



## Connecticut State University System NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday, March 14, 2008

### ***Statewide Coalition, Connecticut State University System Host Town Meetings to Discuss Education, State's Future***

In Connecticut, education is everybody's business and critical to the state's economy and quality of life.

With dramatic changes in demographics, the advance of technology and unprecedented demands of global competition, Connecticut's long-term economic strength appears in doubt. Data suggests that if no action is taken to ensure the quality of education for all Connecticut residents, the caliber of graduates that the state's businesses and economy depend on may suffer.

To focus public attention on the issue, a statewide coalition and the Connecticut State University System (CSUS) are hosting an unprecedented series of four participatory Town Meetings during a two-week period beginning later this month. The series, titled "Education Now. Prosperity Tomorrow. Growing Connecticut's Future." will address the

fundamental question: Why is education important to Connecticut's future?

**EDUCATION NOW.**  
**PROSPERITY TOMORROW.**  
**GROWING CONNECTICUT'S FUTURE**

The Town Meetings will be held at Central, Eastern, Southern, and Western Connecticut State Universities and are

free and open to the public. They are designed to stimulate discussion exploring the connections between effective education, a sound economy and a vibrant state.

To highlight the connections between education and Connecticut's economy, the Town Meetings will open with a brief video that includes striking statistics framing the conversation and featuring the perspectives of Governor M. Jodi Rell, Senate President Donald Williams, House Speaker James Amann, Aetna Chairman and CEO Ronald Williams, Bank of America Connecticut President Susan Rottner, and Community Renewal Team President Lena Rodriguez among others.

The meetings will be held from **6:45 to 8:15 p.m.** and will feature a different panel of business, education and community leaders at each location. Audience participation is a critical component. Ann Baldwin, veteran broadcaster and principal of Baldwin Media Marketing, will moderate the conversations. The schedule is as follows:

- **Monday, March 24**, Western Connecticut State University, Danbury Midtown Campus, Warner Hall, First Floor
- **Tuesday, March 25**, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain Vance Academic Center, Room 105
- **Monday, March 31**, Eastern Connecticut State University, Willimantic Student Center, Betty Tipton Room
- **Tuesday, April 1**, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven Adanti Student Center

**Why is Education Important to Connecticut's Future?**

The panelists, and those introducing the Town Meetings, are as follows:

**Western Connecticut State University, Monday, March 24**

Introduction by Marc Herzog, Chancellor, Connecticut Community Colleges, and Judith Greiman, President, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges

- Chris Bruhl, President and CEO, The Business Council of Fairfield County
- Gary Chesley, Superintendent of Schools, Bethel
- James Comer, Maurice Falk Professor of Child Psychiatry, Yale Child Study Center
- Noel Hord, CEO, The Hord Foundation, BCBG Shoes

**Central Connecticut State University, Tuesday, March 25**

Introduction by Oz Griebel, CEO, MetroHartford Alliance, and Michael Meotti, Commissioner, State Department of Higher Education

- Fernando Betancourt, Executive Director, Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission
- David Fink, Policy Communications Director, Partnership for Strong Communities
- Linda Kelly, President, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
- John Rathgeber, President and CEO, Connecticut Business and Industry Association

**Eastern Connecticut State University, Monday, March 31**

Introduction by Michael Hogan, President, University of Connecticut

- Sally Boske, Vice President, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education and Executive Director, Connecticut PTA
- Christopher Clouet, Superintendent of Schools, New London
- Diane Randall, Director, Partnership for Strong Communities
- Chandler Howard, President and CEO, Liberty Bank

**Southern Connecticut State University, Tuesday, April 1**

Introduction by State Education Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan and Chancellor David G. Carter, Connecticut State University System

- Juan Figueroa, President, Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut, Inc.
- Fran Rabinowitz, Superintendent of Schools, Hamden
- Anthony Rescigno, President, Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce
- Robert Santy, President and CEO, Connecticut Economic Resource Center

The statewide coalition for Town Meetings include: African American Affairs Commission; American Federation of Teachers (Connecticut); Business Council of Fairfield County; Capitol Region Council of Governments; Connecticut Association of Boards of Education; Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents; Connecticut Business and Industry Association; Connecticut Community Colleges; Connecticut Department of Education; Connecticut Department of Higher Education; Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Authority; Connecticut Office for Workforce Competitiveness; Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network; Charter Oak College, Connecticut Small Business Development Centers; Connecticut State University American Association of University Professors; Connecticut State University System (CSUS); Connecticut State University System Foundation; Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission; Northeast Utilities Foundation; State University Organization of Administrative Faculty, AFSCME, Council 4 – Local 2836.

The Town Meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, call 860.493.0040 or visit <http://www.ctstateu.edu/TownMeeting.htm>.

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