



## Connecticut State University System NEWS RELEASE

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### ***Student Government Leaders to be Honored at State Capitol; Reception Concludes Day Highlighting Academic Programs at Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities***

Twenty student government leaders from Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State universities are being honored at the State Capitol Thursday by the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System (CSUS) and state legislators.

The students, who serve in elected leadership positions at their respective universities, not only lead their respective student government organizations, they also work collaboratively on key issues. The student government presidents meet regularly as a system-wide Student Advisory Council, exchanging ideas, discussing issues and provide student perspective on matters facing the university system.

They provide advice to the Chancellor and senior administrators of the university system. The Chair of the Student Advisory Council rotates among the universities each year. Southern's student government president, Melvin Saunders, has served as chair during the current academic year.

"These young people have distinguished themselves, providing dedicated leadership and a truly remarkable level of involvement at the university they attend. We are pleased to recognize their achievement, and commend the time and talent they provide, which has certainly been a huge benefit for the entire university community," said Chairman Lawrence D. McHugh of the CSUS Board of Trustees.

The students being honored are:

**Central:** Alexander Estron (President-Student Government Association), Chelsea Bombria (President-Central Activities Network), Taryn Bonner (Vice President, SGA), Andrea Spitko (Vice President of Marketing & Recruiting), Erin LaCombe (Treasurer, CAN), Kenneth Barone, (Chair, Student Board of Governors), Corey Zohlman (Treasurer, SGA).

**Eastern:** Sulthana Sayed (President), Ibiyemi Ayeni (Vice President), Monica Rochon (Treasurer), Ashley Biegert (Secretary), and Michael Trombly (Budget & Management Chair).

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**Southern:** Melvin Saunders (President), Jessica Mascia (Vice President), Andrew Marullo (Board of Student Issues Chair), Anthony Ayala (Board of Finance Chair), and Felicia Valentino (Board of Public Relations Chair).

**Western:** Imran Qazi (President), Edmund Breitling (VP of Operations), Christina Williams (VP of Finance), and Eli Reed (VP of Student Relations).

The State Capitol reception is to be alcohol-free, consistent with the spirit of the Governor's focus on safe driving by young people, and the university system's policies to promote safe choices by students.

The reception honoring the student government leaders comes at the conclusion of CSUS Day at the State Capitol, during which the academic programs offered by the four universities were highlighted. Among the programs represented were those in the STEM areas (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) as well as nursing, business, technology and the arts.

The number of full-time students attending CSUS universities has increased by 37 percent since 1996, and undergraduate enrollment across CSUS is at the highest level on record. First time freshmen applications increased more than 10 percent between 2006 and 2007, and transfer applications by nearly 5 percent. Overall, 93 percent of CSUS students come from Connecticut, and nearly nine in ten graduates remain in Connecticut to pursue their careers.

Connecticut's largest university system, with more than 35,000 students at four universities in New Britain, Willimantic, New Haven and Danbury, the Connecticut State University System celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008. Each of the individual institutions has a century-long tradition of educational excellence, achieving university status in 1983.

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