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OVCS Newsletter May 2016

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May 2016
Build Community

OVCS NEWS



The 9th Annual Walk to End Homelessness

Annette Davis '18

This year the New London Homeless Hospitality Center put on the 9th annual Walk to End Homelessness. The walk began at the Homeless Hospitality Center, located at 325 Huntington Street, on Sunday April 24th. A large crowd began to gather outside of the center half an hour before the walk began, and people engaged in many activities including face painting, taking photos at a photo booth, and hula-hooping.

Supreme Hot Dog, Rolling Tomato and a root beer truck provided delicious food and beverages, there was music playing, and people were dancing. The atmosphere was cheerful with community members gathering together on such a beautiful sunny day. People lined up to begin the walk at two o'clock, and the walkers were led by two



Walk to End Homelessness (Continued)

previous guests of the center holding a large banner proudly displaying to all passers-by that this was the Walk to End Homelessness. This is an important event for the Homeless Hospitality Center as it brings awareness to the social issue of homelessness and brings in a significant amount of donations that help keep the center running. This year \$20,000 was raised. A group of sophomore PICA scholars from the Holleran Center worked hard to plan this wonderful event. Based on the number of people who participated, their hard work paid off.

Connecticut College students from Art and Gender and Women's Studies classes planned three different stations along

the walking route where walkers could participate in small activities. These included reading personal and inspirational quotes written in chalk on the sidewalk, blowing bubbles, and pushing over cardboard blocks with different mental and physical barriers written on them. The last stopping point was at the whale tale where an acapella group from Connecticut College performed.

The walk concluded at the Homeless Hospitality Center and people once again gathered to dance to the music, share food, do some yoga, and enjoy the day together after participating in such a significant and meaningful event.

Why ELT Means So Much to Me

Fabiola Ramirez '19

My time at Jennings Elementary School for the Extended Learning Time program will definitely be unforgettable. One of the main reasons why I believe this program is very important and helpful for both the students we work with and the community at Conn is that it is a very long-term impactful experience for all of us.

As a first generation student of color who grew up attending various different Chicago Public Schools (CPS), I did not really have an experience like the one ELT provides. This meaning that I did not have other students who shared many of my same experiences come into my school to help younger students both academically and socially.

I believe this is very important for students to go through because it gives the younger generations an idea of the paths that they would consider once they are older. It was very powerful and important that I could really relate my experiences in CPS with the students' experiences in the New London public schools.

The amount of academic and social knowledge that the students gain throughout the program is also very important for all of the mentors. Even seeing the transformations of the relationships between the Jennings students and the Conn students is wonderful because at times there are very powerful bonds built.

This is also a learning experience not only for the ELT students, but for Conn. There is so much that we have to learn about elementary education and the ways in which many ideologies are formed and nourished throughout schooling.

As a result, we learn the many different ways in which these ideologies affect the classroom and how this all then shapes higher education institutions like Connecticut College. This is something that I will most likely be looking forward to participating in for the next few years of my time at Conn.

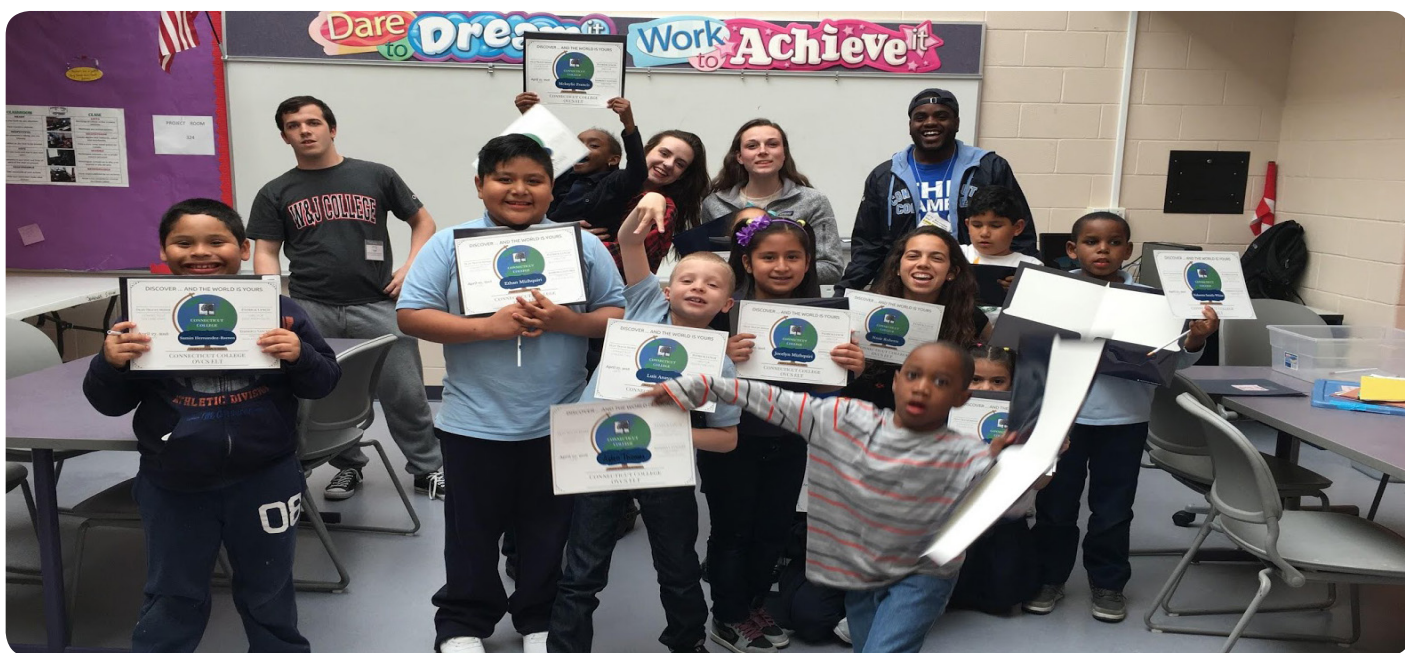
Dr. Cornel West

Mari Izoteco '17

Last week, the Connecticut College community was fortunate enough to welcome Dr. Cornel West to our campus for the 10th anniversary of the Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE). During his speech, Dr. West addressed a variety of issues, but one that I thought was particularly significant was that of radical love. In my introductory course to American Studies with Professor Kim, we have discussed the idea of radical love and what it means in a classroom setting, however, it was very inspiring to personally hear it from Dr. West himself. A classroom setting allows for there to be both agreement and disagreement while promoting an environment of mutual respect, and I think that is a goal we can all work towards achieving.



AmeriCorps and OVCS: Bringing National Service to a Local 2nd Grade Classroom



A classroom of 2nd graders with their college mentors getting their ELT completion certificates on the last day of the semester.

Chloe Jones '15, AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), is a domestic anti-poverty measure that has been in place since Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency in 1965. VISTAs work in low-income communities to help alleviate poverty at an individual and communal level. At Connecticut College, VISTAs work through Connecticut Campus Compact, a cohort of colleges and universities across the state who conduct K-12 programming to address the achievement gap in their respectful communities. At Connecticut College, we aim to achieve these goals through our own K-12 programming, Project Teach & Learn, a symbiotic partnership between Connecticut College and the New London Public School District.

After graduating from Conn last May, I accepted the position as one of two Project Teach & Learn coordinators at OVCS through AmeriCorps VISTA. I had never participated in Project Teach & Learn while a student at Conn, and adapting to running and participating in education programs was challenging at first, specifically working with Expanded Learning Time. ELT is a collaborative program with Jennings Elementary School to impact academic performance, enhance school culture, and engage students in rich endeavors that broaden their experiences through facilitating an additional 300 hours of learning time for grades K-2.

This year, we worked with 2nd graders. We did a wide range of activities with the Jennings students, from creating and working on interactive journals with them, to going on a field trip to the Groton submarine museum. Honestly, there was nothing that could have prepared me for the experience that was ELT. There were times that I felt slightly overwhelmed, and there were times where I felt like I really missed out on an amazing opportunity during my undergraduate time at Conn. I would definitely recommend participating in ELT if your schedule allows -- not only are you supporting local public schools and taking part in programming that is endorsed at the national level, but you are in turn working to alleviate poverty in our community by bridging the gap in academic opportunity and achievement for local underrepresented students.

If you are interested in applying for the AmeriCorps position with OVCS for the 2016-2017 academic year, VISTA is still accepting applications!

Apply today:
<https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?id=59157>

Anna Lord Strauss Medal

Each year, since 1976, one graduating senior is honored at commencement with the Anna Lord Strauss Medal. Connecticut College faculty and staff nominate students who have completed "outstanding work in public or community service, including service to the College and value the importance of the individual's participation in society." Anna Lord Strauss was an active citizen both at Connecticut College and within local, national and global communities. She had a long and distinguished career in advancing human rights and strengthening communities. She held five presidential appointments to national and international committees and missions.

She was named by President Truman in 1951 as executive vice chairman of the President's Commission on Internal Security and Individual Rights. She was appointed to the U.S. Delegation to the United Nations Sixth General Assembly meeting in Paris in 1951. She was President of the National League of Women Voters. She served on the National Council of Negro Women's Educational Fund and on the National Institute of Public Affairs and the Fair Campaign Practices Committee. She also served as a Connecticut College trustee for 32 years.

Congratulations to the outstanding 2016 Anna Lord Strauss nominees, Kate Adams, Aleksandr Chandra, Tom Conlin, Taryn Kitchen, and Joseph Mercado. They have all contributed deeply to Connecticut College and to local, national and global communities as well.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Research Direct Service Advocacy

THANK YOU

STUDENTS, STAFF, FACULTY, COMMUNITY MEMBERS

tutors • mentors • role models • health care aides • economic development assistants
oral history writers • geriatric assistants • health clinic aides • blood drive assistants
pre-school educators • hunger relief workers • adult education teachers • historians
swim instructors • therapeutic riding aides • dance teachers • recreation assistants
marine life aides • environmentalists • political campaigners • registrar of voters
legal assistants • science educators • computer technology interns • researchers
art teachers • rehabilitation aides • mental health assistants • counseling aides
web masters • grant writers • counselors • teenage pregnancy prevention aides
advocates and educators for health and wellness
house builders • COMMUNITY BUILDERS

Your work improves the quality of life in our community and enhances the liberal arts education. Thank you for your engagement and may you continue to make a difference.

GRACIAS AMIGOS

May your exam period go smoothly and best wishes for a wonderful summer break.

Office of Volunteers for Community Service OVCS
Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy