SUBOG HARVEST FEST REPLACES 2026 HOMECOMING CARNIVAL

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A UConn student rides a bull ride at SUBOG's Harvest Fest. The event was held on Nov. 7, 2026 on the Student Union lawn.

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Drawing in students on a dreary fall day with food, games, a petting zoo and more was the Student Union Board of Governors' Harvest Fest, held on Saturday afternoon at the University of Connecticut.

The event was the first of its kind, created after the cancelation of this year's Homecoming Carnival, prompted by a September Nor'easter, SUBOG Special Events Chair Korah Erase said.

Erase called Harvest Fest a "revamp" of the carnival and said, "I wanted the students to be able to come together, and just do something fun with their friends."

Upon checking in at the event, students were automatically entered into a raffle for a chance to win a fall-themed prize basket, a pickleball basket or a hot chocolate basket, Erase said. After participating in two or more games, which included inflatables, like Zap-A-Mole and a mock corn maze, students could redeem additional prizes, such as animal plushies, SUBOG's Vice President of Membership Ruby Leonard said.

The chicken stuffed animal was of interest to Johanna Rivera, a fifth-semester allied health sciences major. She said that she was excited to see the real chickens in the petting zoo from Good Pickin' Farm.

"I will definitely be doing everything and anything that this place has to offer," Rivera said.

Young chickens, Kunekune piglets, Nigerian Dwarf goats and rabbits were featured in the petting zoo, Co-Owner of Good Pickin' Farm Jen Mitton said. Three baby rabbits that were in the pen are currently up for adoption, Mitton added.

Good Pickin' Farm is an educational farm located in Westford, Massachusetts, with an on-the-go program. The farm has partnered with UConn in the past, dating back to a goat yoga event three years ago, Mitton said. Erase mentioned that the petting zoo was originally planned for the cancelled Homecoming Carnival.

Mitton said that all her animals are very friendly.

"Our animals are handled on a daily basis, by a lot of different people, so this is their happy place," she said. "They love to be handled and snuggled and everything."

Five food trucks were parked along the border of the lawn, offering coffee, snow cones, apple fritters and other fall treats to students for free.

Travelin' Tom's Coffee Truck is no stranger to UConn, appearing on campus five times in the last two months, Erase said. The truck served hot and iced coffee and lattes, frozen drinks and refresher-style beverages, which were all customizable with an extensive assortment of flavors.

Anvita Lammata, a fifth-semester analytics and information management major, said she is not an avid coffee-drinker, but liked her salted caramel iced latte.

"It's not too bitter to me," she said.

She also said that she played a few games at the event and that she was having fun.

Personalized, air-brushed tote bags were the main attraction for some at Harvest Fest, with a large line of students waiting to have their names or chosen designs sprayed onto a bag.

One of those students was Cashlyn Cunneen, a fifth-semester political science major, who said that she was planning to get her name and her favorite colors on her tote. She said that she had only seen airbrushed T-shirts at events before.

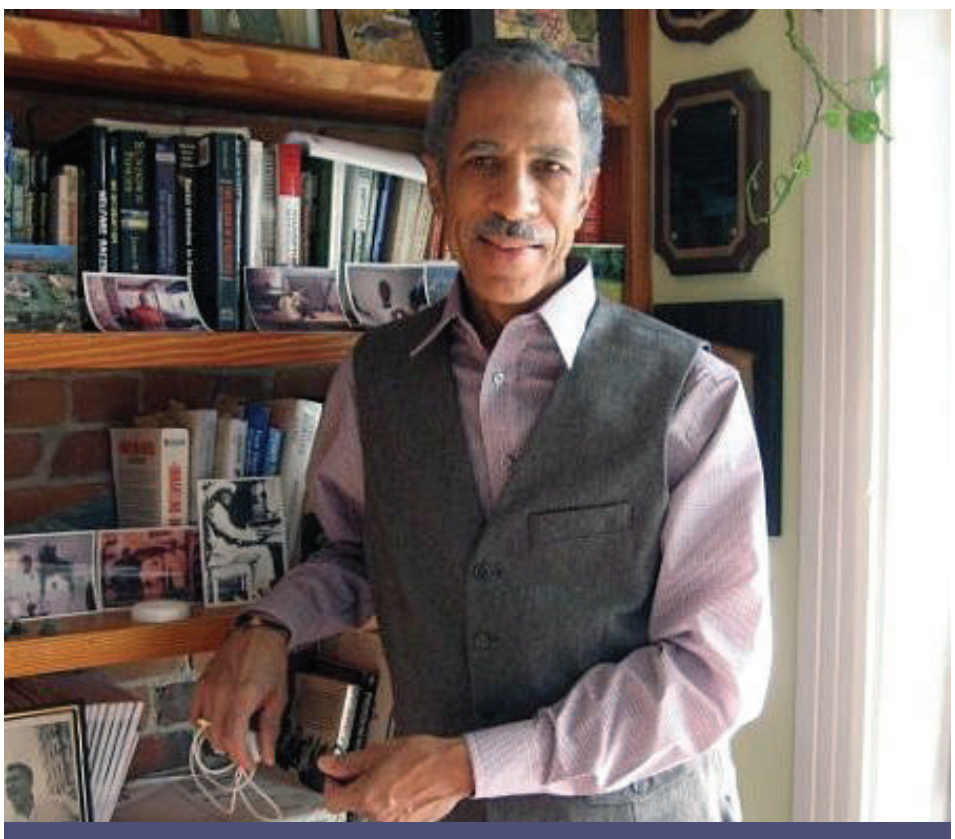
"It looks cool," Cunneen said.

SUBOG Major Weekends Chair Yanique Guichette said the goal of the event was to bring students together in place of the carnival before winter begins.

"We just said, 'Let's do this again,'" Guichette said.

NOEL CAZENAVE DISCUSSES RACIAL TRAUMA IN LATEST BOOK, 'CAZENAVE EYES'

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Professor Noël Cazenave posing against a bookshelf. Dr. Cazenave has been a professor at UConn since September 1991.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NOEL A. CAZENAVE ON LINKEDIN

University of Connecticut students and professors gathered in the Class of 1947 Meeting Room for Noel Cazenave's talk about his memoir, "Cazenave Eyes," on Thursday, Nov. 5.

The sociology professor, who holds a doctorate in the subject, discussed his experiences growing up in the Jim Crow South, working at predominantly white institutions like UConn, and how to protect yourself against racial trauma.

The event was sponsored by the Africana Studies Institute (ASI), the African American Cultural Center, the Office for Inclusion and Civil Rights, the Well Being Collective and the African American Faculty and Staff Association. After a brief introduction by Evelyn Simien, a professor of political science and director of the ASI, Cazenave took to the podium and asked the audience if "y'all [are] ready for some mischief."

Cazenave urged anyone who thinks racism is a major problem at UConn to reach out to the organizations who sponsored this event, and he hopes that his book talk could be a new beginning on the discussion of racial trauma.

Cazenave also stated that higher institutions like UConn are hostile places for people of color and this hostility has caused him great emotional and mental stress, along with the difficulty of being successful in academia. Sometimes, a good laugh is needed to deal with this hostility, according to Cazenave.

"Sometimes you have to laugh to keep from crying," Cazenave said. "So, laugh, cry and curse with me this afternoon."

There were two moments in Cazenave's life that led him towards being a professor and researching and challenging racist structures. The first one was during the 1966 fall semester, when he was an incoming student at Dillard University, a historically black college in New Orleans. It was on Dillard's "plantation style campus," built by white philanthropists, and during the beginning of the Black power movement that he resolved to "kick the system in its ass."

The second life-changing moment occurred during 1995, when Cazenave proposed his white racism course to the sociology department. People at UConn were furious about the title of the course. According to Cazenave, a columnist at the Hartford Courant thought he "deserves to be beat up a bit" over the proposed course.

Next, Cazenave discussed his time as an associate professor at Temple University in Philadelphia. He shared stories about conflicts with white faculty members in the sociology department, such as the time people came together to propose a course on white racism until a white colleague interjected and said the course should be about race, a concept Cazenave believed is "inherently racist."

Cazenave also shared anecdotes about racist incidents he endured at Temple, like how guards would stop him and ask for ID when he wanted to take an elevator to his office while his white colleagues did not get the same treatment. He called these actions probe and control tactics, but he noted that the modern term for them would also be microaggressions.

After Cazenave secured tenure at Temple, he felt burnt out and said, "I got to get out of here." That is how he ended up at UConn in the fall of 1991, "angry and worn out," he said.

Cazenave talked more about the adversity he saw from fellow faculty members. According to Cazenave, his department head opposed the idea of studies in racism, and his fellow faculty members chided him for showing too much anger at a campus protest about police killings.

After a racist incident on campus occurred in 2021, faculty members suggested the sociology department could act as a resource for students in the burgeoning anti-racism movement, which Cazenave responded with "if the students wanted to learn about racism, they should go anywhere but the sociology department."

To conclude his talk, Cazenave shared a few lessons he learned over his more than 40 years challenging racism: never underestimate your power, don't be defined by your enemies, take your anger against oppression and make it compassion for the oppressed, celebrate your successes, protect yourself against burnout and live an authentic life.

Matt Calise and Chengzhe Xu, both of whom are third-semester doctoral students in sociology, said they liked how Cazenave connected his life experiences with broader social frameworks.

"I think he does a really good job of connecting his own personal experiences to broader social structures in a way that most memoirs tend not to do," Calise said.

"He makes me think that his methodology or his experience is applicable," Xu said of Cazenave. "There's definitely a universal way to reflect on your experience and try to turn it into a change of the academia or social issues."