

Section 46a-68-93
Innovative Programs

Section 46a-68-93: INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

(a) The Connecticut State Community College (CTSTATE) has developed and/or implemented innovative programs as called for in this section and not otherwise covered in this AA Plan as an important part of the road to equal employment opportunity. CT State welcomes the continuous opportunity to structure comprehensive programs to create opportunities not otherwise available to achieve the full and fair participation of all protected group members. Such programs under consideration include, but are not limited to:

- (1) summer employment programs;
- (2) youth programs;
- (3) apprenticeships;
- (4) work-study programs;
- (5) job sharing arrangements;
- (6) internships;
- (7) day care programs;
- (8) creation of new positions;
- (9) outreach for high school and college students;
- (10) reassignments; or
- (11) any positive, result-oriented program designed to achieve affirmative action.

Higher education and, specifically, the community college system itself is an innovative program that affords numerous equal opportunities for our future workforce and beyond. As part of our mission, we provide opportunities for our students to have summer employment opportunities and/or internships. These are often built into our curriculum as graduation requirements. Each of our campuses employ 100s of students annually through our work-study/student employment opportunities. Additionally, we frequently reach out to high school and other college students to enroll in our programs or to take individual courses.

The campuses also have K-12 youth programs in various disciplines, e.g., STEM fields, providing educational opportunities to our local students.

CT State also offers other programs, e.g., job-sharing, the creation of new career series/job descriptions, childcare and reassignments as necessary.

(b) The plan shall describe any program planned or operated pursuant to this section and report the results achieved.

These programs are important to the road to parity and create opportunities not otherwise available to achieve the full and fair participation of all protected class members. Further, they enhance the college's cultural diversity.

Achieving the Dream: CT State Community College has continued their partnership with Achieving the Dream. As an institution committed to advancing racial equity and fostering an inclusive, supportive environment for all students, faculty, and staff, this opportunity positions our college to become a national leader in this vital area—serving as a model for others.

CT State Capital

Equitable IT Pathways Initiative (EITPI):

The EITPI is a grant program designed to create both entry points and career advancement pathways into the Information Technology (IT) field for underrepresented communities. The program offers eligible students tuition scholarships, supportive services, and student success payments. Course offerings include Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, IT Support/Network Administration, and Web Development/Data Analytics. Each student is paired with a dedicated Guided Pathways Advisor to help remove barriers and connect them with relevant training and employment opportunities. Capital is the lead campus, and the other campuses are: Asnuntuck, Gateway, Housatonic, Manchester, Norwalk, Naugatuck Valley, and Quinebaug Valley.

Workforce Development/High School Partnerships:

The Capital campus has partnered with local high schools to provide noncredit training programs in IT and healthcare. Students can access free courses in Nurse Aide Certification (CNA), EKG Technician, IT Support, and Artificial Intelligence. These partnerships empower students to either earn industry-recognized certifications or acquire key skills that enhance their career readiness. The courses are integrated into students' school schedules, and some courses are offered on the college campus, providing students with a collegiate experience.

Eversource Lineworker Program:

In collaboration with Eversource, the Capital and Housatonic campuses offer an entry-level lineworker program, equipping students with the fundamental skills necessary for installing and maintaining electric distribution systems. The curriculum includes the safe and effective use of common tools and equipment, along with OSHA 10 certification and First Aid/CPR/AED training. Upon successful completion of the program, students are eligible for consideration in the Eversource Apprenticeship Program.

Accenture Apprenticeship Program:

Capital has formed a strategic partnership with Accenture to offer a year-long, paid apprenticeship in Information Technology. This highly competitive program provides hands-on training and mentorship, offering participants a full-time salary, healthcare, and other benefits. Apprentices will gain formal learning, on-the-job experience, and ongoing coaching, with the potential for career advancement within Accenture.

Credible Messenger Training Program:

In collaboration with the City of Hartford and Full Citizens Coalition, the Capital campus has launched the first-ever Credible Messenger Training Program. This initiative equips individuals with past justice system involvement with the skills and knowledge necessary to become agents of change in their communities. The program focuses on supporting, assisting, and facilitating access to resources for individuals currently engaged with the justice system. Three cohorts have successfully completed the training and will continue to receive additional skill-building support throughout the duration of the grant.

Capital's Career Advancement Program (CCAP) connects students to business partner-sponsored scholarships and year-round paid internships, creating a bridge from the classroom to career readiness. CCAP currently has five business partners, primarily in the insurance and financial services (IFS) sector, and between 12 - 20 participants in any given semester. Over 70% of students completing the program go on to accept job offers from their placement sites.

CT State Capital is represented at Weaver High School by the CCAP program coordinator. The program coordinator sits on the school's Academy of Finance (AOF) Industry Advisory Board with school, community, and business leaders. The goal of the program is to support student preparations for college

and workforce. Each Spring semester CT State Capital hosts AOF students for their annual Business Case Competition.

The Hartford Heritage Project (HHP) creates access to Hartford's museums, theaters, and other venues that for many students appear to be elite or white spaces. Place-based curriculum developed through the HHP integrates these cultural resources into lessons and assignments in ways that stimulate student interest and engagement in course materials. Through the Black Heritage Project and Herencias Latinas, the HHP also creates specific programming to celebrate Black and Latine cultures and histories and to inform students, staff, and faculty about the complexities, struggles, and contributions of these communities.

The Liberal Arts Action Lab is a collaboration between Trinity College and CT State Capital that enrolls students from both colleges in a participatory action research methods class and a Hartford research project. Students work in teams guided by faculty to address research questions submitted by Hartford community organizations and to offer research-driven recommendations to these organizations to address these issues. Capital students gain experience researching with their Trinity College counterparts, interacting with and serving a community organization in Hartford, and presenting their findings in a public forum.

CT State Tunxis

ODAS-Office of Disability and Accessibility Services:

Accessibility Awareness Challenges were sent out to the community- for both digital accessibility and physical accessibility creating an opportunity for community members to identify places for improvement, both in our practice and behaviors on campus and how things like moving furniture or a trash can has the potential to impede someone's path when attempting to navigate our campus, as well as digital accessibility asking folks to identify the issues present in a poster created for the activity, that had areas that could be improved so that it could be accessed by all community members, and be compatible with assistive technology.

On ***International Day for Persons with Disabilities (IDPWD)***, CT State students, in collaboration with the CT State Student Disability Council, shared their powerful messages to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and foster a more inclusive environment for all. Each campus ODAS displayed them as a way to amplify the voices and perspectives of our students with disabilities.

On ***World Autism Day***, we had activities centered around raising awareness, fostering acceptance, and understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Over 100 students, faculty, and staff attended a panel presentation by FOCUS Center for Autism, received an autism infinity pin as a symbol of their commitment to inclusivity, and pledged to be an ally.

For ***World Down Syndrome Day***, we celebrated everything that makes all of us different, and yet the same by participating in the Lots of Socks campaign wearing our most eye-catching socks. The event got people talking, challenging misconceptions, moving beyond stereotypes, and recognizing the unique talents and abilities of every individual.

Seizure Response Certification Training was offered on campus to not only bring awareness to Epilepsy but also to educate and inform community members on appropriate response and support for a person experiencing a seizure

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Team:

The DEI Team at Tunxis was formed this year and the group of faculty and staff joined together to identify and support the needs of our community through a lens of inclusion and belonging. There was not only

encouragement for folks to complete the campus climate survey, but also hosted activities like “I am _____, but I am not _____.” That facilitated identity-based discussion and offered a framework to dismantle stereotypes. This event was part of the campus-wide wellness fair and over 100 community members participated. This team is rich in ideas and passionate about creating spaces to learn more from our community members about their identities and experiences and the inclusion gaps present on our campus and then develop plans for appropriate action to bridge those gaps. There was support of the CT State Climate Survey to gather baseline data, and then begin crafting goals and interventions to better meet the needs of the community when it comes to campus climate and areas highlighted in the data for improvement.

Other initiatives:

Leading up to Halloween and the campus Halloween party, shared the campaign “My Culture is not a Costume” and associated educational materials developed by students at Ohio University. This was shared to educate students on cultural appropriation and how to engage in the fun on Halloween while avoiding offensive choices.

Title IX programming:

This year at Tunxis we brought awareness, education, and support to our community through online sexual violence education sent out to every registered student, monthly representation from our campus advocate in the building lobby to offer services and support to hundreds of people daily, as well as programs like the Red Flag Campaign which was student led and offered space for participants to reflect on their past relationships and those relationships around them and identify things that have been ‘red flags’ or indicators of unhealthy behaviors. This activity not only built awareness on those experiences but it also opened up the conversation creating space to discuss resources and referrals and also healthy things to look for in future relationships.

Tunxis Food Pantry:

The Tunxis Food Pantry operates both virtually on-ground and virtually to provide food items to members of the Tunxis community experiencing food insecurity. The Pantry sponsored Thanksgiving baskets in the fall semester & spring baskets in the spring semester.

Student Activities and Student Government Association:

The Student Activities team focused on pairing food and facts this year with their cultural programming, they highlighted theme months to celebrate, brought awareness to the designated month’s culture by sharing in a meal prepared by a restaurant specializing in that cuisine and pairing the meal with a series of short films educating attendees on the history and culture of each specific identity. There was also signage placed around campus celebrating prominent historical figures and interesting facts for each celebrated month.

In addition, our identity-based clubs and organizations shared programming with the community. This encompassed LGBTQ+ Pride events, ESOL Community Conversations Gatherings, and Religiously affiliated community gatherings and holiday celebrations.

Civic Engagement Institute:

The Center builds strong sustainable relationships and collaborations with the community encouraging student service, community commitment, civic responsibility and cultural comprehension and does this by creating an array of civic and service opportunities for students and staff. Hosted multiple programs throughout the year including topics like: Freedom of Speech, What It Means to Be Part of a Constitutional Republic?, Local and State Elections of Interest, The Presidential Election of 2024: a Deep Dive, Assessing

the Results of the Presidential Election.

SOAR Mentorship Program:

The CT State Tunxis SOAR Mentoring program was developed by the SOAR team at CT State Tunxis to remove barriers to success for Tunxis students and close the equity gaps for several minority groups. The CT State Tunxis SOAR mentoring program partners students with a faculty or staff mentor and other Tunxis students (up to 4) for one semester. Per student request, students can receive one-on-one mentoring. The mentoring groups help students navigate their way through college and build long-lasting social and academic connections. The mentor team offers guidance, advice, information, support, encouragement, and empowerment to help students achieve their goals, and solve challenges along the way. Mentor teams are formed based on common identity and/or interests. Mentor teams meet weekly or biweekly. Typically, students join the program for the period of an academic year but they can continue with the program as long as they feel it benefits them. Currently, more than 25 faculty and staff mentors are involved in the program, and about 40 student mentees are supported in their personal, academic, and career journeys. Students can sign up for the program at any time.

Our campuses provide **on-campus Childcare Services** for the children of staff and students at a reasonable cost. For example, CT State – Naugatuck, Tunxis, Norwalk, and Gateway Community College Early Childhood Learning Center serve as laboratory school for the college's Early Childhood Education program. Such cooperation has enabled area students to continue their studies without the stress of affording daycare for their young children.

CT State offers **Work-Study Positions** to students who are qualified for financial aid. These students are employed in all divisions on the campus. Besides training of the operations of the department to which they are assigned, the students acquire important soft skills such as punctuality, responsibility, customer service, completing tasks on time, etc. Anecdotal information suggests that students who participate in this program are quite likely to complete degree/certificate requirements and continue their education or obtain meaningful jobs.

CT State Gateway:

CT State Gateway and other members of the CSCC began a partnership with the NAACP related to the One Million Jobs Campaign. The campaign works to secure jobs for individuals that have been formerly incarcerated in the Greater New Haven Area within the Yale New Haven Health System. Positions include: Coding, LPN/Testers, Transport, Food and Nutrition, Cooks, Environmental Services, Skilled Maintenance, Patient Care Coordinators, Sterile Processing, and Laboratory Techs.

Manufacturing Program at CT State: GCC: Students in an intensive five-week manufacturing job training program celebrated their graduation March 15 during a ceremony at Gateway Community College. A program managed by Workforce Alliance of South Central Connecticut, *Skill Up for Manufacturing* was developed to provide a free program at GCC aimed to quickly train underemployed and unemployed state residents for manufacturing jobs. Nineteen students (19) graduated as part of the inaugural program. The *Skill Up* coursework was developed in coordination with local manufacturers including Allnex, Brooks & Whittle Packaging Solutions, Penn Globe, PTA Plastics, Rowland Technologies, Ulbrich Steel, Wepco Plastics, and the New Haven Manufacturers Association. Graduates have completed 250 hours of classroom activities.

CT State Housatonic

CT State Housatonic Equity Project: CT State Housatonic is elevating its commitment to under-resourced and under-represented students with the The Equity Project. Through the Equity Project,

students are exposed to experts on social justice, equity and other important issues, as well as training and workshops that provide life skill development personal and career development tools and economic support. These efforts will work to increase their sense of community, belonging and ability to succeed at CT State and beyond. During 2025, 88 students were in this current cohort. The Equity Project major programs are our Family Economic Security Program (FESP) and our Male Success Initiative (MSI). Other programs supported by the Equity Project have included the Reentry Justice in Higher Education program supporting students who are reentering society after incarceration, the Immigrant Oasis, and the Veterans and Active-Duty Resource Center.

CT State Housatonic Family Economic Security Program (FESP): Since 2015, the Family Economic Security Program (FESP) has been an innovative partnership between Housatonic Community College (now CT State Housatonic), the Housatonic Community College Foundation, and Fairfield County's Community Foundation Fund for Women and Girls. A pilot program of FESP first ran in Norwalk Community College for 5 years on a small scale and was adapted from a national model developed by The Annie E. Casey Foundation. FESP offers CT State Housatonic students the necessary resources and tools needed to advance both their education and career and provide economic security for their families. It includes financial and career coaching, case management, emergency financial assistance, tuition scholarships, and peer-to-peer mentoring to help students persist and graduate with an associate's degree or industry certification and move into family sustaining careers. Since the program's inception at HCC through Spring 2025, FESP has worked with over 550 women.

Male Success Initiative (MSI): The Male Success Initiative grew out of the Men's Center and offers workshops and presentations on a variety of subjects such as career readiness, professional development, wellness, and toxic masculinity, as well as provides a safe place of support for men within the CT State Housatonic community. Similarly to our FESP program, students are coached individually and in groups and are supported holistically. Students are provided with resources and tools for personal and academic success and are provided with emergency financial assistance. Cohort activities include financial literacy workshops, cultural excursions and tours of Connecticut four-year colleges and universities. The men also participate in volunteer service activities. Since 2022, MSI has served 100 men.

From 2023 to 2025, Housatonic's Justice in Higher Education program supported about 40 students returning to society after incarceration. These students require extensive high levels of support and a great deal of time and care; however, education is one of the best deterrents of recidivism. Clients were provided one-on-one support with applying to and enrolling in CT State Community College, course registration, mentoring, life-skill training, and courses on computer skills. Funds to support tuition costs and educational expenses were also available.

CT State - Norwalk

AMERICORPS VISTA: NCC participates in the AmeriCorps Vista program. This is a national service program designed specifically to fight poverty. Vista members commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or local government agency, working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, strengthen community groups, etc.

NCC CAREER CENTRAL: NCC's Career Services division has implanted NCC's job board aimed at connecting students with available internships and employment opportunities, including Student Worker job opportunities, which could provide a pipeline to future entry level jobs at NCC.

CT State - Asnuntuck

HERI Data Review and Development of Campus-Specific Logic Models and Value Statements:

Based on the results of the HERI Climate Survey, the Campus Equity Coordinator and the Asnuntuck DEI Committee worked with members of the campus community and established the following value statements:

1. We believe in empathizing with the students we serve by being fully present for any student who crosses our path.
2. We are a welcoming community who values the uniqueness of every individual as demonstrated by our respectful policies, programs, approaches, and interactions which reflect our students, faculty, and staff.
3. We cultivate belonging by creating inclusive spaces where all voices are valued. This is demonstrated through our commitment to actively listening, promoting equitable opportunities, fostering respect for diverse perspectives, and ensuring everyone feels seen, heard, and empowered to contribute.

Celebrating Campus Community:

During the month of September, we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by raising flags in our main tower lobby to recognize the different Hispanic and Latin American countries represented in our campus community.

The Muslim Association hosted a “Jesus in the Quar’an” celebration in December 2024 and we celebrated Connecticut’s first Muslim Heritage month in late January with tabling events and a student read aloud of Governor Ned Lamont’s official proclamation for Muslim Heritage Month. We shared cuisine and sweets from a diverse set of cultures, and displayed fabric pieces from different Muslim cultures, particularly those associated with the cultures of the students.

For Women’s History month, a series of engaging events were designed to illuminate the achievements of women and foster a deeper understanding of their vital role in shaping our world. Activities included posting of Women in History and gratitude bulletin boards in the Tower Lobby, a webinar titled “From Legacy to Leadership: Women Shaping the Future,” a “Tea with Taylor Swift” friendship bracelet workshop, and a “Give Her Flowers” event in support of the bulletin board project. These initiatives were co-hosted by members of our DEI Committee and the Student Women’s Leadership Club.

In June, the campus Belonging Committee held a Pride Celebration in our Tower Lobby with music and a photobooth where campus community members were encouraged to wear their Pride colors.

Recognizing Individual Rights:

Following an incident on campus with a First Amendment auditor, campus leadership coordinated with CT State Community College Chief of Police to host a training session for all faculty and staff on First Amendment rights and how to respond when an auditor visits our campus.

In response to concerns about individuals’ constitutional and protections, communication went out to all students, faculty, and staff in February about the use of Red Cards. In addition to sharing the information electronically, hard copies of the Red Cards were available throughout campus in multiple languages.

CT State - Northwestern

The campus has a diversity committee that proposes workshops and speakers on a range of topics designed to increase awareness of diversity, whether racial, gender or disabilities, etc.

The NWCC nursing program has the only Men in Nursing student club in the state, which is focused on promoting the nursing and allied health careers to male students, which is traditionally a heavily female

population. As a result, our nursing population is often far more gender diverse than similar programs at other colleges.

CT State - Naugatuck Valley

The Promoting Academically Successful Students (PASS) program, designed to support minority students who are struggling academically, introduced a new initiative called the Success Series to highlight individual stories of success. Guest speakers ranged from faculty members to administrators and former successful students. The series pointed out the struggles of working, going to college, and managing life and highlighted overcoming adversity and rising to the challenge.

CT State Community College Naugatuck Valley has been awarded a \$1,999,471 NSF grant for the "STEM Inclusive Opportunity Network for Academically Talented Low-Income Students," with over \$1.4 million dedicated to scholarships ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000 annually (2025-2030) for approximately 60 students. Building on the achievements of the previous NSF-funded NViSION project, which awarded \$649,323 over five years (2019–2024), this initiative reflects a commitment to advancing equity and inclusion in STEM education. By increasing the size of scholarships, the program aims to alleviate financial barriers, allowing students to focus on their studies rather than seeking external employment. It also expands opportunities for academically talented, financially disadvantaged students by enhancing academic, social, and professional development resources, which have already demonstrated success in improving graduation rates, STEM job placement, and transfers to four-year degree programs. This new project furthers these goals by providing robust advising, academic supports, and professional experiences to prepare students for seamless transitions into four-year institutions or STEM careers, fostering a diverse and inclusive STEM workforce.

Established in February 2018 at CT State Naugatuck Valley, the Naugatuck Valley Student Food Pantry supports students facing food insecurity. Funded by the NVCC Foundation, the pantry seeks to raise awareness of student needs and provide essential resources, serving all students on the Waterbury and Danbury campuses. Initiatives include the Waterbury Campus Grocery Program, where students can place online orders for groceries twice a month, and the Danbury Campus Grocery Program, which delivers pre-selected grocery packages to students' homes once a month. Additionally, the pantry offers Grab and Go snacks daily at both campuses, provides grocery gift cards for those in need, and runs a Diaper Bank offering disposable diapers once a week to students with children. These services are designed to help students succeed academically while maintaining their well-being.

The CT State Naugatuck Valley Women of Color Empowerment Collective (WCEC) is a program designed to support women students of color at CT State Naugatuck Valley. Launched in the 2021-2022 academic year, the program has hosted three cohorts, with 34 participants completing the program. In the most recent year (2023-2024), 15 out of 16 students successfully completed the program, achieving a 94% completion rate and an impressive average GPA of 3.4. The WCEC offers mentorship, pairing each student with a mentor for regular guidance, and provides workshops focused on leadership, communication, self-confidence, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Additionally, the program reaches out to young girls of color through its annual Women of Color Empowerment Conference, which averages about 50 high school girls of color from Waterbury high schools attending. The conference gives these students the opportunity to interact with successful women leaders, hear personal stories of achievement, and gain inspiration. A panel of current WCEC students also shares their experiences, encouraging high school girls to envision their own future success in higher education and beyond. By empowering both its participants and the broader community, the WCEC creates lasting impact, building pathways for success for women of color and playing an essential role in supporting their academic, personal, and professional growth at CT State Naugatuck Valley.

CREAR (College Readiness, Achievement and Retention) Futuros is a peer-mentor program funded by The Hispanic Federation. The only community college campus in the state of Connecticut that has such a program, CT State Naugatuck Valley recruits qualified Latinx students from the Danbury and Waterbury campuses to mentor, guide, and support students, or mentees. Mentors assist mentees in tutoring, financial aid, and pointing to resources available to them, including services offered by Hispanic Federation's community-based member organizations. In AY2024-25 the mentoring program has enlisted four mentors who work with 42 active mentees. Programming with CREAR Futuros has included events such as a mentor/mentee orientation, a collaboration with SUNY Purchase during Hispanic Heritage month, a Courageous Conversation with students, faculty and staff, and engaging in volunteering opportunities at local food pantries in the Greater Danbury region.

Students in the WAVE (Workforce Achievers Value Education) program have been very busy collecting personal care items for the Waterbury Community Shelters. Our ongoing Notes of Cheer project, in which students write and mail letters to residents of local retirement communities, is well underway each month. Students have also been volunteering in both the Danbury and Waterbury food pantries.

Gender neutral bathrooms are available on both the Waterbury and Danbury campuses.

Under the leadership of Robert Sheftel, Director of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE), up to six students from diverse backgrounds participate in the NASA Consortium Quadcopter Challenge grant alongside other Connecticut community colleges. The team sharpens their STEM skills through the collaborative process of designing, building, and competitively flying a drone. Since joining the competition in 2021, the CT State Naugatuck team has secured first place overall twice and earned numerous individual awards. The Quadcopter Challenge fosters student engagement, deepens technological expertise, and strengthens teamwork abilities.

Upward Bound programs help high school students succeed in their classes, develop important life skills, and most importantly, plan and prepare for college. NV's UB programs works with students who are either, or both, first-generation college students and whose families identify as low socio-economic status in the Waterbury Public School system. A large percentage of the students we serve identify as African-American and Latino / Latina, although that is not a requirement for the receipt of Upward Bound services. During our annual summer program our participating students are able to take college level, credit carrying courses at CT State Naugatuck Valley. We are proud to say we assist scholars in raising their bar of perceived opportunities they have for themselves as well as guide them toward an educational and life trajectory that will help them reach their highest potential!

The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative is one of the largest and most effective programs focused on increasing the college and career readiness of low-income students in communities nationwide. The GEAR UP Waterbury team is currently working with a cohort of over 1,232 students throughout seven high schools who are currently in 12th grade, and we will continue serving this cohort throughout their first year of post-secondary. The cohort is composed of 88% students of color and/or of Hispanic background. Through the partnership with CT State Naugatuck Valley, 15% of the total cohort have participated in earning college credits in a summer bridge program on the Waterbury campus as well as 10% have taken part in out-of-state overnight college exposure programs to increase their knowledge of post-secondary options beyond Connecticut. In addition to day time services for students focusing on career & trade workshops, academic progress monitoring, and college visits; our family engagement initiatives are an intrinsic part of programming to ensure the student is best supported for beyond high school.

CT State Middlesex:

Middlesex - Skill Up for Manufacturing: A program managed by Workforce Alliance of South-Central Connecticut, developed in partnership with Middlesex and Gateway Community Colleges. Skill Up is a free, 5-week intensive program aimed to quickly train underemployed and unemployed state residents for manufacturing jobs.

During the reporting period, CT State Middlesex taught two cohorts of Skill Up for Manufacturing for a total of 16 students enrolled. Of the 16 students three students are black, three students are Hispanic, five students are white, one student identifies as belonging to multiple racial or ethnic groups, and four students are unknown.

Middlesex - GEAR UP Program: In the fall of 2019, Middlesex was awarded a seven-year, \$4.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to launch a “Gear Up” (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) project with the Meriden Public Schools. This grant requires a 1:1 match which results in a total commitment of \$9 million from federal, state, and private funding.

GEAR UP is a federal program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared for and succeed in postsecondary education through various support services and scholarships. As of fall 2025, Middlesex’s GEAR UP Program is in its final year of the grant. The 2019 cohorts from Maloney High School and Platt High School are now in their first year of college. As of fall 2025, there are 285 GEAR UP Program students attending State Colleges, 67 GEAR UP Program students attending out-of-state colleges, and 59 students attending CT State Middlesex. The demographic information below is the cohort in its entirety of 574 students.

Race/Ethnicity	
White	22%
Hispanic or Latino	56%
Black/African American	13%
Asian	3%
2 or More Races	5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	.3%
Gender:	
Female	50%
Male	50%
Other Data:	
Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals	37%
Students have English as their Second Language	7%
Students had an IEP	7%
Students reporting they were homeless	2
Planned to go into the Military post high school graduation.	5%

CT State Three Rivers

EASTERN CT MANUFACTURING PIPELINE PROGRAM (MPI): TRCC offers customized non-credit programs in Welding, Design Engineering, Outside Machining and Intro to Manufacturing for eligible students through the Eastern Connecticut Manufacturing Pipeline. Developed to address the massive need for skilled trades workers at Electric Boat and Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA) companies, these short-term (6-8 weeks long) training programs are available to unemployed and underemployed workers unable to attend longer-term training. The course curriculums are developed by Three Rivers with Electric Boat and EAMA input. Courses are taught by Three Rivers Community College faculty at Ella Grasso Technical School in Groton. To date, hundreds of people have been trained through this program and are now working for Electric Boat and EAMA manufacturers. Accepted students may receive conditional offers of work from the manufacturers based on their successful completion of the program. Students also receive support from the American Job Centers staff, helping them access supportive services while in classroom training to reduce barriers to enrollment and completion. Examples include: travel reimbursement, daycare assistance, and required books, tools, and clothing. Additionally, there is a cash stipend awarded to participants for successful completion of classroom training benchmarks.

YOUTH MANUFACTURING PIPELINE INITIATIVE (YMPI): Three Rivers has extended the manufacturing pipeline program to the high school level by partnering with local school districts. The Youth Manufacturing program prepares students for careers in manufacturing at institutions like Electric Boat or EAMA employers through coursework that can take place on high school campuses, the Three Rivers campus, or at the Three Rivers MAC training facility at Grasso Technical High School depending on the program.

EASTERN CT HEALTHCARE PIPELINE PROGRAM: The Eastern Connecticut Healthcare Pipeline was developed to address the need for skilled healthcare professionals. These short-term training programs are available at no cost to unemployed and underemployed workers unable to attend longer-term training. The application and selection process are run through Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board and the courses are taught at Three Rivers.

PERSONAL CARE AIDE PROGRAM: Personal Care Aides (PCA) work in a home care environment and dedicate themselves to assisting individuals with daily activities such as using the bathroom, preparing or eating meals, executing hygiene and grooming habits, taking medication, bathing, and completing housework or other chores. This program is a free, customized, non-credit Personal Care Aide program for eligible students through the Eastern Connecticut Healthcare Pipeline developed to address the need for skilled healthcare professionals. This short-term (5.5 weeks long) training program is available to unemployed and underemployed workers unable to attend longer-term training. Three Rivers Community College has partnered with Assured Quality Home Care, LLC along with other healthcare employers to design a training program that prepares individuals with entry-level skills and knowledge to perform Personal Care Aide (PCA) duties. Upon completion of the program, students will earn the following industry-recognized credentials/certificates: Personal Care Assistant, Dementia Care Certificate, AHA Basic Life Support CPR, and Mental Health First Aid Certification.

NORWICH FREE ACADEMY (NFA) CERTIFIED NURSE AIDE (CNA) PROGRAM: This program was developed in partnership with NFA, in efforts to train and certify high school seniors interested in pursuing a career in healthcare. This 120-hour Certified Nurse Aide training program is designed to prepare students with the necessary skills and knowledge to become a Certified Nurse Aide, the first step to a career in the medical field. Upon successful completion of the course, the graduate's name will be placed on the State Certified Nurse Aide Registry; this is a CT state certification. Students who plan on

moving can still take this program but need to go through the Prometric site to transfer their license to a different state.

PARTNERSHIP WITH ELECTRIC BOAT: TRCC Continuing ed & Workforce works with EWIB to respond to their needs for works, especially welders and other tradespeople. TRCC works with them to provide training for manufacturing jobs in the area, specifically with EB.

PARTNERSHIP WITH EAMA: Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Association: This association of over 200 small manufacturers from the eastern border of Massachusetts and Connecticut to Old Saybrook. They seek trained employees for manufacturing positions due to the fact that they are dealing with an aging workforce.

PARTNERSHIP WITH HARTFORD HEALTHCARE AND THE UNITED WAY GEMMA MORAN FOOD CENTER IN NEW LONDON: TRCC partners with these organizations for the free mobile health clinics they provide by having TRCC nursing students assist. In addition to food distribution, people in the community are able to get blood pressure and blood sugar tests and they also have the opportunity to speak with medical, nursing, pharmacy and dental students. A medical doctor is also available.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS: TRCC has created 4 committees to be responsive to issues related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

- o Multicultural and International
- o Non-Traditional and Caregivers
- o LGBTQ+ & Women
- o Race and Diversity

CT State - Manchester

CAPITAL WORKFORCE PARTNERS BEST Chance Pre-Manufacturing Program: Manchester's WDCE Department partnered with Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) and its Best Chance program from 2016-2023 to offer workforce development opportunities to unemployed and/or underserved populations in the Greater Hartford area. The Best Chance program provides job training for previously incarcerated individuals with non-violent, non-sexual crimes seeking a career in the manufacturing industry. CWP coordinates student recruitment, student support, and job placement. The college provides the educational training. Students who successfully complete this 12-week non-credit certificate program have the option to enter the workforce as a machine operator or petition for credit and apply to the credit manufacturing program at CT State Manchester and continue their education. Manchester's WDCE Department coordinated 14 successful cohorts of Precision Manufacturing for CWP's BEST Chance Program from Summer 2016 - Fall 2023, serving approximately 140 students.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM: The Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program is a long-standing partnership between the Manchester Youth Service Bureau and Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) along with local organizations. CT State Manchester Campus is one of the participating employment sites for this Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program. Typically, the campus hires approximately 5-10 diverse high school students per summer to engage in job skills training and a quality work experience in various departments on campus.

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE: To consider issues and concerns regarding diversity and initiate programming to foster equity, access, and inclusion throughout the CT State Manchester campus community.

CT State Quinebaug Valley

LPN : The Practical Nursing Program offered at Willimantic will serve a one of the most underserved

communities in our state. Willimantic has a poverty rate of 25 percent versus the state average of ten percent. It is the most diverse community in our county with 41 percent of their population being Hispanic. The Practical Nursing Program is to support diverse students' aspirations to become a licensed practical nurse through accessible, affordable, high-quality education with the goal of preparing graduates who practice safe, entry-level practical nursing care.

Women in Manufacturing Program:

This outreach program is focused on promoting Advance Manufacturing careers to female students, Advance manufacturing is traditionally a heavily male field. As a result, our Advance Manufacturing program is often far more gender diverse than similar programs at other colleges.

Youth in Manufacturing Program:

Manufacturing Program and Electric Boat Partnership: QV's Continuing Ed & Workforce works with Electric Boat and EWIB to respond to their needs for work, especially welders and other tradespeople. QV works with them to provide training for manufacturing jobs in the area, specifically with EB.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS: QV's Mental Health and Wellness offers consistent programming that provides access for all students at both Danielson and Willimantic locations to get connected with resources on basic needs, behavioral health treatment and information.

The hiring of a wellness counselor in Spring 2023.

QV Wellness Counselor collaborates with community partners to provide resources and programs at a range of times, dates, and sites to try to reach all students.

QV's Mental Health Coalition (MHC) is comprised of people who have diverse talents and backgrounds that assist with planning events and provide information relevant and meaningful to the QV community. MHC hosts passive programming that includes local resources on a range of topics that are posted, emailed and on our campus TVs for students to see and access as they wish. In addition, on-site QPR and Narcan (Naloxone) training to educate students (and the QV community) about the importance of suicide prevention and to equip them with the skills they need to help themselves or someone else in a crisis. Bilingual (Spanish and English) wellness materials are also available and for use in programming at the campus.

QV's Mental Health Coalition sponsors over 60 events annually.

CAREER READINESS STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM: QV's Emerging Leader Series, sponsored by the Offices of Student Development and Career Services each semester, offers all matriculating students the opportunity to participate in an eight-week series of workshops. The workshops focus on cultivating and empowering the next generation of leaders. Participants hear from a variety of professionals on topics critical to their academic, personal, and career success. The program is designed to enhance students' leadership, innovation, and networking skills that align with career readiness. Since the implementation of the program in Spring 2024, 12 students received Career Readiness Certificates of Completion.

CULTURAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE: QV's Cultural Programs Committee sponsors diverse and inclusive programming to foster equity, access, and belonging throughout the QV community. The committee works to promote awareness, communication, and collaboration among students, faculty, and staff both in and out of the classroom. It actively supports and links initiatives offered by various campus constituencies. The committee strives to develop engaging programming and resources that elicit a keen awareness of the value of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in all its forms. QV's Cultural Programs Committee sponsors over 25 events annually.