

The Recorder

FEBRUARY 15, 2024

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CCSU Proposes New Writing Requirements

BY SAVANNA YELLING
Managing Editor

The Ad Hoc Committee for General Education Review is proposing five changes to CCSU's general education requirements, including a Writing in the Discipline requirement.

The proposal would require all students to take a course that teaches the writing required by their area of study. The course is not an additional general education requirement and will be a part of the curriculum in students' given major.

"Each (WID) course would prepare students to do the sort of writing they'll be expected to do to succeed in their major and their career path," Stephen Cohen, chair of the English department, said.

Cohen said he has been advocating for this change for over a decade and has learned two things.



Photo: Isabella Chan

"First, CCSU is the only school in the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system, including the CT State Community College, that requires only one writing course," Cohen said. "This puts our students at a disadvantage when competing with other students in the state for jobs and other opportunities. Second, our as-

essment data consistently shows that our students do not write as well as they could or should."

Seniors at CCSU have 65.9 pages of assigned writing and students at other New England public schools have 84 pages of assigned writing, according to the National Survey of Student Engagement report.

Cohen said that

treasurer of SGA, expressed his gratitude to President Toro for standing with CCSU students.

"I'm glad that the president of the university is on our side on that matter," Palardy said. "I think it says a lot about her intentions that she is advocating on a state level and to the governor himself about our tuition increases."

SGA President Haneen Alkabasi added that while she is hopeful President Toro's advocacy will produce something positive, she is still apprehensive.

"I do have hope,

CCSU's First Year Writing Program students score well, but seniors do not score as well in writing as the national average.

"Of the five Gen Ed skills we assess, our students show the least improvement in writing from freshman to senior year," Cohen said. "We can do better."

but it's a little bit difficult; this is a battle that's been going on for years," Alkabasi said. "But I feel like the students on the back end have been doing a lot of advocacy work, and there's a public hearing coming up at the Capitol that we're planning to testify at."

Toro said Central is developing programs and facilities to teach students how to use artificial intelligence. She added that she wanted students to take advantage of the upcoming programs and learn more about artificial intelligence before graduating.

Cohen said the development of writing skills is important to students of all majors despite their area of study, which is why the WID requirement will be unique to each major.

"Every discipline, STEM or otherwise, requires writing, as do the careers those disciplines prepare students to pursue," Cohen said. "They don't all require the same kind of writing. A Biology student may need to learn to write lab reports, a business major may need to learn to write business plans, and a nursing student may need to learn to write patient charts—but they all need writing. That's why we're advocating a WID requirement: to prepare every major for the kind of writing they need."

This proposal will be voted on by the general education subcommittee at the main meeting. Then, it will move up to be voted on in the senate.

Palardy talked about artificial intelligence and its role in the lives of students post-graduation.

"I think A.I. is going to become such an integral part of our lives," Palardy said. "It's definitely not a bad thing to at least get people familiar with it because it's going to be in the workplace for sure. It's already getting implemented."

Toro also said several events will be held this year to celebrate CCSU's 175th anniversary. One of which will be a gala.

President Toro speaks to the Student Government Association

BY EARY BANUSHI
Staff Writer

Central Connecticut State University President Zulma R. Toro addressed CCSU's 175th anniversary, Central's tuition increase, and new academic programs and facilities during the Student Government Association's weekly meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 7.

During the meet-

ing, Toro said she went to the Connecticut State Capitol on Wednesday and discussed the legislative session for 2024 to request funding from the state and advocate suspending Central's tuition increase.

However, she cautioned senate members that even with her efforts, there was a chance the increased tuition would remain. Despite this, Logan Palardy,

THE RECORDER OFFICE

Student Center
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, CT 06050
860.832.3744
editor@centralrecorder.com
centralrecorder.org

Printed By
Valley Publishing Company

Editor-in-Chief

Andrew DeCapua

Managing Editor

Savanna Yelling

News Editor

Nathalia Blair

Sports Editor

Ian Yale

Lifestyle Editor

Jayden Klaus

Layout Editor

Andrew DeCapua

Social Media Editor

Lucas Amoroso

Staff Writers

Daschall Hayes
Jason Hartman
Eary Banushi
Hollie David
Dylan Braccia

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CCSU Parking Awareness

BY NATHALIA BLAIR
News Editor

Parking at Central Connecticut State University becomes frustrating for students who have received tickets while working to afford tuition and other school necessities.

Ray Monaccio, a senior and international studies major at CCSU, said she was new at locating the designated parking spaces during her first year. The parking ticket she received applied a lot of pressure when she didn't have a job to afford it.

"I thought that was a little, you know, unfair with the tuition and textbook costs and all that."

Sergeant Densil Samuda, CCSU Police Department patrol and investigative division supervisor, said parking tickets are issued when there are complaints about improper parking or noticed during parking patrol.

"The one [parking] we focus on are people parking in handicapped spots or halfway

blocking the travel lanes and stuff like that," Samuda said.

Students can appeal against tickets by presenting their case to the parking appeals committee, which meets every three months.

"Students who think they got a parking ticket in error should pay the ticket, fill out the parking appeals form, and participate in the parking appeals committee meeting," Samuda said.

Samuda said parking spaces are abundant.

Monaccio said she has become more aware of parking spaces available throughout her years.

"I commute every single day at different times, like in the morning and afternoon," Monaccio said. "I've never had a problem finding a spot."

Student violations commonly occur when students run late to class and park in forbidden zones closer to their class, Samuda said.

"Unless your ticket is forgiven through the parking appeals committee, you just have to pay the ticket," Samuda said. "Everybody knows where they should or should not

be parking.

Considering the inconvenience and financial burden, students who have gotten a parking ticket can be frustrated.

Alexis Lykowski, a communication major and senior at CCSU, said it would be more helpful for students to receive more warnings than a ticket.

"I think that it's inconvenient. Because it is a waste of time, it is also a waste of money for students who are struggling financially. No one wants to pay them, but they know they have to, so they do it."

Jason Chen, associate professor at Central Connecticut State University, experienced when parking in the Vance garage. His concerns relate to cleanliness in the garage and students using the garage to smoke, citing personal experiences where the smell lingered for an extended period.

"I have no problem with students being able to park after hours and during the weekend," Chen said. "However, I would like to see that the Vance garage is not littered with fast food trash

after many weekends when the gates are not up to allow all to park. I also wish that students who choose to park do not use the space to smoke weed as the smell lingered even after the entire weekend. Finally, having a drinking party in a parked car with headlights on seems suspicious."

Samuda said students can not park in reserved spaces or fire lanes, and a permit is required to park in handicapped spaces.

Samuda urged students to look for the parking signs before entering a parking lot. Parking signs are color coded. Parking signs colored red are for commuters and visitors, green signs are for student residents, and yellow signs are for faculty and staff. These parking rules apply Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. These rules are lifted on Saturday and Sunday and resume again on Mondays at 7 a.m.

Students who plan to leave their vehicles on campus for an extended period, especially in the winter, should park their cars in a garage.

SGA Updates Senate Policies

BY EARY BANUSHI
Staff Writer

The Student Government Organization passed a resignation policy for absent senate members at their weekly meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 7.

The motion for an automatic resignation policy was passed. This policy requires senate members to resign if they fail to

respond to inquiries and have three unexcused absences from general senate meetings.

Logan Palardy, the treasurer of SGA, voted to pass the motion and said that the repeated absence of senate members results in SGA being less effective.

"There are a few senators who have not gone to anything that the Senate has done this

year," Palardy said. "It affects our quorum because we need a certain percentage of our members to do things like pass by-law changes. It messes up our numbers on important votes and makes it so stuff can't get passed. It's something that the SGA used to do years ago, and we're just trying to reimplement it."

The motion to increase SGA stipends failed. This motion was introduced at the

last SGA meeting for Senators to earn \$800, Vice-Chairs to earn \$900, and Chairs to earn \$1,000.

The Student Government Association meets every Wednesday at 3:05 p.m. in the Bellin room of the Student Center, with the next meeting taking place on Wednesday, Feb. 14. The meetings are open to all Central Connecticut State University students and faculty.

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OPINION

THE RECORDER

Gypsy Rose From Prisoner to Prisoner of Public Perception

BY HOLLIE DAVID
Staff Writer

Gypsy Rose Blanchard-Anderson's public relations team is working overtime. A week after her release from prison, Blanchard-Anderson released a book, a new Lifetime documentary and amassed a substantial social media following. At the time of writing, she has 9.8 million TikTok followers and 8.3 million Instagram followers. Blanchard-Anderson is the Internet's newest "It" girl.

Blanchard-Anderson was charged in 2016 with second-degree murder for the role she played in the murder of her mother, Claudine "Dee Dee" Blanchard. Blanchard suffered from factitious disorder imposed on another, formerly Munchausen by proxy, a psychological disorder where a caregiver acts if someone, typically a child, is sick even if they are not.

Blanchard forced her daughter to pretend that she had a multitude of medical illnesses, including leukemia and muscular dystrophy. Even though her daughter could walk, she was forced to stay in a wheelchair. Blanchard-Anderson was put on an extensive medication regime and given unnecessary medical surgeries and procedures when she was perfectly healthy.

Blanchard-Anderson met an older man, Nicholas Godejohn, on a Christian dating site and became romantically involved with him. Godejohn had a history of mental illnesses. She told Godejohn everything about the abuse she was facing. Together, the two



Photo: Getty

planned the murder of Blanchard-Anderson's mother.

In June 2015, Godejohn came to the home the two women shared and stabbed Blanchard while Blanchard-Anderson covered her ears in the bathroom. Blanchard-Anderson was initially sentenced to 10 years in prison but was released after seven due to good behavior.

The Internet has had a sympathetic view of her, with TikTokers excited for her release. People on social media posted ideas for her release party, entered her into Gag City, and offered their support to Blanchard-Anderson.

Blanchard-Anderson has been warmly welcomed into the public sphere with a plethora of speaking engagements and memes. Despite this, other victims of abuse who commit crimes are not given the same support that she has received.

There is an element of infantilization of Blanchard-Anderson that is at play. Her mother infantilized her, and is now by the public. The narrative is that, since she missed the formative years of her life, the actions that she took part in are okay. In her interview

with *The View*, host Joy Behar explained how she had no choice in the part she played in the murder of her mother, thereby excusing her for her actions.

The public has the idea that Blanchard-Anderson is still the same young, abused girl that she was when she entered prison. Which, even according to Blanchard-Anderson herself, is not a valid assessment. She is a grown woman, and her infantilization has made it easier for the public to overlook the violent and grotesque crime she had taken part in. When we infantilize grown women, we take away their agency and make them more palatable and easier to pity.

White women have always found it easy to be viewed as victims. In well-known true crime cases, everyone loves and is fascinated by victims who are white women. White women have been given the benefit of having the factors that they face taken into consideration when they commit crimes. In contrast, women of color do not get the same sympathy.

Take Cyntoia Brown, a victim of human trafficking who, at age 16, killed Johnny Allen, a 43-year-old man who had taken her to his home

to pay her for sex. Brown was forced into sex work by her pimp, "Cut Throat," who brutalized her physically and sexually repeatedly.

Brown was intimidated by Allen, who took her to his house where no one knew where she was, showed her his extensive collection of guns, and then tried to have sex with her while he thought she was sleeping. Brown was not even the age of consent in her state, yet she was tried as an adult and given no sympathy by the court. During her trial, Brown was not treated as a victim but instead as a conniving prostitute who wanted to rob Allen. Brown was sentenced to 60 years in prison but was released after 15 years when her case was brought into the public light.

Blanchard-Anderson, with her pale skin and little girl voice, was treated as an abused little girl despite her being 24 at the time. In contrast, Brown was received differently. Many women of color face similar situations as Brown by being treated as adults too soon.

A study by the Georgetown Law Center on poverty and inequality showed that Black girls are seen as less innocent

than their white peers. They also found that compared to white girls the same age, participants perceived Black girls as needing less nurturing and protection and that Black girls knew about more adult topics. White girls are given the benefit of the doubt, whereas Black girls do not receive the same. Black girls are pushed into adulthood without any regard for the trauma that this causes.

Brown earned her GED and college degree in prison, wrote a book, and started a non-profit. Brown has dedicated her life to advocacy for victims of human trafficking. Brown had to work twice as hard to receive a quarter of the support and sympathy that Blanchard-Anderson has received. I say this not to say that Blanchard-Anderson should not be receiving the kindness and empathy she is receiving from the public, but instead, we should treat all criminals like this with compassion and nuance.

Blanchard-Anderson went from being a prisoner of her mother to being a prisoner of the state to being a prisoner of the public. Blanchard-Anderson was taught how to manipulate people from a young age by her mother. She was media trained on how to gain sympathy and again plays a role in gaining profit. Now, instead of her mother, whom she was trying to please, it is the public. As soon as she does something they disagree with, they will throw her away and move on to the next obsession. In a sick way, Blanchard-Anderson is living out her mother's dream by turning sympathy and pity into profit and fame.

Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival Comes to CCSU

BY LUCAS AMOROSO
Social Media Editor

Central Connecticut State University hosted The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival on its campus the week of Jan. 30.

The festival hosted colleges from Region 1, which comprises New England states and New York.

Christie Maturo, associate professor and department chair for the CCSU Theatre Department, said that the school was able to host due to her connections with people at the festival and having served on the festival's board in the past.

"I said I think we'd be interested in at least seeing what that could look like, and so they asked, could they come to campus, take a tour, meet our deans and provost and such, and see the facilities," Maturo said. "So that's how that came to be, and ultimately ... it was good on both sides to have the festival, very simply located for this region, here in Connecticut."

Participants could attend performances, various workshops, acting competitions and seminars held throughout the week.

Maturo explained that for the region, four to five shows are selected to travel



Photo: Lucas Amoroso

to and perform at the festival, and schools must enter their shows to be considered. Maturo said CCSU entered this year due to other schools having issues with funding limitations and that there were about 10 shows that were entered for consideration, with five ultimately selected. The Theatre Department's fall production of "Eurydice" was performed twice during the festival.

The festival concluded with a closing ceremony on Feb. 3 in Welte Hall, where an award ceremony occurred.

Juan Rubio, a theater major from LaGuardia Community College in Queens, NY, won an award for theatre administration

and said that it was an ample opportunity for him to discuss issues related to how workers are paid and how many participating in the event do not have prospective livable wages.

"We gotta change theater for the better," Rubio said. "At the end of the week, that is us, our generation, who is going to bring theater to the future and keep it alive in a very, very hard context."

Rubio also noted that all the schools involved brought high-quality productions. He also highlighted that many of the schools in attendance were not top colleges or the most recognized.

"Everybody has been doing great work with their professors,

with their directors and with the resources that they have," Rubio said.

Cedric Wescott, a theater major at CCSU, won an award for Best Scene Partner and said they enjoyed their experience in the Irene Ryan acting competition.

Wescott said that participants could self-submit or get nominated for the competition. Usually, two or three people from each show are selected, and after nominations, participants send in two video monologues. The best monologues are then chosen for the semifinal round. Almost 200 people submitted this year, according to Wescott.

"A few people got into the semifinals round, two of whom I

was the scene partner for, that was Aria Adeo and Mike Zimmerman, and Mike made it to the finals as well," Wescott said.

Ashlyn Sminkey, a Norwich resident and a student at Eastern Connecticut State University, said that this event helped expose her and others to theater work they otherwise may not have been able to try.

"But at this event, it was an opportunity for a lot of our actors to try at tech events and try their hand at that and learn a little bit about the other side," Sminkey said. "I got to learn a little bit about other tech too that I don't normally do at my school."

Maturo said that she and the department are grateful that the university was able to host the festival and with the number of students that got to participate.

"I'm so proud of how happy the students seem to be during the festival, and just number-wise, which just makes me feel so happy," Maturo said. "56 colleges came, there was 170 extra people on campus to attend to this festival, and I think that is a super cool mark for our university to get to, to have hosted that many people and produce something exciting for them."

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LIFESTYLE

THE RECORDER

Psychic Fair Charms the CCSU Campus

BY MADISON MUSCO
Staff Writer

Mystical melodies filled Alumni Hall at Central Connecticut State University as dozens of students shuffled in, hoping to glimpse their future, on Tuesday, Feb. 6.

The Psychic Fair, hosted by First-Year Experience and organized by Brianna Kirk, offered a chance for students to relieve a bit of freshman stress by gaining insight through unconventional means.

“I know that it’s the beginning of the semester, and it can be really overwhelming, but also a really exciting time for students,” Kirk said. “So, I really wanted folks to just have an opportunity to come in, set those intentions and, like, sort of clear their brain for the night, but also, like, really prepare themselves for the semester.”



Photo: Madison Musco

Kirk has worked in event management on other college campuses to coordinate similar events. She said they typically see a great turnout because of the shift from traditional religious practices toward more mindful and spirituality-based healing.

Three psychics offered a variety of readings, including tarot cards, palm reading, and ribbon reading. Each practice requires years of

training and experience to interpret the meaning of their tools.

Salma Binetti, a freshman at CCSU, received a tarot card reading from one of the psychics at the event.

“I felt connected to her right away,” Binetti said.

Binetti said she was skeptical before the event, saying that the trendiness of spirituality in recent years made her

think that the Psychic Fair would be less than legitimate. Binetti said the event exceeded her expectations and she got a lot out of her reading.

“I feel like she told me things I needed to hear without me having to ask her,” she said. “That girl knew everything; it scared me how accurate that was.”

Camille Grandy, another first-year student, also said she was

impressed by the psychic she sat down with. Unlike Binetti, she said she regularly sees a psychic for a yearly check-in.

“I got humbled, but I needed it,” Grandy said. “He nailed it perfectly; like, that was weird.”

Grandy said the psychic told her that the communication issues she had been dealing with in a personal relationship were not her fault. Grandy said she described her situation accurately and provided valuable insight as he pulled various cards for interpretation.

The Psychic fair had a table set up for making crystal packs, where students could choose from a variety of stones, including quartz and amethyst, each with its own specific healing properties. It also featured a table filled with magazines and stickers for students to create vision boards.

Valentine’s Day Craft Event Draws a Crowd



Photo: Jayden Klaus

BY JAYDEN KLAUS
Lifestyle Editor

During Valentine’s Day, it is important to show the people in your life just how much you care about them, and there is no better way to do it

than with a sweet craft that you made for them.

Last week’s Devil’s Den at 10 provided Central Connecticut State University students the opportunity to flex their crafty muscles while making something

for a loved one for Valentine’s Day.

The event had a large turnout, with many students attending to create crafts. Food and drinks were provided, making it a great opportunity to socialize with friends and be creative.

Students were free to make whatever they wanted with the many offered supplies. Alongside colored paper, markers, and stickers, several craft kits were available. The kits ranged from pom-pom critters to stylized Valentine’s Day picture frames to paper flowers. Beads and string for friendship bracelets were also available and turned out to be very popular with many of the students in attendance.

The environment at the event was lively with all the people present, but it was fairly calm and relaxing due to the nature of the event. Making fun Valentine’s Day crafts provided a great way to spend the evening with friends in a low-key and relaxed way.

During the event, hosts Monica Long and Kevin Agis from Central Activities Network encouraged students to come up to the stage and say who they loved and were thankful for, be it a friend, family member, or romantic partner. Many people came up to express their love for the people in their lives. It was a very touching thing to see, and people in the audience were

very enthusiastic and applauded everyone who came up.

Long said that she was very pleased with the event. She said it turned out better than expected, with most of the crafts being used and most of the seats filled.

“It feels good to host,” Long said. “It was nerve-wracking, which I’m sure you could see when I was up on stage, but it turned out good.”

Nevaeh Alvarado said that she enjoyed the event because it provided a way to relax and relieve stress.

“When a new semester starts, it can be really stressful,” Alvarado said. “These events are fun, and you can be yourself.”

I Miss the Old Kanye - "Vultures 1" Album Review

BY DASCHALL HAYES
Staff Writer

Kanye West's career has been riddled with controversy over the past few years, but that has not stopped him from releasing new music.

In August 2023, he began promoting his 11th studio album, "Vultures 1," the first album of a three-part collaboration series between himself and Ty Dolla \$ign. After months of the album being pushed back, listening parties, and manic Instagram livestreams, the album was released a day after the intended date of Feb. 9. It is time to see if the months of waiting were worth it.

The lead singles are "Vultures," featuring Lil Durk & Bump J, and "Talking / Once Again," featuring Ye's eldest daughter, North West. When "Vultures" dropped in October, it was the first we had heard from Ye or Ty in a long time. The hype persisted, but I soon realized this rushed song was nowhere near greatness.

Bump J is a stranger to hip-hop, and his verse is lackluster. Lil Durk provides an average verse that makes the song slightly hyped. At least



Photo: Youtube

the beat is hard-hitting, and Ty's singing voice is memorable. But Ye has to add more fuel to the fire with his lyrics, where he references not being antisemitic after having intercourse with a Jewish woman.

I am glad that "Talking/Once Again" is listenable with the catchy cheerleading vocal sample from James Blake, a delightful verse from West, and more soothing vocals from Ty. Ye is still the worst part, but at least his part is short and sweet.

I do not have many positives about this album beyond the production choices. While muddy and mixed poorly at times, Ye still makes

impressive choices, like using a Brazilian "phunk" beat on "Paperwork," featuring Quavo, making the 808s otherworldly. I also enjoy the fun nature of "Do It," featuring YG. I like that they stuck to the Cali sound that YG is best at instead of throwing him on something out of his element. Sampling Juvenile's "Back That Azz Up" was perfect for this song.

The intro for "Stars" has a choir-like sample from Dijon, which adds to the simple melody and drum pattern. Ye does ruin it by mentioning Jewish people again. "Burn" is another great song, as it brings me back to Ye's roots of relaxed R&B

production and his classic flow, easily making it one of the best tracks on this record.

It is sad seeing Ty Dolla \$ign taking a backseat on most of the records he is on. He does have a solo or collab album that sold over 50,000 units in the first week. While that is still an accomplishment, Ye's name will easily make Ty more successful. I would bet money that Ye took over most of the creative decisions while Ty was happy to be there. That is likely why Ty did not say much about the record during the promotional phase or about Ye's controversies, as he does not want to pass up on the opportu-

nity. He will forever be a supporting artist, never the star.

"Vultures 1" is sexually suggestive to the point where it makes you cringe. "Back to Me," featuring Freddie Gibbs, spends minutes on big-breasted women not falling out of the sky. Other songs, like "F-k Sumn" and "Carnival," give me the same vibes. Both songs have some fascinating moments, like Travis Scott's part on "F-k Sumn," but I get uncomfortable hearing Ye say something like, "I don't care who you f---ed, you're a virgin to me." The subject matter has gone far from what I am used to from Ye and Ty, and it takes away from what could have made this record special.

"Vultures 1" has some enjoyable production and a few good songs. However, it is ultimately brought down by Ye's controversial and uncomfortable lyrics, as well as the lackluster verses from some of the featured artists. While it may satisfy some fans, others may find it disappointing compared to Ye's previous works. I hope the following two albums are better and allow Ty to shine like a star and not pass by like a comet.



: @centralrecorder

FEBRUARY 15, 2024

SPORTS

THE RECORDER

Pair of Dominant Defenders Anchor Blue Devils' Defense



Photo: Ian Yale

BY ARI KINDER
Staff Writer

The Central Connecticut State University men's basketball program has featured a mixture of smooth and aggressive play down low in the paint during the 2023-24 season, with one big man playing with finesse and the other playing with grit.

Juniors Jayden Brown and Abdul Momoh have been the perfect rotating duo on the floor this year, as well as the heart and soul of Central's defense.

Brown, the starting center, has been a

Blue Devil from the start. In 2023, he has started to blossom into his own, averaging eight points and four rebounds.

Brown has worked on his face-up game extensively, which has paid dividends thus far this season.

"This offseason, I worked on mostly my face-up, so mid-post catching it, being comfortable to dribble and make a move without looking for someone first," Brown said.

With an astounding 36 blocks and counting this season, Brown has become an elite shot blocker who tracks the ball very well. Brown



Photo: Ben Daddio

learned to track the ball by trying to time his older brother's shots when they played against each other.

"That comes with playing with my older brother," Brown said. "He's 7 feet and plays overseas now, so playing against him and trying to time his blocks growing up helped."

Momoh has been making noise on both ends of the floor in his third year. The 6-foot-7 big man is light on his feet and can hang down low with anyone that a team throws at him.

Finishing in the top three in the conference for blocks in the 2022-23 season and hav-

ing 23 blocks this season, Momoh is the anchor on defense when his number gets called.

"This year, my biggest thing has been to stay in games late, stay out of foul trouble and wall up the right way," Momoh said.

CCSU has played in many close games this season, and both players have shown up, getting clutch blocks and late-game rebounds that have closed out games. Momoh said he loves the rotation between the two.

"I like me and Jayden as the rotating big men because our skill sets complement each other well," Momoh said.

CCSU ATHLETICS
SCHEDULE

MEN'S B-BALL

Feb. 15 @ Le Moyne
Feb. 22 @ Wagner
Feb. 24 @ Sacred Heart
Feb. 29 vs. LIU

WOMEN'S B-BALL

Feb. 15 vs. Le Moyne
Feb. 22 vs. Wagner
Feb. 24 vs. Sacred Heart
Feb. 29 @ LIU

TRACK & FIELD

Feb. 18 @ NEC
Feb. 19 @ NEC
March 2 @ IC4A/ECAC
March 3 @ IC4A/ECAC

WOMEN'S
LACROSSE

Feb. 24 @ Rider
Feb. 28 @ Lafayette
March 3 @ Delaware State
March 6 vs. Howard

SWIM & DIVE

Feb. 20 @ NEC
Feb. 21 @ NEC
Feb. 22 @ NEC
Feb. 23 @ NEC

SOFTBALL

Feb. 25 vs. Saint Peter's
Feb. 25 vs. Saint Peter's
March 1 @ Norfolk State
March 2 @ Hampton

CCSU Softball Opens Season with Doubleheader Sweep



Photo: Ian Yale

BY DYLAN BRACCIA
Staff Writer

The Central Connecticut State University softball team hosted Saint Peter's University on Saturday for a doubleheader to kick off the season, winning both games by scores of 4-3 and 8-0.

Game one saw

four home runs, including two in the first inning. The first came from senior Meg Gorman, and the second from freshman Reagan Vunak in her first collegiate plate appearance.

"It was my first at-bat, so I was nervous," Vunak said.

Central's other two home runs came from

senior Paige Stringer in the third and junior Ava Cino in the sixth, which ended up being the game-winning run.

The reigning NEC Pitcher of the Year, senior Kaylee Whittaker, threw a complete game, only giving up three runs.

"Our main goal is to win the conference," Whittaker said. "Obviously, we have to take it game by game, but I think with the group we have, it's looking good this year."

In the second game, Central started off swinging a hot bat. The lineup combined for six runs in the bottom of the first to take a commanding 6-0 lead. They won in the sixth inning via mercy rule, scoring their eighth run.

Freshman Liz

Hamilton tossed a gem in her debut, throwing all six innings. She gave up no runs and only three hits while striking out six.

"I hope to keep building off of today and gain more control over my pitching," Hamilton said.

Coach Breanne Gleason said she doesn't like to set goals for the team but does want to win games.

"I feel like last year, we were a little unsure when we started," Gleason said. "We had a little bit of a shaky year in 2022, and we just want to pick up where we left off in 2023."

The Blue Devils will return home on Feb. 25 for another doubleheader against Saint Peter's.

Athlete of the Week: Samora Watson, Women's Basketball

BY DYLAN BRACCIA
Staff Writer

As the Central Connecticut State University women's basketball team continues its fight in the Northeast Conference standings, a star has bloomed. Samora Watson, a sophomore from League City, Texas, has been electric to watch.

Watson, a guard for the team, is in her first season with the Blue Devils. She is averaging 18 points per game, which leads the team. She also averages 5.8 rebounds per game and 2.5 assists per game.

So far this season, she has tallied three NEC Player of the Week awards. The most recent being earlier this month on Feb. 5, as she led the team to two big conference wins. The



Photo: Ian Yale

first, over Saint Francis, saw her finish with 22 points and 9 rebounds. The second, against Merrimack, she scored 37 points, one off her career high.

"It makes me feel good," Watson said. "A year ago, I couldn't say I was in a position like this."

Her previous two honors came in December. Her first was on Dec. 4, where she put up her career high of 38 points. Her second came a few weeks later, on December 26th, where she had 55 points and 21 rebounds over a two-game span.

Last year, she

attended East Carolina University but did not play in many games. After the season, she looked to reconnect with CCSU's head coach, Way Veney, who recruited her to Temple.

"When I saw Coach Way at Central, I saw it as another chance to play for her," Watson

said.

She said she started playing basketball at 7 years old when a friend introduced her to the game. Now, she has become one of the most prolific scorers in the NEC.

"It takes a lot of focus," Watson said. "I love the pressure. If there was no pressure, I would be nothing."

While she has been recognized for her hard work, her drive doesn't stop there.

"I'm trying to keep the title of top scorer," she said. "I want to be successful. Both in every game and going pro."

Watson dedicates a lot of her success to her mother.

"She is a role model for everything," Watson said. "She never lets me slack, even when I want to."

Men's Basketball Dominates Defensively in Win Over FDU



Photo: Ben Daddio

BY CHIKE ONYIUKÉ
Staff Writer

The Central Connecticut State University men's basketball team picked up a vital win against Fairleigh Dick-

inson University on Saturday in Detrick Gymnasium by a score of 71-62.

The story of the game was CCSU's dominant defensive performance in the first

half, holding FDU to just 15 points on four made field goals.

Despite early foul trouble, Central's big three of graduate student Allan Jeanne-Rose, senior Kellen

Amos and senior Jordan Jones were sent to the bench. However, the Blue Devils managed to hold on through a shaky second half and secure the win.

Despite their limited minutes, Amos, Jeanne-Rose and Jones led the way for the Blue Devils' offense, scoring 16, 15 and 11 points, respectively.

Junior Jayden Brown added 10 points, his third straight game scoring in double figures. He also anchored the Central defense with three steals and a block.

"A win feels great," Brown said. "It was a bit shaky in the second half, but we pulled through."

Senior Tre Brelan, who led the game

in rebounding, and Brown were the only Blue Devils to play more than 30 minutes. Head coach Patrick Sellers ran a rare nine-man rotation that included sophomore T.J. Holloway to better match up against FDU's deep bench.

Sellers acknowledged the tough second half but maintained faith in his players.

"It's just older guys and understanding what's going on," Sellers said.

The Blue Devils will play three consecutive away games before returning to Detrick on Thursday, Feb. 29, for their second matchup against Long Island University.