



Stamford UConn's Professors Head Back to School

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STAMFORD — Associate Vice Provost Michael Ego marshaled the faculty and staff, invited some friends down from Storrs and threw a couple of burgers on the grill Wednesday as the University of Connecticut's Stamford Campus's employees kicked off the school year.

"Ever since I started school, this time of year has always been an exciting time," Ego said to the nearly 200 faculty and staff members gathered at the annual fall Town Meeting and Picnic. The students return on Monday.

"Clearly the excitement of the new year is being felt here," said UConn's provost and executive vice president for academic affairs, Peter Nicholls, down in Stamford with a dozen deans and vice provosts from the main campus. "We are gearing up for this tremendous invasion [of students]."

This year will be important for the University of Connecticut [UConn] as a whole — the university is up for re-accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges [NEASC], Nicholls said. Nicholls said a team of 12 NEASC evaluators will visit UConn's facilities in January. Although Nicholls does not know which parts of the UConn system will be visited, he stressed that the accreditation process will cover all aspects of the university's operation. "Certainly this accreditation covers all the regional campuses," he told the UConn Stamford faculty and staff.

Vice Provost Veronica Makowsky, director of all UConn's regional campuses, told the Stamford academics to take heart from past achievements. Working at a regional campus can be frustrating, she said — professors and staff who wish to make changes often feel as though they are taking baby steps toward a distant goal. "Look at where you were this time last year," she advised. "If you look at it, you're making progress."

According to Ego, the campus is definitely making progress — local officials are working on a strategic plan this year, and in the meantime, are preparing to launch a program for middle school children called University Pals. UConn Stamford will also offer a course in

Mandarin Chinese for the first time next spring and will continue to work with the Stamford Chamber of Commerce on a jointly-operated academic research unit on trade and commerce called the UConn Center of Globalization and Commerce.

Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Jack Condlin was honored Wednesday with the first-ever Town and Gown Award for his role in starting that program. Condlin's work with the Center for Globalization and Commerce, said Ego, exemplifies the relationship between "town and gown," or, the Stamford community and the college. Condlin accepted the prize on behalf of the entire Chamber of Commerce.

"It's not often you get recognized for doing something you really enjoy, and I truly do enjoy this," he said. Condlin was one of three to accept an award on Wednesday. Professor of Philosophy Susan Anderson was chosen by a committee of her peers to receive the inaugural Faculty Recognition Award. Anderson, who taught at the college level for 33 years, was recognized as a dedicated teacher who has pursued several undergraduate research grants, and a tireless researcher. Her latest work focused on artificial intelligence and ethics.

Pam Williams, manager of the UConn Stamford's co-op, was chosen by her peers for the Staff Recognition Award. Williams' dedication to serving students and her work in the community made her a candidate for the award, Ego said. He said Williams, a seven-year employee of the school, is active in programs such as the Children's Reading Hour in Stamford.