

CAS

CONNECTIONS

2023-2024 Fall/Winter Term | ISSUE #2 | December 11th, 2023

FROM THE DEAN

Greetings, Northeastern community,

This time of year, when the semester winds down, is one when we find ourselves exhausted and yet also exhilarated as we share in the myriad successes and accomplishments of our students as we attend the many honors and awards ceremonies as well as, of course, the culminating commencement.

It is truly inspiring to witness the growth of our students, especially as we are all so acutely aware of the challenges and obstacles they, in many cases, have had to overcome.

As I write to you, I do not want to pretend that all is well in our world, that the current state of our world is not a trying one. Yet I do always find hope in graduating a new class of students. I believe Northeastern educates students with a powerful social ethic such that their participation in the world will indeed bend the arc of the moral universe toward justice. When I think of our students, I am reminded of the words of the civil rights and labor activist Grace Lee Boggs, who said, "You don't choose the times you live in, but you do choose who you want to be." I have profound faith our students make--and have made--humane and wise choices about who they want to be and that they will shape the world in this image.

As you read our second edition of CAS Connections and learn about what's happening in the College and with our alumni and students, I hope you'll feel as inspired as I do by the good work our community is doing.

As the holidays come upon us, I hope you find time for rest and reflection and that you can experience some peace and put some energy into imagining and realizing a peaceful world.

Sincerely,
Tim Libretti, Acting Dean, CAS

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FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

Dr. Casey Holschneider

Social Work Program

Often faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences are doing amazing work that falls under the radar precisely because the College is vast and so many of our faculty are busily engaged in the activities meaningful to them that they do not have time to publicize what they are doing. [Professor Casey Holschneider](#), a faculty member in the Social Work program, is one such faculty member.

Dr. Casey has done an incredible job developing a center for homeless youth outside of the great work she does as a faculty member at NEIU. She always extended an open invitation to visit, and earlier this term, Dean Tim Libretti, and Associate Deans Ken Voglesonger and Amanda Dykema-Engblade took a road trip to [549 E. 76th Street](#) to visit the [LYTE Collective](#).

What we saw amazed us, exceeding anything we imagined. As we approached the building that resembled a kind of spaceship, staff from the collective (including an NEIU graduate!) were putting up Halloween decorations. Casey came out to greet us and took us on a tour through the warm and welcoming center, explaining to us that LYTE derives from the principle articulated by the human rights leader Václav Havel of [Live Your Truth Everywhere](#).



FACULTY HIGHLIGHT (CONTINUED)

Dr. Casey Holschneider

The center is designed to provide any and every young adult impacted by poverty and homelessness with whatever they need without question. Those who enter can help themselves to a meal in the kitchen and dining area, designed to resemble a café, where homeless youth often seek shelter. They can nap, shower, and do laundry. There are lockers for them to store their belongings. There is an art and music studio, a library, a clinic where people can receive medical care, and more. As explained on the LYTE Collective website, "Havel's ideas call us to end participation in social systems that harm human beings and to instead create alternative systems defined by social justice, dignity and the protection of human rights."

Casey had worked in social service agencies for a decade and was frustrated seeing the harm these systems do to those seeking succor. So she and the other founders in 2014 set out to develop this alternative system whose mission has three key elements:

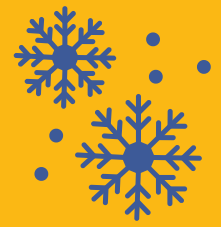
- SUPPORT every young adult who contacts us, with whatever they need, for as long as they want us by their side.
- END harmful systems that cause young people to need our help in the first place.
- BUILD a more just and equitable world together with all who aspire to do better by young people.

This brief news blurb can not do justice to the wonders of this center and the work Casey is doing. It is truly a gem representing the best of work our faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences contribute to the world.

To learn more, check out the site: [Link](#)



CURRENT CAS STUDENT HIGHLIGHT



Muna Aden

BIOLOGY MAJOR



What do you study at NEIU?

I'm majoring in biology right now.

What are your career goals?

My career goal is to pursue something in biotech or biopharmaceuticals.

What do you like most about NEIU?

What I like best about NEIU so far is the manageable class sizes, which allow you to feel like you can get to know your professors and even ask for help. I also appreciate how supportive all of the professors are. You can tell they genuinely care about each and every one of their students. Additionally, I adore how the campus seems in the fall with all of the leaves falling; it's really quite lovely.

Any sort of fun/interesting thing that we should know about you?

Something interesting about me is that I enjoy painting since it brings me happiness. I also enjoy occasionally writing poems.

Anything else fun and interesting that we should know about you?

Something I'd want to convey is that joining a trio was the best thing I did in college. I feel that the program has helped me so much, and I often recommend it to others, especially first-generation students like myself.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Cassandra Ceballos

BS BIOLOGY 2014 + MS BIOLOGY 2022

Recipient of the Dr. Bernard
J. Brommel Doctoral
Scholarship

What did you study at NEIU?

I received a BS in Biology in 2014 and a MS in Biology in 2022

What are you doing now?

After graduating from NEIU in August 2022, I joined the Center for Limnology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as a PhD student in the Freshwater and Marine Sciences program. This past summer I conducted fieldwork on a lake outside of Madison, WI to determine the ecological impacts of rising water levels. Most of my efforts are focused on expanding my knowledge of inland waters to develop research questions for my dissertation project.



What do you remember most about your time at NEIU?

One of the best things about NEIU is the incredible community that it offers. The strong unity among students and faculty fosters a sense of belonging regardless of your background or your motivations for being in school. Even after graduating, I still feel very much a part of the community and value the long-lasting friendships and professional relationships that I built as a student at NEIU.

What is a word of advice for current students?

The biggest piece of advice I can offer to current students is to enjoy the experience of higher education. Take in the moments, meet new people, and discover more about yourself. I think many students feel tied down to a particular timeline when navigating through college. The pressure of racking up credits in a certain amount of time can make it difficult to enjoy the process of obtaining your degree. Even when you have meticulously planned out the path you want to take, life happens and can steer you off course. While it is our first instinct to get back onto the path we have planned for, there is value in being thrown off course. There are opportunities to find something useful, life changing, or clarifying on that path.



SACNAS CONFERENCE 2023 PORTLAND OREGON

This year, over 30 NEIU students and faculty attended the 50th National Diversity in STEM conference in Portland, OR. The NDiSTEM conference is organized by the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)

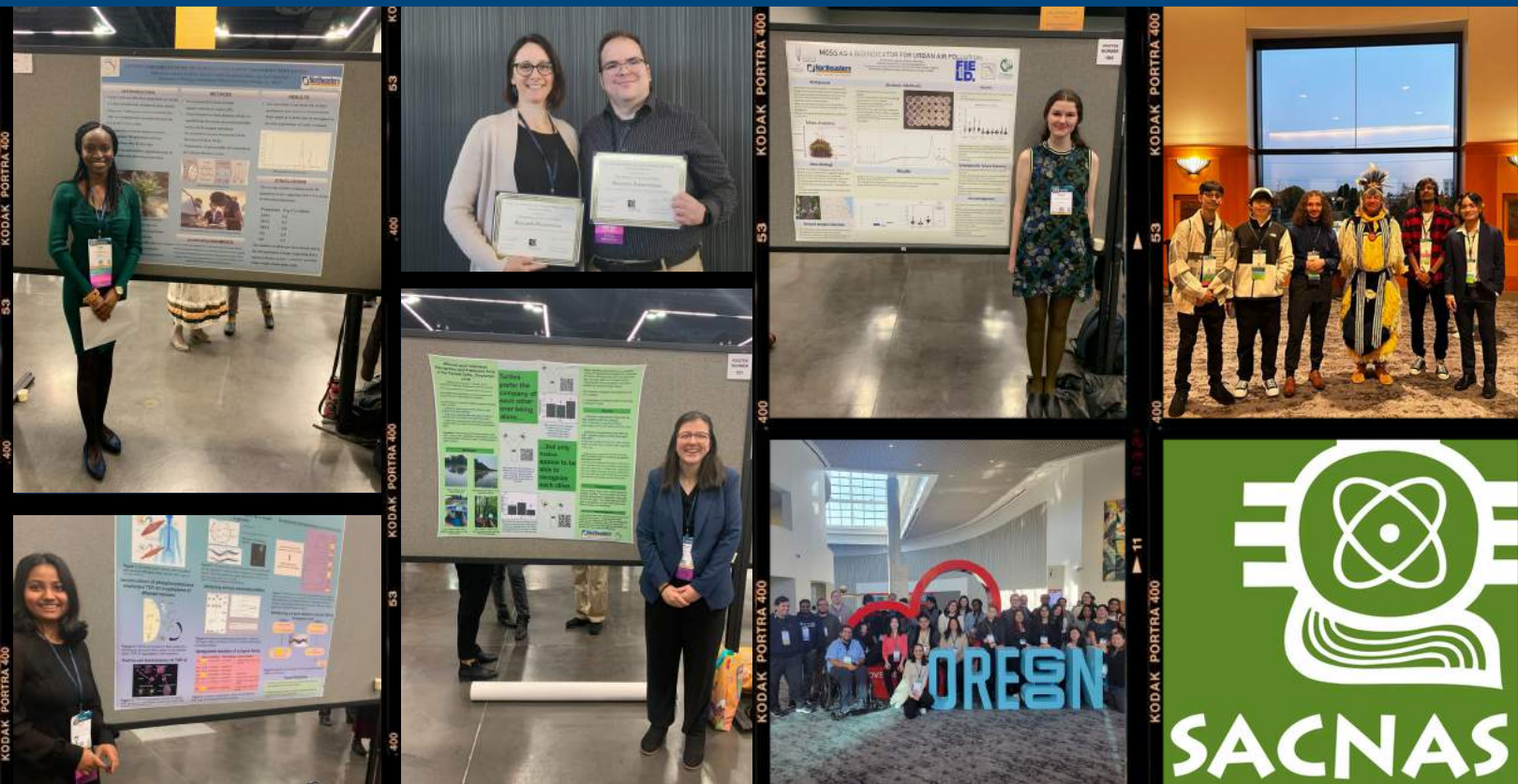
SACNAS introduces our students to "a future where STEM reflects the demographics of our country, so the field is better equipped to solve our world's most pressing problems.

Through our people, programs, and partnerships, SACNAS has taken a radical approach to lead with culture and identity as the means to achieve true diversity in STEM."

A major portion of the funds for the trip were provided by the Department of Education, Title III HSI grant Advancing Research Careers and Opportunities in STEM (ARCOS) at NEIU, the DOE Title V Creating Access to STEM for ALL (CASA) program, and the USDA Bridge grant and the College of Arts and Sciences.

Our students (and alumni) presented their research in both poster and oral formats. Two NEIU students, Vincent Lotesto and Kimberly Rice, won awards for their poster presentations. Dr. Joe Hibdon (Math Department) also presented in a session titled, "Indigenous Perspectives in Mathematics".

Overall the conference was a great success!



Alumni Owned Business

BRAD HOUGH: BA PHILOSOPHY 2011

BUSINESS: OKO SALON

“In 2011, I earned a Philosophy Bachelor's from NEIU's CAS. With a background as a hairstylist and musician, my time at NEIU sparked my journey into entrepreneurship, providing inspiration, confidence, and essential tools.

Studies in critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and aesthetics not only enhanced my career as a stylist, but also laid the groundwork for venturing into entrepreneurship and owning a salon.

Skills such as clear communication, ethical decision-making, and creative problem-solving have been crucial in creating and running my small business.

The personal guidance and engagement from NEIU's philosophy faculty played a significant role in shaping my skills and perspectives, contributing to my growth as an entrepreneur and a broader personal worldview. “ -Brad Hough

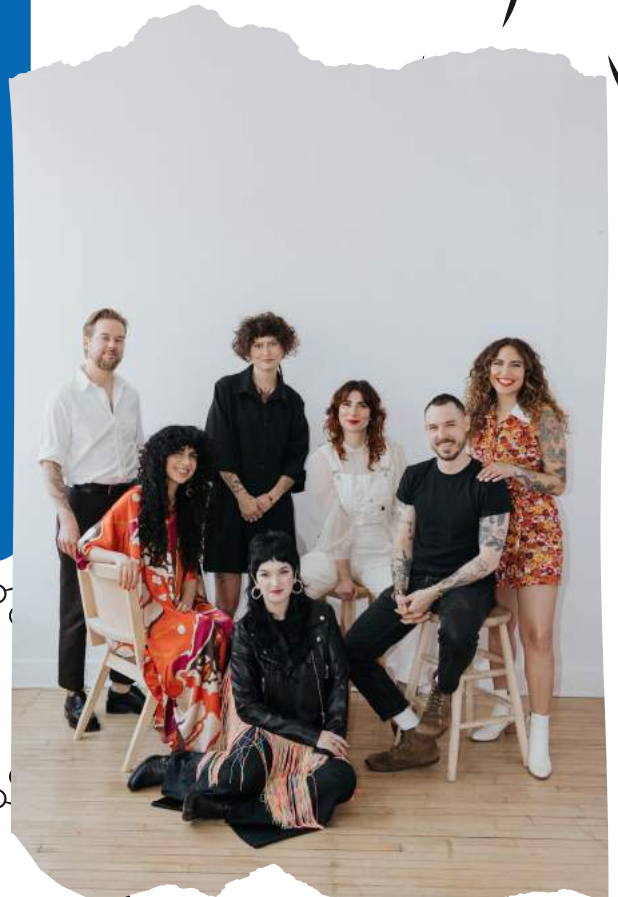
Oko Salon

1107 N California Ave, Chicago, IL 60622

(773) 939-1665

Link: okosalon.com

If you are a CAS Alumni and would like your business featured please reach out to a-dykema-engblade@neiu.edu



Announcements



Congratulations to the NEIU TRIO Faculty of the Year nominated by TRIO SSS students: Jeremy Babcock!

Jeremy is Program Coordinator and Instructor for CASEP and FYE programs.



Congratulations to NEIU's CAS Social Work Department for obtaining re-accreditation for another 8 years!

The Bachelor's of Social Work (BSW) and Master's of Social Work (MSW) programs were found to be in compliance with all educational policy and accreditation standards through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Thank you for your hard work in obtaining this accreditation Social Work!



Congratulations to Denise Cloonan Cortez from WLC for being a panelist at the XXIX International Symposium on Research in Applied Linguistics!

Denise spoke about her recent publication in the Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, "Dialecto Literario and Regional Literature in the College Classroom: Salvador Salazar Arrue's Cuentos de Barro (1993)."

Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, 25 (2), pp. 30-43.

XXIX INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON RESEARCH IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Congratulations to Dr. Joseph Hibdon for being featured on "Meet a Mathematician" Youtube channel!

Watch interview here [Link](#)



Congratulations to Alejandro Cabrajal for receiving the ICTFL Award for College Teaching Majors!

Alejandro is a Spanish and K-12 teaching major at NEIU. ICTFL is the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Congratulations to the finalists for the 2024 Audrey Reynolds Distinguished Teacher Award! The final award will be announced in March 2024.

- Tim Barnett, English
- Emily Garcia, English
- Matthew Graham, Mathematics
- Nabil Kahouadji, Mathematics
- Isaura Pulido, Education Inquiry and Curriculum Studies

Congratulations to the finalists for the annual Bernard J. Brommel Distinguished Research Professor Award.

- Scott Hegerty, Economics
- Cindy Voisine, Biology
- Dilek Yunlu, Management and Marketing

LWH Construction

Flooring construction will make the 2nd and 3rd floors of LWH inaccessible from December 14th through Winter break.

Signs will be posted on the 1st floor with further information and contacts for affected faculty.

Campus Closure

The campus will be closed from December 22nd to January 1st for Winter break.



If you have an event you would like highlighted, please send our way! [Link](#)

C O N G R A T S

2023 Fall Graduates!

Congratulations graduates! As you stand on the threshold of a new chapter in your lives, take a moment to celebrate your incredible achievement. Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance have brought you to this significant milestone.

Best wishes for a future filled with endless possibilities. Go forth and make your mark on the world!





Scholarship Corner

The next Merit Scholarship Deadline is February 1st for Summer Semester. Scan QR code or click here for application!



ANNOUNCING THE CANNON-HERSKOVIC ISRAEL RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

(\$3,000 AWARD)

If you are a part-time or full-time student in any major in the Honors program or in any Master's program and are working on a thesis in areas of relevance to the State of Israel and/or Zionism, we hope you'll consider applying for the Cannon-Herskovic Scholarship to support your thesis work. Your research may address any aspect of Israel or Zionism appropriate to your field of academic expertise.

Preference will be given to research endeavors that promote exchanges in research between NEIU and the Israeli institutions. Proposals that involve interdisciplinary cooperation will be granted special consideration, and the research must be structured in an academically rigorous, balanced, and constructive scholarly manner.

For more information or if you are interested in applying, please contact Tim Libretti, Acting Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, at t-libretti@neiu.edu.

GIVING TUESDAY- THANK YOU!

Many thanks for everyone that donated to The College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Scholars Program (CUSP) on Tuesday November 28th!

Your donation will help us provide more research opportunities to students, opportunities that energize students and transform the undergraduate learning experience!



#GIVINGTUESDAY



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QUICK LINKS

- [CAS Connections Newsletter Archive](#)
- [College of Arts and Sciences Website](#)
- [CAS Connections Newsletter Archive](#)
- [CAS Log Form](#) Department submit important paperwork to CAS using attached link.
- Schedule a meeting with David Nissim-Sabat for Pre-Professional Advising (Law and Health). Using this [link](#) or QR code below:



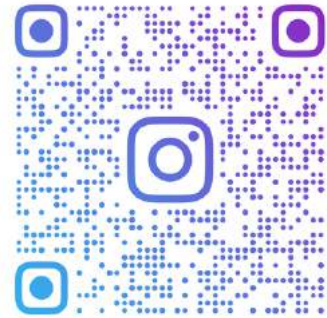
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