

# The Recorder

February 26, 2020

VOLUME 121 | ISSUE 6



Former Director of Student Conduct has looked to his faith for support and spiritual guidance.

JULIA JADE MORAN

## Dukes Fights For Reputation And Job

BY ISABELLA CHAN  
 & RYAN JONES  
 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
 & MANAGING EDITOR

Christopher Dukes has faced a number of charges after his wife, Christine A. Berenbach, accused him of attacking her. According to police reports, Dukes was arrested for two counts of first-degree kidnapping and strangulation, third-degree assault, second-degree threatening and breach of peace.

Despite the charges being dismissed this past November, Dukes is still working to clear his name and return to a normal life. Since his termination from Central Connecticut in December 2018, Dukes has been unemployed thus leaving him to rely on the financial support from the Justice4Dukes Coalition.

During a court hearing, on Nov. 14, 2019, State Attorney Vicki Melchiorre stated Berenbach did not want to see Dukes go to jail “for the sake of her children,” therefore the state would no longer pursue the case. Dukes claims the state dropped the charges due to a lack of evidence. Berenbach’s attorney Frank Romeo III did not respond to requests for comment.

Although the case did not make it to trial, there is DNA evidence and records from the night of the incident that contradict the claims made against Dukes.

The timeline on the night of April 24, 2018, illustrated by Berenbach, indicated that Dukes attacked her suddenly, dragged her into their basement to then bound her with duct tape and forced her to confess to having an extramarital affair, which she denies. When she later escaped, Berenbach reported to Hartford police at 11:59 p.m. that Dukes, who she described as a large, drunk black man reported to the 9-1-1

dispatcher, was trying to kill her and himself while heavily armed.

Berenbach reported the attack took place between 10 p.m. and 12 a.m..

Dukes believes that Berenbach had attempted to swat Dukes the night in question. As defined by the FBI, swatting is “calling 9-1-1 and faking an emergency that draws a response from law enforcement—usually a SWAT team.”

In the initial police report, Berenbach reported that

**“ Reports concluded Dukes was ‘eliminated as the source of the DNA profile’ from duct tape collected”**

pre-cut strips of duct tape were used by Dukes to bound her while in the basement.

Over a year after the events of the night, the DNA reports concluded Dukes was “eliminated as the source of the DNA profile” from the first strip of duct tape collected. DNA tested from the second strip of duct tape indicated that there were three mixtures of DNA found, it likely being Berenbach, Dukes and unknown sources.

Both strips of duct tape suggested Berenbach’s DNA was predominantly found on them.

“That DNA test confirms there is only one person in the world who could’ve taken that duct tape off the

roll, crumpled it up and put onto the ground for the detectives to find,” Dukes stated in an interview with The Recorder. Dukes suggests that Berenbach placed the duct tape in the basement, citing not only DNA evidence but the time frame leading up to its discovery on April 25 as well.

Dukes was escorted off of his property by Hartford Police close to 3:25 a.m. The duct tape was gathered around 6 a.m., leaving a roughly three hour gap that included a point where Berenbach was alone in the house with Hartford Police, as highlighted by footage taken from Dukes’s front door camera. Following the incident, Dukes was transported to the hospital for testing, resulting in a toxicology report, that was shared with The Recorder, which revealed his blood alcohol content showed no signs of intoxication.

“They had to hide it to protect the Hartford Police Department, who after I left my home voluntarily at that point in time, this crucial evidence was planted either with their knowledge or with their negligence because it is the only time it could’ve happened where this duct tape evidence was planted,” Dukes noted. “Why would you have to plant evidence if you weren’t framing someone?”

Berenbach also reported to police that she had vomited in the basement following Dukes assaulting her. When doing their first search of the basement, no such evidence was found at the scene of the crime.

Phone records from that night also defy some pieces of Berenbach’s timeline, showing Dukes’ mother, Viola Dukes, was the only person in contact with the two parties prior to Berenbach’s 9-1-1 call; the three spoke for approximately an hour until Berenbach left the room close to midnight.

Berenbach said at a family court trial on May 18, 2018 that Viola Dukes had asked Dukes to “please come

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## THE RECORDER

Student Center  
1615 Stanley Street  
New Britain, CT 06050  
860.832.3744

editor@centralrecorder.org  
centralrecorder.org

## Editor-in-Chief

Isabella Chan  
chan2017@my.ccsu.edu

## Managing Editor

Ryan Jones  
ryan.michael.jones@my.ccsu.edu

## News Editor

Bruna Vila Artigues  
bruna.vilaartigues@my.ccsu.edu  
Samantha Bender, Assistant  
samanthabender@my.ccsu.edu

## Arts &amp; Entertainment Editor

Julia Conant  
juliaconant@my.ccsu.edu  
Mauriah Johnson, Assistant  
mauriah.johnson@my.ccsu.edu

## Sports Editor

Trevi Alickolli,  
talickolli@my.ccsu.edu  
George Attwood, Assistant  
gjattwood@my.ccsu.edu

## Layout Editor

Julia Jade Moran  
julia.j.moran@my.ccsu.edu

## Copy Editor

Megan Brawner  
megan.brawner@my.ccsu.edu  
Kiernan Foster  
fosterk@my.ccsu.edu

## Social Media Editors

Kelly Langevin  
kelly.langevin@my.ccsu.edu  
Bailey Murphy  
baileymurphy@my.ccsu.edu

## Staff Writers

Nat Dest  
Sarah Willson  
Shwar Zaidi  
Gabriel Anton  
Samuel Pappas

# CCSU Earns Third Spot on List of “10 Best ‘Hidden Gem’ Universities in New England”



The university’s acknowledgment is due to facilities and on campus opportunities.

BY SAMANTHA BENDER  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

In a recent article published by the higher education website known as the College Gazette, Central Connecticut State University earned the third spot on its list of “10 best ‘Hidden Gem’ universities in New England.”

The article, which was published at the beginning of the year, credited CCSU on its implementation of the “many new initiatives to further its curricular offerings.”

This honor came as no surprise to President Dr. Zulma Toro, who began her tenure at CCSU in January 2017.

“Having public recognition of the university you have the privilege to lead is very nice, but we know that we are a gem,” Dr. Toro said.

Placed just behind top-ranked Sacred Heart University and University of New England, the article acknowledged that “in

the last decade alone, Central Connecticut State has invested an amazing \$394 million in its facilities, bolstering its appearance and classroom offerings.”

Dr. Toro believes that on top of CCSU’s new renovations and academic programs, the faculty play a major role in the success of the university.

“Our faculty members are first-class in the sense that they not only teach, they’re respected scholars. They continue to be up to date in their areas, they contribute to the advancement of knowledge,” Dr. Toro stated. “They contribute to the solution of community problems and they mentor our students.”

The College Gazette went on to mention that CCSU, which is home to approximately 12,000 students, is among the more selective of Connecticut’s public universities and highlighted well-known alumni, including actor Richard Grieco and Dave Campo, former head coach of the Dallas Cowboys.

Jason Dubrovich, a sophomore on the men’s soccer team, takes pride in being able to call CCSU home.

“It’s an honor to be a part of a university that holds such high standards and will help me to better my future,” Dubrovich said.

This honor is among just one of many bestowed upon the university in the past several years.

Recently, the Princeton Review, a college guidebook, included CCSU in its new publication titled, “2020 Best Colleges: Region by Region.”

It was featured along with nine other Connecticut institutions including Yale, Wesleyan, Trinity College, University of Connecticut, Connecticut College, Fairfield University, Quinnipiac University, U.S. Coast Guard Academy and St. Joseph Academy.

The Princeton Review commended CCSU on having over 130 student clubs and organizations, which cover a broad range of interests for students of every background.

According to CCSU’s website, the university has been recognized nationally several other times in the past.

“In 2001, the Association of American Colleges & Universities selected CCSU as one of 16 national ‘leadership institutions,’ and in 2002, the college guidebook, Great Colleges for the Real World selected the University for inclusion among its ‘best 201 colleges’ in the nation,” the website stated.

According to Dr. Toro, any public recognition is beneficial for the university in that it helps with advocating for the support of stakeholders and in attracting prospective students to take a closer look at what Central offers.

“One of our goals is to get the Central name beyond the boundaries of our state,” Dr. Toro explained further. “We want to get Central known in New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island and the New England area.”

@SBENDER99



## About

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## What’s New, CCSU?

- *The African Students Organization is putting on L’Affaire Royale Fashion Show hosted by Zaawdi in Welte Auditorium Friday Feb. 28 at 7pm. Doors open at 6:30*
- *Coffee & Kala is holding an open mic in Marcus White room 008 on Feb. 27th from 7-9pm. To perform sign up by 8pm on night of event*
- *CCSU Center for Africana Studies’ 26th annual conference celebrating accomplishments of Dr. Warren Perry will be held on Thursday March 5th from 9am to 4pm in the Constitution Room of Memorial Hall*

## SGA Briefs

The Student Government Association meets every Wednesday at 3:05 p.m. in Bellin A and B in the Student Center. These briefs are from the SGA’s meeting on Feb. 19.

- Director Hazan informed about two, back-to-back focus groups meeting on Thursday, February 27, regarding the Freshmen Year Program.
- Senator Carpa has resigned and there is an open seat on the Board of Governors for SGA representative.
- RECentral will be taking over the funding of club sports.
- Motion to add items in the By-laws under Title 4 was passed unanimously.
- Motion to consent agenda items under New Business was also passed unanimously.

# Dukes Fights For Reputation And Job

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

out of the basement and go back upstairs.”

Berenbach also claims to have told Viola Dukes that she did not feel safe and was injured by Dukes during the incident.

Contrary to Berenbach's story, Viola Dukes disclosed in a witness statement that the three of them discussed Berenbach's extramarital affair, in which Berenbach apologized for doing. Viola then offered to visit the house that night, but Berenbach declined because the couple was okay, according to Viola Dukes.

“Christine never said anything about being kept in the basement or hurt by Christopher. I never had to convince Christopher to release Christine. He never said anything about suicide,” Dukes's mother stated. “The two of them sounded as if nothing happened between the two of them. No one was crying, yelling or sounded upset in anyway. I knew the kids were still asleep upstairs.”

Viola Dukes has had no contact with Berenbach or her grandchildren since the night of the incident.

Dukes has also had limited contact with his children, receiving only two hour visitations per week. This has been one of the many outcomes from the night of the incident, along with losing his employment at CCSU.

Dukes's termination from CCSU went in full-effect on Dec. 26, 2018, after the university cited the off-duty behavior conducted in the police report as the main reason of removal.

During his hearing, Dukes presented the university with evidence supporting his innocence, including recordings of interviews, call logs from the night of the incident, photographs and other supporting documents. But the board claims Dukes's evidence did not mitigate any of his actions from that night.

Dukes has since begun to counter his termination, claiming the university's decision was rooted from the inaccuracy of the police reports and that the action was taken prior to the court's motion to dismiss the charges.

“At the time of his dismissal, Mr. Dukes

was a long-standing and active member of the State University Organization of Administrative Faculty (SUOAF) union. Article 20 of our contract is clear on the process to be followed when management moves to terminate an employee and it is our stance that that process has not been followed,” Lisa Bigelow, CCSU SUOAF Chapter President, stated.

“We continue to take measures to defend Mr. Dukes's right to due process, seeking a remedy that includes reinstatement to his SUOAF position,” Bigelow added.

According to Janice Palmer, director of public relations, the university will not comment on Dukes's case as it goes through the arbitration process.

“CCSU and the Board of Regents had ulterior motives for removing me from my position to prevent the disclosure of mismanagement of sexual misconduct cases,” Dukes stated. “They almost got me, that was what the plot was. But through the grace of God while going through this process, we fought it.”



Despite being offered many plea deals, Dukes declined them all citing his innocence.

JULIA JADE MORAN

## Churches And Friends Rally Behind Dukes

BY ISABELLA CHAN  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

“This isn't about me,” Christopher Dukes announced to his fellow church members. “We are all a vessel of God.”

People surrounding him included members of First Church of Christ, Lakewood Church and supporters of the Justice4Dukes Coalition. All gathered together to listen to Dukes give thanks for their support and speak of the struggles that he's faced in the past two years.

“We love him” and “his faith has inspired all of us,” were just a few of the small words of praise and support whispered among those crowding First Church of Christ on Sunday.

Dukes got his start at the church working as a section leader while attending Central Connecticut. At the time, Dukes would not call himself a practicing Christian but as “seeds were planted,” his faith began to grow. Despite a short absence after college, Dukes has been with the church ever since.

After the incident on April 24, 2018, members of First Church of Christ reached out to both Dukes and his wife, Christine A. Berenbach, to offer them spiritual support. Although Berenbach did not accept the offer, Dukes has continued to attend services and maintain being an active member of their spiritual community. Along with this, Beulah Missionary Baptist Church sends Dukes CDs of their services, while Lakewood Church's Joel Osteen offers him daily sermons.

“I have not known many people to go through trials and tribulation like this. They find themselves broken up, finding themselves committing suicide, but he held his composure and he did a wonderful job. He was always in good spirits, an example to all of us that no matter what we're going through, stay strong and keep the faith,” Bishop Milton Boyd stated.

“He has kept his integrity and has not allowed for his spirit to be broken. It was very painful and depressing but, through it all, I saw him as a spiritual man,” Boyd continued. “To see where he's at now and see that they dropped the case, I just thank God for him.”

Several people of these churches and others have worked together to create the Justice4Dukes Coalition, in which participants provide Dukes encouragement throughout the many court hearings he has experienced and continues to go through; in total, 17 churches are represented.



Seventeen churches have gathered to support Dukes through the Justice4Dukes Coalition.

JULIA JADE MORAN

“There are some folks who have been there for the majority of the hearing, who have been recipients of the bad news that I kept hearing, getting and the injustices. They've stood behind me and prayed with me in the hallways of the court houses,” Duke said.

Even on Christmas Eve of 2018, as he sang in front of the congregation and celebrated Christmas without his kids, the members of his church helped to uplift him.

“I am standing here, in front of this manger of baby Jesus, meanwhile only a couple of people in the house knew here, in the meeting house, that I'm standing up here singing with an ankle monitor on Christmas Eve. It was one of the most humiliating experiences, but the thing that didn't let it get in the way was worship,” Dukes recalled of the day.

The Davis couple is one of Dukes's many supporters — both John and Helen have gone to various hearings with fellow church members and have watched resiliently from the back of the courtroom to “show [their] Christian support” to their friend.

“I just want to present the very human side of this, the struggles that he's been through, the separation, and it's all been over false testimonies,” Helen stated. “One particular time, he was in family court and found out for the first time in 15 months he was able to see his children. He came out and he was sobbing because he hadn't been able to see his kids in that long.”

Dukes believes the court has taken all but his faith from him, calling the biggest injustice the loss of being a part of his children's lives.

But he does not feel as though these are merely accidents or punishment but rather calculated acts to create reactions.

“There would be a time when your courage is outweighed by the fear of the unknown. And I can tell you sitting in that house in the shower stall, while flashing lights were shining through my doors, my fears were [gestured high] and my courage [gestured low],” Dukes said as he reflected on the night of the incident — describing the experience almost as if they put him in a pressure cooker, waiting for him to explode, but he didn't.

“At some point in time, my dog licked me on my wrist and snapped me out of that moment of fear. My courage came back. I'm able to hear what is the voice of God tell me ‘you need to stand up, you know the truth, if you trust me walk out of this house.’ That's what got me to walk out the house,” Dukes added.

CHAN2017@MY.CCSU.EDU

# Evening Childcare Finally Opens After Decades Of Planning

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY BRUNA VILA ARTIGUES  
NEWS EDITOR

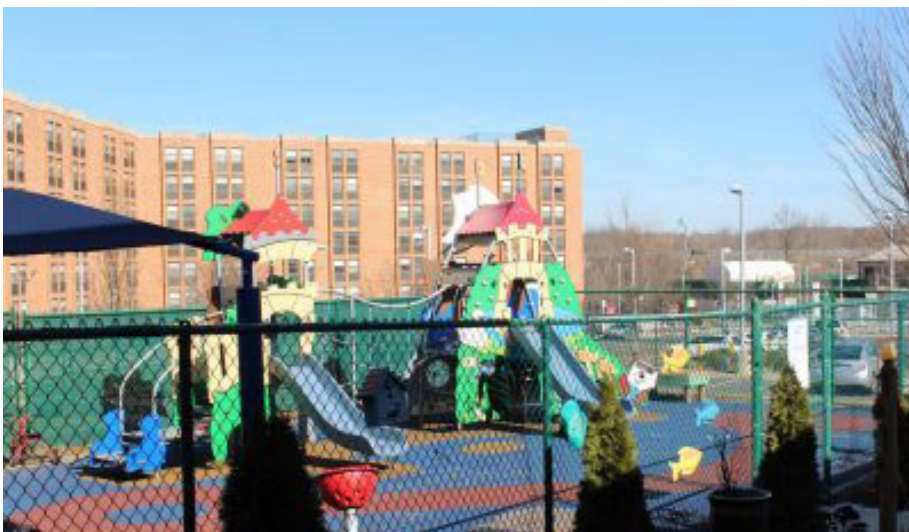
Over the last 20 years, Central Connecticut has failed to establish a child care facility for their students, faculty and staff. While this year will mark the opening of an new after-school and evening care program for the community to use, it could last shorter than expected.

Although the additional childcare program has been helpful for those using it, with eight children enrolled in the program, it still has not secured a permanent position into the university.

“The program is applied for our students [faculty and staff as well] at CCSU that have children and may have classes in the evening, or may need to do some work, or may have to attend any university activities,” Talhaht Mannan, the Early Learning Program (ELP) director, explained. “It is making CCSU programs more accessible to them this way.”

Fiona Pearson, the board director and chairperson of the Social Science Department at CCSU, was ambitious enough to apply and receive a grant to fund the program. However, being state-funded also means that the organization must rely on an outside source for funding in order to make it work.

“We would like to advertise it every semester, but it all depends on the funds.”



The Early Learning Program consists of two classrooms and a leisure area for the kids

Mannan said. “This year the funds come up in June and then we’ll see if we have the funds for next year to offer it again.”

While this is the child care center’s first year back in a long time, the program has been years in the making awaiting to take action.

In 2000, the CCSU Master Plan called for the “creation of a new day care facility with surrounding play area and landscaping.” At that time, the university did not provide day care drop-in services. However, it was affiliated with an off-campus facility called the Early Learning Program (ELP), a pre-school program for CCSU parents with children ages three to five.

Eight years later, the Committee

for the Concerns of Women Child Care Subcommittee realized that the plan had never come into fruition and, throughout the year, they worked to create a proposal for on-campus child care services. Other universities in the state had already adopted family-friendly policies by then.

After surveying nearly 500 people, the committee found that 48 percent of the respondents had “missed an on-campus event or class due to lack of child care,” and 80 percent “claimed to know people on campus who could use an on-campus child care service.”

Therefore, the committee realized that “CCSU [did] not currently provide adequate support for childcare needs,” and that the Early Learning Program

associated with the university lacked space, funding and accommodations for older kids.

Come 2011, CCSU still had yet to implement any changes. The committee continued to recommend CCSU to “develop initiatives and increase access to child care resources that ultimately promote a ‘family friendly’ culture on campus.” A year later, they finally submitted a “Proposal to Create a Pilot Child Care Drop-In Center.”

This year, eight years after the proposal and two decades after the first plan, it has finally happened. Nearly a month ago, the Early Learning Program, now licensed for children ages three to 14, adopted an evening childcare with a max capacity of 12 kids.

For the time being, the evening childcare is in service from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. every week day and consists of two classrooms run by co-teacher modules – meaning two teachers in each classroom.

People can sign up for specific days following an enrollment application and an interview by the board president. Individuals must be either enrolled as a CCSU student, faculty or staff, be in good academic standing and exhibit a need for the program to qualify for the services.

To apply or contact the Early Learning Program, visit their office at 1285 East Street or their website: <https://www.ccsu.edu/earlylearningprogram/>

@BRUNAVILA

## News In Brief

BY SARAH WILLSON  
REPORTER

### Possible ‘Tightening’ Vaccine Requirements Spark Protests:

Anti-vaccine protests by parents broke out at the Capitol earlier this week in response to the legislature’s public health committee plans to vote for a bill that would tighten vaccine requirements for school children.

The bill would bar parents from being able to cite “religious beliefs” as a reason to not vaccinate their school-age children, the Hartford Courant reported.

Parents protesting argued that the vote infringes on their parental rights.

In a nearly 22-hour long public hearing, doctors and other healthcare professionals fought back, citing that vaccinations are “highly effective and safe” ways to protect children from potentially deadly diseases.

The bill is expected to be voted on this week.

### Sanders Emerges As Democratic Frontrunner, Wins Nevada:

Bernie Sanders is locking in his place as the 2020 Democratic front-runner after defeating his rivals in the Nevada Caucus last week.

Sanders won 11 out of Nevada’s 17 counties.

Former Vice President Joe Biden trailed behind Sanders, coming in second. The remainder of the field is split between Pete Buttigieg and Elizabeth Warren.

Currently, Sanders has 21 out of the 1,990 delegates needed to become the Democratic nominee.

### World Should Prepare For Pandemic, WHO Says:

The World Health Organization is urging the world to “do more” to prepare for a possible coronavirus pandemic, according to BBC News.

Though too early to call the outbreak a pandemic, the WHO said countries should be “in a phase of preparedness.”

The virus is continuing to emerge in other parts of the world, including South Korea and Iran, with most of the infections remaining in China.

Over 1,200 cases have been confirmed in roughly 30 countries, BBC said.

## Governor Announces Innovation Fellowship for Seniors

BY MEGAN BRAWNER  
COPY EDITOR

Governor Ned Lamont has launched a new initiative in partnership with CTNext and Connecticut Innovations to form the Governor’s Innovation Fellowship (“GIF”).

The Stamford 2020 GIF Program is accepting applications until March 1, with recruitment beginning in the fall. The applications will be reviewed by a Stamford-based panel of business leaders and executives.

The program will match 20 graduates of Connecticut universities with jobs at innovative Stamford corporations. Aside from being placed with a corporation, fellows will have the opportunity for professional growth through mentorships, professional development events, incentives and networking opportunities. Fellows will also receive a \$5,000 Fellowship prize along with full-time salary and benefits.

Octagon, Trebel, Henkel, Sema4, Pitney Bowes and ISG are among the several companies hiring fellows. Applicants of the fellowship are required to go through the hiring process at each company.

In order to be eligible, candidates must be a graduating senior of a Connecticut university or college, must be willing to accept an offer for a technology-related, or STEM-focused position and must be a Connecticut resident by August of 2020. International students are welcome to apply, but the agreement with the partner companies does not guarantee visa sponsorship.

Positions include data analytics, marketing technology, engineering, computer programming and software development. However, preference will be given to STEM-focused positions.

Lamont’s initiative was launched following a study that shows STEM occupations are projected to have an estimated 705,000 annual average openings from now until the year 2028, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

As STEM-aligned companies hiring expands, the mission of the Stamford 2020 GIF Program is to provide recent graduates with the opportunity to work at innovative companies in the city. The community of fellows will strive to foster an environment of professional growth and to create a cohort of talent and comradery throughout the state.



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The Recorder at CCSU

## Living In Poverty

BY KELLY LANGEVIN  
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

If you were not born into poverty, you may not realize it, but your brain can.

Everyday people, like myself, often take our nonstop working brain for granted. However, people living in poverty are facing difficult situations that can cause long term effects and these impacts start during childhood.

According to The Effects of Poverty on Childhood Development Study, conducted by the department of psychiatry at Washington University, a smaller hippocampus and amygdala were detected in five to 17-year-olds living in poverty. These two regions of the brain - hippocampus and amygdala - are involved in stress regulation and emotion processing, which later can become problematic.

In a large community sample, findings from the study also showed smaller hippocampal grey matter volumes amongst children who were in a lower socioeconomic status.

Think about the last time you had to buy groceries or college textbooks. If you're anything like me, having to open your wallet and part with a couple hundred dollars is an irritating, stressful time.

But if you are living in poverty, the stress becomes more intense. Finding a meal, let alone groceries, is a whole different issue. Getting a basic education in and of itself can be a hard step and college might not even be an idea that can be fathomed by some due to their circumstances.

Living in poverty halts everyday tasks that one takes for granted such as getting an education, food security and keeping up with good hygiene.

My stress is not the same.

Children experiencing increased stress, known as a causal factor, are more likely to have brain developmental issues, according to the article Childhood Poverty, Living Below the Line, published by the American Psychological Association.

The article states that stress can lead to "adverse changes in the cardiovascular system, the immune system and the neuroendocrine and cortical systems which impacts learning and decision making."

The problems involving stress do not stop there. For parents living in major poverty, it can be especially stressful which can be translated amongst their children.

"Poverty impacts children's development indirectly through direct effects on parents," Living Below the Line article states.

This can both impair parenting practices and cause mental health issues down the road.

Another issue to take into consideration is living conditions. I was lucky enough to grow up in a very small town in which I felt safe. I could walk down the street to a friend's house and pass by a soccer field and watch little kids kick a ball; smiles gleaming and parents roaring with happiness.

Unfortunately, not everyone has this privilege, and where I grew up is another factor I don't think about every day or appreciate nearly enough. I am sure anyone else who has grown up in a similar situation wouldn't think twice about it. But for those who are in an inner-city, where how they walk, who they associate themselves with, and how they dress is... - the list is endless - these things matter every single day. These small things can sometimes result in a life or death situation.

Growing up with everyday stressors such as exposure to crime, low family income, discrimination and limited access to health care and low socioeconomic status make individuals highly susceptible to physical and mental disorders, academic struggles in school and low IQ scores, according to Martha Farah, a University Pennsylvania professor.

Of course, this is not the case for everyone.

But I hope you take this into consideration the next time you are close to someone who cannot read as fast as you or calculate math problems as quickly. Nobody truly knows what the person across from them is going through.

@KELLYLANGEVIN2

## Not All Disabilities Are Visible

BY MELODY RIVERA  
CONTRIBUTOR

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "disability?"

Is it a woman in a wheelchair? Perhaps a man with a white cane or maybe a little kid who is wearing a hearing aid.

Whichever first comes to mind is correct, because all of those descriptions accurately portray someone who has a visible disability. However, the first idea that came to your mind probably wasn't of someone with a mental or physical disability that isn't noticeable without the assistance of a guiding object. This is the problem that most people with non-visible disabilities face. When trying to obtain the accommodations they need, they often times get treated differently.

One of the people who has experienced this firsthand is me.

I have two non-visible disabilities. One is a mental disorder and the other is a physical condition. I have PDD-NOS (Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified), which is part of the autism spectrum, and Ehlers-Danlos syndrome type 3, which means I have loose joints that can cause severe joint pain.

Thankfully, I have received the help that I needed over the years, but I still had to deal with very uncomfortable situations and people who were not understanding of my

conditions.

When I was in sixth grade, I was bullied by other students because I was socially awkward because I was on the autism spectrum. Rumors were spread around about me and I suffered from severe anxiety. I was afraid to go to school.

I would throw up almost every morning before getting on the bus because of my anxiety and it got to the point where I had to meet with my principal. I told her about my situation and, at first, she was extremely non-empathetic towards me — she told me that I should grow thicker skin and suggested that I be put on medication.

The principal did not take my situation seriously and made me feel like I was the one with the problem because I was different and too sensitive. I was forced to go back to class after that meeting despite tears coming out of my eyes. I was scared.

When I told my mother what happened, appropriate measures were taken and my parents and other staff members advocated for me to get the help I needed. Finally, the principal put an end to the bullying.

I cannot stress enough how hard it was for me to get through those rough days. But I was able to because I advocated for myself.

I remember another incident that occurred during my freshman year of high school. It's really hard for me to walk up a lot of stairs because of my Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, so I

usually take the elevator.

One time I tried to use the elevator, but I was blocked by a security guard. When I politely asked him to use it, he pointed to another student who had crutches and a cast around his leg. He told me that that student had a reason to go on the elevator, and asked me: "What is wrong with you?"

Little did he know, I also had a reason to use the elevator, but I felt guilt-tripped and forced myself to use the stairs. I knew I was making a poor decision, especially because I remembered the time when I actually dislocated a joint in my hip while going down the stairs.

After that incident, I spoke up about my situation and the school gave me an elevator pass to show the security guards. Once again, my problem did not get solved until I communicated with others about my struggles.

According to the dictionary, the word disability is defined by a "physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses or activities." This means that a disability is not always visible and a person's struggles are not always obvious. This is why it is so important to spread awareness about all disabilities, not just the ones that are easier to talk about.

Every person with a disability deserves to receive the help they need and should not be discriminated against.

### EDITORIAL

## Race Cases Are More Than Just The Average Case

The United States has dealt with numerous cases that have involved racial discrimination. From smaller, local cases to ones that defined America with the simple fitting of a glove, the court system is constantly placed in situations in which racial identities play a major factor.

Questions such as what public schools can a person attend, who can someone marry, who has the right to use the courts and how can education be equal for everybody, among plenty of others, have been placed under the law of the court.

For instance, the Dred Scott v. Sandford case in 1857, in which the Court ruled that slaves were not entitled to their freedom even if they had resided in a free state; and that African-Americans, either free or enslaved, were not American citizens and could not sue in federal court citizenship for black people.

Or the Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education case in 1971, that established the busing of students as a remedial technique to promote integration and balance race in public schools.

The same things that are happening across the country are occurring right in our own state— it is no different.

On Jan. 15, Mubarak Soulemane, 19, was shot seven times by State Trooper Brian North for carjacking white

Hyundai in Norwalk, according to the police report.

It is stated Soulemane was armed with a knife when he was surrounded in New Haven after a high-speed car chase; shots were later fired after the vehicle crashed. Reports show North was the only officer to fire his gun during the incident.

It was later reported, Soulemane died at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

North is currently on administrative assignment as the conclusion of the investigation is pending, according to the New Haven Register.

Based on the body camera footage, Soulemane was in no shape or form a threat to the handful of officers that were surrounding him in his car. Even if Soulemane was a potential threat, the number of shots fired by the state trooper were simply unnecessary.

Along with that, with the officer under investigation is still employed after this incident and the fact that the media is covering this as just another case are both problems for Connecticut, the country and even the whole world.

America has dealt with race problems since the first time someone stepped on its land and has never gotten over it. The question now is, for everybody's sake, will we ever see this end?

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# Expressing Inner Beauty Through Fashion

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY JULIA CONANT  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

C.A.N. turned fashion shows on their head last week. While the stigma is that fashion shows typically promote unrealistic expectations, however, C.A.N.'s fashion show was based around body positivity and inclusivity.

Circus week kicked off with "Self Love Fits Fashion," where Central students walked the runway in clothes that made them feel confident about themselves and their bodies. The idea came from Tia Meares, the wellness chair of C.A.N., because she wanted to be a part

of promoting promote body acceptance.

A poster board sat at the front of Semesters stating, "Loving Yourself is the Greatest Revolution." Students were directed to stick a color-coded sticky note on the board, representing where they are in their self love journey. For example, one color represented complete self acceptance, while another symbolized that the student is still working on loving themselves.

Amara Osorio, the President of PRIDE club, introduced the event and discussed why it's important to promote self love in today's society. She prompted audience members to raise their hand if they have ever felt less beautiful because of social media in which many of them did.

"These Instagram models have their detox cleanses, and their teas, telling us that we need to lose weight.

Telling us that we need to malnourish ourselves in order to be beautiful," Osorio said. "You know? It's really hard."

Osorio also shared personal experiences of times when she didn't feel as beautiful as she was. She recalled standing in the mirror next to her muscular, dolled-up mother and feeling like her "ugly lesbian friend."

"And I remember she just stood there," Osorio said. "She looked at me, and she looked back at her and she said, 'Don't worry. You'll never be as pretty as I am.' I laugh about it now because I ran out crying from the room that day."

The models came on stage one by one, each receiving their moment in the spotlight. Their confident walks and striking outfits sent a message to the audience that confidence is key.



Women of Central showed off the outfits that make them feel confident.



Male models walked the catwalk in their best suits and ties.



Amara Osorio hosted the event, detailing how important it is to work on self love and recounting personal experiences.



Jordyn Williams was one of the students featured in the fashion show, debuting the dress she would wear to the winter formal later in the week.

@JULIA\_CONANT

## Tune In With DJ Emily

BY MADDIE CECI  
CONTRIBUTOR

A brief stroll through the Student Center is a part of many students' mundane routine on campus, but there is a moment that could simply be described as unique when walking by the radio station. With a quick side glance, on-goers can witness DJs in action or controversial discussions take place, all being aired live.

The station's official name is "107.7 WFCS New Britain Hartford The Edge," and it broadcasts podcasts, talk shows and music from our campus student center. Student DJs and Central staff make up the station, which has been airing since 1947, nearly 73 years.

One of the radio station's member is DJ Emily, who started at the station back in September. First year student Emily Leite, an accounting major, became interested in being a DJ soon after she attend the club fair during the fall semester.

"The live DJ and music they were playing caught my attention," Leite said, regarding when she first discovered her opportunity to have a spot at the station. She currently takes the role of a reoccurring DJ.

Leading up to her broadcast time, she creates a playlist of any music she enjoys or finds popular and carefully listens to make sure the song is radio friendly — if it's not, she must find a clean version. Leite informed that all DJ's must do this as the station is very clean, yet still close to what everyone wants to hear.

Leite has found that since joining the station, her music variety has expanded as she gets inspired through friends, fellow music creators and new versions

inspired," Leite said.

The station has opened up many new doors for students interested in learning about music and running broadcasts. For any students who might be contemplating taking a role at the station, Leite's advice is simple.

"Come on down to hangout and see what it's about," Leite said. "If you like it, you can apply to be a DJ and go through training."

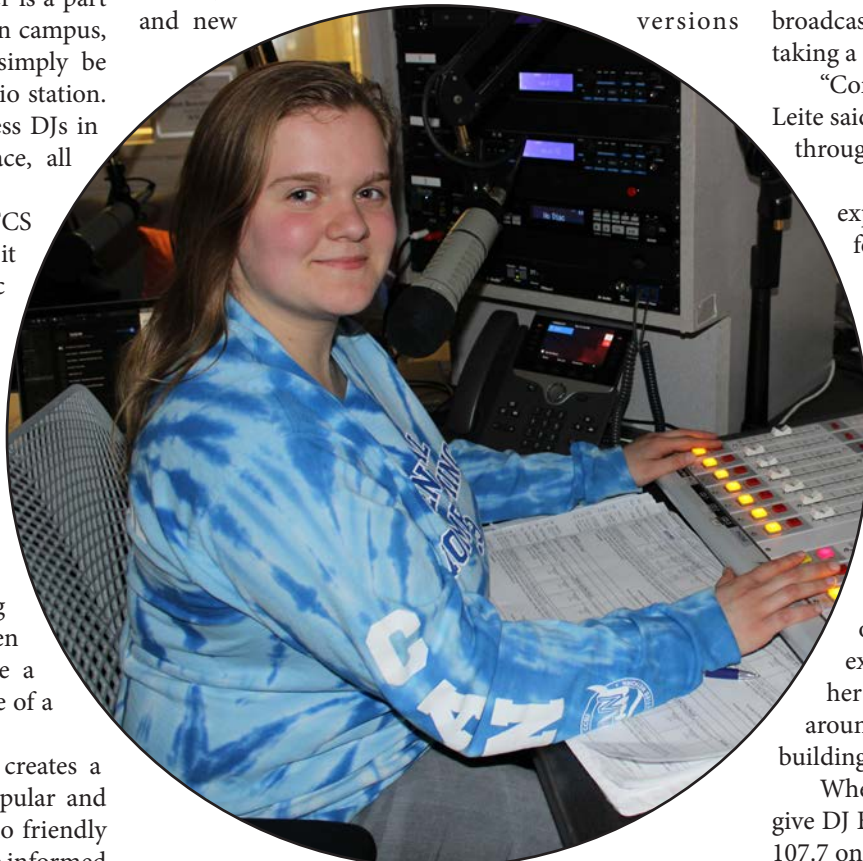
As some students might feel intimidated, Leite explained she was nervous at first, but quickly found her place.

"I was worried at first, but it wasn't as bad as I thought and I wasn't a big talker. When I'm here I get a chill vibe and it's relaxing to be in the studio."

Leite explained that the quiet environment gives students the time to do their work and participate in other extracurricular activities, all while allowing time in the station.

When Leite isn't running the booth during her selected time, her student role takes over and she can be found studying for her next exam, writing an essay or at a C.A.N. meeting. In her free time, she enjoys watching Netflix, walking around campus, napping and going to her fun building activities.

When you walk by the station window, be sure to give DJ Emily a wave; to listen in on her show tune into 107.7 on Wednesdays between 4 and 6 p.m. Towards the end of the segment, you might hear her signature phrase, "Thanks for listening with DJ Emily, see you next week, eerowwww."



of songs.

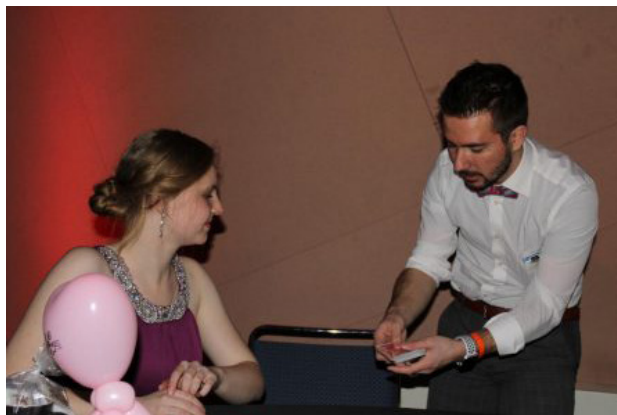
"I play everything, but now my taste in music has a wider variety since I see what other people play and I get

# C.A.N Welcomes You To The Circus

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY JULIA CONANT  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Juggling, card tricks and... love taps? C.A.N.'s circus-themed winter formal was a night to remember.

Last Friday, students pulled out their old prom outfits and gathered in Alumni Hall to eat hors d'oeuvres and watch notable circus performances. Highlights from the night are captured below.



A magician went table to table performing card tricks for students to provide entertainment.



Juggler and unicyclist Michael DuBois bounced on his unicycle between student volunteer Sven's legs, asking if Sven wanted, "A love tap up the center." Sven surprisingly agreed.



Comedic juggler Nick Thomas made self-deprecating jokes as he showed off his juggling skills.



Centerpieces featuring tickets and circus animals covered each table.



Partygoers took to the dance floor as the DJ played the latest hits.

## Movies Sure To Cure Boredom

BY AMINA FERATOVIC  
CONTRIBUTOR

If you are ever faced with the dreadful feeling of being unable to find what movie to watch during your free-time, here are some movies you should watch.

### "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar" (1995)

This 1995 movie is in essence about two drag queens and one 'drag princess' on a road trip from New York City to Hollywood to participate in the "Miss Drag Queen of America" pageant. Unfortunately, they get lost and their stylish automobile breaks down in a western town with seemingly different ideals than those of which the three characters have. In the end, the characters influence the people of the town and vice versa.

The film features "Dirty Dancing" actor and Golden Globe nominee Patrick Swayze, as well as some small features by Robin Williams and Stockard Channing. The movie also features Wesley Snipes, who acted in all three "Blade" movies and John Leguizamo who has acted in roles such as "Romeo + Juliet" and "Ice Age."

This movie is perfect for those who like to watch "RuPaul's Drag Race" or have a general interest in movies that go against the status quo.



### "Beautiful Boy" (2018)

"Beautiful Boy" is based on two books about a teen named Nic Sheff. Before he was introduced to the life-threatening consequences of using meth, Nic was the star-athlete and ideal image of the American high schooler. In this movie, viewers gain perspective of what addiction can cause people to do, breaks down the stigma against addicts and opens the way for discussion.

Academy Award winning actors Steve Carrell and Timothée Chalamet, one of the youngest nominees of Best Actor in the past 80 years, are both featured in this American biographical drama about the sad reality of drug addiction and what many people tend to turn their eyes from.

This movie is for everyone, regardless of what interests precede them. It is a perfect discussion topic and has caused tidal waves of opening the world's eyes on the fact anyone can become a drug addict.









Morgan Sinton (far right) leads the team with seven goals through their first four games.

JULIA JADE MORAN

## Offensive Troubles Hurt Women's Lacrosse

BY GEORGE ATTWOOD  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Women's lacrosse continued their rough start of the season, dropping back to back games to Holy Cross and Monmouth. The Blue Devils lost these games 16-1 and 18-4 respectively.

The lone goal for the CCSU against Holy Cross was scored by freshman Katelyn Parker, who now has three goals on the season which is the second-most on the team.

Junior goalkeeper, Cooper Cowdin made 13 saves for CCSU as Holy Cross held a 29-10 advantage in shots on goal.

In their second game of the week, Central welcomed Monmouth for their second home game of the season. The Blue Devils were led by junior Emma

Sullivan and senior Morgan Sinton who had two goals each. Raphaela DaSilva added an assist.

The Blue Devils were playing a zone defense which consistently allowed the Hawks plenty of offensive opportunities. Monmouth had 13 free-position shots to Centrals three.

Betsy Vendel, who is now in her second season as head coach, was impressed with the defense performed throughout the game.

"The defense is working incredibly hard to create turnovers and in the midfield is definitely tough to keep coming back but our defense has really stepped up and to only have them score 18 despite how many turnovers we had is a positive," Vendel said. "I'll take 18 goals over how many they could have had."

The team struggled to produce on offense which Vendel said they need to work on.

"We just have to be able to produce

on attack, we had worked all week on transition and getting the ball down that end," Vendel said. "We just have to produce."

The Blue Devils lost the turnover battle 15-12 and this had a big impact on the game. Vendel said this is something they can work on in practice.

"We can just be harder on everyone in practice of the pressure we put on them to catch the ball," Vendel said. "Game-like pressure and practice pressure is a little bit different, so being able to catch the ball under pressure, catch the ball when you have three people on you, is something we're gonna have to practice."

Vendel said she felt as though they were affected by inconsistent officiating.

"We definitely didn't have any calls going our way so for them to keep their spirits up and their fight is impressive," Vendel said. "It takes us out of our game a little but I think the defense did a good job of handling it and resetting after each

call so they could produce."

For the second game in a row, Central conceded at least 10 goals in the first half and was only able to score a total of four goals in the first half of both of these games.

The Hawks outshot CCSU 39-19 and 31-12 in shots on goal.

Vendel wasn't too concerned with how many goals the Blue Devils were letting in and was more worried about their offensive struggles.

"Being down seven goals in lacrosse isn't that bad, so the morale wasn't bad in the locker room that wasn't really the issue," Vendel said. "The issue was trying to fix offensive struggles, being able to win the draw would be a lot more helpful, so we're going to have to work on that."

The Blue Devils are next in action at Iona, on Feb 26 at 3 p.m.

@THECHUNKYGADGIE

## MLS Season Preview: The Best Is Yet To Come



Carlos Vela was the league's Most Valuable Player in 2019 and is one of the favorites to repeat.

ABC NEWS

BY GEORGE ATTWOOD  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Now in its twenty-fifth season, Major League Soccer is back and looks to be bigger than ever before. The league brings excitement, variety in their winners and now, perhaps some of the biggest names in soccer from across the world.

In its 25 year history, the league has had 11 different winners and a big reason why is that each MLS team has an equal base salary budget with which to build a 28-man squad. However, this hasn't stopped some clubs from being able to attract global stars. Over recent years, the league has been able to attract big-time players such as Wayne Rooney (DC United) and Zlatan Ibrahimovic (LA Galaxy).

Last season, the cup was won by Seattle Sounders, who have been among the league's most successful teams, winning the U.S. Open Cup four times, the Supporters' Shield in 2014 and the MLS Cup in 2016 and 2019.

In the playoffs, the Sounders were able to defeat the Supporters' Shield winning-team LAFC in the Conference Finals, leading them to face Toronto FC in the MLS Cup Final for the third time in 4 years. The Sounders won the game 3-1 in front of a

franchise-record 69,274 fans at CenturyLink Field.

One of the big topics of discussion during the off-season was the introduction of two new teams. In its landmark season, the league will have the most teams it has had with the addition of Inter Miami CF and Nashville SC. This takes the total of teams to 26. Inter Miami CF is owned by English football legend, David Beckham, who came through on his promise of bringing an MLS team to Miami after his storied career with LA Galaxy.

This will be the first MLS season in which each team does not play every other team at least once.

One of the big coaching changes during the year was Montreal Impacts' hire of Arsenal legend Thierry Henry, who had one of the most successful playing careers in the Premier League and will be looking to bring this success to the MLS.

Looking ahead to the upcoming season, the bookmakers favorite to win the MLS Cup is 2019 Supporters Shield winner, LAFC. Last season LAFC had statistically the best season in MLS history, finishing the year with 72 points. They have arguably the best player in the league in Carlos Vela, who finished the year with 34 goals and 15 assists. Those marks may never be matched, but if anyone can, Vela has the best opportunity to match his highs. LAFC will be looking to avenge their shock defeat to the Sounders and are an obvious pick to win it all.

According to Bovada, last year's runner up Toronto is second favorite and Eastern Conference winner New York City FC is the third favorite.

The fourth favorite is last year's winner Seattle Sounders, although this will be no easy task, as previous winners Toronto in 2018 and Sporting KC in 2019 have struggled in the following season as the previous winner is always the team that everyone wants to beat. There's no doubt that they are one of the better teams in the league and as last year's winner, they cannot be overlooked.

My outside favorite to win the MLS Cup is Atlanta United. Their 2019 season almost ended in a treble after they won the U.S. Open Cup and Campeones Cup. United is lead by their Venezuelan talisman Josef Martinez who is one of the leagues most prolific goal scorers. Even though they are in the Eastern Conference, they have the squad to win. There is also a feeling that they should have completed the treble last year and this will be something the team will be looking to rectify.

The league's first game will see D.C. United take on Colorado at 1 p.m. ET on Feb. 29.

@THECHUNKYGADGIE

# Softball Wins Season Opener

BY TREVI ALICKOLLI  
SPORTS EDITOR

Central Connecticut softball opened up its 2020 season with a 4-1 victory over Rider University at the Tennessee State Tiger Classic tournament.

The Blue Devils competed in the tournament in Nashville, Tennessee through three days, Friday, Feb. 21 through Sunday, Feb. 23, facing four different opponents. Following their first victory, Central lost three straight contests against Bowling Green University, Tennessee State University and Creighton University.

CCSU was scheduled to play Bowling Green twice but their first meeting was postponed due to weather, and will likely be canceled.

Against Rider, Central scored all of its four runs in the second inning.

Junior right fielder Meg Dugas opened the scoring with a single, followed by a two-run double by senior shortstop Sarah Ogilvie. center fielder Giuliana Hathaway singled and drove in the fourth and final scorer for the Blue Devils, making it 4-0.

Rian Eigenmann (1 for 3) and Kaitlin Paterson (2 for 4) also registered hits for Central. CCSU had seven hits as a team.

Sophomore pitcher Kari Marks received the victory over Rider. She allowed only six hits and one run in 7.0 innings of work. She struck out eight in the process.

On Saturday, the Blue Devils



Softball defeated Rider 4-1 for their first victory of the season.

faced the Bowling Green Falcons and the Tennessee St. Tigers, losing both matchups 4-3 and 7-1 respectively.

The Falcons matchup needed extra innings to decide a victor.

Junior Meg Dugas took the loss on Saturday after allowing three earned runs in 7.1 innings pitched. Dugas also had a hit at the plate and finished 1-of-4, with a double.

In the third inning, the Falcons lead was 3-1 but Central would regroup and tie the game in the fifth inning.

Freshman right fielder Meg Gorman hit a double to score senior Hathaway to make it 3-2. Eigenmann followed with a double of her own to drive in her second run of the day and tie the game at 3-3.

Eigenmann finished 2-of-4 at the plate with two runs batted in. Dugas registered another hit and Gorman had the fourth and final hit for the Blue Devils.

Central was unable to execute in the eighth inning after having someone in scoring position with two outs while the Falcons scored the game-winning run in

that same inning.

To close out the night, Central lost to Tennessee State 7-1.

Dugas scored the only run for CCSU in the fifth. She finished 1-of-4 at the plate.

Paterson and senior Alicia Bertolino each went 2-of-3 at-bat.

Marks took the loss after allowing four runs in 1.2 innings pitched. Junior pitcher Ashley Antonazzo saw her first action of the series and allowed two runs in 4.1 innings pitched. Antonazzo had six strikeouts.

CCSU closed out the road trip with a matchup against the Creighton University Bluejays, losing 6-2.

Paterson went a perfect 3-of-3 at the plate for the Blue Devils, driving in their lone two runs of the game in the shape of Eigenmann and Dugas.

Eigenmann (1-of-4), Dugas (2-of-4) and Gorman (1-of-3) all got hits at the plate.

Carley Stoker pitched 4.0 innings and received the loss. She allowed three runs. Marks pitched 2.0 innings, also allowing three runs. Antonazzo pitched 1.0 innings, allowing one hit but no runs.

Central's softball team will get nearly two and a half weeks off before taking the field again against Manhattan College on March 11, for their home opener.

The Blue Devils are scheduled for a doubleheader against the Jaspers, game one is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. while game two for 3:00 p.m.

CCSU lost both games against Manhattan last season, 6-5 and 3-2 respectively.

@ATREVI013

# Second Halves Continue To Haunt Women's Basketball

BY TREVI ALICKOLLI  
SPORTS EDITOR

The Central Connecticut Women's Basketball team lost two games this week after an offensive explosion was not enough to defeat Fairleigh Dickinson University at home and a second-half collapse on the road allowed Wagner University to split the season series against the Blue Devils.

Central lost to the Knights 63-55 and the Seahawks 63-56.

Guard Emma McCamus exploded for 25 points on 50 percent shooting from the field against the Knights, but it was not enough as Central did not get any defensive stops late in the fourth quarter. McCamus scored seven of her 25 points from the free-throw line.

"I just got to my spots," McCamus said. "When you're hot, you can't really miss, and I think it was that and I got some good foul calls that I haven't been getting a lot recently."

This is McCamus' second highest-scoring game of the season, second to her 30 against Brown University back in November.

Despite averaging double-digits in scoring this season, McCamus had higher expectations than her 11.4 points per game this season.

"After I scored my career-high [against Brown], after that, I got a concussion and I had an ankle injury," McCamus said. "I feel like I'm just now starting to get back to my game."

Interim head coach Kerri Reaves said she was also impressed with McCamus.

"Emma scoring 25 points, playing out of position and playing so many minutes, she played fantastic," Reaves said. "I'm not sure what more we can ask of her."

Ashley Forker was the only other Blue Devil in double figures with 13 points. She also had four rebounds, an assist, steal and block.

Four days later, Central traveled to Wagner and got off to another good start and led by eight points at halftime. They lost the game by seven, 63-56 against the



Ashley Berube (pictured above) led all CCSU scorers with 16 points against Wagner on 80 percent shooting from the field.

CCSU

Seahawks.

After scoring 37 points in the first half, the Blue Devils scored 10 points in the third quarter and only nine in the fourth.

While they scored a total of 19 points in the second half, the Seahawks scored 19 in the fourth quarter alone. Wagner also scored 15 in the third.

Reaves said that she doesn't think that her team losing in the second half is a trend.

"I wouldn't call it a trend," Reaves said. "It's just something that's happening to our team recently and we have to figure that out."

McCamus scored 12 points against Wagner but was the second-leading scorer for her team. Center Ashley Berube scored 16 points on 80 percent shooting from the field. She also collected a team-high eight rebounds.

McCamus, Forker and Tiffany Slicklein were all tied with four assists, a game-high.

A game is not won on the stat sheet, but looking at the majority of the team statistics, it would appear that

Central should have won this game.

The Blue Devils made one more field goal than the Seahawks, made 50 percent of their shots compared to 44.9 percent, outrebounded Wagner 30 to 26, had more assists (17-13), second-chance points (13-7), points in the paint (32-26) and bench points (19-6).

As the statistics would suggest, the game was close. It was tied 56-56 with 82 seconds remaining, then the Seahawks scored the final seven points of the game.

Reaves sees these games as learning opportunities for her team.

"Losing these close games is difficult," Reaves said. "But every time we step out on the floor I think we learn something new about ourselves as a team, as individuals and as coaches so we can improve the next time."

The Blue Devils have three more games remaining this season. Next, they face Merrimack University on the road before closing out their season with two home games against Long Island University and St. Francis Brooklyn University.

@ATREVI013

# Track And Field Sets School Record At Conference Championships

BY ANDREW DECAPUA  
REPORTER

The Central Connecticut State University men's and women's track and field teams earned eight gold medals, thirteen total, during the Northeast Conference Championships this past weekend. The men's team placed fourth overall in the team standings with 88 points, while the women's placed sixth overall with a total of 63 points.

Sophomore Angie Rafter got things started for the Blue Devils by setting a new school record and taking the gold in the women's 3,000-meter final with a time of 9:57.67. Rafter also went on to win the women's 800-meter final with a time of 2:17.18.

Senior Megan Brawner took home two individual golds of her own. She won the women's one-mile final with a time of 5:01.42 and followed that up with a win in the women's 5,000-meter final with a time of 18:01.78.

Brawner and Rafter teamed up with freshmen Ashley Dana and Magnalen Camara to win gold in the women's distance medley relay with a time of 12:07.76.

Brawner and Rafter also shared the honor of being named the Most Outstanding Track Performer in the distance category.

"It's very special to share the Most Outstanding Track Performer honors for distance with Angie because we see how hard we work each day," Brawner said. "It's so rewarding to see your teammate's work ethic pay off during the bigger points of the season."

Dana also earned the silver in the women's 800-meter final with a time of 2:17.45, finishing less than a second behind Rafter.

Going into the weekend, head coach Eric Blake

thought that Brawner, Rafter and Dana were primed to have success.

"Megan, Angie and Ashley had pretty much a perfect weekend," Blake said. "We thought that could happen but to actually do it says a lot about those three."

Another notable performance for the women came from senior Hailey Rospierski who placed fourth in the women's 60-meter hurdles final with a time of 8.86 seconds.

The men's team also earned a few first-place finishes of their own this past weekend. They were highlighted by a dramatic finish from senior Richard Grudzwick who placed first in the men's 800-meter final with a time of 1:52.48, edging out the competition by just .01 seconds.

Although Grudzwick was trailing going in the final moments of the race, he said he never doubted himself.

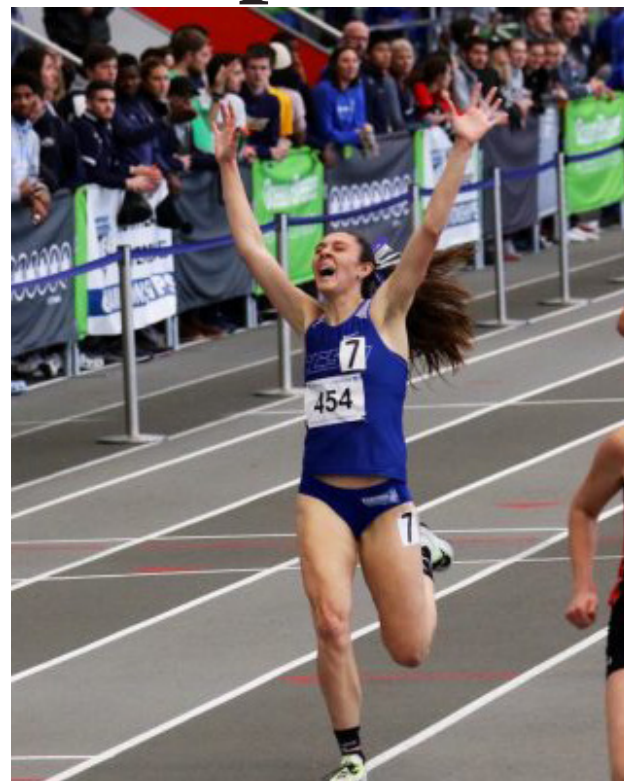
"Going into the last 100 meters of the race, I thought to myself, 'you can win this,'" Grudzwick said. "I pushed as hard as I could and leaned as hard as I could [to win]."

Seniors Edwin Alston and Quincy Sanchez finished the men's 60-meter hurdles final in first and third place respectively. Alston took the gold with a time of 8.10 seconds and Sanchez took the bronze with a time of 8.15 seconds.

In the men's 5,000-meter final, seniors Alex Norstrom and Roberto Piotto finished in first and second. Norstrom crossed the finish line with a time of 14:37.41 to take the gold, while Piotto finished with a time of 14:44.80 to take the silver.

Junior Miles Fye-Moore took the bronze in the 200-meter dash final with a time of 21.66. He also placed sixth in the men's 60-meter dash final with a time of 7.04 seconds.

The Blue Devils' men's distance medley relay team consisting of Grudzwick, Fye-Moore, senior Andrew Findley and senior Julio Arredondo finished in third place with a time of 10:15.28.



Sophomore Angie Rafter set a new school record in the 3,000-meter run with a time of 9:57.67. **TWITTER**

Other stand out performances for the men included a fifth-place finish from senior Kevorni Welsh in the triple jump event with a leap of 14.46 meters and a fifth-place finish from Findley in the 500-meter final with a time of 1:04.30.

Up next on the schedule for track and field is the Boston University Last Chance Qualifier in Boston, Massachusetts on Feb. 28, followed by a return trip to Boston to compete in the IC4A/ECAC Championships on March 6-8.

@ANDREWDECAPUA

## Pitching Pushes CCSU To Two Shutout Wins

BY RYAN JONES  
MANAGING EDITOR

In their first showing of the season, Central Connecticut baseball allowed only one run to Bethune-Cookman over three games, collecting their first two wins in shutout fashion.

Senior Andrew Braun started on the mound Friday for the Blue Devils. Despite only starting in four games over the previous three seasons, Braun put in six scoreless innings of work, allowing only one hit and striking out seven.

Dylan Benton came in relief for Braun, pitching another clean three innings and striking out a trio along the way for his first save of his career. The sophomore bullpen arm only appeared in 7.2 innings of play last season.

Freshman arm Anthony Mozzicato was the Blue Devils' third and final starter of the series. In his first seven collegiate innings, he only allowed two hits and struck out just the same. Tim Buchek and Dominic Niman came in relief, helping clinch CCSU's second shutout in three games.

While this is only the first series of the year, it should be noted that in their first series last season, head coach Charlie Hickey put his top two starters on the mound.

Little changed over the three games on the other side of the ball. The only shift over the three games was TT Bowens moving from first base to left field. This move pushed Jack Nolan into the lineup

Bethune-Cookman who would be paying.

With two outs down in the top of the third, Chris Kanios was able to steal third, then chug all the way home for the Blue Devils' first run of the season.

At the top of the fifth, Jake Siracusa garnered a walk, then took little time to steal second before reaching third on a passed ball.

Chandler Debrosse scored Siracusa in the ensuing at-bat, giving CCSU a 2-0 cushion that would stand until the final out.

The Blue Devil offense could not get things going the same way in game two.

CCSU never got past second, going out with four three-up, three-down innings. They struck out 12 times.

Scoring in the third



@RYANJONES385

## Schedule

Women's Lacrosse  
2/26 | 3pm  
@Iona

Track & Field  
2/28 | All Day  
@ NEC Championship  
Last Chance Qualifier,  
@ Boston University  
Track and Tennis Center

Men's Basketball  
2/27 | 7pm  
@ Merrimack  
2/29 | 1pm  
vs St. Francis Brooklyn

Women's Basketball  
2/29 | 1pm  
@ Merrimack  
3/2 | 7pm  
vs. Long Island University

Baseball  
2/28 | 5:30pm  
3/1 | 10:30am & 1:30pm  
@RussMatt Central  
Florida Invitational  
3/3 | 1pm vs Hartford



CCSU basketball secured their first winning streak when they defeated Fairleigh Dickinson 76-75.

CCSU

## Men's Basketball Delivers In Clutch For First Winning Streak

BY RYAN JONES  
MANAGING EDITOR

Through losing streaks, growing pains and tribulations, Central Connecticut men's basketball have finally found their groove, collecting their first back-to-back wins of the season.

A lights out first half from the floor against Fairleigh Dickinson propelled the Blue Devils to a 13 point lead heading into the break. A late push from the Knights was cut short, as Central Connecticut edged them out by a point at home. The win is their second in a row after another home-court victory against Bryant.

Head coach Donyell Marshall has seen the change in mentality among his players throughout the season and credits that to their recent success.

"Earlier in the year we're kind of getting blown out, the guys are down, they didn't know if they were good enough," Marshall said. "The guys are starting to realize that they're good and that they can play with anyone in this league."

The Blue Devils shot 71.4 percent

from beyond the arc in the first. This output was their second-best three-point percentage in a half against Northeast Conference opponents.

Ian Krishnan and Trey Tennyson led the way on offense, each of them dropping in 11 in the first. Krishnan was a perfect five-of-five.

Things cooled down in the second half for CCSU. After seemingly every shot attempted would fall in the first, the Blue Devils only shot 40 percent from the floor in the second.

Central stuttered offensively to start the second, but their defense and some clutch plays down the stretch were able to stave off the Knights' attack.

Fairleigh Dickinson went on a 36-24 run to start off the second. With just over a minute remaining, the Knights came within one of tying it. Freshman Myles Baker, who came off the bench for five points in the first, drilled a long-range bomb to put CCSU back up two possessions. In one of the Knights' final attempts to tie the game, Baker came flying in with a block to ice the game.

Like Marshall, Baker has also seen the team performing better than they did at the start of the season.

"We're definitely maturing," Baker said. "You see us, we've just been playing next game and next game, next man up. Trey had a good game today, last game it was me, the game before it was Jamir. Everyone is just stepping up."

Though the last few minutes were a bit of a nail biter, Marshall thinks the close finish was more beneficial as a learning experience for the team.

"It was closer than we'd like, but it took for that for these kids to grow," Marshall said. "You look to Saint Francis PA where we lost that game, to them they needed to know that they could win these type of games."

The Blue Devils traveled to Wagner for their next game, with a shot at the playoffs still there.

Similar to their last game, CCSU came out swinging in the first. The Blue Devils shot 50 percent from downtown on their way to a 35-29 lead.

The scoring bug switched sides in the

second half. After knocking down half of the shots they attempted in the first, CCSU only shot 16.7 percent in the second.

Wagner's two starting guards piled in 10 each in the second, catapulting them to a 12 point win over the Blue Devils.

Though the win streak came to an end, Marshall is less worried about results and more focused on his player's development.

"Guys are practicing better, coming in with the right focus and practicing hard," Marshall said. "Not to say that they weren't earlier. Earlier in the year every time we lost guys just got down, where now I think they're listening more, they're paying attention, watching film a little bit more showing that 'this is why it wasn't working' and they're doing it."

With the playoffs now out of the question for CCSU, only two games remain on the 2019-2020 season. The Blue Devils will be traveling to first-seeded Merrimack before finishing off their season at home against St. Francis Brooklyn.

@RYANJONES385

## Swimming And Diving Finishes Second Overall At NEC Championships

BY GABRIEL ANTON  
REPORTER

Central's swimming and diving team came in second place at the Northeast Conference Championships with a score of 586 and were edged out by Bryant University, who scored 813.5 points.

Unlike past competitions, the Blue Devils faced Merrimack University and Saint Francis University in addition to their familiar foes.

Since there were nine schools competing, point distribution was expanded to the first 16 swimmers in each event, with the first place competitor earning 20 points for their team.

There were a total of 20 events throughout four days and Central won four gold medals out of 20. They remained in second place throughout the entire span of the competition.

Central earned their first gold medal during the second day of events. A team of Katie Czulewicz, Hallie Perrin, Jeannette King and Simona Visinski won the 200-yard freestyle relay.

Czulewicz, Perrin, King and Visinski also won the 400-yard freestyle relay.

Centrals' third gold medal came in the form of a pure freestyle event as King took first place in the 50-yard freestyle.



CCSU finished second overall with 586 total points at the NEC Championships.

TWITTER

The Blue Devils fourth and final first-place finish came when Alex Lindgren won the 200-yard breaststroke.

The 200-yard medley relay saw a team of Perrin, Mariana Espino, Katelyn Mann and King overtake Wagner, but fall less than two seconds away from Bryant. A team of Erika Maercklein, Shannon Welcome, Czulewicz and Visinski took the second-place spot in the 800-yard freestyle relay.

The two remaining relay events each brought the last two competition days to an end with a fourth-place win in the 400-yard medley relay, with a team of King, Regan, Mann and Czulewicz.

In the 500-yard freestyle event, four

swimmers landed on the scoreboard. Gracie Regan finished eighth, followed by Czulewicz at nine, Welcome at eleven and Maercklein at thirteenth.

On the third day, Central took the second, third and eighth spots in the 200-yard freestyle event by Czulewicz, Visinski and Maercklein respectively.

In the 100-yard freestyle on the fourth day, Central had three of the top six swimmers in the event. King placed second, followed by Visinski in fourth and Czulewicz in sixth.

More success was waiting for the team in the backstroke events, with King and Perrin taking second and sixth place in the 100-yard backstroke.

Lindgren helped place the Blue Devils in the top five spots in both individual medley events. She and Mann took the fifth and sixth spots in the 200-yard IM, while she and Kendall took the fourth and seventh-place finish in the 400-yard IM.

The Central diving team helped tremendously with garnering points for the Blue Devils with their 1-meter diving bouts, in which Kirsten Bednarz and Rachel Pinsky tied for thirteenth place, allowing Central to take in 0.5 more than what the point reward was for that place, twice. This was an extra four points for the team along with an eighth-place finish by Reagan Kenney for another 11 points. In the 3-meter diving, Kenney and Pinsky scored eleventh and twelfth place respectively gaining 11 more points.

The swimming and diving competition was brought to an amazing crescendo at the NEC Championships with a second-place overall finish for the Blue Devils and credence to their spectacular season so far.

Up next for the Central Swimming and Diving team are a few more championship events. The National Invitational Championship is scheduled for March 12-14 and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Championships are scheduled for March 18-21.