

Central *focus*

summer 2006

the magazine for alumni & friends of central connecticut state university

**Now Playing:
Bill Berloni and
His Amazing
Animal Actors**



Letter from the President of the Alumni Association



Wendell G. Davis, Jr. '89

Congratulations and welcome to the newest members of the CCSU Alumni Association—the Class of 2006! Please call us with any questions you have about the programs and activities sponsored by your alumni association. While this time of year marks a new beginning for the graduates, the CCSU Alumni Association undertakes new leadership at its annual election. As the University grows, the responsibilities of the CCSU Alumni Association's board of directors increase exponentially. We need your support and guidance, so I encourage you to take this opportunity to familiarize yourself with, and become involved in, your alumni association.

The CCSU Alumni Association benefits alumni in a myriad of ways. The Alumni Association Scholarship, for example, helps to make a CCSU education accessible to the children and grandchildren of alumni. Last March, teachers, parents, grandparents and other alumni representatives reached out to more than 40,000 children across Connecticut in the Read Across America Program. More than 3,000 alumni attended reunions, receptions and networking parties around the state and in Arizona, Florida and Washington, D.C. in just this year alone. The response to our short term medical, life, identity theft, and auto insurance, and credit card and loan consolidation programs has proven a definite need for these products.

These are just a few of the many programs available to you through your alumni association, all made possible through the efforts of hundreds of alumni volunteers, including the board of directors, and the guidance of the staff of the Office of Development & Alumni Affairs.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve the alumni of CCSU for the past three years. As I step aside, I find solace in knowing that I will continue to gain many new friendships simply by staying involved in the alumni association's activities and events.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendell G. Davis, Jr.' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wendell G. Davis, Jr. '89

Congratulations Class of 2006!





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FROM US TO YOU The CCSU motto, "Start with a Dream, Finish with a Future" must have been created with Bill Berloni '89 in mind. Berloni, the subject of our cover story, enrolled at CCSU in the mid-1970s with the dream of becoming a Broadway star. His dream came true, though not exactly as planned. Instead of being on stage, Berloni works with animals who take the bows for him. His experience at Central helped to establish his career, which has been more personally and professionally fulfilling than he ever could have imagined. We hope you enjoy his story.

We hope you also enjoy the story on the Theatre Department, which explores the history of the department and chronicles how it has evolved into one of the best programs of its kind in the state. And you'll want to check out the latest news in Sports, as well as peruse the photos and accounts of the many alumni events that have occurred over the past several months, including the annual presentation of the CCSU Alumni Association Awards and inductions into the CCSU Alumni Association Athletic Hall of Fame.

We wish all of our alumni a safe and relaxing summer and look forward to sharing with you the results of the Alumni Association board elections in our next issue. 'Til then, stay cool!

The *Central Focus* Editorial Staff

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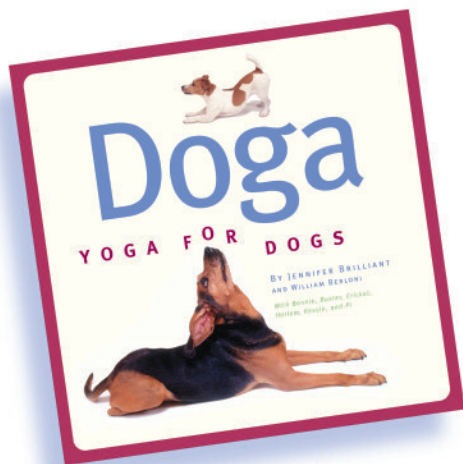
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Bennie

How many people do you know would turn down the chance to appear on late-night television with Jay Leno or David Letterman? Well, now you know one: Bill Berloni. Berloni, a professional animal trainer, did just that when he was invited to visit the talk shows to discuss his book, *Doga: Yoga for Dogs*.



Dogs Don't Do Yoga

by Martha Perry

As a theatre major at CCSU in the mid-1970s, Berloni dreamt of a Broadway career. But while working as an unpaid technical apprentice at the Goodspeed Opera House during the summer before his sophomore year, he was handed an unusual opportunity. Michael Price, the organization's famous former executive director, called Berloni into his office one day and asked him if he'd like to be in one of the shows.

"I had barely spoken to [Mr. Price] up to that point, and I couldn't figure out why he was offering me a part. Then he said, 'All you have to do is find and train a dog for the show.'"

The show Price was referring to was the original production of *Annie*. And the dog, of course, was the original Sandy.

Berloni had no way of knowing at the time how significant this opportunity would be, but being "the sucker" he was, he tackled the project with his usual enthusiasm. With no budget to buy a dog, someone suggested that he check out the animal shelters.

"One day I grabbed a truck and a Polaroid camera and started looking for sandy-colored mutts. I found one at the Connecticut Humane Society who was pretty badly abused. I adopted him and thought, 'If we treat this dog like our pet, and make him think of our theatre as his home, he might do [what is required of him on stage.]' Looking back, it was a positive reinforcement method of training, which was not the norm back then. It worked."

The next summer Berloni moved to New York, where he enrolled in the drama program at NYU. He brought 'Sandy' with him, in part because he had grown attached to him and in part because having a dog was "in keeping with

When Berloni's co-author, a yoga expert, first approached him about collaborating on the project, he remembers telling her—rather emphatically—that dogs don't do yoga. "I told her I wasn't interested in working on something where we exploit dogs," Berloni says. But after further discussion, the two agreed on a book that would feature dogs displaying the essence of yoga. "I found six dogs who reflected the various characteristics of yoga—bravery, courage, and so on. But it was meant to be a yoga book for people, not for dogs." Appearing on Leno or Letterman, Berloni insists, "would have sent the wrong message. I didn't want people at home twisting their little dogs into yoga positions."

Like the dogs in his book, Berloni has an inner calmness about him, not to mention a sense of humor. Yet he takes his work with animals very seriously.



Buster

Photos of *Doga*, Bennie, Buster and Kessie
Copyright © David Hughes/Hotfoot Studio

the lifestyle of a starving artist.” A few months later, Mike Nichols’ office called to say they were producing *Annie* for Broadway, using the original company. “They asked, ‘Would you be interested in participating?’ and I thought, ‘Any chance to work with Mike Nichols.’” The show went to Washington and opened on Broadway in 1977. And Berloni became a Broadway animal trainer.

Berloni has worked on countless Broadway shows in the ensuing three decades. Recent projects include a revival of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, for which he trained

a pack of eight dogs to run on stage simultaneously; a production of the new Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, *The Woman in White*, for which he trained a rat; and an upcoming adaptation of *Legally Blond*, with its signature Chihuahua. And with regional theatres of various sizes staging their own versions of *Annie* and *The Wizard of Oz* the world over, Berloni has more than enough work to keep him and his team of trainers busy.

“I chose early in my career to stay in the theatre, as opposed to going to Hollywood where the money is,” he explains. “Theatre is my specialty, and no one else has really been able to figure it out.”

Having lived in New York for many years, Berloni now resides on a farm in Higganum with his wife and young daughter. The conditions there are better suited to caring for his brood of animals, the exact number of which is in constant flux. The current tally includes 17 dogs, five cats, three horses, a donkey, a pony, two llamas, three rats, three mice, and two cockatiels.

“All of the animals we train are rescued, and I’ve become a big animal rights advocate, so at any given moment we have animals going in and out of foster situations,” he explains.

Surprisingly, working with stage animals is not unlike working with human actors. Says Berloni: “Producers will say to me, ‘Can you guarantee that that dog is going to perform?’ and I respond, ‘Can you guarantee that the actors will remember their lines every night?’ Dogs are living creatures, and my philosophy is not one in which I force them to work. I try to create a situation in which they want to do things.

Do they make mistakes? Yes. But ninety percent of the time it’s because the actor has given the wrong cue. And because dogs don’t have the benefit of cognitive thought process, they can’t say, ‘Oh, she screwed up her



William M. Berloni '89 demonstrates the training of a rat for a theatrical production

line, so I’ll cover for her.’ Instead, they get confused and walk off stage.”

Animals share other similarities with their two-legged counterparts. “It’s just like working in an office. There is a dynamic that changes day to day; it changes as the animals age, as the new stupid young ones come in ... we are constantly shifting and adjusting.”

Likewise, dogs are ‘temperament tested’ for the stage just as people are. “Some people love to stand up in front of others, whereas the rest of us would shake in our pants,” says Berloni.

“Some dogs are meant to stay at home and sleep on a couch while others want to get out there and be with people. So I look for dogs that deal well with stress and are comfortable with chaos.”

The most difficult part of his job, though, is passing the baton to the actor. Ideally, a trainer works with a dog for hours on end until a bond develops. The trainer and dog reach a point where they are totally in sync. It is just at that moment, however, that Berloni has to turn over the animal to a complete stranger and hope for the best.

“I chose early in my career to stay in the theatre, as opposed to going to Hollywood where the money is. Theatre is my specialty, and no one else has really been able to figure it out.”

“The hardest part is working with the actor who ultimately is going to handle the animal. If the actor doesn’t care, if he doesn’t like animals, if he’s not interested in forming a bond, then my job is unsuccessful, and there isn’t anything I can do about it,” says Berloni.

Some smaller theatres, for instance, will hire a Dorothy or an Annie who either is afraid of or allergic to dogs. (“You would think they’d ask them that at the audition,” Berloni bemoans.) But it happens, even in New York. Berloni even recalls one occasion when he

had to appear on stage in costume to compensate for an actress who exaggerated her level of experience working with animals. (Ordinarily, trainers are on hand at every performance, but only in a supervisory role. At that point, says Berloni, “our job is to keep the dogs healthy and focused and ▶



Kessie



Carol Rosegg


Bill Berloni and Cindy Lou, from the 20th anniversary production of *Annie*

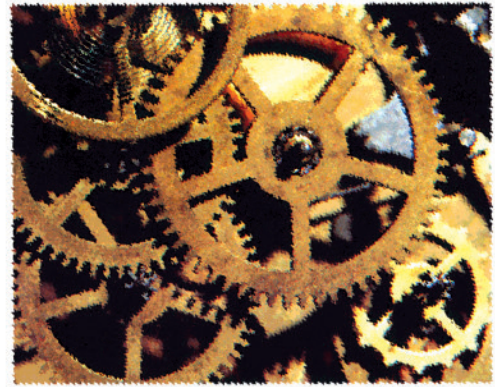
well-rested so that in that one moment, they are in optimum condition to focus on what they need to do.”)

While his career has followed an unexpected path, Berloni has no regrets. “Working at the Goodspeed, I saw talented actors. Then I went to Broadway and saw other 20-year-old actors who could sing and dance and were better-looking than I was, and I knew I would probably end up a second-rate character actor. So I asked myself, ‘Do you want that, or do you want to do something that no one else on Broadway can do?’ I didn’t have to go through years of rejection to come to my decision.”

“From the very beginning, I have been a collaborator,” he continues. “I get to work with the directors, the designers, the entire artistic team. I get to educate them about what is really possible when it comes to putting animals on stage. Do I miss performing? Not at all. This job has taken me so many different places.”

Berloni’s story has another happy ending. After coming home to Connecticut, he returned to CCSU and finished his bachelor’s degree in 1989.

“I think the reason I am successful is that I love animals and I love theatre,” reflects Berloni. “I never started out to be a trainer, so when I make decisions about what I do and how I do it, it is from a good place.” 



CCSU to Offer Program in Mechanical Engineering

Responding to one of the state’s most pressing workforce needs, CCSU will begin offering a Bachelor of Science program in mechanical engineering in fall 2006.

“This is excellent news,” said CCSU President John W. Miller, in making the announcement. “The demand for qualified engineers in Connecticut is double the number of engineering graduates from all of the state’s colleges and universities combined. This new program will soon begin to address the state’s workforce needs.”

Dr. Zdzislaw Kremens, dean of CCSU’s School of Technology, which will house the program, said, “This is a natural fit for us. It draws on the strengths of the School of Technology, which offers a practical, application-oriented education. Our co-op and internship programs provide students with challenging real-work experiences. Our faculty are not only highly qualified professors of engineering, they also have extensive experience in industry, and so they can advise students about best practices and future trends.”

Kremens said that the curriculum was designed to be “forward looking,” drawing from a comprehensive report produced by the National Academy of Engineers: *The Engineer of 2020*. “That report, especially with its emphasis on the urgent need to teach engineering that connects applied sciences, engineering design, and solutions to real-world problems, was a crucial component in developing our program.”

Another key component is the commitment to attract capable students from currently underrepresented groups. Says Kremens, “As all reports indicate, successful engineers need to be able to work in highly diverse groups. So bringing in a diverse student body will be a win-win situation for all students.”

Center Stage: The CCSU Theatre Department

As a professor of theatre and chairwoman of her department, Lani Johnson is often hard-pressed for time. Even so, this past spring was an unusually busy time as she prepared costumes for the largest show in her 38 years at CCSU. The play, *Red Noses*, a dark comedy about the Black Plague, featured 30 cast members and some 87 characters. "Costume-wise it was enormous," Johnson says. "I've never had so many costumes to build in so little time."

Despite the demands, Johnson was excited about the show, in part because it illustrated just how far the Theatre Department has come. Key among these advancements is the emphasis on specialties within technical theatre.

"Technical theatre used to be lumped into one category—whether you were in costuming, lighting, scenery, sound—you were all one," Johnson says. "But the skills a costumer needs, for example, require coursework in figure drawing and art history, which are very specific to costuming."



Lani Johnson with student costume shop assistants Cathy Lee (left) and Sophie A. R. Hopper

Red Noses also showcased improvisation, an important element in the acting curriculum at CCSU. "Improvisation has, in many ways, become the heart of our program," says Johnson. "Acting is much more than memorizing lines and doing what you're told to do. It is important to teach students to think on their feet. And



Lani Johnson, chair of the CCSU Theatre Department, with some of the 100 or so costumes built for the recent production of *Red Noses*

Red Noses was filled with clowning and juggling and very physical acting."

Johnson came to CCSU on a one-year appointment in 1968, right out of graduate school. At the time, speech and theatre were combined in one department. During her first year, the two programs separated. "It took some years before we got a major," says Johnson, "and then it took more years, and a lot of hard work, to get a Bachelor of Fine Arts program, the highest undergraduate degree you can earn in theatre." Now, she says, "Central has one of the best undergraduate theatre majors in the state, both in performance and in technical theatre."

The department currently offers two degree programs: the aforementioned BFA, for students who plan to go on to graduate school and pursue careers in professional theatre, and the BA, for students who want to study theatre alongside a minor or concentration in another academic discipline. Soon the department also will introduce two new teacher certification programs: one in dance and the other in theater.


Other changes have occurred, too. At one time, all departmental productions were presented in the college theater, which later became the university theater before undergoing a total renovation and reopening as Torp Theatre in 1999. (Torp is named after Thaddeus Torp, "a marvelous director and enthusiastic theatre person who was the Theatre Department way back when," says Johnson.) Today, most departmental productions are staged in the black box theatre in Maloney Hall



Special effects make-up artist Leigh Radziwon '04 creates make-up effects on the neck of CCSU student Chris Thompson

which, according to Johnson, "demands a very different kind of acting because it is more intimate, with the actors very close to the audience." The lighting and sound systems also have been upgraded with state-of-the-art technology and are now some of the best in the state.

From a human perspective, the department attracts more serious theatre students than ever before. Likewise, the faculty has become more specialized. "Our emphasis is on hiring experts who are skilled in one area," says Johnson.

Despite the growth and change, one important thing has stayed the same. "Our goal is no different than it was 30 years ago, which is to produce really good theater," says Johnson. "Our goals have always been to provide the best work we can for our audience and the best training for our students." 



(l-r) Denis Murphy '91, Wayne Campbell '90, Alfrancis Williams '91, Bryan Heron '94, John Wilgus '88, Don Dunning '89 at men's basketball reunion February 18th



(l-r) David Monti, Sr. '64, MS '68, Carmay (Santoro) Monti '64, MS '74, and Chuck McGarry '74 at Florida Reunion February 26th



Howard B. Dickenman, Jr. '70, MS '75 with daughter Erica Dickenman '98 who surprised him at Hoop Group Lunch on Valentine's Day



(l-r) Madeline (Sherry) Marcoux '41, Helen (Reed) Tonkin '41, and Margaret (Judd) Yung '41, MS '67 celebrated their 65th reunion (TCC) at Alumni Day on April 29th



(l-r) Barbara Lukas MS '90, Lowell Lukas and Peter Vieira at Florida Reunion February 26th



(l-r) Joan Perrone, Tony Veneziano '57, Peggy Veneziano, Mike Perrone '59, Nancy Deneen at Florida Reunion February 26th



(l-r) Jason Smith '02, Jeremy Bergh '00, Victor Payne '01, Corsley Edwards II '02, Rick Mickens '00, Ayotunde Williams '99, advisor Bobbie Koplowitz, and Tomas Brookins '00 (in front) at men's basketball reunion February 18th



(l-r) Jeff Buskey '97, MS '02, Matt Grimm '96, Kevin Oliva '90, MS '96, Fred Bonvicini '79, MS '81, MS '83 at Blue Devil Classic golf tournament May 5th

CCSU Alumni Association Awards & Athletic Hall of Fame Induction

An excited group of alumni, family and friends gathered on April 28th to celebrate the 2006 CCSU Alumni Association Awards and Athletic Hall of Fame Induction. Emotions were running especially high for a beloved coach who would be inducted into the CCSU Alumni Association Athletic Hall of Fame, but who was unable to be present because of illness.



Angelo Messina

Angelo J. Messina '75, recipient of the 2006 Distinguished Alumni Service Award, credits his Central education for a very successful career. He graduated *magna cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in accounting from CCSU, received a juris doctorate from the University of Connecticut School of Law, and completed a master's degree in management as a Sloan Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology. He held positions at PriceWaterhouse and Gerber Scientific prior to joining United Technologies Corporation (UTC) in 1983 as associate counsel, a position that required his presence in Singapore for several years. Since returning to the U.S., he has served UTC and its subsidiaries in a variety of legal and financial positions. In July 2005, he was named vice president and chief financial officer for Otis Elevator Company, where he oversees all aspects of finance. Messina has served as chair of the CCSU Foundation, a post that was cut short when he was appointed by the Governor to serve as a trustee of the CSU system.



Tracey Obst Bonvincini

The adage, 'if you want something done, give it to the busiest person you know' defines the recipient of the 2006 Young Alumni Service Award. **Tracey Obst Bonvincini '89** was a dedicated member of the CCSU Alumni Association Board of Directors for six years, including two as chair of the Ways and Means Committee, until her term expired. Prior to her current commitment as full-time mother of three boys,

Tracey applied her management skills at Aetna as a drafter of employee benefit books and supervisor of an employee benefits team for eight years. She creatively uses those skills as president of the St. Peter Home & School Association in Torrington, and has also served as its hospitality chair. Bonvincini helps to raise money for the school when she's not driving Benjamin, Matthew or Joseph to baseball practice, karate classes, swim lessons, basketball games and Cub Scout activities.



CCSU Alumni Association award recipients and Athletic Hall of Fame inductees: (l-r) Jack Banks '81, Tom McCarthy '90, MS '96 (accepting the award for his ill father-in-law, George Redman), Gale Brown '74, Kevin Cranford '89, Bob Winn '81, Ken Hightower '84, Tracey Bonvincini '89, Angelo Messina '75



Jack Banks

Jack H. Banks '81 is living his dream as owner and operator of two of the state's finest gyms, Powerhouse Gym in Berlin and Malibu Fitness in Farmington, in partnership with fellow CCSU grad, Paul Carson '81. The former CCSU javelin thrower, and this year's recipient of the Kaiser Alumni Service Award, volunteered his expertise as strength and conditioning coach for the wrestling, baseball, basketball

and football teams after graduating. He is passionately involved in community activities including Special Olympics and youth sports. He and his firms are the organizers and primary sponsors of the annual Farmington Valley Road Race, which benefits Juvenile Diabetes and the Channel 3 Kids Camp.

2006 CCSU Alumni Association Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees



Gale Brown

Among the top volleyball players in CCSU history, **Gale Gokey Brown, Jr. '74** is remembered as much for her intellectual gifts as her athletic abilities. She received her physical education degree, *magna cum laude*, from CCSU in 1974, then earned a medical degree from the University of Connecticut in 1980, and a graduate certificate in special studies from Harvard University in 1995. "Gigi," now known as

Dr. Gale Brown, is board certified in internal medicine, physical medicine and rehabilitation, and is in private practice in the Portsmouth, NH area. Gigi served as team captain for multiple seasons while at CCSU, was

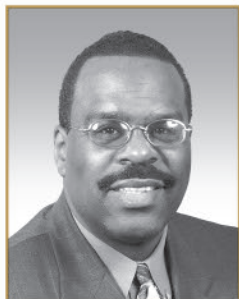
invited to try out for the U.S. Volleyball Team in 1973, and participated in the United States Volleyball Association Nationals from 1970-74. A member of Phi Beta Kappa, Brown earned the Gail Rutz Award as CCSU's most outstanding senior female athlete and, in 2002, was inducted into the Connecticut Volleyball Hall of Fame. She also spent several seasons as an outside hitter with the Connecticut Clippers.



Kevin Cranford

Kevin W. Cranford '89 has always been a champion, having established a Central standard of excellence in his specialty that has stood for 25 years. The greatest triple jumper ever to don a Blue Devil uniform, he continued to excel long after earning his bachelor's degree at CCSU and his master's at Springfield College, becoming the U.S. National Masters champion in the 35-39 age group in 1997.

The kind of discipline and dedication it takes to be a world-class athlete has made Cranford a tireless advocate for Connecticut's most at-risk youngsters. As a program quality coordinator for the state Department of Children and Families, he oversees services to Connecticut youngsters who are sent out of state and develops and evaluates new treatment programs.



Kenneth Hightower

While he has enjoyed a highly successful executive-level career in the insurance industry since leaving CCSU, former basketball star **Kenneth C. Hightower '84** was the kind of player who was always willing to mix it up inside despite being physically smaller—sometimes much smaller—than those with whom he did battle. That never-give-an-inch attitude is one reason why, even after more than

20 years, Hightower's name is still among CCSU's elite in scoring and rebounding. Hightower is one of only five players ever to score more than a thousand points and grab more than a thousand rebounds for the Blue Devils.



George Redman

George L. Redman holds a unique place in Central history and in the hearts of his players. An outstanding athlete in his own right, he came to CCSU in 1969 and, in a sense, never left. Although officially retired, he has taken up new causes with the same competitive fervor that made him both the fiercest of competitors and the most loyal of friends. Those who played for him claim that they responded to his

relentless commitment to excellence by finding strengths they never knew they had. He coached linemen, linebackers, and defensive backs and served as both offensive

and defensive coordinator over more than 15 years on the football sidelines. He also coached baseball and established a wrestling program that set the standard in New England. Redman was honored as America East Coach of the Year in 1990. He is preceded in the Athletic Hall of Fame by players in all three of the sports he coached.



Robert Winn

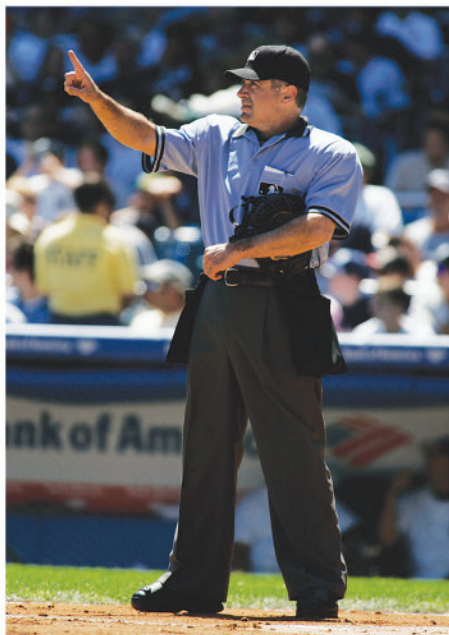
Robert N. Winn '81 jokes about the 'tremendous growth spurt' he enjoyed between the time he graduated from high school and the time he entered CCSU. By his reckoning, he shot "all the way up to 5'6." By the time he graduated, Winn had set a CCSU home course record at Stanley Quarter Park, a school record in the 10,000 meter run, and twice earned All-New England and All-East honors in cross

country and track and field. He also qualified for the NCAA championships and was named to the All-Eastern Conference teams for both his athletic and academic accomplishments. In 1981, Winn was honored with the Frederick M. Gladstone Award as the University's most outstanding male athlete. Successful as a teacher, coach and businessman, Winn has remained active in long distance running. He has been the Maine Runner of the Year several times, the New England Runner of the Year, and is a three-time National Masters Cross Country Champion.



ITBD
Notes Success of Incubator Companies

CCSU's Institute of Technology and Business Development (ITBD) marked the success of two of its incubator companies recently. U.S. 5th District Congresswoman Nancy L. Johnson (above, third from right) congratulates U.S. Tax and Bookkeeping Services, LLC (UST&BS), an ITBD incubator company that won a major contract with national casual furniture retailer LoveSac. Joining her are (from left): ITBD Managing Director and Central graduate Richard C. Mullins, Jr. '84; Hugh Curley of the U.S. Small Business Administration office in Hartford; CCSU President Jack Miller; Robert Nix, managing director for business development of UST&BS; Marshal P. Trigg '97, managing director of operations for UST&BS and a CCSU alumnus; Amber Craig, store manager of LoveSac in Meriden; and her assistant manager, Kelly Treanor. International Plating Technology was also recognized; it is the first ITBD-based company to qualify for the coveted ISO 9000 Quality Registration Certificate. "Both companies work with other incubators in the building and have significant economic impact on the state," said Mullins. Johnson hailed the event saying, "ITBD's incubator companies add value to big companies."



John F. Hirschbeck '76, umpire, major league baseball

John Hirschbeck: The Man Behind the Mask

While his name is the “answer” to several intriguing trivia questions, John Hirschbeck’s major league career has been anything but trivial. In fact, the 1976 Central grad has been one of the game’s highest profile umpires for a very long time.

The trivia questions: “Who’s the president of the World Umpires Association (the bargaining unit for major league umpires)?” “Can you name the first brothers ever to become Major League Umpires?” (John and Mark Hirschbeck.) And, of course, “What was the name of that umpire involved in the famous 1996 Roberto Alomar ‘spitting incident?’”

Even casual fans remember the ugly scene, but only true baseball trivia buffs recall the names of the people involved. Fewer still know that Hirschbeck and Alomar have since become good friends off the field, or that, as a result of their friendship, the former player has contributed more than a quarter of a million dollars to ALD research. ALD is an acronym for Adrenoleukodystrophy, the rare genetic brain disorder, which took the life of the umpire’s eight-year-old son John.

Hirschbeck, who now makes his home in Poland, OH, came to CCSU from Bridgeport and earned a degree in physical education. By the time he graduated,

he’d already been “bitten” by the umpiring bug. He attended a specialized school and worked his way up the ranks with stops in the Instructional League, the Florida State League, the Eastern League and the International League along the way.

He wears number “17” and has been a Major League umpire since 1984, serving as a crew chief for much of that time. An avid outdoorsman in the off-season, he has twice worked the Major League All-Star Game and called divisional series games and league championships on several occasions. He also worked the World Series in 1995. He calls that “the proudest moment of my career.”



Charlie Hickey, head coach, CCSU baseball

Baseball Blue Devils Soar

Boasting strong pitching and seven starters batting over .300 for much of the season, the baseball Blue Devils won the Northeast Conference regular season championship and handed Coach Charlie Hickey his 300th career victory. Hickey was named Coach of the Year for the third time in his seven seasons here.

Over the course of the previous five years, CCSU won three conference championships and made as many NCAA tournament appearances. In one particularly memorable stretch, Hickey’s teams posted four straight 30-win seasons and won a school record 41 games in 2004. CCSU finished at 33-18 this year and was second in the NEC tournament.

Junior pitcher Evan Scribner was one of just two hurlers named to the All-NEC first team. CCSU players making the second team were juniors Sean Salvatore, Matt Memoli and John Romano, along with freshman hitting star Richie Tri.



Howard B. Dickenman, Jr. '70, MS '75, head coach, CCSU men’s basketball

Dickenman Honored by Peers

The Northeast Conference will be kicking off its 26th season in the fall. Until Howie Dickenman came along, no one had ever earned Coach of the Year honors in men’s basketball more than twice. In just his tenth season at CCSU and ninth as a member of the NEC, the 1970 Central grad set a new league standard when he earned Coach of the Year honors for the third time.

The award celebrates the fact that, while CCSU was picked to finish in the middle of the NEC pack in the league’s preseason poll, Dickenman’s Devils ended up in second place during the regular season. They were 13-5 in league play and 17-10 overall before the playoffs, which saw them beat Sacred Heart before dropping a semifinal round decision to eventual tournament titlist Monmouth.

Dickenman, who also won the award in 1999-2000 and 2001-2002, owns an 11-6 record in NEC Tournament appearances. His .647 is the highest winning percentage among active league coaches and fourth all-time.

37 Josephine (Bertino) Tansey was honored for outstanding contributions to volunteerism at the Spirit of New Hampshire Awards dinner in Concord. New Hampshire Governor John Lynch presented Jo with a plaque inscribed “2005 Spirit of N.H. Awards/Volunteer Service Award.”

58 Tony Antonelli, MS '65, technology education teacher, retired from North Haven High School; **Frank Borchetta**, Windsor Locks High School, retired, currently adjunct professor at Asnuntuck Community College; **Joe Didato**, director of guidance, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, retired; **Paul Falcigno, MS '69**, technology education teacher, retired from Wilbur Cross High School, New Haven; **Carlo Palmer**, department chair, technology education teacher, Brien McMahon High School, Norwalk, retired; and **Frank Testa**, vice principal, Carmen Arace Middle School in Bloomfield, retired, all members of the TCC Class of 1958, recently enjoyed a nostalgic visit to the campus, and their “collective reaction to seeing CCSU’s spacious facilities was one of awe.”

61 Leigh B. Shearer, MS '71, of North Conway, NH, is the recipient of the Rotarian First Responder of the Year Award.

68 John W. Calla, Jr. is a partner in Liberty Sport Aviation LLC, specializing in light sport aircraft. He and wife, **Judith (Badera) Calla '68, MA '96**, live in York, PA.

69 Elizabeth (Daley) Nelligan retired from her position as a 4th-grade teacher in Canton.



Charles “C.J.” Jones, Jr. '69, MS '72, athletic director at CCSU, left, co-authored a book, *A Method to March Madness: An Insider’s Look at the Final Four*,

with Thomas Hazuka, professor of English. The book draws upon C.J.’s experience as a student-athlete, coach, athletic director, and more than three decades of attending the Final Four.



Carolyn J. Book '71 was promoted to senior vice president of regulatory risk management at Citizens Bank, her employer since 1999.

She is responsible for developing and managing the corporate regulatory identification, communication and implementation program, and also serves as the corporate privacy officer. She lives in Cumberland, RI.

71 Beverly (Bitgood) Williams retired after 24 years of service to the State of Connecticut as a personnel psychologist.

72 John M. Battista, MS '78, who retired after teaching 32 years at Daisy Ingraham Elementary School in Westbrook and now is teaching part-time at East Farms School in Farmington, recently received a professional service award from the Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. His wife, **Catherine (Morassini) Battista, '72, MS '77**, is director of the Family Resource Center at Benjamin Franklin School and John Barry School in Meriden. They live in South Meriden. **Edward A. (Ned) Biehler** and **Olga (Glenges) Biehler '72** started a family business with three sons in 2003. Pegasus Sales & Marketing, a food broker, recently merged with a Florida company and is now known as AFM/Pegasus Sales. **Lynn A. Bode** is a customer service trainer with United Airlines at Newark International Airport.

74 John G. Parauka has taught for New Orleans Public Schools since graduating from CCSU, most recently at Ben Franklin High School. He reports that New Orleans Public Schools were all but destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. With the help of parents, the principal and the faculty, the school was able to resume classes as a charter school. Prior to Katrina, Franklin High was the #1 school in the State of Louisiana, with 25 national Merit Finalists this year alone in spite of the storm. Much of the city remains devastated with no electricity, phones, street lights or basic services. John would love to hear from other alumni in the New Orleans area.

79 Raymond S. Kostka, Jr. was elected as a corporator of Griffin Hospital in Derby. **Savas S. Synodi, MS '86** is assistant football coach (offensive coordinator) and athletic director of Branford High School.

83 Mary (Johnson) MacLean was promoted to assistant manager of the law firm Zeisler & Zeisler, PC in Bridgeport.

84 Stan Simpson, columnist for *The Hartford Courant* and WTIC NewsTalk personality, was voted best local newspaper columnist by the readers of *Hartford Magazine* (May issue).

86 Donald M. Casey, Jr., a professional educator at Stepney Elementary School in Monroe, was selected for inclusion in the 2005/2006 edition of *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*.

87 Steven T. Cohen is manager of commercial accounts for Bermack, Champion & Lewine, personal and business insurance services, in New York. **Jonathan R. Topazian** is an attorney and partner with Semmes, Bowen & Semmes, PC, practicing labor and employment law and litigation on behalf of management; insurance company insolvency and liquidation; and complex commercial litigation in Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD. Leisure time activities include enduro-style racing, Harley-Davidson cruising, golf, hiking, bass fishing and short story writing.



Congratulations to **Robert G. Hale, Jr. '76, MS '81, 6th Yr '84**, principal of Westbrook High School and resident of Clinton, who was

named the 2006 Connecticut High School Principal of the Year by the Connecticut Association of Schools. A 30-year veteran educator honored for his single-minded commitment to high levels of student achievement, Bob was nominated by Westbrook Superintendent Dr. John Sullivan and Special Services Coordinator Chester Bialicki. Says Sullivan, “Bob has boundless energy and is totally dedicated to the success of his students and their school.”

88 Jonathan S. Chernes, Jr. left *Martha Stewart Living* after more than eight years to become managing editor of *House Beautiful*. In addition to his role at *HB*, he is an adjunct faculty member in Parsons' [the New School For Design] Design and Management program. **Julie (Tippo) Cotnoir** is technical preparation coordinator and retention specialist at Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield and a freelance journalist for *The Hartford Courant*, *Journal Inquirer*, and *Cape Cod Life*. She and husband, **Michael T. Cotnoir '88**, live in Enfield. **John A. Verderosa IV** is athletic director and physical education supervisor for Raritan High and Hazlet Middle Schools in Hazlet, NJ. His master's degree is from New Jersey City University, and he is currently certified as a New Jersey teacher, supervisor, principal and superintendent of schools. He and his wife, Marie, reside in Toms River, NJ with their two children.

89 Cassandra Vorisek-Creto is married and a new mom. She runs her own business, The Wholesome Horse; serves as treasurer and planned giving chair for the Humane Society for Greater Nashua, NH; and is executive director of the New Hampshire chapter of Community Associations Institute.

91 Steven S. Brooks is mental health advocate for Cedarcrest Hospital in Newington and, seasonally, a tax processor for Bank of America. **James A. Goodman** was elected a corporator of Griffin Hospital in Derby. **Wendy M. Lux-Yakulevich** is director of development at the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington. She is also the president (2005/2006) of the Connecticut chapter of the Association of Fund-raising Professionals. **Patricia A. Stamidis, MS '95** is assistant principal at York Correctional Institution in Niantic.

92 Mylinda A. Howard-Oliva, who "loves helping people get organized," is building a business as an organizing consultant while working full-time as project manager at The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc. She also coordinates a busy household with husband, **Kevin C. Oliva '90, MS '96**, director of the Academic Center for Student Athletes at CCSU, and their two young children. **Andrew M. Kokorda III** is a senior financial analyst with Applera Corporation in Norwalk. **David V. Palmer** is currently living in New York City and is a book editor for Hachette

Marriages

Jocelyn D. Ocelik '97, MS '04 & Jeremy J. Campbell '98 6/25/05
Denise D. Rock '98 & Eddie DuBose IV 5/14/05
Sherlly Contreras & Alexander F. Cortes '00 5/6/05
Ana Maria Tosado '00 & Brian J. Bernier 7/9/05
Cara Vivencio & Jorge Veintimilla '00 8/13/05
Sabrina Marino '02 & Sebastiano Boccaccio 10/8/05
Katherine Radcliffe Banach, MS '02 & Edwin W. Davis 9/24/05
Maura Beth Carey '03 & Michael R. Beaudoin '02 10/29/05
Kimberly Kudla '03 & Matthew Cornell 9/10/05
Marissa L. Valentino '03 & Craig Browning 5/30/05
Stephanie A. Baker '04 & Brendan Murphy 12/18/25



Amy (Doyle) Coan '94, MS '04, a chemistry teacher at East Catholic High School in Manchester, was honored by the New England Institute of Chemists (NEIC) as a recipient of a regional NEIC Secondary School Chemistry Teachers Award, which is awarded annually to one chemistry teacher in each New England state.

Book Group USA (formerly Time Warner Book Group). **Amy Jo (Schott) Vonderhorst** is the funds and stewardship coordinator at Keene State College in Keene, NH.

93 Megan (Mozdziak) Nolan is director of new business services at The Hartford. She and husband, Rick, and children reside in Coventry.

94 Jennifer (Graves) Flatow is volunteer manager for Family Centers, Inc. in Greenwich, CT. **Laurie L. O'Neil**, owner and president of Innovative Financial Services LLC in Hartford, was elected to the board of directors of the Connecticut Business Hall of Fame.

95 Suzanne M. Finn is corporate affairs manager for IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers) in Washington, DC. The National Association of Educational Procurement (NAEP) recently selected **Thomas J. Fogarty**, executive director of business and auxiliary services at Harrisburg, PA Area Community College (HACC), to serve as its regional president for Delaware, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

96 Kenneth C. Wolf is a sales agent for Metlife.

97 Jack J. Burriesci has accepted a position with a defense contractor in Washington, DC and will be working on a project for the Department of

New Arrivals (Births/Adoptions)

Cassandra Vorisek-Creto '89 & Albert Creto: a daughter, Isabelle Lauren
Amy Jo Schott Vonderhorst '92 & Shawn Vonderhorst: a daughter, Emily
Kristen Dickinson Piscitelli '95 & Michael Piscitelli: a son, Gabriel Matthew
Erin Kane Caron '02 & Corey Caron: a son, John Michael
Angela Masciangioli-Shea '03 & Michael J. Shea '95: twin daughters, Tralee Rose and Sydney Irene
Melany Gagner Anderson '05 & Eric Anderson: a son, Evan Jon

Homeland Security. **Jocelyn (Ocelik) Campbell, MS '04** is a vocational rehabilitation counselor for the State of Connecticut while husband, **Jeremy J. Campbell '98**, who earned a master's degree from RPI in '02 and an MBA from the University of Hartford in '05, is employed at Yale University in finance and administration. They live in Higganum.

98 Denise (Rock) DuBose is recently married and a mail handler for the United States Postal Service. **Gayle (Knobe) Kuhr** is relationship manager for ADP – National Account Services.

Stay [In] Touch!

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phone: (860) 832-1740
fax: (860) 832-2585

00 Alexander Cortes was recently promoted to communications manager at ESPN, Inc. in Bristol. **Meghan M. Jarboe, MS '04** is a 6th grade English teacher in West Hartford and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program in education administration. **Jorge E. Veintimilla** is teaching physical education in grades 4, 5 and 6 for Public Schools of the Tarrytowns, NJ, and coaching varsity football, wrestling and lacrosse, as well as working in real estate. Jorge's classmates, **Michael Zielinski '98** and **Sean P. Conway '99**, were members of the wedding party at his recent marriage to Cara Vivenzio.

01 David Gagnard, MS '05 is a technology education teacher in Plainville and an adjunct professor at Briarwood College. **Thomas C. Perrine [MS]** is a school counselor for Fulton County Schools in Atlanta, GA and lacrosse coach for Roswell High School in Roswell, GA.

02 Sabina T. Szylobryt [MS] is a 4th-grade teacher for Southington Public Schools.

03 Maura (Carey) Beaudoin is an insurance agent with Bouvier Beckwith & Lennox in West Hartford. Recently wedded to **Michael R. Beaudoin '02**, a business analyst with Pratt & Whitney, they live in Newington. **Jason S. Lambert [6th Yr]**, assistant principal at Newington High School since 2003, was named principal at Martin Kellogg Middle School, also in Newington.

04 Stephanie (Baker) Murphy is a music teacher for Central Linn School District in Brownsville, OR and is enrolled in a master's degree program at Grand Canyon University. She and her husband, Brendan, live in Eugene, OR.

05 Stefanie M. Dearing is an actuarial analyst for St. Paul Travelers in Hartford. **Michelle T. Pratt** is a health fitness specialist at ProFitness Health Solutions in Shelton. **Anne T. Wakelin [MS]**, who manages the Windsor Discovery Center and Montessori School, was honored at the state capitol for earning the Connecticut Director's Credential.

In Memoriam

1930	1953	1967	1979
Gertrude Rast Blume 2/8/06	Evelyn Vollhardt Gagnon 1/8/06	Johanna Bowsza Armentano 1/8/06	Shirley Moran D'Aloisio 4/12/06
1932	1954	1969	1980
Margaret Byrne Shannon 4/19/06	Joanne Flis 1/1/06	James R. Cade 1/20/06	Nancy Peters Kennedy 2/14/06
1936	1955	1971	1982
Helen E. Pope 3/11/06	Clifford C. Fellage, Jr. 1/21/06	Lawrence J. Climan 1/21/06	Dorothy Fischer Saunders 2/26/27
1937	1957	1972	1984
Lucile Greenstein Cohen 4/2/06	Lucille Lofgren Gemmell 1/14/06	Frances Britton Lawler 1/12/06	Christine Gallo Donovan 3/6/06
1938	1958	1973	1986
Barbara Pratt Wells 4/25/06	Justin J. Millium 3/22/06	Maria Curcio DiManno 1/2/06	William J. Barrows 3/11/06
1939	1959	1974	1987
Jane Harrigan Kilby 4/24/06	Marie Sonstrom Werner 2/22/06	Marian V. Byrne 1/22/05	Lois McGrath McDonald 1/15/06
1940	1963	1976	1988
Margaret Hart Zotter 6/9/00	Grace Marlowe McCann 1/24/06	Thomas R. Mott 4/19/06	Janice M. Kolodziej 12/11/05
1940	1964	1976	1990
Lois King Taubner 1/20/06	Earl French 4/15/06	Edward S. Alsup 2/6/06	Sam A. Bigley 5/18/01
1943	1965		1993
Lorraine Hubbard Brainard 3/19/06	Bonnie Wyman Dahling 2/11/06		Stanley C. Kocienda 1/23/06
1948	1964		
Helen Shapiro Scherr 1/8/06	Marjorie Lipsky Miles 2/8/06		
1949	1965		
Helen A. Yinshanis 1/20/06	Louise MacKeen Young 3/19/06		
1949			
Ralph Marrone			

Memorial gifts may be made to the CCSU Foundation, P.O. Box 612, New Britain, CT 06050.



Oleg Ouchakoff '74, Richard Wiszniak '73, Ray Crothers '67 at Hartford networking party at the Arch Street Tavern on March 30th



Susan (Loonam) Borghesi '71, Linda (DeRose) Carlson '71, MS '76, Patricia (Sailer) Panetta '71, Gloria (Forcucci) Ragosta '76 and Jeffrey Borghesi '73 at a Hartford networking party at the Arch Street Tavern on March 30th

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CCSU Alumni Association-Sponsored

UPCOMING EVENTS

Gridiron Update Lunch Series

w / Football Head Coach Jeff McInerney

Wednesday, August 30, 2006

Wednesday, October 4, 2006

Wednesday, November 1, 2006

12:00 noon

Angelico's Café

New Britain, CT

50th Reunion

Class of 1956

Saturday, September 16, 2006 – 3:00 pm

Sunday, September 17, 2006 – 11:00 am

Central Connecticut State University

Women's Soccer Reunion

Saturday, September 16, 2006 – 1:00 pm

Newington, CT

Sunday, September 17, 2006 – 1:00 pm

CCSU vs UCONN

Central Connecticut State University

Networking Social

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Angelico's Lake House

East Hampton, CT

HOMECOMING

Saturday, October 7, 2006

CCSU vs St. Francis (PA) 1:00 pm

Children's Activities

Entertainment

Pre-Game Barbeque

Post-Game Party

Central Connecticut State University

Reunion – Men's Track

Undefeated 1954 – 1961

Saturday, October 21, 2006 – 10:00 am

Stanley Quarter Park

New Britain, CT

Networking Social

Thursday, October 26, 2006

Arch Street Tavern

Hartford, CT

Reservations / Information

phone: (860) 832-1740

e-mail: alumnidept@ccsu.edu

website: www.ccsu.edu/alumni

Please check website for latest event updates

Peter M. Rosa '68, MS '74

Pamela G. Rosa MS '02



Educators, Grandparents, Annual Fund Donors

Pam and Peter Rosa are big proponents of higher education. Peter, who earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at CCSU before going on to earn his Ph.D. in higher education administration, worked at CCSU on and off over the course of 30 years, holding positions as admissions officer and vice president for student affairs as well as teaching in the graduate school. He retired in 2004.

Pam, who was well-established in medical administration, changed careers after earning her master's degree in counseling at CCSU. She is now assistant director of admissions at Quinnipiac University where, among other duties, she assists transfer students and other selected first-year students.

Both Peter and Pam believe CCSU was instrumental in their professional success. Says Peter, "CCSU opened up a new world to me. As an undergraduate, I was involved in activities that prepared me for later life, such as serving as a class officer and as an officer on the Student Senate." Meanwhile, Pam's experience as a graduate student allowed her to work with like-minded students and faculty, to taste the field through her practicum and internship, and to focus on a new profession. "Because it is often difficult for adults to make such career changes, this preparation was critical to her success," says Peter.

Peter now serves as a program officer for the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, where he uses his knowledge and experience to benefit the community. He also serves on the Board of Trustees of the CSU system and is active in Hispanics in Philanthropy, a national fundraising organization. This latter affiliation has helped him to recognize the leveraging power of organized philanthropy. "In giving back to the community, we can accomplish much more by working in an organized manner than we can as individuals," he observes.

When not on the job, Peter and Pam relish their role as grandparents to Rachel (9), Rebecca (6), Matthew (5) and Kyle (2), recently finding time to enjoy a family trip to Disney World.

The Rosas are happy to support CCSU. "We are regular donors because we want to acknowledge the role the University played in our own development," says Peter. "We believe in Central's mission to serve students who cannot afford more expensive colleges, many of whom are first-generation college students such as those who are admitted through the Educational Opportunity Program. We have fond memories of CCSU and are proud of the vital role it plays in the region and the state."



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