

theindependentvoice

Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges... Educators, Employers, Community Partners

Ten Facts That May Surprise You About Independent Colleges & Universities:



Judith B. Greiman, President, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges

Fact 1: Nationally, the proportion of students from racial and ethnic minorities at independent colleges and universities is almost the same as at four-year state institutions. In Connecticut, independent colleges and universities award 60% of the four-year and above degrees given to minority students.

Fact 2: The proportion of low and middle-income students at independent colleges and universities is almost the same as at four-year state institutions. The median income of students attending Connecticut's four-year independent colleges is \$65,400 compared to \$79,200 at four-year state institutions.

Fact 3: Many older, working and part-time students attend independent colleges and universities, along with "traditional" full-time students just out of high school. Sixty-four percent of students who are considered "at risk" attend four-year independent institutions compared to 47% attending Connecticut four-year state institutions.

Fact 4: Students who have dependents or support themselves attend indepen-

dent colleges and universities at about the same rate as at four-year state institutions. Connecticut's independent colleges enroll a greater proportion of students whose parents did not earn a bachelor's degree (61% independent vs. 54% state).

Fact 5: Students who work full-time, have a high school equivalency diploma, or face other challenges are far more likely to graduate from an independent college or university than from a state institution.

Fact 6: With only a small amount of state support, all in financial aid, Connecticut's independent sector awards degrees at a state cost of only \$894 as compared to the \$49,220 cost of a degree from the state institutions (FY 2004).

Fact 7: Regardless of initial academic preparation for college, students are as likely to earn their degrees in four years at an independent college or university as they are in six years at a state institution. After grant aid, students at Connecticut independent colleges pay significantly less than the published "sticker price" with a net tuition of \$13,900 (NPSAS 2003-04).

Fact 8: Students who earn bachelor's degrees are able to do so sooner at independent colleges and universities than at state institutions, avoiding additional tuition and financial aid expenditures and beginning their careers earlier.

Fact 9: Most of the financial aid undergraduates receive at independent colleges and universities is based on financial need. Sixty-four percent of full-time students attending a Connecticut four-year independent college receive institutional grants compared to 27% in a four-year state institution.

Fact 10: 50% of all degrees granted in Connecticut and 51%-70% of the degrees granted in the identified key cluster academic disciplines come from the Connecticut's independent colleges and universities.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) 2003-04. Statistics are for dependent students who are CT residents. State enrollment and degree data are based on Department of Higher Education and IPEDS data. Additional data collected by the National Association of Independent Colleges & Universities.

Yale Will Study Ways to Promote Tolerance via 'Difficult Dialogues' Grant

Yale University has received a grant of \$100,000 from the Ford Foundation for a unique program to develop a more temperate climate on campus for dialogue about such flashpoint issues as race relations, religion and political views.

The grants are part of Ford's "Difficult Dialogues"

Yale (continued)

initiative, created in response to reports of growing intolerance and efforts to curb academic freedom at colleges and universities.



Donald Green is the A. Whitney Griswold Professor of Political Science at Yale and director of the university's Institution for Social and Political Studies.

Yale's program will track possible changes in students' perspectives, knowledge and beliefs after they take courses dealing with different aspects of provocative subjects like politics in the Middle East, tensions between different ethnic groups and the rise of political Islam.

"For generations, scholars have argued that college courses engender a more tolerant and circumspect outlook. This study attempts to measure the ways in which these courses change students' outlook," says Donald Green, the A. Whitney Griswold Professor of Political Science, who developed the program with colleagues Cynthia Farrar and Khalilah Brown-Dean.

The Ford-funded study at Yale will be administered through the Institution for Social and

Yale (continued on page 3)



From Biloxi to West Haven: Quinnipiac University service learning class relocates Katrina ravaged family to Connecticut

Gulf Coast residents breathed a sigh of relief as the most active and costly hurricane season on record officially closed at the end of November.

Three months after hurricanes Katrina and Rita roared through Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and other Gulf states, many are still trying to reclaim their lives. Many are still displaced.

Dapanese Rodriguez and her family are starting over in West Haven, Conn., because their Biloxi, Miss. home is no longer habitable. Rodriguez and two of her children arrived in Connecticut two weeks ago. Her husband, William, and a daughter, age 11, will join them soon.

Their relocation was sponsored by a group of Quinnipiac University students, who raised \$7,000 and got donations of furniture and household supplies for the family that lost virtually everything.

"I was devastated by the hurricane. It was something I never thought I'd have to go through. We were literally blown away. It's like, one day you're in a comfort zone and the next day you're in a war zone. You could smell the dead bodies. I still have nightmares," said Rodriguez, whose home was not destroyed by the initial winds and subsequent floods but by a tornado spawned by Hurricane Katrina.

"It's still standing but we can't live in it, it's full of debris and mold," she said.

It upset Kristen Ritter, a junior public relations major at Quinnipiac from Boxborough, Mass., to listen to Rodriguez cough when they spoke on the phone, knowing she was exposed to the mold as she tried to recover some personal belongings. It upsets Ritter still that the family must continue



From left to right in the back row are: Quinnipiac University students Kristen Casimiro of Bridgeport, Conn., a senior sociology major; Jenna Henry of Peoria, Ariz., a junior public relations major; Danielle Hansen of North Massapequa, N.Y., a sophomore communications major; John Donnellan of Shoreham, N.Y., a senior criminal justice major; Lisa Gallo of Massapequa, N.Y., a senior sociology major; and Professor Shannon O'Roarke. Front row: Tray Rodriguez, age 14, Dapanese Rodriguez, and Michael Rodriguez, age 12. Tray and Michael are kneeling down flanking their mom.

to pay the mortgage on a home they can never live in again.

"We had insurance but it doesn't cover everything," Rodriguez said.

The funds students raised paid for some moving expenses and allowed Rodriguez to put a deposit on the rented home.

Students continue to help the family transition from a life-long home in the warm south to the unfamiliar surroundings and cold weather of New England.

"They've been wonderful. They stop by and take me to the store because I don't have a vehicle. They pitch in and help wherever I need it," Rodriguez said.

The students were required to perform eight to 10 hours of community service in the fall semester as part of adjunct philosophy Professor Shannon

O'Roarke's "Ethics and Human Values" course. The course stresses service learning, which is the process of integrating community service and active guided reflection with the course curriculum to enhance and enrich the way in which students learn the course material. Students learn from the service experience and the community benefits, O'Roarke said.

Often service is performed independently, O'Roarke said. Students contact local non-profit agencies, schools or soup kitchens on their own.

"This time we had a group of people who wanted to work together on this project. It was their idea and they carried the ball," O'Roarke said. Out of her 29 students 25 helped the Rodriguez family. The others worked on their own projects.

"The group effort made all the difference. With the human power we had we were able to systematically find out what was needed and we then split into groups, appointed leaders of the groups and dealt with it," said Robert Steadman, a junior criminal justice major from Dudley, Mass.

"It gave us an interesting opportunity to help a family get set up in a new environment at a time when they needed it most," said sophomore Jessica Champagne, of Stratford, Conn., an English major.

The students raised about \$7,000 — including an anonymous donation of \$5,000 — through a raffle, appeal letters and personal requests.

"In the aftermath of the hurricane you see the Red Cross commercials but as college students you don't really have much money to give out. This was an easy way to give to the victims," said

senior John Donnellan, a criminal justice major from Shoreham, N.Y., who met the family at the New Haven train station when they arrived at took them to look at rental houses.

The class plans to continue fundraising efforts to try to get the family a car. In addition to the students in O'Roarke's class, students in the Quinnipiac chapter of the Alpha Phi Omega fraternity provided a welcome packet and brought the family a Thanksgiving meal. The fraternity plans to increase their involvement with the family in the semester to come.

And Ritter said she and other students plan to take the two boys, ages 12 and 14, to a Quinnipiac basketball game.

"They are a blessing to my family. Without them I don't know what we would have done. It's humbling to my soul. I can't find the words to thank them. They are truly a blessing," Rodriguez said.

Abel James, a senior criminal justice major from Brooklyn, N.Y., who is originally from the hurricane-prone Caribbean, said he's grateful for the family's gratitude but, "I didn't do it for that. I did it because it's the right thing to do. I don't think I'll ever forget this ethics class. You're helping somebody who desperately needs your help. There's nothing bigger than that."

Did you Know?

Of the \$122B in aid available to students in 2003-2004 student loans totaled about 56%, grants or work study 39% and tax credits 5%.

Source: NASFAA "Cash for College"

Sacred Heart University Earns Community Service Award and Addresses Public Policy Challenges

Community service efforts at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield were recognized by the Connecticut Department of Higher Education for an unprecedented 12th year in a row. SHU's Habitat for Humanity Chapter brought home one of three awards in the state for exceptional community service by student groups.

Service learning takes an important place in the lives of SHU students. From Habitat for Humanity projects to urban elementary school read-alouds, students have the opportunity to get hooked on community service from the very beginning of their college experience.

Commemorating its 10th anniversary this past fall, Sacred Heart University's Community Connections program welcomed a special group of incoming freshman students, who decided to give up the last part of their summer vacation in order to work in the Bridgeport community.

Following Sacred Heart University's long tradition of service to the community, the students participated in the weeklong urban outreach program that provides freshmen with a first-hand opportunity to learn about both the resources and the challenges of urban life.

This year's group was part of a newly expanded program that included eight upper-class students, members of the faculty and staff, and 44 incoming freshmen. Together, the group spent a week devoted to community service, taking part in projects that increased their awareness of what inner-city life is like.

The week began as students from the Class of 2009 arrived at the University, dropped off

their belongings, and immediately headed for St. Charles Urban Center and Golden Hill Methodist Church in downtown Bridgeport, their temporary home away from home.

The next seven days were spent engaged in a variety of volunteer activities, from working at soup kitchens and food pantries, to visiting Beardsley Zoo with city kids and their families, and tutoring children at Bridgeport schools. In addition, they helped build Habitat for Humanity homes on Bridgeport's East Side and worked to restore a small park on Wood Avenue, in conjunction with Groundwork Bridgeport, which was dedicated to the memory of victims of violence.

Each evening, after a busy work-filled day, the freshmen returned to their houses to clean up, cook dinner and participate in group activities, sharing experiences and relaxing together.

The physical experience of performing one-on-one community service was complemented by daily discussions between faculty, students and community leaders.

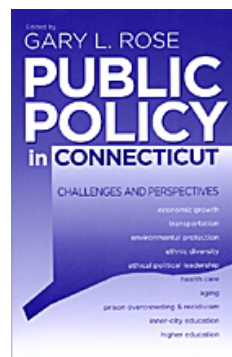
Sacred Heart University professors and administrators, many of whom have already spent weekends at the Urban Center, joined in evening discussions to discover and examine the social, political and religious implications of each day's experience.

Members of Sacred Heart University's Campus Ministry staff participated with the group and provided daily opportunities for reflection and prayer.

Student volunteers say that being part of Community Connections is a life-changing

opportunity to make a real contribution to the wider community. Like most of the students involved in past programs, many participants will continue to serve as community volunteers and campus leaders throughout their college career.

Service in the local community is one of the distinguishing characteristics of Sacred Heart University, where thousands of students have taken part in a wide range of community activities.



Public Policy in Connecticut: Challenges and Perspectives, edited by Gary L. Rose, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Government and Politics at Sacred Heart University. This book examines ten of the key policy challenges — from economic growth to transportation, healthcare, ethics, and education — that currently confront Connecticut lawmakers. (Sacred Heart University Press, 2005)

XXX

Yale (cont. from p. 1)

Policy Studies (ISPS), which is directed by Green, a leading scholar in the field of political psychology whose research includes studies of prejudice and the impact of deliberation on public opinion.

Brown-Dean, who teaches in the departments of African American Studies and Political Science, is a highly regarded



Khalilah Brown-Dean, an assistant professor of Political Science and African American Studies, is affiliated with Yale's Institution for Social and Political Studies.

expert on perceptions of bias and group conflict. Her popular class, "Black and Jewish Community Politics," is one of the courses that will be used in the Difficult Dialogues study at Yale.

Farrar, who will coordinate the program, organizes and studies "deliberative polling," a system for gauging change of public opinion through improved access to information and dialogue, which has been tested both locally and nationally.

By comparing students who were randomly selected to take the designated classes and those who were randomly excluded, researchers hope to learn whether attitudes and perspectives are affected by courses, and, if so, which courses produce what effects. The program is also expected to reveal which students are more affected and whether the diversity of the group makes a difference. In addition, the study will track students' behavior to see if the courses influence their choice of extracurricular activities as well as their attitudes.

The Ford Foundation launched Difficult Dialogues in April 2005 by inviting proposals from all accredited, degree-granting, non-profit institutions with general undergraduate programs. Yale was one of 26 institutions of higher education to receive the grant. Difficult Dialogues is part of a broader, \$12 million effort by the Ford Foundation to understand and combat anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of bigotry in the United States and Europe.

XXX

Saint Joseph College Reaches out to the Community in Hartford

Saint Joseph College and The Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry, an outreach ministry of St. Patrick-St. Anthony Catholic Church in downtown Hartford, have partnered to establish The Wellness Center on Church Street. This collaborative endeavor benefits the poor, needy, and underserved in Hartford while at the same time enriching the educational experiences of Saint Joseph College students and faculty and increasing outreach and volunteer opportunities for parishioners and staff of St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church.

The Wellness Center provides community-based, accessible health screenings and referrals, health and nutrition education, counseling services, and the case management services of social workers at no charge. Nursing students and faculty were on site during the Fall 2005 semester; Counseling, Social Work and Nutrition students and faculty joined their colleagues at The Wellness Center second semester.

Saint Joseph College President Evelyn C. Lynch, Ed.D. first announced the concept of The Wellness Center in her Inaugural Address in April,



L-R: Sister Beth Fischer, Saint Joseph College's coordinator of community outreach/partnerships, Reverend James Hynes, OFM, pastor of St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church, Saint Joseph College President Evelyn C. Lynch, Ed.D., and Trudi White, director of volunteer ministry at St. Patrick-St. Anthony.

2005. She worked with Father James Hynes, pastor of St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church, to realize the project shortly after her arrival in Connecticut. President Lynch believed that by working more closely with the city parish, the College community could have a positive impact on its neighbors in Hartford. She said: "The Wellness Center on Church Street is a natural extension of the College's Mercy mission of service to those in need. The College, over the course of its 73-year history, has established itself as a vital resource to the greater Hartford community in numerous ways. In partnering with the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry, we affirm and demonstrate our commitment to this

community in one more visible, tangible way."

Father James Hynes believes that the College's support will enhance the impact of his parish's people and programs. He said: "Churches and institutions of higher learning belong in partnership for the well-being of the community. We want our collaboration to reach beyond our own four walls in service to others, and by partnering with Saint Joseph College, we are able to reach more deeply into the community and to be more effective in how we reach."

For more detailed information about Saint Joseph College's involvement with The Wellness Center on Church Street, you may read the article "Where We Started" at www.sjc.edu/outlook.

Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
342 North Main Street, Suite 202
West Hartford, CT 06117
Student Success Statewide

p4



The Independent Voice is a publication of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges, a public policy association representing Connecticut's nonprofit independent higher education institutions.

Chair

Dr. Walter Harrison
President, University of Hartford

Vice Chair

Dr. Douglas J. Bennet
President, Wesleyan University

President

Judith B. Greiman
Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
ph: 860.236.0900
fax: 860.236.0910
e: greimanj@theccic.org
www.theccic.org

Membership

Albertus Magnus College
Connecticut College
Fairfield University
Goodwin College
Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts
Mitchell College
Quinnipiac University
Rensselaer at Hartford
Sacred Heart University
Saint Joseph College
Saint Vincent's College
Trinity College
University of Bridgeport
University of Hartford
University of New Haven
Wesleyan University
Yale University

The Independent Voice follows a regular rotation schedule featuring four of the seventeen member institutions in each quarterly issue.

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #1733
Hartford, CT