EV and up to \$10,000 per charger reimbursement.

Marcone and his team applied for the DEEP grant, which partially funded the electric cars and the installation of an additional eight charging stations to the university's existing four. Various departments, including maintenance trades, locksmiths, painters and facilities operations use the new EVs for drives between the university's two campuses. The vehicles can also be used for any business-related trips within a range of 90 miles.

"The cars have been a huge success," Marcone said. "They are practical, zero-emission vehicles, perfect for college campus driving."

WCSU is committed to sustainability, Marcone said, and is continually looking for new ways to conserve.



LEYMAH GBOWEE

A life of tumult and peace

by Paul Steinmetz & Moira Gentry

Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee will lead a public talk, open to the community, on Feb. 24 at WCSU.

A new program at WestConn will bring Nobel Peace Prize winners to campus to help develop youth leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities and the world.

PeaceJam is an international organization founded in 1996 that incorporates the inspiration and guidance of living Nobel Peace Laureates into curricula and programs that provide education

about compassion and guidance for community service projects to address issues of global concern such as poverty, human rights and the environment.

The first Nobel Laureate to visit WestConn under the new partnership with the PeaceJam Foundation is Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, who was awarded the 2011 Peace Prize for her work as a leader of a women's peace movement that helped end the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003.

Gbowee will give a Public Talk open to the community at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, in Ives Concert Hall in White Hall on the Western Connecticut State University Midtown campus. General admission tickets are \$15 and are available at wcsu.edu/peacejam.

Gbowee will also be on campus Feb. 25-26 providing inspiration and guidance to over 200 students in a two-day interactive PeaceJam Conference conducted by the new collaboration between WestConn and the PeaceJam Foundation. See wcsu.edu/peacejam for details.

WestConn has founded a PeaceJam chapter with support from Graves Kiely, a former international financial adviser who encourages the project's potential to confront and solve difficult world issues locally.

Kiely said after years of traveling around the world, "I reached a point in my life when I wanted to connect to my own community to make a difference in the lives of young people. I loved the idea of bringing Nobel Peace Prize winners together ►



with students. It's one thing to read about someone who has changed history through nonviolent, positive action and another for young people to meet them and learn first-hand about the transformative changes they have made."

Kiely attended a conference and became involved with PeaceJam's New England office in 2009. His son Sean started a PeaceJam club at Wooster School in Danbury. Soon after the Dalai Lama's visit to WestConn, Kiely connected with Dr. Christopher Kukk, a political science professor who is the director of the university's Center for Compassion, Creativity & Innovation and the Kathwari Honors program. The Student Government Association, the Center for Student Involvement and Pre-Collegiate & Access Programs are also hosts of the February conference.

"It's been great to discover from President Clark and the students here at WestConn how much the university values community service," Kiely said. "I am excited about helping introduce PeaceJam and Leymah Gbowee to the university and to the greater Danbury community."

"It is time to stand up, sisters, and do some of the most unthinkable things. We have the power to turn our upsidedown world right."

– Leymah Gbowee,
2011 Nobel Peace Laureate

LEYMAH GBOWEE

Leymah Gbowee aspired to be a medical doctor, but civil war in her native Liberia derailed those plans. The war drove her at 17 from their home to a refugee camp. When Gbowee returned, she trained as a social worker, concentrating on helping those who suffered psychological trauma during the fighting, including child soldiers.

After the war entered a new, even more brutal stage, Gbowee formed a coalition of Christian and Muslim women and organized the Women of Liberia Mass

Action for Peace movement. Thousands of women staged pray-ins and nonviolent protests demanding that the men in charge of the country, including dictator Charles Taylor and opposition leaders, engage in peace talks. Dressed in white T-shirts they held daily demonstrations at the fishmarket in Monrovia and then staged a sit-in at the hotel where peace talks were taking place. The talks finally succeeded, with Taylor pushed into exile, followed by the election of Africa's first female head of state, fellow 2011 Nobel Laureate Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

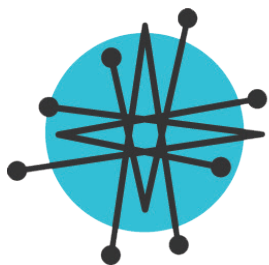
Gbowee is founder and president of the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa and a co-founder of the Women Peace and Security Network Africa. She lectures around the world on women's rights, gender-based violence and women-led peace building as part of the democratic process.

Gbowee, who has six children, was awarded the peace prize for her "non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peace-building work."

"It is time to stand up, sisters, and do some of the most unthinkable things. We have the power to turn our upsidedown world right."



Local businessman Graves Kiely has supported PeaceJam for several years.



PEACEJAM

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY



PeaceJam coordinator Dean Sheehan leads students through a warm-up exercise.

PEACEJAM

The PeaceJam Foundation calls itself “the global leader in developing young leaders committed to positive change in themselves and their communities.” The organization, founded in 1996 by political activist Dawn Engle and artist Ivan Suvanjieff, works with 13 Nobel Peace Prize winners who inspire and guide youth as they strive to “pass on the spirit, skills and wisdom they embody.”

The year-long, award-winning PeaceJam curriculum for ages K-college is based on the study of the lives, issues, struggles and triumphs of living Nobel Peace Laureates themselves to gain awareness of global human rights issues and how to help make positive changes locally.

PeaceJam operates in 39 countries. At annual Youth Leadership Conferences, young people spend two days learning how to

become change makers, engaging in service projects, taking interactive workshops, and presenting their work to the visiting Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

The organization also produces a full-length documentary on each of the Nobel Laureates who participate with PeaceJam in an effort “to guide future leaders in their quest for peace.”

Last year, PeaceJam issued an online call to action called “One Billion Acts of Peace” to encourage citizens to engage in addressing the most pressing issues affecting the planet. The program records initiatives and awards prizes to individuals or groups that celebrate acts of peace through projects that address the root causes of racism, human rights, environmental issues, poverty and other import. ■

Global Call to Action

PeaceJam’s 10-year campaign to commit One Billion Acts of Peace is designed to tackle 10 of civilization’s greatest challenges to humanity’s survival and well-being.



Education
and Community
Development



Protecting the
Environment



Alleviating
Extreme Poverty



Global Health
and Wellness



Non-Proliferation
and Disarmament



Human Rights for All



Ending Racism and Hate



Advancing Women
and Children



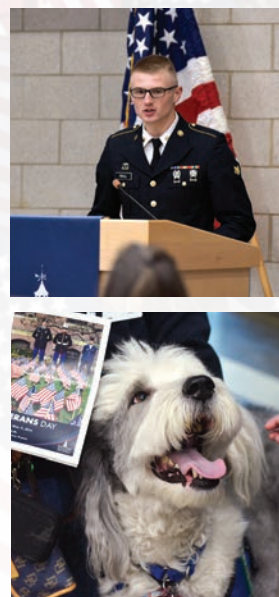
Clean Water
for Everyone



Conflict
Resolution

Remembering on Nov. 11

Veterans Day ceremonies included memorializing those who served by hanging dog tags in a tree on the Westside campus, as well as speeches by Jonathan B. Gonzalez, treasurer of the Student Veterans Organization; Bret J. Pikul, president of the Student Veterans Organization; Matthew T. Kuchta, WCSU veterans affairs coordinator; and Dr. Mary Ellen Doherty, a professor in the Nursing Department who, with her sister, has written two books about the experience of nurses in the wars of the Middle East.



Scholarship for a veteran

WCSU student Alan Sexton received the \$2,000 Charles Guarino Veterans Scholarship from the Danbury Exchange Club in recognition of his military service and academic achievement. Sexton, a Danbury resident and marketing major pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, enlisted after his high school graduation. He served from April 2011 through April 2016 in the

U.S. Army with the rank of specialist and deployed from September 2012 to May 2013 in the United Arab Emirates. Sexton credited his five years with the Army for opening "a way to go out and explore new opportunities and experience something different. All the Army asked for was my years of service, and now they are paying for my college education."

Housing opportunities



WCSU, the Danbury Housing Authority and The Bridge to Independence and Career Opportunities (TBICO) have joined together to offer education, housing and career advisement to veterans attending the university.

The Housing Authority gutted and rebuilt a house on Eighth Avenue, across the street from Litchfield Hall. The building was reconfigured into one efficiency, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments.

WCSU Veterans Affairs Coordinator Matthew T. Kuchta said veterans are scheduled to be living in the three apartments by March.

The student veterans can stay in the housing for up to four years, during which time they will work with TBICO and WCSU Career Services on employment after graduation.

"This project may be the only one of its kind in the Northeast," Kuchta said. "It's a way to thank them for their service."

WestConn offers in-state tuition for students from select New York counties

WestConn is offering in-state tuition to residents of seven New York counties starting with the fall 2017 semester.

Students from Putnam, Westchester, Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Rockland and Ulster counties are able to enroll at WCSU at the same rate paid by Connecticut residents, which this year is \$10,017. Out-of-state tuition and fees for these students previously was \$22,878.

“We will be providing our New York neighbors in the Hudson River region the same high-quality and affordable education as Connecticut residents enjoy,” said WCSU President John Clark. “I invite everyone in the seven Hudson Valley counties to expand your college search and come visit our beautiful campuses.”

The university is promoting the new fees with a promotional campaign called “Look West. Pay Less.” It will promote WCSU’s offerings and the new pricing, which will save students in the seven counties more than \$12,000 a year.

Among WestConn’s 38 bachelor degree programs are numerous professional degrees – including business management, marketing, accounting, biology, nursing, education, counseling, communication, psychology and justice and law administration. It is the designated school for the visual and performing arts in the system of Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) and features a \$97 million facility that houses a concert hall, art gallery, two theaters and rehearsal and classroom spaces.

With easy access from Interstate-84 or Metro-North, WCSU students enjoy up-to-date sports facilities for intramural, club and Division III athletics, more than 80 student clubs, a nature preserve, suite-style residence halls, and a student-to-faculty ratio of 14 to 1. Students looking for the highest academic challenge can explore the innovative Kathwari Honors Program, open to students in all university’s four schools.

The Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education approved in-state tuition for Hudson Valley residents at its Sept. 16 meeting. Members said they expect the new offer will benefit both New York and Connecticut as highly educated residents strengthen the regional economy along the states’ border.

WCSU admissions counselors will visit New York high schools to introduce students to the university and its offerings. Residents are invited to learn about WCSU by visiting www.wcsu.edu/ny/ for more information.

The WCSU Office of Admissions will answer any questions at (203) 837-9000 or admissions@wcsu.edu. ■





(left): The MaryJean Rizzo-Rebeiro Think Tank in the Westside Classroom Building. (below): MaryJean Rebeiro



Alumna honored for years of support

MaryJean Rizzo-Rebeiro is known in the community for many accomplishments: Business leader, female role-model in an industry populated mostly with men, mother of three successful children, and philanthropist.

Rizzo-Rebeiro offers guidance to other women in business as a member of the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Western Connecticut and the chamber's Women's Business Council. Rebeiro also sits on the board of directors of the Regional Hospice, and with her family supports several other charities. She is regularly honored by community organizations for the work and intelligence she puts toward many projects.

But among her most enduring relationships has been one with Western Connecticut State University.

Rizzo-Rebeiro graduated from WCSU with a bachelor's in Business Administration. After establishing herself as president of

NY-CONN Corp. electrical contractors in Danbury, she continued the WCSU relationship by joining the board of the WCSU Foundation, which raises money for student support and recognition for the university.

Her family helped undergraduates for more than a 10 years with the Rizzo Endowed Scholarship for the Ansell School of Business. Rebeiro and NY-CONN Corp. recently added significant donation to the scholarship fund to benefit graduate students, a first for the Ansell School.

"I am very proud to be a part of the school that gave me an excellent education," Rebeiro said. "I obtained the stepping stones needed to navigate in the business world from my professors at the Ansell School of Business. I often catch myself quoting one of my professors and it is then that I realize what a strong foundation I was given and the impact my teachers had on me then and now."

In recognition of Rizzo-Rebeiro's long support of her alma mater, the university has named a new student lounge on the Westside campus in her honor. Students have been studying in the MaryJean Rizzo-Rebeiro Think Tank — long known unofficially as the Fish Bowl — since the spring semester started. A ribbon cutting will take place later in the spring semester.

"The university recognizes its loyal supporters in a variety of ways, but the most memorable is by naming a campus facility in their honor," said WCSU President Dr. John B. Clark. "MaryJean has been an outstanding benefactor of the university and its students over a long period of time. Accordingly, it is most appropriate to name our new Westside student lounge for her, where it will remind students of MaryJean's generosity and inspire them to achieve the success she has had." ■

Austin McChord of Datto is WCSU Entrepreneur of the Year



Austin McChord, founder and CEO of a billion-dollar tech company based in Norwalk, was honored as the 2016 Macricostas Entrepreneur of the Year at the ceremony in October.

As chief executive officer and major shareholder of Datto, Inc., since its founding in 2007, McChord has built a rapidly growing and highly innovative company that provides comprehensive data backup, recovery and business continuity services.

Recognized for three consecutive years by the business magazine Inc. as one of the 500 fastest-growing companies in the United States, Datto posted year-over-year sales growth exceeding 50 percent and expanded into European and Pacific Asian markets during 2015. McChord's trailblazing corporate leadership has earned prestigious recognitions including selection as one of Forbes magazine's "30 under 30" top young entrepreneurs and as a finalist for Ernst & Young's 2016 Entrepreneur of the Year award.

At the ceremony, McChord discussed the transformation of Datto from its beginnings in his parents' basement to an international company with 700 employees. He explained why he chose to Connecticut as his headquarters and how he stays competitive in his field, among other topics.

McChord earned a degree in bioinformatics from Rochester Institute of Technology, and holds several patents. In 2014 he was a finalist for Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year, as well as named a CRN Top 25 Innovator and a CRN Top 50 Midmarket IT Vendor Executive. McChord sits on the board of the Connecticut Technology Council.

The annual Entrepreneur of the Year ceremony is made possible through the generosity of Constantine "Deno" Macricostas, the founder of Photronics Inc., in Brookfield, who endowed a fund to support entrepreneurial-focused educational projects for students at WCSU. Additional sponsors include the Savings Bank of Danbury, Newtown Savings Bank, Yamin & Yamin law offices and the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce. ■

(above): Dr. David Martin, dean of the Ansell School of Business; Kathleen Lindenmayer, director of WCSU Career Services; honoree Austin McChord; and Dr. John B. Clark, WCSU president, before the Entrepreneur of the Year luncheon honoring McChord.

(right): Lindenmayer interviews Entrepreneur of the Year Austin McChord about Datto, Inc., one of the fastest-growing companies in the U.S.





THE CUPOLA

Link to the past
fits a university's
modern view

by Paul Steinmetz



One day last summer, the morning sun shone brightly on the cupola that sits on top of Fairfield Hall. It could have been any day for the past 89 years – the cupola, erect and stately, stark white against a turquoise sky and silver clouds, on its perch above the campus.

While it is probably true that most people don't often look up to make sure the cupola is there, or consider it as they walk from building to building or drive along White Street, the cupola on Fairfield Hall has become a ubiquitous symbol of WCSU. The cupola is embedded in Western's logo, so that whenever the university publicizes itself — in every marketing piece handed to a prospective student, on every identification card, and in every spot that the university plants its name — the cupola is there, too.

The cupola, sitting above all, with a view of all, is a perfect structure in which to imbue the university's history and future.

For that reason, I decided it would be a good idea to visit the cupola. I imagined that I could climb up into it and survey the realm. That was not to be, but I was able to clamber onto the roof of Fairfield Hall and put my hand on the cupola and peer inside.

Not everyone can get to the cupola. My guide was Mike Spremulli, director of Facilities Operations. We were joined by Mia Dovoljani, a student photographer. We walked up the interior stairwell of Fairfield Hall to the third floor, where Spremulli unlocked a door that led to a steel ladder bolted to the wall. We hugged the ladder and climbed into a hot and humid attic. ►



Artwork by Sara Ruiz '17

"In winter, the views are incredible," Spremulli says, but he professes not to venture up too often.

When Fairfield Hall was first built, in 1927, you could stand inside the cupola. The traditional job of a cupola is to provide light and ventilation to buildings, or to help building residents get a view of potential intruders or returning adventurers. Fairfield's roof, along with the cupola, was rebuilt in 1994. That was when the cupola became strictly an ornament. Walking carefully through the attic, making sure not to step into insulation pellets or trip on ventilation pipes and sprinkler heads, Spremulli pointed out the steel beam that now runs the length of the roof, with bolts as big as a baby's fist that tie it to thick wooden trusses.

We came to a three-step wooden staircase below a hatch. Spremulli opened the hatch and we climbed into the sunshine and stood on the copper roof between an original brick chimney and the cupola looming above us.

Peter Visentin, WCSU director of Planning and Engineering, told me the base of the cupola is an octagon that is 12 feet wide, and from the roof of the building to the top of the weather vane, the structure is 23 feet tall. Standing beside it gave us an appreciation of the cupola's size and mass that you don't notice from the ground, where it looks thinner and almost frilly. Also, we were standing about 60 feet above the ground. As we looked down, our legs wobbled from the strain of standing on a slant.

Up close, the cupola is slightly weather-beaten. It is clad in aluminum siding, which bears gray streaks from years of rain and melting snow. The cupola is topped with a copper roof and a weather vane in the form of a feathered writing quill. The railing that decorates its lower portion, where in the old days someone would have leaned as they took in the long views, is decorated with acorn-like knobs and voluptuous stiles that indicate the designer's fancy, as opposed to utilitarian tastes. The modern version is also surrounded by spotlights that illuminate the cupola in a soft glow all night long.

Leafy trees obscure some of the view from up on the roof, but we spotted students sitting at a table near the Student Center, and the chimneys of Old Main peeking out at us. To the west is White Hall with Danbury Hospital to the north.

"In winter, the views are incredible," Spremulli says, but he professes not to venture up too often. Sometimes contractors need to come up to repair flashing on the copper roof. "Only when it's necessary or we need to do a visual inspection, a couple of times a year."

Fairfield Hall was the second structure built for the state Normal School at Danbury. It is of the symmetrical and stately Georgian style of red brick and white trim. (The wooden cornice underneath the roof line had been rotting for years and was recently replaced with fiberglass replica copied from the original remaining 1927 wood.) The building is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

WCSU Library Archivist Brian Stevens and his staff reported that an act of the state legislature was required to approve \$300,000 for the original construction of Fairfield Hall. Among the arguments in favor, at a March 1925 hearing in the state Capitol, was a plea to create a safe refuge for young women while they pursued their studies.

"I maintain the best teacher is the teacher from the farm," said a Senator Shaw. "I believe her birth and training is such she has advantages no city girl can have when it comes to managing children. This school reaches out and educates the farmer's daughter from the upper end of Litchfield County to the Sound."

But, he added, the parents of those interested in teaching would not allow their daughters to attend the school if they did not have a guaranteed place to live on campus, as opposed to a local boarding house: "Many of the best people in rural communities will not let their girls go to the normal school unless they know where they are."

Back on ground level I noticed that, ironically, the closer you get to Fairfield Hall, the more the view of the cupola is obscured – by the building itself, by the oak in front of Old Main and the trees along Alumni Circle or the maples at the Student Center. You can get a glimpse of the cupola through the branches, but the best views are from higher up and farther away, and then not from every vantage point. From the Science Building terrace or the top floors of the Fifth Avenue parking garage, for instance, the cupola can't be seen.

One of the best places to view it is from White Street. It is elegant, obviously designed to impress the thousands of drivers who pass by each day. If they glance up, say at 10 a.m., they will see the cupola standing guard, bright white and shining as sunlight pours onto its eastern flank.

The cupola has been part of WCSU's logo for at least the past 20 years, as far as I could determine, tying the university's brand to a past — when Fairfield Hall was built as a residence only for women, who dressed to enjoy a formal tea every afternoon — even as the pace of campus life changed at a fast clip.

The cupola is a metaphor now, as well as an elegant architectural detail. It is no longer needed for ventilation. But as Welcome Week inaugurates each fall semester with seminars on expectations for safe behavior regarding drinking, drugs and sex, and where students of all races and ethnicity as well those who identify as LGBTQ are encouraged and welcomed, and as many courses of study in addition to teaching are offered, what Western's cupola represents is this: the opportunity for young people to become educated in the classroom and use that knowledge to improve their lives as they raise families and become citizens of the community. It's a message that has remained the same for at least 89 years. ■



WCSU oak tree celebrates 100 Years

It was Arbor Day 1916. Woodrow Wilson was President, and in Europe, World War I raged. All over the nation and around the world, people planted trees in hope for a better future.

On Friday, April 19, of that year at what was then known as the Danbury Normal School, Miss Marguerite Wheeler's kindergarten class streamed out of their Old Main classroom, and — with the help of the grown-ups — placed a tiny red oak sapling in the ground. Over the years, the tree, along with generations of students, grew and flourished.

But in 1996, plans to extend WCSU's first building, Old Main, were under-way. The majestic old oak tree shading the building's front was destined for destruction. Luckily, a savior stood in the way.

Helen Bechard, coordinator of University Events, learned of the oak's peril and went to then-President

James Roach to plead on the tree's behalf. Bechard had recently read Dr. Charlotte Isham's "History of Western Connecticut State College: 1903-1978," in which the oak's story was revealed.

"You can't cut down this tree," Bechard explained to Roach, and he agreed. Next, Bechard went to Vice President of Finance and Administration Richard Sullivan, who arranged to pay for the marble plinth and brass plaque that was placed near the tree's massive base.

Today, the stately oak continues to shelter the entrance of Old Main and the Alumni and Friends Circle with its engraved bricks, inscribed benches, light posts — and other trees, which for a donation can be named with a personalized message plate.

"I'm glad we saved the oak," Bechard said. "It's a deeply-rooted part of WCSU history."

Hancock students learn skills in the classroom and leadership in the community



Victor Namer, right, tours Danbury High School with a guidance counselor as part of Namer's work as a Hancock Student Leader.

Each year, a handful of students from Western are chosen to participate in the Hancock Student Leadership Program, an initiative designed to promote, foster and acknowledge diverse student leadership.

The program aims to enhance students' basic understanding of the skills necessary to be effective leaders, including civility, ethics and team building. Students are encouraged to explore creative problem-solving, goal setting, conflict management and financial accountability opportunities.

Leadership students also are paired with a mentor from the community. Naturally, WCSU's wide selection of diverse majors leads to different styles of leadership opportunities.

The 2016 Hancock Student Leaders and their internships:

- Psychology major Victor Namer of Danbury, placed with Dr. William Glass, deputy superintendent of Danbury Public Schools.

As a member of the Hancock Student Leadership Program, Kaitlyn LaBonte, center, works as an intern at the headquarters of the United Way of Western Connecticut with CEO Kim Morgan, left, and Casey Levene, vice president of Community Development.

- English major Kristen Hinz of New Milford, placed with the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence in Wethersfield.
- Political Science major Kyle Gaudet of Bethel, placed with Hon. Dianne E. Yamin at Yamin & Yamin law offices in Danbury.
- Social Work and Political Science major Kaitlyn LaBonte of Danbury, placed with Kim Morgan, chief executive officer at United Way of Western Connecticut in Danbury and Stamford.

- Chemistry major Trevor Lyons of Danbury, placed with Peter D'Amico, CEO and president of SBC International Materials Inc. in Newtown.

- Finance major Molly Mathieu of Woodstock Valley, placed with Cynthia Merkle, president and CEO, and Paul Bruce, CFO, of Union Savings Bank in Danbury.

- Relational Communication major Kristy Trotta of Danbury, also placed with Dr. William Glass of the Danbury Public Schools.

Namer said his internship helped him learn how to advocate for his beliefs.

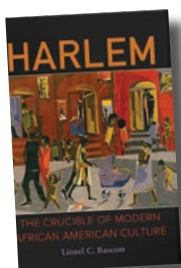
"Growing up in the Danbury Public School system, I feel I received a fantastic education," Namer said. "While I received a quality education, I now see that reforms are needed within the public school system. I want to not only ensure that future Danbury Public School students have the same opportunities that I had while going through the school system, but that even more options are available for them as time progresses." ■

— *Michael Medeiros*



HARLEM: THE CRUCIBLE OF MODERN AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE

By Lionel Bascom



Although much has been reported on the Harlem Renaissance, Lionel Bascom, instructor in the Department of Writing, Linguistics and Creative Process, suspected there was more to the movement than has been revealed.

As he wrote a book about the period, "Harlem: The Crucible of Modern African American Culture," he found that not only did the flowering of African-American literature and music endure much longer than is widely documented, it lasted long enough to change his own life.

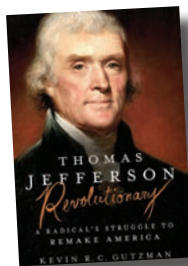
"When you read about the Harlem Renaissance, you believe it is a brief period where Harlem art scenes flourished until it disappeared in 1929" Bascom said. "I wondered, why 1929? I didn't believe that number."

In fact, although the clubs and theaters closed, black intellectuals and artists like Ralph Ellison, Langston Hughes and James Baldwin continued to work there. The legal attack on southern segregation was devised in Harlem and when a march on Washington was scheduled, a 16-year-old Bascom, who was the president of the Danbury NAACP Youth Group, answered the call. With dozens of others, he rode a bus from Danbury, marched and heard Martin Luther King Jr. give his famous speech, and then rode the bus back that night.

"I thought this book was necessary because I wanted to say that when the music stopped playing, these people in Harlem were working toward justice," Bascom said. "It was a coming together of progressives who said, 'We have got to change.'"

THOMAS JEFFERSON — REVOLUTIONARY: A Radical's Struggle to Remake America

By Dr. Kevin Gutzman



Thomas Jefferson has long influenced Dr. Kevin Gutzman, an author and professor of history at WCSU. In fact, Gutzman argues, Jefferson influences the daily life of every American.

But Gutzman has spent more time thinking about Jefferson's mark on society than the rest of us. That is why he has written "Thomas Jefferson — Revolutionary: A Radical's Struggle to Remake America" about the man who drafted the Declaration of Independence, wrote the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, served as president, and founded the University of Virginia.

Historians have probably documented Jefferson more often than any other president besides Lincoln and Washington. However, Gutzman said he has not written a biography, but instead concentrates on a handful of Jefferson's principles and achievements that defined him and the nation.

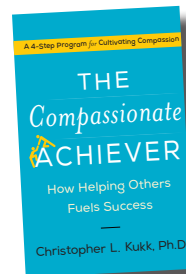
"People don't realize he was such a radical," Gutzman said. "People think freedom of religion is normal. We shouldn't think that way." The book covers Jefferson's views on the nature of the Federal Government, freedom of conscience, the places of blacks and Indians in American society, and the unprecedented, revolutionary University of Virginia.

"The fact that we live with the legacy of Jefferson's accomplishments doesn't mean they are self-sustaining or that they will endure," Gutzman said. "We have to insist on it."

Gutzman will give a public lecture on "Thomas Jefferson — Revolutionary" and sign copies of the book at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 28, in Warner Hall on WestConn's Midtown campus, 181 White St., Danbury, CT.

THE COMPASSIONATE ACHIEVER

By Dr. Christopher L. Kukuk



Following the historic visit of the Dalai Lama to WestConn in 2012, Dr. Chris Kukuk, professor of Political Science, was tasked with working with students to create a lasting tribute to the event.

The result was the Center for Compassion, Creativity and Innovation, which Kukuk directs. As he dove into the subject, Kukuk became fascinated with the topic of compassion and its positive effects.

The result is a book, "The Compassionate Achiever: How Helping Others Fuels Success," due out this year.

As Kukuk wrote:

"For decades, we've been told the key to prosperity is to look out for number one. But recent science shows that to achieve durable success, we need to be more than just achievers; we need to be compassionate achievers."

Kukuk said that new research in biology, neuroscience and economics has found that compassion — recognizing a problem or caring about another's pain and making a commitment to help — not only improves others' lives; it can transform our own. "The Compassionate Achiever" reveals the profound benefits of practicing compassion, including more constructive relationships, improved intelligence and increased resiliency.

Kukuk identifies the skills every compassionate achiever should master — listening, understanding, connecting and acting — and outlines how to develop each, with clear explanations, easy-to-implement strategies, actionable exercises and real-world examples. "The Compassionate Achiever" is available now at Amazon and Barnesandnoble.com, with a full rollout in March.

WCSU professor receives largest research grant in university history

by Paul Steinmetz





(above): Dr. Neeta Connally at work in her Science Building lab.

(below): Dr. Rayda Krell is the study coordinator for the tick research project.



Dr. Neeta Connally — associate professor of Biological and Environmental Sciences — will receive an estimated \$1.6 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) over the next four years for tick research. It is the largest research grant in the university's history.

The grant will fund a four-year integrated tick management study that aims to bridge the gap between tick control research and human behavior with the ultimate goal of combatting Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses. WCSU biology majors will participate in the study through a summer internship program.

"We hope to better understand backyard strategies for preventing Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses in our local communities," Connally said.

"Many people who get Lyme disease are exposed to disease-transmitting ticks in their own backyards," Connally said. "We hope to better understand backyard strategies for preventing Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses in our local communities."

The study is a collaborative effort between WCSU, the CDC, and co-principal investigator, Dr. Thomas Mather, professor and director of the TickEncounter Resource Center at the University of Rhode Island. Tick samples will be taken from 200 homes in western Connecticut, including the towns of Bethel, Newtown

and Ridgefield, and from several southern Rhode Island towns.

Connally said the study will include spraying the property to kill ticks and placing treated rodent-bait boxes to reduce ticks that infest mice. The properties sampled will be adjacent, and some will receive placebo treatments. As the study also provides for research on human behavior, WCSU Professor of Psychology Dr. Daniel Barrett, who specializes in social psychology, will assess how people affect their risk of exposure to ticks on their own property.

WCSU student interns will collect the ticks by dragging a flannel cloth through tick-dense areas such as wooded perimeters. As many as 700 ticks an hour at a Newtown site have been collected in a past study, Connally said. The ticks are then sent to the CDC for testing. Tick abundance will be compared between treated and untreated (placebo) properties; human tick encounters will be recorded and compared using a novel crowd-sourced reporting system.

An expert on Lyme disease and other tick-borne maladies, Connally joined the WCSU biology department in 2011. She was formerly an associate research scientist at Yale School of Public Health. In her research lab at WCSU, students learn about ecology, epidemiology and prevention of tick-borne diseases through internships such as those funded through the CDC grant.

Connally said there are several diseases that can be transmitted by the blacklegged tick, commonly called the "deer tick": anaplasmosis, babesiosis, Lyme disease, Powassan encephalitis and a newly identified relapsing fever borreliosis. The CDC estimates that 300,000 people are infected with Lyme disease every year and that 96 percent of the reported cases are from 14 states including Rhode Island and Connecticut. ■



Lori Mazza named Director of Athletics at WCSU

Lori Mazza has been named WestConn Director of Athletics, taking responsibility for the Colonials' 14 intercollegiate programs.

"On behalf of the university, I am delighted to welcome Lori Mazza as our new Director of Athletics," said WCSU President John B. Clark. "With her impressive and longstanding experience as a coach, athletic director and senior Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) administrator, I am sure she will do an excellent job in moving our athletic programs forward in new and innovative ways and, most importantly, ensure that our student athletes succeed both on the field and in the classroom."

Mazza comes to Western from the nearby ECAC corporate offices in Danbury, where she has been the associate vice president of Championships, Leagues and Affiliates and Senior Woman Administrator since 2015. She was the main contact for ECAC-affiliated leagues in ice hockey, field hockey and lacrosse, providing administrative support for those leagues. She also oversaw all of the conference's rowing affiliate leagues and championship regattas. Additionally, Mazza was the conference's compliance contact, working with the membership and the NCAA to obtain waivers, provide legislative interpretation, assist in reviewing hardship waivers and function as the National Letter of Intent contact. As the ECAC SWA, she helped member institutions enhance their SWA positions and facilitate Title IX compliance and gender equality. Mazza will report to Dr. Keith Betts, vice president of Student Affairs.

"I am honored and humbled to join Western Connecticut State University as its new Director of Athletics," stated Mazza. "I would like to thank President Clark, Dr. Betts and the search committee for providing me with this incredible opportunity. Throughout the interview process, I was impressed with the professionalism, enthusiasm and passion of everyone I met. I look forward to engaging and working with our student athletes, coaches, university leaders, alumni and local community in continuing WestConn's tradition of excellence."

Prior to joining the ECAC, Mazza, a native of West Chester, Pennsylvania, served as director of athletics and recreation at University of Pittsburgh at Bradford since 1998, and brings with her over 20 years of experience in college athletics administration. ■

New coach, same results for Women's Soccer

The Western Connecticut State University women's program welcomed a new head coach for the first time in 20 years this past fall. Its leader changed as Joe Mingachos ('91) took the helm of Western's men's soccer program, but the more than two-decade run of dominance continued.

The Colonials, under the guidance of Alex Harrison, went 12-5-2 in the regular season, won three games to capture the Little East Conference Tournament and earned their 12th invitation to the NCAA Division III National Championships.

Western fell to Johns Hopkins University, 3-1, in the first round of the NCAAAs on Nov. 12.

Junior forward Autumn Sorice scored the lone goal against the Blue Jays. It was her 25th tally of the season. Sorice, who was ranked as high as fourth in the nation in scoring this fall, was named LEC Offensive Player of the Year for the second straight year following an explosive campaign. She recorded six game-winning goals in her third season.

Joining Sorice on the LEC All-Conference First Team were seniors Celia DeVoe and Meaghan Gustafson. Junior midfielder Andrea DeVoe and freshman Bailey Julian were honored on the Second Team.

The WestConn defense registered 10 shutouts on the season. Behind keepers Jillian Fernandez and Serena Gunter was a veteran group of backs. Gustafson, who was named Most Outstanding Player of the LEC Tournament, teamed with Lucy Daniels, Jasmine Grey and Samantha Carbonell in the defensive third. They and the net minders allowed just 29 goals in 23 contests.



Three seniors depart Field Hockey with final victory

The field hockey team, under the watchful eye of 12-year head coach Dani McDonnell, finished with a 5-13 overall record and was 2-9 in the Little East Conference.

The careers of three seniors came to an end this fall. Kristy Trotta played all but 28 minutes in goal this season. She had a respectable goals-against average at 3.03 and made 191 saves.

Brianna Reda and Bryanna Willaby capped off their careers with a 3-1 victory over Roger Williams University in WestConn's finale on Oct. 25.

Freshman Carly Matasavage led the Colonials with seven goals and 15 total points. Two of her goals were game-winning tallies.



All-American returns as Men's Soccer coach

The men's soccer program welcomed a very familiar face to lead the team when WestConn alumnus Joe Mingachos took the reins of a program that he was an All-American with back in 1989.

With just three months to assemble a team, Mingachos put together a team that went 4-3 in the Little East Conference and returned to the league tournament for the first time since 2008.

The Colonials nearly upset the tournament's second seed Rhode Island College in the semi-finals before falling to the Anchormen, 1-0 in overtime.

The team's overall record, 6-11-1, would not garner too many headlines, but the program made tremendous strides and is now headed in the right direction.

Mingachos won 298 matches in the 19 years he was in the women's soccer driver's seat, went to 11 NCAA Tournaments and won 10 or more contests every season.

On Sept. 18, the legendary coach won his 300th collegiate contest when Western upset Keene State College, 2-0 at the Westside Athletic Complex.

Freshman Spencer Ranno was named Little East Conference Rookie of the Year after an outstanding first season. The defender scored one goal, assisted on another and helped the Colonials shut out three opponents.

Sophomore forward Chauncey Allers and junior back Shane Beirfeldt were named to the All-Conference First Team. Allers scored a team-leading 13 goals.



All-Conference honorees led Football

Six WestConn football players were named to the 2016 Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference All-Conference Team.

Senior defensive back Kareem Patterson was named to the First Team. Sophomore defensive lineman Haywood Alexander was named to the Defensive Second Team while senior offensive tackle Matthew Gilday, junior running back Kyle McKinnon, senior fullback Michael Nicol and freshman place-kicker Jordan D'Onofrio each were recognized on the Offensive Second Team.

For the second straight season, the Colonials went 5-5 overall and 4-4 in the conference. They closed out the season by winning four out of their final five games including back-to-back home victories over Worcester State, 40-13 on Homecoming Night and University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 35-22 on Senior Night. They wrapped up the season with a 42-7 triumph at Westfield State University.



Coach of the Year leads Volleyball to another solid season

Fifth-year mentor Don Ferguson was named Little East Conference Women's Volleyball Coach of the Year after guiding his Colonials through a 20-11 season. WestConn advanced to the semi-finals of the Little East Conference Tournament before bowing to Plymouth State University in straight sets.

The Colonials have won 20 or more matches the past four years and Ferguson now has an impressive 109-56 record at WestConn.

Senior Karissa Smith was named to the Co-SIDA Academic All-American Third Team and approaches graduation in May with a psychology degree with a perfect 4.0 grade-point average. The Bristol native also was named to the Little East Conference All-Conference First Team after leading Western with 443 kills and a .222 hitting percentage. Smith now holds the school record with 4,717 attacks and is second behind Paxton Thornton (2009-12) with 1,560 kills.

Classmate Danielle Kaminsky was honored on the LEC Second Team. She registered 999 assists and 264 digs in her final campaign.

First-year and non-trad lead Women's Tennis

WestConn freshman Emma Chapman was named Little East Conference Rookie of the Year for her instant success as a freshman and becoming the first Colonials' student-athlete to win the honor in program history. Chapman finished with a 5-3 (.625) record on the year as the Colonials' No. 1 singles player and also earned All-LEC First Team Singles selection.

Chapman and her doubles partner Carole Allers also garnered All-LEC First Conference Doubles honors. The pair of Chapman and Allers combined for a 9-3 (.750) overall record and 4-3 in conference. Allers was also named to the Second Team All-LEC Singles selection for 2016.

Allers, the mother of Western men's soccer standout Chauncey, is also a member of the Western women's basketball team.

The Colonials went 4-10 overall and 1-7 in Little East Conference play under head coach and Western alumnus Shawn Stillman ('94).



ALUMNI



30

HOMECOMING



New inductees to the WCSU Athletic Hall of Fame proudly display their awards.

Homecoming featured a ribbon cutting for the Alumni Pavilion, the crowning of a queen and king, and several games and other entertainment.





Alumni Pavilion

The Alumni Association opened its new pavilion for the enjoyment of all who visit the Westside campus. Long in the planning stages, the association committed more than \$100,000 for the pavilion, which can be reserved for parties, receptions and other events. The space has quickly become a favorite for alumni gatherings while enjoying athletic events or Homecoming. WCSU Environmental and Facilities Services prepared the site and oversaw construction of the pavilion. A ribbon cutting was held in the fall.

2017 Alumni Events

- MAR 24** Dinner and Opera featuring "The Gondoliers"
- MAY 3** Grad Salute
- MAY 21** Commencement
- JUN 10** Bus trip to Rhode Island, "Providence Italian Style"
- JUL 8** Connecticut Lighthouse Tour, New London
- AUG 5** Lake Compounce Family Day
- AUG TBD** WCSU M.F.A. in Creative and Professional Writing Alumni Recognition
- SEP 25** Neil Wagner WCSU Alumni Association Golf Tournament

HOMEcoming



The Colonial Football Team finished the season strong and is looking forward to the upcoming season.



Students participate in games between residents of campus dorms while visitors enjoy the fun.



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