Smart, prepared, aiming high!

Meet our newest WestConn grads
Features

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Table of Contents

3 | Message from Alumni Association president

4 | Youngs support the School of Visual & Performing Arts

5 | Union Savings Bank honored at University Ball

6 | Smart, prepared, aiming high!

7 | Stephen Price ’09

8 | Najah Mahfoud ’09

9 | Adam Radzimirski ’09

10 | Meredith Liberto ’09

11 | Jeff Shpunt ’09

12 | Velvet Ritch ’09

13 | Sname Wilson ’09

14 | Jason Burger ’09

15 | Bringing ‘political speak’ to life: Dr. Chris Kukk

16 | Star player, stellar coach — Kim Rybczyk ’88 Hall of Fame Dinner and Ceremony

17 | Geddes Memorial Endowed Scholarship

18 | In Memoriam: Claire G. (Trisch) Geddes Roberta M. Watts Robert P. DiNardo ’76 Eleanor V. Geel

19 | Class Notes

20 | Homecoming 2009 events

WCSU calendar of events
Homecoming fever!

As always, I hope this issue of Alumni News finds you and your family in good health and great spirits after a long summer season. I have some exciting news to share with you about campus changes and coming events — many of which are a direct result of the support provided by our alumni, their families and the entire university community.

Your Alumni Association and the staff of Alumni Relations have been hard at work making plans to welcome all graduates back for Homecoming Week. If you haven’t visited WestConn in a while, expect to be amazed by the extensive upgrades and changes the university has seen these last few years. There are impressive new dorms and athletic facilities, and more new projects planned. One of these, the Alumni Pavilion, will be built at Westside as an attractive outdoor meeting place where students, faculty, friends and family can enjoy each other’s company. Details about this and other upcoming projects will unfold throughout the coming year.

Beyond capital improvements, WestConn has continued to add to its rich array of academic programs and outstanding faculty. In truth, our university has become a world-class center for learning. I hope you’ll consider joining us for Homecoming this year and discover for yourself just how much we have changed.

There are numerous events planned for Homecoming, which will be held on Saturday, Oct. 24. Come by yourself, with a friend, or bring the family! Festivities will include games, music, fabulous Colonials football and our ever-popular Alumni Hospitality Tent where you can mingle and catch up with former classmates and friends.

Several reunions also are in the works this fall. On Oct. 2-3, the 1969 WCSU football team will celebrate its 40th anniversary as WestConn’s first football team to play intercollegiate ball. On Homecoming day, Oct. 24, the Classes of 1959, 1969, 1979 and a combination of years that include 1988, 1989 and 1990 also will celebrate reunions. You can get details about these and other upcoming events at wcsu.edu/alumni or call the Alumni Office at (203) 837-8290.

On behalf of your Alumni Association, the Homecoming Committee and the staff of the Alumni Office, I would like to welcome you back to campus this October. Come relive a little history, reconnect with old friends and witness the progress of a wonderful university where you are always welcome and that you can be proud to call your own.
By Paul Steinmetz

WestConn’s School of Visual and Performing Arts (SVPA) had a coming out party of sorts, hosted by longtime WCSU supporters Roy and Ginny Young.

The Youngs offered their spectacular home and gardens in Bridgewater, Conn., as the site of the party, which introduced about 100 fans of the arts to SVPA faculty, students and alumni.

The Departments of Music, Theatre Arts and Art were brought together in a new school about three years ago. And while plans are underway for a new building to house the school, it was decided that more needs to be done to let the arts community know what the SVPA offers not only to students, but also to lovers of the arts throughout the region.

Guests circulated throughout the house and grounds, admiring the miles-long views before enjoying brunch and a musical performance by WestConn students.

Architects Robert Swain, president of Amenta/Emma Architects, and Nestor Bottino, a partner with Holzman Moss, explained some of the concepts they are developing as they design the new building that will be constructed on the Westside campus.

“The challenge is how we give a distinctive identity and character to each area of the building, as well as provide a building that will enrich the university and the outside community,” Bottino says.

WCSU President James W. Schmotter extolled the virtues of the SVPA and asked those in attendance to support the university’s efforts.

“We are the only university between Purchase, N.Y., and Hartford to offer a Master of Fine Arts,” Schmotter says. “It made sense to us to put our stake in the ground and say we are the university of the arts.”

(Top): Roy and Ginny Young opened their Bridgewater home and spacious grounds for an SVPA fundraiser. (Inset, l-r): Hostess Ginny Young chats with Ruth Henderson of Hunt Hill Farm Trust and President James W. Schmotter.

(Middle, l-r): Hafez Taghavi and Lindsey Jones on violin, Laura Flachbart on cello and Julia Isaacson on viola, performed for the crowd.

(Bottom, l-r): Union Savings Bank President John Kline chatted with host Roy Young and a guest at the SVPA event.
Western Connecticut State University honored Union Savings Bank (USB) for its tireless efforts to foster community growth at the 23rd University Ball in the spring. This year’s theme, “A Beacon on Main,” illustrated how USB has been a guiding light in the region for more than 142 years, and under the leadership of President John Kline has continued a history of generosity and activity that has moved the city constantly forward.

“The ball is our largest fundraiser and is a perfect opportunity to celebrate the wonderful work of our supporters,” says Dr. G. Koryoe Anim-Wright, the university’s vice president for Institutional Advancement. “We honored Union Savings Bank as one of the region’s most durable and generous institutions.”

The university also recognized several major donors whose loyal support has illuminated the promise and progress of WestConn and the greater Danbury community. The event was co-chaired by Hal and Barbara Wibling.

(Top, l-r): USB representatives Jay Lent, Chairman Thomas Frizzell and USB President John Kline posed with President James W. Schmotter at the 23rd University Ball.

(Bottom, left): Many longtime WestConn supporters were present at this year’s event, including Terry Eberhard-Asch ’64, ’72, who chatted with David Nurnberger ’72 and his wife Nancy.

(Bottom, right): Joanne Albanesi, Mary Elizabeth Salem and Marilynn Glen enjoyed the festivities.

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This May, as in so many other years in its history, WestConn graduated an extraordinary group of students. Scholarly, ambitious and hardworking, all had their own reasons for choosing WestConn — their now alma mater — as the university where they would ultimately excel. Turn the pages and hear all about a young man who landed a much-sought-after internship at W. W. Norton Publishers. Meet a Barnard Scholar who’s now a scientist at Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals. There’s the animal-lover who managed to beat the daunting national odds against getting into veterinary school. We’ll introduce you to a young woman who dreams of one day addressing the United Nations, and a Fulbright winner who turned down a scholarship at the prestigious Oberlin Conservatory to study with one of WestConn’s master music teachers. Read their stories and see what each has to say about their time here. We’re sure you’ll be impressed.
France-bound, on a Fulbright

Stephen Price ’09

By Sherri Hill

Some people say it’s not what you know, but who you know. For Stephen Price ’09, it came down to a bit of both. If he didn’t know so much about playing the pipe organ, the Buffalo, N.Y., native might not have won numerous local competitions or been one of only 20 high school students nationwide invited to attend the Westminster Choir College of Rider University Organ Week in Princeton, N.J.

But it was who he met once he was at Organ Week that eventually led Price to WestConn.

“Steve Roberts actually performed an organ recital at my church, so I got to meet him, hear him play and talk to him about the organ,” Price said. “That pretty much made up my mind about where I wanted to go to college.”

It’s not that Price didn’t have other options. The prestigious Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio had offered a $12,000 per-semester scholarship. Price turned it down to come to WestConn.

Roberts is pleased Price made that choice.

“Stephen is a fine young man, and I believe that we are indeed fortunate to have had him at WCSU,” Roberts says. “The fact that he chose WestConn over better-known schools shows that our reputation is increasing, and that we compare very well to other universities.”

Price says he based his decision on a number of factors. “The smaller music department allows more time for individual attention and enables the trips that the organ program takes to Europe each year,” he says.

The 21-year-old participated in some memorable learning experiences while at WestConn. “I went on all four organ program trips to Europe,” he says. “My favorite trip was the France trip because I enjoy French organ music the most.”

It’s a good thing Price prefers French organ music. This spring, as he prepared to graduate with a Bachelor of Music, he received word he had won a very coveted award: a Fulbright Scholarship to study at the Conservatoire National de Région in Toulouse, France. After that, he will relocate to Bloomington, Ind., to enroll in the Master’s in Organ Performance program at Indiana University.

Price’s instructor, Roberts, had a Fulbright to study in Vienna when he was an organ student 35 years ago. “The truth is, since I had a Fulbright myself, I know what kinds of doors this can open,” Roberts says.

Read the full story about Stephen Price at wcsu.edu/alumni.

By Robin DeMerell

Najah Mahfoud grew up in Lebanon, a country where opportunities are limited and going to college is nearly an impossible dream. So when the 23-year-old became a U.S. citizen in February, she realized how lucky she was to be living in a place where you could have a hand in creating a successful future.

“I want to live here for the rest of my life,” says the Danbury resident. “I’m building my future in the U.S.”

In May, Mahfoud graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. After working as a nurse’s aid at Danbury Hospital throughout much of her college life, she is now employed there as a nurse.

“I’m thrilled to be working in the medical unit,” Mahfoud says. “It’s a great place to be.”

Mahfoud was born in Lebanon and first moved to the U.S. with her family when she was a baby and returned home after five years. Shortly after the family returned, her father was killed at work in an accidental explosion. For the next 10 years, her mother raised Mahfoud and her brother and sister until the company she worked for shut down and the family was forced to make some serious decisions. There was no money for Mahfoud and her siblings to attend school and her mother weighed her options carefully before deciding to return to the U.S.

Mahfoud says moving back to the U.S. as a teenager was a lonely experience. Once she got to WestConn, though, things changed. She says she couldn’t have made it through the nursing program without the support of her fellow students and the camaraderie in the department.

“WestConn gave me the education and experience I needed to pursue nursing, but my professors also helped me become more focused, more knowledgeable and more mature,” Mahfoud says.

Moving back to the U.S. was an eye-opening experience. “Here, you can have whatever kind of life you choose if you pursue an education and work hard,” Mahfoud says. Though she does admit her initial impressions about America were a little naïve.

“I thought that once you put a foot down here, you were rich,” she says. “Now I realize you have to take advantage of all the opportunities out there. If I had stayed in Lebanon, I would have had a much different life and very few prospects. In Lebanon, college is expensive. It’s not a possibility the way it is for everyone here.”

“Najah opened our eyes to what it means to be an immigrant in our health care system,” says Associate Professor of Nursing Dr. Karen Daley. “She has a perspective that not many of us have.”
From chief to scholar — a nontraditional success story
Adam Radzimirski ‘09

By Irene Sherlock
Most college graduates dream of earning their degree, landing a job in their field, then advancing up the ladder of success — in that order.

Not Adam Radzimirski. He has taken a modified ‘Benjamin Button’ approach to his career.

As a nontraditional student on a 10-year education odyssey, Radzimirski has only just begun to feel the pride and elation much younger graduates experience upon completing their degrees.

“I think of all those evenings and weekends in class or studying,” Radzimirski says of his long road to graduation. “Trying to fit it all in with a full-time career.”

Last May, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Justice and Law Administration (JLA), earning all A’s and summa cum laude status.

But his academic record is only his most recent accomplishment. Starting out as a patrol officer in 1983, he was promoted to sergeant, lieutenant, then captain in the Bridgeport Police Department (BPD). In 2003, he was named Commander of Special Operations — a division he organized. Two years ago, he was named deputy chief of BPD Investigative and Special Services.

“Adam is an experienced police executive who understands what officers have to deal with on a regular basis,” says Assistant Professor of JLA Dr. Anthony Markert. “He’s also a justice-and-law-curriculum scholar, a researcher who understands the contemporary literature on policing and public administration.”

“Adam Radzimirski is the quintessential nontrad student,” says Associate Professor of JLA Dr. Michael Foley. “His ability to gracefully juggle a demanding full-time career with his studies reflects his tenacity, his commitment and intellectual acumen. He makes us all proud.”

Not only have these qualities driven him toward success, they also have informed his propensity for developing opportunities that help others interested in law enforcement careers. In the last three years, Radzimirski has provided JLA students with a valuable ‘leg up’ in the field by coordinating a number of internships through the BPD.

Read the full story about Adam Radzimirski at wcsu.edu/alumni.

By Sherri Hill
New Milford resident and Immaculate High School graduate Meredith Liberto ‘09 began her collegiate studies at the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, Penn. Her stay in the Keystone State didn’t last long, however.

“After four days, I knew I had to come home because I was extremely homesick,” she explains. “And although the WCSU semester had already started, the admission deadline had not passed yet.”

Liberto wasted no time in putting her collegiate ‘plan B’ into action.

“My mother played an instrumental role in my transition from Philadelphia to WCSU,” Liberto explains. “Since I was still in Philadelphia, she met with admissions counselors, submitted my paperwork, and compiled a course schedule for me. I applied, was accepted to WestConn, and rescued from Philadelphia all in the same day. On the way home, I took a self-guided tour of the Midtown campus and prepared for classes the next day. I never had a formal orientation or official campus tour, but leaving Philadelphia and coming home was the greatest decision I ever made!”

Despite the challenges she encountered at the onset of her first year of college, WCU proved to be the best choice for her, Liberto says. “The new, state-of-the-art science facilities and small class sizes were definitely a reason to come here,” she says. “I was shocked transitioning from a general chemistry class of hundreds to one with only 30 students. In addition, I had never met such a supportive and encouraging faculty and staff. The chemistry department really took me under its wing and relayed a sense of confidence and knowledge when it came to biochemistry.”

While at WestConn, Liberto took advantage of a number of extracurricular opportunities. The Dean’s List student was a member of the Honors Program, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, the Newman Club, the Biology Club, and was president of a very active and award-winning Chemistry Club.

Liberto, along with six Chemistry Club members and the club’s adviser, Associate Professor of Chemistry Dr. Paula Secondo, traveled to New Orleans, La., to attend the American Chemical Society (ACS) National Meeting and Exposition. “Attending the ACS National Meeting and Exposition provided an opportunity for me to explore current areas of scientific research, network with senior scientists, attend career enhancement seminars, and explore the city of New Orleans and sample its unique culture,” Liberto says. “This experience was very exciting and special because I got to share it with my WCSU mentor and friends!”

The hard-working student also spent every summer as an intern at nearby Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, which yielded a post-graduation job as a full-time scientist in the company’s department of Immunology and Inflammation.

In the end, leaving Philadelphia for the more familiar surroundings in Danbury proved to be the right decision for Liberto.

“I really don’t believe I missed out on the ‘college experience’ by staying close to home,” she says. “I studied hard, attended school-sponsored events, met new people, participated in student organizations and clubs, and traveled to new places. WestConn provided me with every opportunity to have a successful and fulfilling college experience and I believe WCSU provided just as many — if not more — academic, social and professional opportunities compared to schools outside the Danbury area.”
Growing up on a Louisiana farm, the 23-year-old Bethel resident knew at an early age that she wanted to be around animals all her life. "I have wanted to be a vet since I was four years old," says Ritch, a first-year veterinary student at Louisiana State University. "I never questioned it," she says. "We were always outside riding horses and playing with the animals. The farm had horses, cows, chickens and goats. The animals were our toys."

After Ritch moved to Connecticut as a teenager to live with her father, the farm that belonged to her riding instructor mother and stepfather was destroyed when Hurricane Rita ripped through the area in 2005. Although they managed to start up a smaller farm further north, the farm she remembered was gone forever. But Ritch never lost her love of animals and has continued to volunteer for a local horse veterinarian and at several farms to care for horses.

Ritch chose WestConn not only because of its affordability and proximity to her Bethel home, but because of the strong science program. Although she looked at other colleges in the Northeast, she made up her mind early on that WestConn would be the ideal school to study biology.

"The new science building was really what attracted me," Ritch says. "Vet schools are competitive and I knew I’d need a solid knowledge of biology to succeed. WestConn has an impressive science program and the addition of the science building had a huge impact on my decision to study there."

In May, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology, graduating summa cum laude. At this year’s Honor Ceremony, she won the Biology Department Award. "Velvet is a remarkable young woman who has been able to maintain an excellent academic record while working and performing much community service," says Professor of Biological and Environmental Sciences Dr. Frank Dye. "I’m sure she’ll excel in veterinary school."

Summa graduate Ritch ’09 has ‘velvet’ touch with animals

By Robin DeMerell
Hours before heading to her classes at WestConn, Velvet Ritch was up tending to the horses at a Danbury farm.

By Irene Sherlock
How many of us can say we were certain of our professional goals when we were barely into our teens?

Newly minted Master of Business Administration (MBA) graduate Jeff Shpunt can. He made his first creative foray into cyberspace by developing Shpunter’s Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) Help Web site when he was 14.

“I had just been diagnosed with ADD and back then there was a lack of available information, particularly online,” Shpunt explains. “I wanted to create a resource that would address the questions I had.”

He did extensive research for the site, add.webaholicdesign.com, which provides information and links to related topics.

“’My parents were a little worried about me,’ he recalls about their reaction to his many hours at the computer. ’Afraid I was turning into a Webaholic. Which, of course, I was.’”

By then Shpunt was thinking about another site, this time for one of his favorite bands, Nirvana. Most of the fan sites were geared toward band frontman Kurt Cobain. But Shpunt was intrigued by Nirvana’s bass player, Krist Novoselic, so he created the Krist Novoselic Dedication Page.

“At its peak, the site got more than half a million hits a month,” Shpunt says. “My primary motive was to offer information about Krist, but I also wanted to meet the man. I felt I had grown to know him over the years.” Eventually he got his wish. To view pictures and read

Jeff Shpunt ’09 (Web)master of the Univers(ity)

about Shpunt’s first two trips to Seattle to meet with Novoselic, visit www.novoselic.com/seattle/.

“So that’s how I got into Web development,” Shpunt says. “Pursuing what I loved doing best.” After high school, he headed to Vermont’s Lyndon State College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Interactive Digital Media.

Back home in Newtown, Conn., he established Webaholic Design LLC, and began freelancing while looking for a regular job. An Internet-based start-up in Groton hired him, but three months later he got a call from WestConn where he’d also applied for work.

“I had a dilemma,” Shpunt recalls. “I liked the job I had, but WestConn was closer to home and the idea of working at a university interested me.” Grinning, he adds, “I figured it would prolong my life as a college student.”

As Web content specialist for University Computing (UC) at WestConn, Shpunt trouble-shoots, creates and maintains sites for faculty and administrators. By his own admission, he loves to solve problems and stretch his learning horizon.

So much so that when he arrived at WestConn, he began the MBA program from which he recently graduated.

“When I designed the MBA course ‘Exploration in Case Research and Writing,’ I knew the first students to sign up would set the standard for others to follow,” says Associate Professor of Marketing Dr. Karen Koza. "Jeff and his teammates did that as the first MBA team to present at the Society for Case Research’s (sfcr.org) summer case conference and to write with a professor in the case journal. We are proud of our WCSU students, and Jeff proves why we continue to expect great things from them.”

“Everyone wants an employee like Jeff,” says WCSU Chief Information Officer Lorraine Capobianco, for whom Shpunt has worked for six years. “He’s knowledgeable, creative, organized — and his dedicated work ethic and devotion to WestConn are evident in every project he is involved with. As our Webmaster, he’s an essential member of the UC team.”

Shpunt responds with a characteristically modest shrug. “In this position, I get to work with people who have very diverse backgrounds and different ideas,” he says. “That, for me, is the best kind of job.”
Out of adversity, a determination to serve
Sname Wilson ’09

By Irene Sherlock
Sname (pronounced S’nah-mi) Wilson dreams of addressing the United Nations (U.N.) General Assembly one day. She’s not exactly sure what she’ll say, only that she’ll be stressing the importance of HIV/AIDS education in Africa.

“I started out in nursing but switched to health promotion. I like the idea of advocating for change, of working for the health of a community.”

Currently, Wilson is a case manager at Ability Beyond Disability in Danbury, where she implements life-skills programs for traumatic brain injury clients. As a WestConn student, she also interned with AIDS Project New Haven and worked with clients living with HIV/AIDS. That’s where she formulated her plan about working in Africa. It’s a goal informed by her past and the circuitous path to the U.S. that shaped her sensibilities and sharpened her loyalties to her homeland.

Her instructors and others who admire her expect Wilson to achieve that dream. “Sname personifies strength and dignity, having survived adverse conditions and now addressing them,” says Assistant Professor of Health Promotion and Exercise Sciences Virginia Verhoff of this student who brought her extraordinary story to the classroom.

Wilson isn’t sure if she’ll choose to study social work or health care administration in graduate school. One thing, though, is sure. She’ll eventually return to Africa, where she’ll work to educate people about HIV/AIDS.

Read the full story about Sname Wilson at wcsu.edu/alumni.

By Irene Sherlock
Could’ve, would’ve, should’ve.

These are not words Jason Burger will likely be uttering in his old age.

Instead, this adventure-loving future novelist will be considering his life experiences, particularly an early one that began when he was 20. That’s when he set out on an eight-month trek through cities large and small in Brazil, Venezuela and Colombia.

“It was an incredible time,” Burger says of his lengthy sojourn in South America. “I knew I was not quite ready for college and wanted to see more of the world. I wanted to live on my own. So I saved my money and brushed up on my Spanish and took advantage of this block of free time that I knew would probably not be available to me again.”

His memories, many of which were jotted down in a notebook, include time spent in Taganga, a small fishing village off the coast of the Caribbean, where he learned to scuba dive. Burger hopes these journal recollections will one day provide the basis for a novel he thinks he might write.

He shrugs a little when he says this, clearly ambivalent about such lofty goals. A modest man, Burger feels more at ease explaining his return home to Norwalk, managing editor. In his senior year, he was awarded the John Eichrodt Prize for the best critical paper submitted by an undergraduate. Capping off the whole college experience, he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English, Summa Cum Laude.

“Jason is one of the two or three most talented, high-achieving and socially conscious young scholars I have known in my almost 20 years of college teaching,” says graduate coordinator and Associate Professor of English Dr. Shouhua Qi, co-adviser of Beyond the Margins.

“Without a doubt, he is bound for success.”

Burger says his editorial experiences at both schools were invaluable. “I learned so much about putting out a publication,” he says.

Just before graduation, he landed what is considered to be a plum gig in his professional field — an internship at a prestigious New York publishing house.

“It is absolutely no surprise to me that, out of more than 100 candidates, it was Jason who got the much-sought-after internship at W. W. Norton Publishers,” says Associate Professor of English Dr. Margaret Murray. “Simply put, I suspect Jason Burger of genius.”

Writing his life story:
Jason Burger ’09

Conn. After his travels, he says, he felt rested and invigorated and ready to immerse himself in the world of academia.

At Norwalk Community College, he edited the school’s literary publication, Musings, then graduated with honors before transferring to WestConn. Here, he co-founded the English department’s online student literary journal, Beyond the Margins, for which he was

“Two-thirds of all people infected with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa,” says this concerned young woman who recently graduated from WestConn with a B.S. in Health Promotion and Exercise Sciences, option in Community Health. “There is such a stigma attached to the disease. People there are dying needlessly because they don’t know what to do to prevent it.”

There’s real inspiration in her vision of standing in front of a future audience of dignitaries and making a case for worldwide response to this devastating problem. Born in Liberia, Africa, Wilson has lived in the U.S. since she was 13 and is very aware of the opportunities that have opened for her here.

“I came to America to be educated, to have a better life,” she says. Her family had been living in Ghana after fleeing civil-war-torn Liberia when she was only seven. Eventually, Wilson, her grandmother and her brother, Worlorbah, now 18, were relocated to the U.S. through the humanitarian organization Interfaith Refuge Ministry.

“I miss my family, my homeland, but I’m glad I’m here,” she says, adding that there was never a doubt that she would attend college and go on to a career. “I started out in nursing but switched to health promotion. I like the idea of advocating for change, of working for the health of a community.”

Read the full story about Sname Wilson at wcsu.edu/alumni.
Bringing ‘political speak’ to life: Dr. Chris Kukk

By Irene Sherlock

You might say Chris Kukk is WestConn’s one-man dream team.

To start with, he’s a Fulbright Scholar who’s taught at Harvard and Boston College. He’s been a counter-intelligence agent for the United States Army and continues to be tapped by media to comment on issues regarding American politics and U.S. foreign policy. Then there’s the fact that he possesses the charm — not to mention the energetic enthusiasm — of a couple of Labradors let off the leash.

“If I had a 10th of his energy, I’d be an extremely productive person,” says Professor of Economics Dr. Steve Skinner, adding that his colleague is an extraordinary teacher who has a great gift for motivating students to learn. Peruse student testimonials on RateMyProfessor.com and you’ll see how revered he is at WestConn.

Twice, he’s been voted Faculty of the Year by the School of Arts and Sciences. A thoroughly involved father of three young boys, he nevertheless finds time to lend a hand to his community and was recently named Volunteer of the Year by the League of Women Voters in Brookfield, Conn., where he lives.

Superman? Well, most of us mere mortals might think so. But as Associate Professor of Political Science Dr. Chris Kukk explains it, it’s simply that he’s passionate about his loves. At the top of the list would be his wife, Elly (formerly Elly Culhane), his high school sweet-heart and wife of 21 years. Together, the two endured a period of adversity when Elly faced a serious illness. She’s in good health now, which means neither of them take a single day for granted.

“It’s all wonderful,” Kukk says with a confident grin. “Whatever is coming, bring it on.”

The fact is, Kukk is one of the new breed of extraordinary WestConn faculty who’s making this university the place to be. “He’s a great professor and a great person,” says student Matt Ullman, who Kukk advises. “He’s always willing to take the time to help any student. Dr. Kukk has done so much for me during my time here.”

A graduate of the U.S. Army Military Intelligence School’s Counterintelligence Agent Program in Fort Huachuca, Ariz., Kukk received a B.A. in Political Science from Boston University, graduating Phi Beta Kappa, before going on to earn an M.A. in American and International Politics and a Ph.D. in Political Science from Boston College.

In addition to inspiring a passion for political science and world affairs, Kukk cultivates the university’s best of the best at WestConn. Since last year, he’s been director of the Honors Program — this after founding the university’s internationally recognized Roger Sherman Debate Society, for which he was named Coach of the Year in the East by the Cross Examination Debate Association, the national association for policy debate.

“Honors work is interdisciplinary,” Kukk says about the program. “It’s about looking at the world through a variety of prisms. It’s always good to stretch and grow and question preconceived notions of the world.”

Obviously, this is something that comes naturally to Kukk. As a member of the university’s Fulbright Committee, he has made it a mission to step up the Honors Program and increase the number of Fulbright recipients each year. This year, he and fellow committee member, Professor of Anthropology Dr. Rob Whitemore, mentored recent Fulbright winner Stephen Price, who is studying this fall in France (see story on page 14).

“If it were not for (Dr. Kukk’s) belief in me, his encouragement and commitment in assisting me with the application, I am not sure I would currently be a Fulbright Scholar,” Price says. “This honor is not just an accomplishment for me, but Dr. Kukk as well, who provided me with the utmost support and inspired me to believe in myself.”

Kukk’s own Fulbright adventure began in 2007, when he and Elly traveled with their young family to his father’s homeland, Estonia. There, at the University of Tartu, Kukk taught classes on diplomacy and intelligence as well as U.S. foreign policy and international politics. Sixty-three years prior to that, his father and grandparents had fled Parnu, Estonia, then a Soviet-occupied Baltic state, and made their way to the U.S.

“Just being in the place that my father had fled for his life was an extraordinary experience,” says Kukk. “Suddenly I was living and teaching there. Hearing stories my Estonian students had to tell…”

His students at WestConn have their own stories about Kukk. “It would not be an exaggeration to say that Dr. Kukk changed my life,” says senior Kevin Gaughan. “I was a sophomore when I took his introductory political science class. I didn’t have an ounce of passion for academics and figured I just wasn’t cut out for the demands of a college education. Yet I experienced something altogether different in his class. His passion for teaching radiated during every lecture he gave. Everyone in the class was able to see he truly believed in us, in our ability to learn, in our will to succeed. He told us we could change the world for the better — even when we didn’t believe it ourselves.”

Kukk is faculty adviser for the Political Science Club, the Advocacy for Progressive Thinking Club, the Honors Program — this after founded the Advocacy for Progressive Thinking Club, and (below, center) with some of his Estonian students.

Continued on page 14
Go Colonials!

By Richard Gregory ’97
As a young basketball star from Cromwell in the mid-’80s, Kim Rybczyk had plenty of opportunities when it came time to select a college. She had scholarship offers on the table from several schools and was weighing her options when she made a visit to WestConn and met with women’s basketball coach Jody Rajcula.

After that, her school choice zeroed in on only one. “I thought, ‘This coach is amazing. She’ll be going places,’” says Rybczyk, who went by Kim Foss in those days. “I made my official visit to meet with Jody and the players, and it was like ‘I’m supposed to be here at WestConn.’”

Little did she know that her decision would have a profound impact on her life and career 25 years down the road, or that she would play her own important role in WestConn athletics as both player and coach.

Rybczyk, who this past winter completed her seventh season as the head coach of the women’s basketball team, was a freshman on Rajcula’s ’84-’85 team. That year marked the rising WestConn team’s first appearance in the Division III National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament. It was a crowning moment for the program and for Rajcula, who had taken the helm three years prior and almost immediately lifted the team to new heights.

WestConn returned to the NCAA tournament in 1988, Rybczyk’s senior season. By then, Rajcula had built the team into a perennial women’s basketball powerhouse. Rybczyk earned third-team All-America honors as a senior and her 606 career assists still stand as the most in program history.

Rybczyk held several coaching positions at other schools in the years after she graduated from WestConn. She was head coach at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in upstate New York for six years and head coach at Southwestern University in Texas for one. But her heart never really left Danbury, and in 2002 she received a call from WestConn Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Ed Farrington.

The call would bring her basketball career — and her life — full circle. After 21 seasons and 10 NCAA tournament appearances, Rajcula was retiring from coaching ball. She was stepping down as the head of women’s basketball and Farrington wanted Rybczyk to carry on the team’s winning tradition.

“Mr. Farrington asked me if I was interested in coming back,” Rybczyk recalls. “It all just felt right. My love of basketball has always been centered here at Western.”

But taking over from her former mentor was both a great opportunity and a daunting task for Rybczyk. Rajcula left some pretty big sneakers to fill.

“It was a little intimidating, to say the least,” Rybczyk admits. “She’s such a fabulous person and just an amazing coach. We’re talking about a legend here. But I had a lot of support from her. She made me feel very comfortable.”

Continued on page 14
Save the Date! Join us for a tour that begins July 8, 2010, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and ends in Rapid City, S.D. Accommodations and 11 meals are included in the nine-day trip. Sights include: Temple Square, Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Devils Tower, Badlands, Crazy Horse, Mt. Rushmore and more! For information and reservations, call Kay Schreiber ’79 at (203) 790-8342.

Trip to the Culinary Institute of America
Saturday, Oct. 10
Join us for the third annual trip to the Culinary Institute of America, the world-famous culinary college. Join fellow alumni for lunch at the American Bounty Restaurant, which features regional specialties prepared with ingredients harvested from the riches of the Hudson River Valley. $79/person includes lunch, gratuity and round-trip transportation. The bus departs from WestConn at 9:30 a.m. For more information or to make a reservation, call (203) 837-8298.

Spring Happenings
1. WXCI alumni celebrated 35 years with longtime adviser Emeritus Professor of Communications Dr. Hugh McCarney (center). 2. Music students and alumni attended the Connecticut Music Educators Conference in Hartford last spring. 3. Scholarship winners at last spring’s Alumni Scholarship Dinner. 4. Nursing alumni at the Annual Nursing Reunion. 5. Jazz studies students performing at the 12th Annual WestConn Jazz Festival.
Rybczyk (cont’d.)

The Claire G. Trisch and Alfred T. Geddes Memorial Endowed Scholarship has been established in memory of the beloved former deans of Danbury Teacher’s College, now Western Connecticut State University. Claire served under then President Ruth A. Haas as the first dean of women until her retirement in 1975. Her husband, Alfred, was dean of men until retiring in 1974. Previous to their appointments, Claire was assistant director of physical education and Alfred was an associate professor in that department. Friends say the two were colleagues long before their relationship turned romantic. The couple wed in 1958 and remained happily married for 43 years until Alfred’s death in 2001. Claire died on June 26, 2009.

“Deans Claire and Alfred Geddes played important roles in WCSU’s history,” says WestConn President James W. Schmotter. “Respectively, they shaped the campus culture of their era and helped countless students achieve their educational dreams. Until very recently, Claire attended many university arts events and never missed a Golden Circle Luncheon. I learned a great deal about WestConn’s history from her, and I will miss those conversations, and her enthusiastic engagement in the affairs of the university she loved.”

Donations to the Claire G. Trisch and Alfred T. Geddes Memorial Endowed Scholarship can be mailed to the WCSU Foundation, 181 White St., Danbury, CT 06810. Please make checks payable to the WCSU Foundation/ Geddes Memorial Endowed Scholarship; or you may call (203) 837-8279 to provide credit card information.

Kukk (cont’d.)

Student Organization and the Student Government Association. Last spring, he coordinated student activities at Lobby Day, an event held at the Capitol in Hartford, Conn., at which WestConn students, faculty and staff, as well as other participants from the CSU system, met and mingled with Democratic and Republican legislators and voiced their support for higher education within the Connecticut State University system.

“Dr. Kukk is the reason I became a political science major,” says senior Kiley Morrison. “He encourages us to think things through for ourselves, which is inevitably how we learn the best, I think. He changes your perspective on learning.”

Kukk says it’s the students who allow him to do what he does in the classroom. “I liken teaching to white water rafting,” he says. “Some days you come into the classroom with plan A, and then someone will ask a question or make a comment and everything will shift and boom! It winds up being a totally different classroom experience than the one you thought it would be.”

Kukk talks about the extraordinary students at WestConn. “They’re smart, motivated. A lot of them work full time and many are first-generation college graduates.” Kukk says there is nothing better than seeing a student on a trajectory that involves challenge and success.

He’s been on a similar path himself. The oldest of three boys, Kukk was raised in the Bronx, N.Y., where his father was a detective on New York City’s tactical patrol force. When he was seven, the family moved to Brookfield, a town that had several Estonian and Lithuanian families.

“I grew up working as a paperboy,” says Kukk. “The irony is that I was determined to move as far away from Brookfield as possible.” He pauses. “Then I met my wife,” he adds, a touch of humor in his voice as if to say that was when his path was set, his future determined.

The Kukk family, which includes Cade, 5; Quinn, 3; and Cole, 2, just moved into what Kukk calls their dream home in Brookfield. “We love it. We’ll never leave now,” he says with a laugh.

Which means luckily for WestConn, the one-man dream team is here to stay.

Savings News You Can Use!

By Connie Conway

We’ve all become cost-and-savings conscious over the past year — and good for us! Your WCSU Alumni Association is supporting that effort by putting real savings on real products and services into the hands of the folks it serves. Namely you.

“Our first objective is always to connect members not only with one another, but with benefits they can enjoy without spending lots of money,” says Alumni Relations Director Tammy Hammershoy. “Recently, we initiated the Working Advantage Members-Only Benefits Program, for example, and it’s proving to be something that alumni who’ve tried it really appreciate.”

Here’s how the program works: WCSU Alumni Association members save up to 60 percent on purchases ranging from Broadway and other entertainment tickets to limousine rentals and hotel bookings, and on services like veterinary care, tax preparation, legal consultation and even realtor fees. It’s really easy to begin saving. Go to www.wcsu.edu/alumni and click on the WCSU Save Alumni Member Benefits Program button. Click on the Working Advantage logo and register. The WCSU Alumni Member I.D. is: 789033144. That’s it!

“The program also includes Advantage Points for folks who like to buy online,” Hammershoy says. “A number of popular products carry the ‘Advantage Points’ symbol, and members accrue points with each purchase of a product that has the symbol.” Points can be used for free movie tickets, gift cards, ski tickets, theme park tickets and more.

“Plus registering online earns a member 100 points right off the bat,” Hammershoy adds. “For active families and individuals trying to cut expenses, that’s just a great payoff.”

There are other businesses that participate in the WCSU Save program. Visit wcsu.edu/alumni and click on the WCSU Save Alumni Member Benefits Program button to learn more about our great savings programs available to you as a member of the WCSU Alumni Association.
In memoriam

Valentine Ashe ’59, Albuquerque, N.M.
Marjory Atkins ’52, Monroe, Conn.
Celestine D. Bassford ’47, Norwalk, Conn.,
Nov. 26, 2008
Marie P. Benicewicz ’45, Danbury, Conn.,
Jan. 9, 2009
Francis (Benjamin) Kahn ’38, Torrington, Conn.,
Sept. 18, 2008
William E. Benzing ’74, Bethel, Conn., Dec. 28, 2008
Thomas J. Blonski ’67, Danbury, Conn.,
April, 8, 2008
Carol W. Brawley ’53, Lake Worth, Fla., May 5, 2009
Grace H. Brenner ’64, Danbury, Conn.
Charles M. Brightly ’67, New Milford, Conn.
Elizabeth P. Burns, ’42, Apache Junction, Ariz.,
March 7, 2009
Doris C. Bushaw ’49, West Simsbury, Conn.
Vincent G. Caponera ’48, Franklin, N.H.
James J. Conaghan ’51, Thomaston, Conn.
Evelyn L. Curtis ’28, Southbury, Conn.
Sydney R. Dobbs ’69, Rockland, Maine
Thelma P. Edelstein ’79, Boxford, Mass.,
Nov. 30, 2008
Sandra D. Fedorko ’67, Zanesville, Ohio, May 3, 2009
Betty Rae Finucane, West Hartford, Conn.,
March 15, 2009
Fay Fink ’94, Saint Petersburg, Fla., March 3, 2009
Scott E. Forrester ’92, Weston, Conn.
Carla B. Gisolfi ’81, East Norwalk, Conn.,
March 25, 2009
Arthur L. Graziani ’72, Hilton Head, S.C.
John H. Grenzner ’40, Silver Spring, Md.,
Nov. 5, 2008
Edward G. Gulla ’60, San Bruno, Calif.,
March 24, 2009
Carl E. Gustafson ’50, Laurel, Md.
Margaret Hoyt ’43, Bethel, Conn., June 4, 2009
Jean C. Jackson ’82, Danbury, Conn., April 27, 2009
Gretchen E. “Beth” Jenkins, Danbury, Conn.,
April 5, 2009
Walter Johnson ’40, Saint Albans, Vt.
Susan G. Jordan ’52, Wallingford, Conn.
Nila A. Koublanis ’51, Danbury, Conn.
Edith A. Leslie ’91, New Milford, Conn., Feb. 2, 2009
John Lipp ’67, Crownsville, Md.
Dinah Lukin ’77, Goldens Bridge, N.Y.
Douglas O. Main ’80, Ridgefield, Conn.
Winifred Plaeger ’75, Trumbull, Conn.
Betty R. Rielle ’59, Sorrento, Fla.
Mary Ellen Sanzeni ’71, Danbury, Conn.,
April 1, 2009
Adrienne M. Silverstein ’59, Shelton, Conn.
Daphne D. Stephens ’81, Brewster, N.Y.,
April 5, 2006
Lawrence Sterry ’59, Niantic, Conn.
Joseph C. Tomajno ’70, River Forest, Ill.,
March 29, 2009
Marion C. Utter ’69, Pawling, N.Y., Dec. 18, 2008
Anda B. Vijups ’80, Vernon-Rockville, Conn.,
Feb. 1, 2009
Janice K. Whiteley ’63, Monroe, Conn.

Claire G. (Trisch) Geddes
First Dean of Women at Danbury State Teachers College

Emeritus faculty Claire G. (Trisch) Geddes, of Brookfield, Conn.,
wife of the late Alfred Geddes, died peacefully at Bethel Health Care
Center, June 26, 2009. Geddes worked for many years as the first
Dean of Women at Danbury State Teacher’s College, now WCSU,
where she met her husband, Alfred. She was an active parishioner
of St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Church and was well loved by the
community. In addition to her many friends, Claire will be
missed by her cousins, Leigh Schwanfelder and Robert Hadley
and his wife, Ann, all of Branford, Conn.

In memoriam

Robert P. DiNardo ’76

Longtime Danbury resident Robert P. DiNardo died
June 25, 2009, at Danbury Hospital. He was 55.
DiNardo served on the Danbury Police Department
for 29 years and was named Police Officer of the Year,
National DARE Officer of the year and served on the
Police Athletic League Board of Directors. He was the
coach of the 1999 Bambino World Series Champions
and holds the single-season home run record at
WestConn.

Contributions can be made to the Robert P. DiNardo
Scholarship, WCSU Foundation, 181 White Street,
Danbury, Conn., 06810. Please make checks payable to
the WCSU Foundation/Robert P. DiNardo Scholarship
Fund; or you may call (203) 837-8279 to provide credit
card information.

Eleanor V. Geel

A secretary for more than 20 years at the university
until retirement, Eleanor V. Geel, passed away on
May 8, 2009. She was 86.
1930s
Ruth H. Smith ’38 lives in Hendersonville, N.C. Although limited by some physical challenges, Smith says life is good and all is well.

1940s
Air Force pilot Richard C. “Dick” Wanzer ’43 has survived two wars, conquered cancer and quadruple bypass heart surgery. He and Victoria, his wife of more than 55 years, live in the South. He would love to hear from classmates.

Marian G. Schroder ’45 enjoys lunching with classmates Edna Waters Miller ’45, Gloria Hayde Kane ’45 and Dorothy Wixted Kane ’45.

Shirley B. Alexander ’47 is chair of the Alexander Communications Group Inc.

1950s
Life is good for Herman A. Anderson ’55 and wife, Ann. They enjoy spending time with friends and family, which include nine grandchildren. They like to travel, read, play golf and attend the theatre.

1960s
Joan A. Johnston ’64 is a second-grade teacher at Williamsville Central Schools in N.Y. A teacher for 45 years, Johnston says she still enjoys her work.

Robert L. Chakar ’68 retired in June 2008 after 40 years in education: 17 as an English teacher at Danbury High School and 23 as a school counselor at Broadview Middle School in Danbury, Conn.

Donna Scott Johnson ’68 and David Johnson ’69 are the proud grandparents of two boys, Andre and Maxwell. A third grandchild is on the way.

1970s
Lynn D. Brown ’72 retired in 2008 after 30 years of teaching — 27 of those at New Fairfield High School. Now she is raising Ringneck doves.

Jane Dee Gross ’72 is currently running for elected office as Miami Beach City Commissioner.

Retired teacher Richard G. Axelby ’74 is a coach, umpire and referee. He taught at Regional School District #6 (Goshen, Warren and Wamogo) High School from 1974 to 1997.

Richard H. Immoehr ’75 is the service manager at Valenti Auto Center in Watertown, Conn. His oldest son, Max, graduated from New Milford High School in June and his youngest, Alex, will be a junior there this fall.

Sheryl Z. O’Hurley ’77 recently celebrated her 23rd year at the Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester in New Hampshire. She is a wellness nurse for the severe and persistently mentally ill.

Helen W. “Nell” Bourgoin ’79 is director of development at Goodwin College in East Hartford, Conn. She has been married for more than 20 years to husband, Dave. They have two daughters: Erika, a college nursing major, and Chissy, a high school senior who’s an all-state, all-conference soccer and softball athlete. She’ll study physical therapy and play ball in college.

1980s
Robert J. Bailyn ’82 is a visiting distinguished professor of journalism at Florida Atlantic University’s School of Communication and Multimedia Studies in Boca Raton.

David A. Carbone ’84 is a two-time ironman Triathlon finisher and completed more than 65 triathlons, running, swimming and cycling events.

George R. Judd ’84 was named CEO of BlueLinx in 2008, a Fortune 500 company and former division of Georgia-Pacific.

Gregory Simonson ’84 serves as chairman of the Sumter, S.C., school district #17 board of trustees. He is employed at Camden Military Academy where he has taught high school biology and physiology since 1990. He and his wife, Christine (Sponheimer ’91), are the parents of four, two of whom are college students.

Elizabeth Carter ’86 and her family moved to Georgia in 1995. After completing a citizens fire academy class and Community Emergency Response Team class, she has found a love for safety and preparedness and sharing that knowledge with others. She earned her certifications to teach first aid and CPR as well as a parent/teen driving safety class. She is a private first class in the Georgia State Defense Force, Aviation Company, a branch of the Georgia National Guard.

After 15 years at Hunter College of the City University of New York, Kristina Testa-Buzzee ’89 has started a new job at Norwalk Community College. As director of the Family Economic Security Program, she is responsible for the creation and implementation of this new program aimed at helping single parents increase their economic stability through personalized achievement coaching, financial literacy education and career enhancement mentoring.

1990s
Sharon Bradley ’91 is the president and CEO of Nursing and Home Care, Inc., a nonprofit home health and hospice agency serving residents of Fairfield County. She is pursuing a doctor of nursing practice degree at Case Western Reserve University.

Marilyn Galanti ’92 and husband, Joe, enjoyed their daughters’ weddings. Elizabeth, who married in 2006, lives in New Fairfield, Conn. Their younger daughter, Larissa, who lives in Switzerland, married last summer.

Alice Hancock Flynn ’93 has two children: Julia, 7, and Liam, 3.

Lt. Com. Charles Klein ’93 retired from the United States Navy in July. He was deployed in 2008 to Expeditionary Medical Facility Kuwait in support of the Global War on terrorism. He currently lives in Orange Park, Fla., with his wife, Rashel, son, Nigel, 15, and daughter, Kiersten, 12.

Dawn M. Grenier ’94 is the admissions director at Crescent Manor in Waterbury, Conn. She has been married for 20 years and has two sons, Joey, 7, and Josh, 3.

Fred Mills ’98 and business partner Robert Light founded the Danbury-based company, Getthatwholesale.com. Their company has become the largest online directory of wholesale suppliers.

2000s
Jermain Griffin ’02 is associate director of International Studies at Fairfield University. He settled in Bridgeport, Conn., after spending three years working abroad in Central America and North Africa.

Emile M. Waite ’02 did a paint/drive/paint drive self-tour/safari across the United States for 50 days in spring 2008.

Molly Jane Hesterberg ’05 is engaged to Marvin Evans ’04. They reside in Maryland and are planning an October 2009 wedding in Connecticut.

Michelle Nelson ’05 recently was promoted to coordinator for student conduct and community standards at the University of Hartford. She and fiancé Mark Huston will marry in June 2010.

Katie A. Raymond ’06 is an editor at WWE.com for World Wrestling Entertainment Inc.
Join us this fall for WestConn’s 2009 Reunions

1959
Class of 1959 50th Reunion, Saturday, Oct. 24, 6 p.m. cocktail hour/7 p.m. dinner, Alumni Hall, WCSU Midtown campus. $50/person

1969
Class of 1969 40th Reunion, Saturday, Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. cocktail hour/7:30 p.m. dinner, Westside Classroom Building, Room 218, Westside campus. $75/person

1979
Class of 1979 30th Reunion, Saturday, Oct. 24, 5 p.m. reception, The Club, Westside Campus Center, Westside campus. $20/person

1988
Classes of 1988/89/90 20th Reunion, Saturday, Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. cocktail hour/7:30 p.m. dinner, Westside Campus Center Ballroom, Westside campus. $75/person

1990
Classes of 1988/89/90 20th Reunion, Saturday, Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m. cocktail hour/7:30 p.m. dinner, Westside Campus Center Ballroom, Westside campus. $75/person

On Oct. 2-3, the 1969 WCSU Football Team celebrates its 40th anniversary as the first football team to have represented WestConn in intercollegiate play. For more information, call (203) 837-8298.

Tell us about yourself

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<th>Name (maiden, if applicable)</th>
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Use additional paper if necessary. Please print or type and return to Office of Alumni Relations, WCSU, 181 White Street, Danbury, CT 06810.

Tell us about yourself

Yes! I want information about the Alumni Association Board and its volunteer committees.

Yes! I want to help organize an event in my area.

Yes! I would be interested in sponsoring an internship with my company.

And baby makes …

Peter Anastasakis ’00 and his wife, Shay, welcomed their son, George, in April 2009.

Pamela (Czajka) ’93 and Trever Holick welcomed daughter, Skylar Capri, on Dec. 29, 2008.

Assunta (DeLuca) ’02 and Erich Bachman welcomed second son, Jaden John, on April 1. He joins brother Preston Anthony, 3.

WestConn Sweethearts Stephanie (Keenan) ’98 and John Rich ’92 welcomed their first child, Hannah Elizabeth, on Oct. 25, 2008.


WestConn Sweethearts Kristin (Munch) ’97 and Nathan Winstanley ’99 celebrated the birth of their second son, Brennan Tait, on Dec. 16, 2008. He joins Ethan, 2.

WestConn Sweethearts Megin (Richards) ’97 and Bret Nichols ’96 celebrated the birth of their third child, Maxton Bacus, on Dec. 22, 2008. He joins Juliette, 4, and Lincoln, 2.

Rebecca Woodward ’88 and Ed Yeziernski welcomed their second child, daughter Logan, on Oct. 21, 2008.

Jaime (Zepko) ’01 and Keith Eng welcomed their second daughter, Abigail Lu Eng, on Jan. 10, 2009. She joins big sister Megan.

Wedding bells

Megan (Alworth) ’00 and Vartan Khazadian, June 14, 2008

WestConn Sweethearts Caitlin (Clarkson) ’07 and Matthew Pereira ’08, July 24, 2009

Jessica (Giuliano) and Joseph Creaco ’03, Sept. 30, 2008

Kelly (Fitzgerald) ’02 and David Spielman, June 7, 2008

Marissa (Mayes) ’04 and Michael Fraser, Oct. 11, 2008

Kristin (McIlrath) ’02 and Linc Keil, Sept. 5, 2008

Emily (O’Donnell) ’06 and Craig Emhardt, Oct. 12, 2008

WestConn Sweethearts Stephanie (Omasta) ’06 and Wayne Lounsbury Jr. ’04, July 25, 2008

WestConn Sweethearts Tina (Simcoe) ’07 and Garrett Elias ’02, Oct. 24, 2008

Lissette (Texeira) ’05 and Daniel Cordeiro, August 23, 2008

Sarah and Joshua Tillson ’03, Sept. 20, 2008
2009 Homecoming


Friday, Oct. 23

Hall of Fame Dinner and Ceremony

5:30 p.m., Westside Campus Center Grand Ballroom, Westside campus. Cost. See page 12 for details.

Saturday, Oct. 24 — Homecoming Day

Alumni & Friends Circle Rededication

9:30 a.m., Alumni & Friends Circle (brick circle outside Old Main), Midtown campus. Free and open to the public.

Homecoming Tailgate Party

10 a.m., O’Neill Center parking lot, Westside campus. Open to the public. Must be 21 years or older.

Homecoming Football Game: Colonials vs. Brockport


Alumni Hospitality Tent

Halftime. Across from Westside Athletic Complex, Westside campus. Featuring Latanya Farrell and the Bookman Styles Band. Cost. Open to alumni, faculty, staff and parents. Must be 21 years or older.

Featuring the classes of

Alumni Business Showcase

2 p.m. (Next to Alumni Hospitality Tent), Westside campus. Meet alumni business owners. Free and open to the public.

Street Fair

2 p.m., Westside campus. Free and open to the public.

WCSU volleyball: Colonial Classic vs. Wesleyan

4:30 p.m., Feldman Arena, O’Neill Center, Westside campus.

Women’s soccer vs. Keene State

6 p.m., Westside Athletic Complex, Westside campus.

Monday, Oct. 19

Informational session about 2010 National Parks Tour

5 to 7 p.m., Warner Hall Lyceum 102
Refreshments provided. Sponsored by the Alumni Association. See page 13 for details.

Tuesday, Oct. 20

Scholarship Reception & Ceremony

Reception: 6 p.m.; Ceremony: 7 p.m.
Westside Campus Center, Westside campus.

Nov. 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21
Theatre Production — “City of Angels”

Presented by the theatre arts department 8 p.m. Berkshire Theatre, Midtown campus. Tickets: $17; $12 for seniors and students. WCSU students free with valid I.D. Box office: (203) 837-8732.

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 7:30 p.m.

Michael Greenberg discusses his book
Hurry Down Sunshine.

Ives Concert Hall, White Hall, Midtown campus
181 White Street, Danbury, Conn.
This event is free and open to the public.

Hurry Down Sunshine tells the true story of 15-year-old Sally who suddenly descends into madness. From her crack-up on the streets of Greenwich Village to her time in a psychiatric ward, her father chronicles the effects of mental illness on Sally and her family. An audience Q & A will immediately follow the presentation. For more information, visit our Web site: onebookdanbury.org.

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One Book, One Community

Golden Circle Luncheon

Friday, Sept. 18

13th Annual Golden Circle Luncheon
Noon, Warner Hall, Midtown campus.
$35/person. For more information, call the Alumni Office at (203) 837-8298.

One Book, One Community

Golden Circle Luncheon

Friday, Sept. 18

13th Annual Golden Circle Luncheon
Noon, Warner Hall, Midtown campus.
$35/person. For more information, call the Alumni Office at (203) 837-8298.

Ives Concert Park Family Fair

Sunday, Sept. 20

2 p.m., Ives Concert Park, Westside campus.
Free and open to the public.

Oct. 2-3

The 1969 WCSU Football Team’s 40th anniversary

The 1969 WCSU Football Team celebrates its 40th anniversary as the first football team to have represented WestConn in intercollegiate play. For more information, call (203) 837-8298.

Saturday, Oct. 10

Trip to Culinary Institute of America
See page 13 for details.

Monday, Oct. 19

Informational session about 2010 National Parks Tour
5 to 7 p.m., Warner Hall Lecture 102
Refreshments provided. Sponsored by the Alumni Association. See page 13 for details.

Tuesday, Oct. 20

Scholarship Reception & Ceremony
Reception: 6 p.m.; Ceremony: 7 p.m.
Westside Campus Center, Westside campus.

Nov. 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21
Theatre Production — “City of Angels”

Presented by the theatre arts department 8 p.m. Berkshire Theatre, Midtown campus. Tickets: $17; $12 for seniors and students. WCSU students free with valid I.D. Box office: (203) 837-8732.

One Book, One Community

Holiday Wine Tasting

Friday, Nov. 6

Dinner: 5:30 p.m., Warner Hall, Midtown campus. Show: 8 p.m., Berkshire Theatre, Midtown campus. Cost. For more information, call the Alumni Office at (203) 837-8298.

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Sunday, Nov. 8

Holiday Wine Tasting

4 to 7 p.m., Westside Campus Center Grand Ballroom, Westside campus. $50/person.
A. WestConn Alumni Hat: $15.98 (Cobra). Available in navy or khaki.
B. WestConn Alumni Crewneck Sweatshirt: $24.98 (Champion) S-2X. Available in navy only.
C. WestConn Infant Tee-shirt: $14.98 (College Kids) 6m, 12m, 18m. Available in white, pink or gray.
D. WCSU Alumni Tee-shirt: $14.98 (College Kids) 2T-5/6. Available in navy only.
E. WestConn Toddler Tee-shirt: $14.98 (Gildan) S-2X. Available in navy only.
F. WestConn Sweatpants: $24.98 (Champion) S-XL. Available in gray only.
G. WCSU Alumni Desk Accessories, seal (Cobra). Available in navy or khaki.
H. WCSU Alumni License Plate Holder, $16.98.
J. WCSU Alumni License Plate Holder, $16.98.
K. WCSU Alumni License Plate Holder, $16.98.
L. WCSU Alumni License Plate Holder, $16.98.
M. WCSU Alumni License Plate Holder, $16.98.
N. WCSU Alumni License Plate Holder, $16.98.

Diploma frames:
- M1: 2xK jewelry-quality medallion, black and gold museum-quality matting, gold embossed WCSU, cherry, $144.95.
- M2 & M3: Regency or Gallery style frames: $119.95, seal and school name gold embossed on black and gold museum-quality matting. M2: Gallery; cherry, M2: Regency; mahogany. Both: gold inner lip. Signature style frame.
- M4: Campus Scene Edition showcases a beautiful panoramic photo of Fairfield Hall mounted above diploma with seal and school name gold embossed on black and gold museum-quality matting and features a high-gloss Gallery cherry moulding, $167.95.

Please specify M1, M2, M3 or M4. For pre-1998 styles, call the Office of Alumni Relations at (203) 837-8290. Visit www.diplomaframe.com. WCSU Rocker, Standard Chair (not shown) and Heritage Lamp (not shown). Can be personalized at an additional charge. Visit www.wcsu.edu/alumni for more information and photos. Call (203) 837-8298 to order.

Marketplace order form

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| Active alumni discount no. _____________ (The number on your Alumni Association membership card) |  |
| Item (letter) | Color | Price | Description | (use additional sheet for more items) |
| A |  |  |  |  |
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| E |  |  |  |  |

Make checks payable to and send orders to:
WCSU Alumni Marketplace
181 White Street, Danbury, CT 06810
1. Alumni and friends cheered on their team at the new Yankee ballpark. Fans included (bottom right) WestConn President James W. Schmotter and his wife, Dr. Daphne Jameson.

2. New students and their families as well as alumni attended the 3rd Annual New Milford Alumni/New Student Send-Off Barbecue, hosted by WestConn Sweethearts Todd ’97 and Tammy (Hammershoy) McInerny ’97.

3. M.F.A. in Fine Arts graduate Bryn Gillette ’09, posed with son, Cai, after WestConn’s Graduate Commencement.

4. (l-r): Heather Smith ’99, Amy (Tworek) Davis ’98 and Director of Alumni Relations Tammy Hammershoy ’97 at the 23rd University Ball, which honored Union Savings Bank.

5. (left and center): Maddie and Jack Walsh, children of Mike ’98 and Jane (Shevlin) ’96, enjoyed the bouncy house with other children at the barbecue during Alumni Spring Weekend.

6. Donning cap and gown once again, alumni participated in the academic procession at this year’s undergraduate commencement ceremony.

Open House for High school students

Sunday, Nov. 1, 2009
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

O’Neill Center (Feldman Arena), WCSU Westside campus, 43 Lake Avenue Ext., Danbury, CT 06811

For information visit wcsu.edu/openhouse