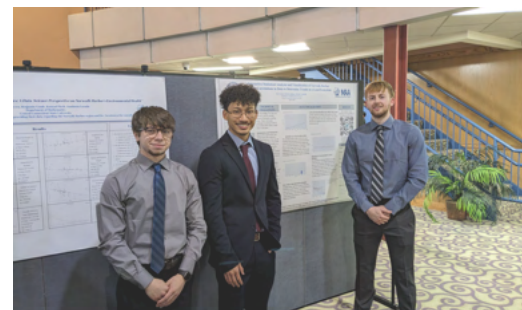




Center for Community Engagement & Social Research

Monthly Faculty Newsletter



SPRING EDITION



Central Community!

Dear Central Family,

The Center for Community Engagement & Social Research (CCESR) has been working hard on collecting the many events and projects that center around community engagement and applied research this Spring semester. As we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has collaborated with us, including students, faculty, and community partners. Your dedication has played a pivotal role in addressing the most pressing needs of our community. As always, we look forward to continued collaboration and making a positive impact through community service. Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to the shared vision of CCESR. We can't wait to see what the 2024-2025 AY will bring forth!

Sincerely,

The Center for Community Engagement & Social Research Team:

- Beth Merenstein, Executive Director
- Ed Vargas, O'Neill Endowed Chair in Public Policy & Practical Politics
- Christian Reyes, Assistant Director and Community Partner Liaison
- F. Kamilah Hastings, Administrative Assistant
- Diana Velasco, Faculty Liaison
- Shealin R. Callahan, Community Engagement Student Ambassador
- Megan Lott, Social Media and Marketing



CENTRAL
CENTER FOR
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
& SOCIAL RESEARCH

SPRING REWIND





175
YEARS



Join the Center for Community Engagement and Social Research for our

CCESR OPEN HOUSE!

and friendly farewell to Edwin Vargas,
O'Neill Chairholder since 2023



We welcome you to the Center's new on-campus location housed in **Davidson Hall, Suite 115**. Come have some light refreshments and help christen the new space!

2PM - 4PM	THURSDAY	1615 STANLEY ST
	23	NEW BRITAIN,
	MAY	CT, 06050

(Rescheduled from April 23 to May 23)

Contact: communityengagement@ccsu.edu

Community Engagement Around Campus & the Community

EMPTY BOWLS 2024

On May 2nd, Central students and faculty, as well as the general public, got together at Smalley Elementary School for Empty Bowls.

Attendees had the opportunity to pick a handcrafted ceramic bowl, enjoy a meal, and view the different performances but on by Central and Smalley.

Students from Professor Sarah Stookey's Management and Organization course worked with Smalley Elementary, CCSU Ceramics, CCESR, LAU, and more, to put on the great event!

All the proceeds from the event will go to the Friendship Service Center in New Britain.



AAPI FESTIVAL 2024

On April 23, 2024, the Central community celebrated Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month with the second annual Asian American and Pacific Islander Festival. The AAPI Festival celebrates and highlights the diverse communities and cultures from Asia and Pacific Islander backgrounds.

This year's festival program included the Japanese Program Kakehashi project presentations coordinated by Professor Matthew Chudnow, special guest Ms. Oliva Nguyen (aka Fiyabomb) who is a visual artist and CCSU alum, and the CCSU Asian American and Pacific Islander Choir directed by Professor Emeritus Yuanqian Chen.

The celebration included involvement from various CCSU programs and individuals, such as Professor Raven Ong's costume display, Professor Emeritus Xiaoping Shen's AAPI 110 student posters, East Asian Studies, International Studies, Center for International Education (Study Abroad to/from Asia), and the Women's Center.

Local community organizations and vendors included the Japan Society of Greater Hartford, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) CT, New Britain Museum of Art, Philippine American Nurses Association, YWCA of New Britain's Sexual Assault Crisis Service, Landi Hou (traditional Chinese Arts), Tiffany Hsu (yarnshaper 3D Crochet Artist), and Meredith Clark (Beacon Craft Studio). The festival planning committee included Dr. Nghi Thai, Emma Snowden, Dr. Alfredo Rosete, and Dr. Natsuko Takemae.

Community Engagement Around Campus & the Community

PURSUE THE TRUTH

More than 80 people attended the Pursue the Truth Day at The Library on April 16 at the Elihu Burritt Library that was sponsored by the library and the Library Committee with funding from CCSU's Center for Community Engagement and Social Research and its AAUP chapter.

It was a day to celebrate the exploration of facts through a variety of lenses, including art, music, science, journalism, public policy, books and even virtual reality.

Adults and children posed with favorite books to make a READ poster. Others met filmmaker Christopher Brown and watched his documentary short, "Thoughts are Things" on virtual reality headsets provided by Central's XR lab.

Audience members heard NBC Connecticut's Len Besthoff and the CT Mirror's Andrew Brown discuss how they pursue the truth as investigative reporters. Russell Blair, the director of communications and education at the state Freedom of Information Commission, told visitors how they can use the FOI Act to obtain public records. Others were able to find out more about Connecticut history at the Connecticut Explored table and storytelling from the Connecticut Storytelling Center.



CCESR'S STUDENT AMBASSADOR SHEALIN CALLAHAN

Congratulations to CCESR Student Ambassador Shealin Callahan for winning the Henry Barnard Distinguished Student Award at this year's Student Awards Ceremony! Shealin was also recognized as an Honors Program Graduate, in addition to her Departmental Honors Award for Central's Philosophy Department.

Thank you for your contributions to CCESR and Central!



Community Engagement Around Campus

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Children with mobility challenges had the opportunity to test drive and take home a brand new toy ride-on car on April 26th through **Go Baby Go**. The cars were modified for them with the guidance of physical and occupational therapists at Central. Students rewire the cars, so instead of children using a foot pedal, they can push a button on the steering wheel to make them go.

Luke Vermilyea, a CCSU student who is student-teaching at New Britain High School, also got his class of students involved.

Huge thank you to Michele Deschino, Lisa McMahon, Central students, the Community Health Education Clinic, the Drop-In Child Care Center, and many more on such an amazing effort.



CAROL A. AMMON COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

On May 2, community engagement minor students in their **internship course (CEN 402)** with Professor Nghi Thai shared about their community engagement internships at a poster event that also included a clothing drive to benefit the Friendship Service Center (FSC) in New Britain.

While two students interned at the FSC this semester, other internship sites included the New Britain YWCA, OIC, New Britain PAL and Navigator programs, North Windham Elementary, the Greater Foundation of New Britain, Pathway, Senderos, and the South Central Region Council of Governments.

The clothing drive was initiated by the students after observing the great need for men's clothing at the community closet at the FSC.



Friendship
Service
Center, Inc.
love made visible

Community Engagement Around Campus

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

In the month of April, a total of 15 students and 2 faculty from Central participated in **JA for a Day**. On April 19th, they visited Noah Webster Magnet School and on April 24th Jefferson Elementary School.

Students from Beta Alpha Psi made a special appearance on April 24th to perform a skit and interact with students their the elementary school's pep rally.

Central students presented on topics such as financial literacy and work and career readiness. They also had the opportunity to team up with PWC and Deloitte, two major accounting firms.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES



On April 2nd, The Career Development Office and the School of Education and Professional Studies collaborated on **Student Teachers Networking Night**.

Representatives from nearly 20 districts were in attendance and met with Central's student teachers to discuss opportunities post-graduation. During the event, a panel discussion highlighted important tips for interviews, cover letters, and resumes. Students also participated in an elevator pitch competition that prepared them to met with each district representative.

Community Engagement Around Campus

ATHLETICS

The Men's Soccer Team headed to Chamberlin Elementary School on Tuesday, April 30th.

The event titled **Read and Play**, was a combination of read-aloud time with Chamberlin's 4th and 5th graders as well as recess time during the visit.



It was a fantastic day for our student-athletes and the for the students at Chamberlin.

The team interacted with the students in the classrooms reading books and asking questions, then having fun with them on the playing fields.

At the end, Central's student-athletes had a number of autographs to sign by the end of the day.



COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Central Connecticut State University and **Junior Achievement**, Southwest New England Inc., have signed an agreement that will enable local high school students to earn academic credits at Central.

The three-year agreement applies to high school students who are taking Junior Achievement (JA) courses at participating high schools. JA courses cover various topics across its core content areas of financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship.

Nationally, Junior Achievement reaches more than 4.8 million students per year in 209,651 classrooms and after-school locations. JA programs are taught by volunteers in inner cities, suburbs, and rural areas throughout the United States, by over 100 JA Area Offices in all 50 states.

JA delivered high-quality economic education to more than 30,000 Connecticut students in 165 schools and sites, including 85 high schools, with more than 1,200 volunteers from 239 leading companies.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STIPEND

CCESR is currently in the works of offering stipends to faculty and staff to participate in community engaged professional development. This stipend has a maximum of \$3,000 per academic year that can be used towards attending an academic conference, workshop, training, or webinar.

Primary goals of the stipend:

- Promote community engaged practices/opportunities in the classroom and in research projects.
- Allow faculty and staff to expand their professional portfolio as it relates to community engagement.
- Open the opportunity to teach community engaged courses at the university.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING STIPEND (CEELS)

CCESR's Community Engagement Experiential Learning Stipend (CEELS) provides stipends for unpaid internships or research roles without standard wages. We offer financial support for experiential learning opportunities that might otherwise be unpaid.

Student Internship Information

Eligible students would receive \$18/hour with a maximum of \$3,000 (this averages to 20hrs/week for an 8-week program). Applications open and close in the following months. More details of deadline will be given near the end of current semester:

- Summer application: March 22, 2024 - May 24, 2024
- Fall application: July 26, 2024 - September 9, 2024
- Spring application: December 6, 2024 - February 7, 2024

Click [HERE](#) to apply!





CCESR'S INTERACTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MAP

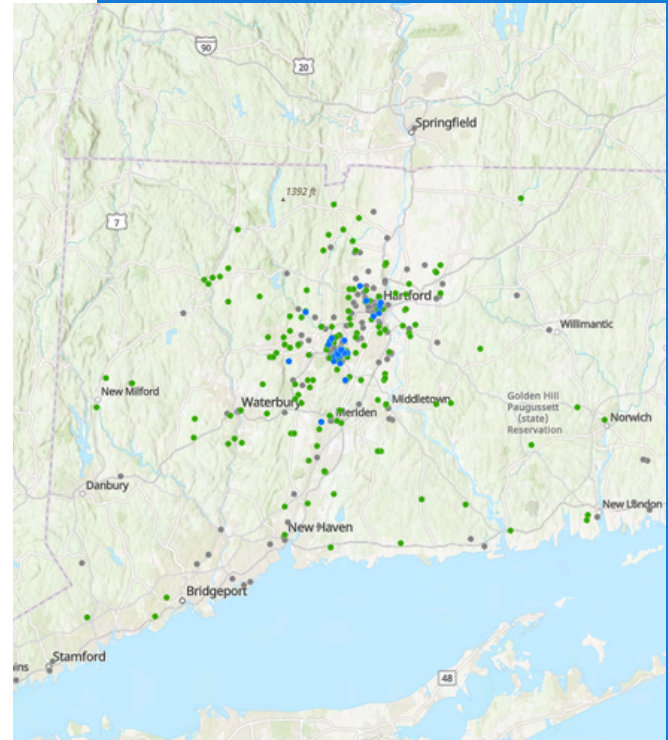
CCESR has created an interactive map as a way to visualize the impact Central has had on the community and provide ideas for future projects.

On the map, you can view community partners Central has worked with, where students have completed internships/field placements, and the locations/descriptions of past community engagement or public service events.

If you have been involved in a CE event/project, fill out this [Microsoft Form](#) to have it added to the map and Collaboratory!

Click [HERE](#) to view the map!

For further questions on Collaboratory, please contact Diana Velasco at d.velasco@ccsu.edu.



CONTACT OUR TEAM

For more information on working with CCESR, do not hesitate to contact us or visit our [website](#)!

- Executive Director, Beth Merenstein, merensteinb@ccsu.edu
- Assistant Director, Christian Reyes, creyes@ccsu.edu
- Administrative Assistant, F. Kamilah Hastings, hastings@ccsu.edu
- Faculty Liaison, Diana Velasco, d.velasco@ccsu.edu