



# THE RECORDER



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## Wearing Pink With A Purpose: Breast Cancer Awareness at CCSU

By Lorenzo Gagliotta & Noah Gavin  
Staff Writers



Photo Credit Noah Gavin, The Recorder; information and triva in CCSU's Alumni Hall

## Low Voter Turnout For SGA

By Andrew O'Sullivan  
Staff Writer

During the week of Sept. 29 to Oct. 3, Central Connecticut State University's Student Government Association (SGA) held its first of two annual elections for positions, including At-Large Senator, Commuter Senators, First-Year Senators, and Resident Senators.

However, many Central students had no idea that the elections were happening. Those who did were unimpressed by the candidates on the ballot.

Despite a total student population of over 11,200, at-large senator winner Nana-Princesse Jackson received just 70 votes over the week-long voting period, with the numbers for other positions being similarly low. The Commuter Senator, Barbara Flores, received 35 votes; top First-Year Senator Anthony Esquilin Ortiz had 22, and Resident Senator Ash Devito led the way with 24.

See *SGA Votes* on Page 3

## Ranking the NBA's Best Teams Going Into the 2025-26 Season

By Marcus Saunders  
Co-Editor-In-Chief

Ranking the NBA's Best Teams Going into the 2025-26 Season

Basketball is finally back! The NBA season starts on Tuesday, Oct. 21. It will feature new broadcasts (Peacock and Prime Video) and the return of old ones (NBC), key players recovering from injuries, familiar faces in new places, legends trying to defeat Father Time and young stars determined to take over the league. This is a time that gives every team and fan hope. Here are my top 10 teams heading into the season.

No. 1: Oklahoma City Thunder

No surprise here—the reigning champions return their entire playoff rotation and now have the championship experience

and pedigree, even though they were the youngest team by average age the past two seasons. The Thunder are led by the reigning scoring champion, regular season MVP and Finals MVP Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, along with Jalen Williams, who was an All-Star and made the All-NBA third team last season. Not only do opponents have to worry about their scoring, but the Thunder also had the league's best defense last season, anchored by Lu Dort, Williams, Alex Caruso and Cason Wallace on the perimeter, as well as Chet Holmgren and Isaiah Hartenstein inside. Oklahoma City may not win 68 games like it did last year, but it wouldn't be a surprise if the Thunder came close given how dominant their defense is.

See *Preview* on Page 5

About

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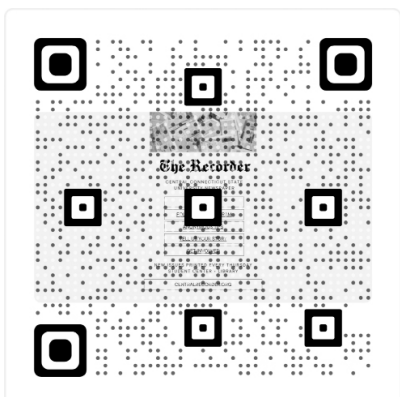
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SCAN FOR OUR LINKS



# Wearing Pink With A Purpose: Breast Cancer Awareness at CCSU



By Lorenzo Gagliotta & Noah Gavin  
Staff Writers

Statistics show that there is a one in eight chance of women developing breast cancer in their lifetime, according to the American Cancer Society.

It is the second most common cancer among women in the United States.

Despite it being more prominent with women, it affects men too.

An estimated 2,800 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer in the coming years, according to the Breast Cancer Foundation. Yet there is a low awareness among men for early detection of this health crisis.

CCSU's Maternal Health Advocacy Club (MHAC) hosted an event at the Student Center, educating and raising awareness for students, for signs to look for a potential case of breast cancer.

Before the event, MHAC President Vanessa Paddy said, "This year, one of our big goals is really to expand a lot of our advocacy and education to the campus as a whole," she added that last year they aimed to expand awareness to women in general. "Like with the breast cancer education table, it's not just pregnant women, it's any woman. So that's kind of our primary focus," she said.

Paddy spoke about what she has learned in her role.

"I think seeing the difference in the level of health education that students are getting in high school right now, and then coming into college, is honestly kind of alarming," she said.

Paddy said efforts should be focused on increasing awareness within the student body.

"So, the sooner we can start making people aware of how to know their own body, the things that are changing, the better," she said.

Last year, MHAC set up an informal table in the health clinic at Copernicus Hall; Paddy said her goals are now to continue their efforts to make information on breast cancer accessible to the public.

Hanna Little, marketing director of the MHAC and human biology major, emphasized the importance of maternal health.

"Maternal health is really, really important," she said. "People just don't pay attention to their bodies, especially us teens and young adults. We tend to just avoid things until they become a problem."

Little wanted this event, and the Maternal Health Advocacy Club, to be welcoming to anyone they can help support.

"This club is good to just show everybody that we're a big community and we're all here to help each other and all of us women need to stick together," Little said.

MHAC got to test students' knowledge on breast cancer and maternal health with a trivia game during a tabling event on campus. There, students who answered questions correctly received a sticker, and those who got them wrong got the opportunity to learn more about the issue.

Nursing major Kayanna Reece participated in this game and

learned that 85% of breast cancer occurs in people with no family history. Reece said MHAC has significance as a place students can go to be informed in a more comfortable setting.

Reece enjoyed the educational aspect of the event as well, and particularly that the club was handing out informative cards on how to self-screen for the signs of breast cancer.

"I personally didn't know how to check if I have breast cancer or how to check myself, and I was taught that at the table today," she said. "I think it's important for other girls to know how to do that."

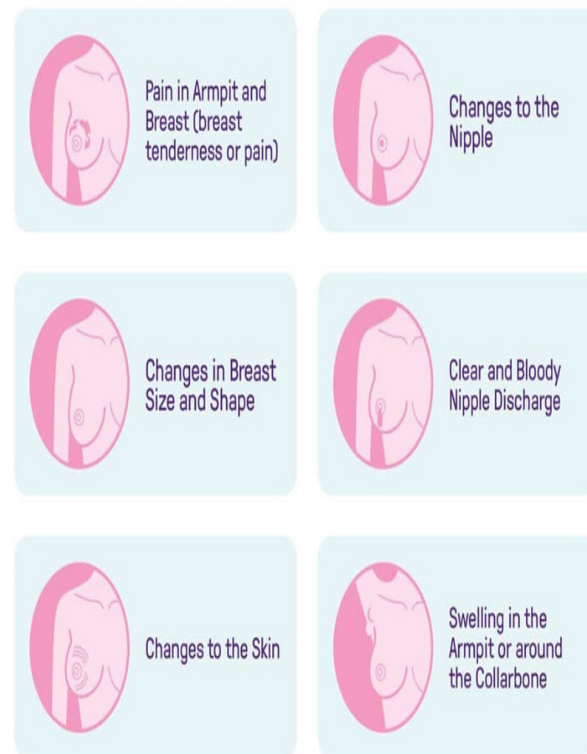
Social services major Anil Deonarine said he was aware of the impact of breast cancer

but came to the table to learn its potential effects for men.

"I have a family that are recent breast cancer survivors," he said. "I've always wondered how it would be for men. It's so uncommon, and I wanted to know would it be affecting any other generations before me?"

Deonarine has another reason for why he thinks awareness among young men is important too.

"We should be able to learn about women's health, because in the future, if you're in a relationship with somebody who is going through cancer or someone in your family is going through cancer, it's good to help them know the symptoms early."



## Potential Signs of Breast Cancer

Contact your doctor if you have noticed any of these changes. Early screening saves lives!



Photo Credit Maternal Health Advocacy Club; these cards show how to check for masses.

Have a story that needs to be told?  
Tips or ledes that should be investigated?  
Email us at [editor@centralrecorder.org](mailto:editor@centralrecorder.org)  
or fill out the contact form on our website  
[centralrecorder.org](http://centralrecorder.org)

## SGA Vote Continued



Resident Senator Logan Taylor mentioned that he has experienced the decline of student involvement firsthand.

“I do think this isn’t a problem with SGA, I think it’s a campus-wide problem where we send out forms and not a ton of people participate. [...] Yeah, it’s a great idea, but what’s gonna happen if no one does it?” Taylor said.

“I’m not sure exactly how to solve it, but I have noticed a pattern or trend,” he said.

Taylor has served as Resident Senator for three semesters and is the current secretary of the Beecher Residence Hall’s Hall Council. Taylor explained there was an overlap between a lack of SGA involvement and a lack of Hall Council involvement.

SGA Vice President Malachi Collins echoed concerns on this dilemma.

“I think it comes down to an awareness level,” Malachi said. “I think on an awareness level, maybe Central isn’t known for SGA, or SGA isn’t

as promoted.”

Although he admitted that the SGA may not have the pull that they want, Collins said the organization has plans to improve.

“We’re on an upward climb since last year. We had a lot of participation, more than we had last year,” he said. “So, focusing on the internal side, we did really good. As we build with more people inside, we’re able to do more, therefore more visibility. With that, we’re able to garner more

attention.”

Collins made it clear that the SGA is meant to invoke policy changes and improve campus life beyond being an organization students participate in.

“The main primary objective is that it’s important to vote because you’re putting people in a position to advocate for things you want,” he said.

Collins said there are constant complaints and requests from Central students on the Fizz app and relates it to how stu-

dents can make a difference. He added, having a clear focus if you’re an SGA candidate is essential; connecting with students is an important aspect of not only being a successful student politician, but also growing SGA as a whole.

“I would say college is just a small scale of the bigger world,” Collins concluded.

The next round of SGA elections will take place in the spring semester.

At Large Senator Results (1)		
Nana-Princesse Anson	70	44.02%
James Sergio Crocker	47	29.55%
N/A - I abstain from voting	30	18.86%
Milton Salmon	12	7.54%

Commuter Senator Results (8)		
Barbara Flores	35	27.13%
Elida Flores	18	13.95%
Jovan Torres	17	13.17%
Alyssa Brythe Owoo	13	10.07%
Alex Matulis	12	9.3%
Lindsay Harkness	12	9.3%
Fares Ahmed	10	7.75%

Photo Credit MySGA; the results of voting

### This Weeks Campus Events

**Sign Man (Short Film), Oct. 16, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

**Torp Theatre @ Davidson Hall**

**Charity Week, Oct. 20, 10 a.m.**

**Student Center, Lobby Tabela**

**Midterm Mandness Study Session, Oct. 20, 2 p.m.**

**Philbrick/Camp**

**Thrift to Death, Oct. 22, 1 p.m.**

**Student Center Circle**

First - Year Senator Results (6)		
Anthony Esquillin Ortiz	22	23.91%
Ashley Hacker	15	16.3%
Bella Giammarino	14	15.21%
Jordan Aaron	14	15.21%
Meralys Torres-Pratts	13	14.13%
Tamiya Tripp	7	7.6%
N/A - I abstain from voting	7	7.6%



## Entertainment Column

### Shaken Not Silenced: Banned Books and Mocktails

By Noah Gavin  
Staff Writer

The Sigma Tau Delta and The Helix hosted a Mocktail Party on Oct. 9 in the English department as a celebration of Banned Books week.

The event, hosted annually on Banned Books week, featured a bartender making drinks based on banned books such as “Big Brother” for George Orwell’s 1984.

The event also had tables full of mocktail snacks, packets of information on banned books, and even some samples of the books available for attendees to read while at the event.

Many Central Connecticut State University English professors and students, not all English majors, attended the event.

“I came out because I wanted to see what the event was about with the banned books, because I have a very strong opinion against the banning of books,” said history major Jaret Pliska.

Pliska said his strong opinions against banning books stem from the importance of the content within said books.

“I’m really against the censorship of books because when authors publish books, put words on a page, everything has a meaning. Even if it is face value, you’re just ripping away learning experiences from people when you ban books,” he said.

Many students shared the sentiment that they enjoyed going to an event like this because they strongly oppose banning books, and they enjoy what CCSU does to spread awareness by having events like this one.

CCSU English Professor Mary Collins believes it is important to be wary of the implications a banned book might have on a student, depending on the content.

“I think it’s complex. I think you have to worry about trigger warnings...I don’t think we should be censoring but there has to be some context and opening for people to decide if they want to engage with the text,” she said.

Collins thinks that banning a book that might have these triggers is overbroad censorship.

“I think that you should inform them [of the possible triggers a banned book may have], and allow gateways for different people to respond to difficult texts...when you create those kinds of spaces you’re allowing a freedom to engage or not to engage, which is better than banning, which would mean no room for engagement,” she said.

One of the authors who was featured heavily on the lists was Toni Morrison, who frequently wrote novels on themes like the legacy of slavery and the consequences of racism in America.

Morrison had books featured at the event, like *The Bluest Eye* and *Beloved*, which were banned in various schools’ curricula because of their unflinching portrayals of graphic violence in relation to slavery and racism.

Secondary English education major Sarah Lippman was shocked to see Morrison on the banned list.

“I just recently finished *Beloved*, and [it] was fantastic. [It] is on the banned book list, which I can’t believe. I would recommend it to anyone.”

Lippman shared what she described as a “common sentiment” at the event.

“I think it’s important not to just let books be banned. I feel like it’s silencing important history and literature from authors, as well as different authors’ perspectives.”

Lippman said her parents collect banned books, and she always enjoys reading them, and because of this, would love to see university professors teach about them.

“I think if professors can build [the silencing of authors and their viewpoints] into their units, I’m 100 percent there.”

Lippman loved the idea behind the event and thinks it is a good model of what universities can do to stand up to censorship.

“I feel like stuff like this is a great example of what universities can do [to react or prevent censorship]. I think just making sure that students have access to any and all types of literature without any kind of censorship is really important.”

Secondary English education major Morgan Veach said she really enjoyed the sentiment around an event like this, and that CCSU is a breath of fresh air compared to where she came from regarding banned books.

“I grew up in a very conservative area, and so those colleges definitely had more an issue when it came to [certain] banned books, but I’ve noticed that here [at CCSU] it is not as big of an issue.”

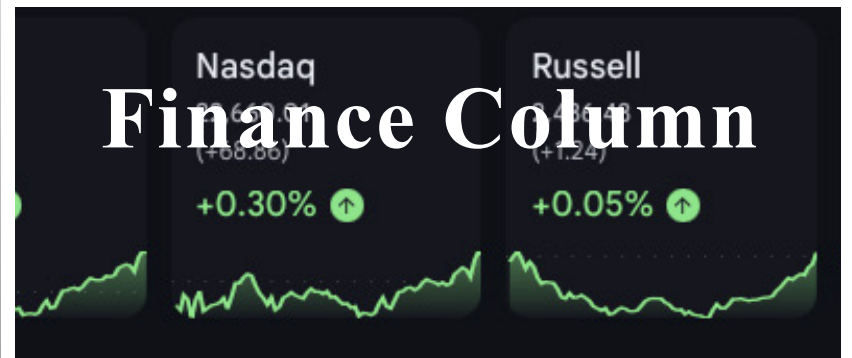
CCSU English professor Robert Dowling thinks that banning books is never needed, and that there is a straightforward way to solve it.

“Needless to say, we’re dead set against banning any literature or literary materials. Somebody doesn’t want to read something about gay people or African Americans, or you name it? Then, don’t read it.”

Dowling does not want CCSU students to worry about liter-

ary work being censored at our university.

“There’s very little fear of anything being banned here. We often do outreach programs with schools and museums, like the Mark Twain House, and of course, *Huckleberry Finn* [a book published by Twain] is a banned book.”



## The Hidden Cost Of OpenAI & AMD’s Deal

By Nicolas Dest  
Staff Writer

When OpenAI signed a deal with AMD to deploy six gigawatts’ worth of AMD chips, the tech world cheered, sending AMD’s stock to all-time highs. But behind the multibillion-dollar partnership lies a much more troubling implication: its impact on everyday Americans.

Six gigawatts isn’t just a number; it’s equivalent to the power consumption of about five million homes. With electricity rates already climbing about 6% last year, triple their usual pace, it’s evident that initiatives like this impact everyone, whether they ever use artificial intelligence.

U.S. data centers already consume about 4% to 5% of the nation’s power.

“AI training centers—hyperscale facilities—can draw hundreds or thousands of megawatts at a single site,” energy researcher Abraham Silverman told *Newsweek*. “It’s like building five nuclear plants into the grid every year, just for AI.”

These concerns aren’t new; they’ve been consistent through countless generations.

“The same concern has attend-

ed the emergence of all radically new technologies over history,” energy analyst Mark P. Mills wrote in *City Journal*.

Paradoxically, each wave of innovation that initially strains resources often leads to making them cheaper and more efficient. Since 1998, the price index for consumer technology has dropped more than 90%, even as computing power has grown exponentially.

It’s possible that GPU technology will follow a similar trajectory to the personal computer revolution of the 1990s—initially expensive, energy-intensive, but ultimately driving costs down. Still, that outcome depends on how quickly the energy sector and manufacturers adapt. Unlike past tech booms, AI’s progress isn’t limited by imagination; it’s constrained by computing power.

This paradox is precisely what Whether or not AI deserves the energy it consumes, it’s clear the U.S. is headed toward a modern industrial revolution, with companies like Nvidia, AMD, Microsoft and Google building the digital infrastructure of the future, and households paying the bill whether they use it or not.

## Preview Continued

### No. 2: Denver Nuggets

This is the best team the Nuggets have built around the best player in the world, Nikola Jokic—and that says a lot, considering they won a championship in 2023. In June, Denver traded sharpshooter Michael Porter Jr. for Cam Johnson, who is a more versatile offensive player, a better defender and on a cheaper contract. With the money the Nuggets saved by trading Porter, they were able to bring back Bruce Brown—a key member of the 2023 championship roster—along with Tim Hardaway Jr. and, most important, Jonas Valanciunas to serve as Jokic's backup center. This is the first time Jokic will have a reliable center behind him. Last season, Valanciunas averaged 8.7 points and seven rebounds in just 16.9 minutes per game for the Sacramento Kings—but that's all Denver needs since Jokic plays most of the game anyway. If this team performs as well as it looks on paper and stays relatively healthy come playoff time, it could be the biggest threat to take down the Thunder.

### No. 3: Cleveland Cavaliers

This has to be the year the Cavaliers get out of the second round ... right? With Boston's Jayson Tatum and Indiana's Tyrese Haliburton expected to miss most, if not all, of the season following achilles injuries, there's no reason a team with Donovan Mitchell, Evan Mobley, Darius Garland and Jarrett Allen should make a first- or second-round exit. Cleveland also added some solid bench pieces in Lonzo Ball and Larry Nance Jr. We know the Cavs will perform in the regular season—they had the league's best offense and won 64 games last year—but they need to be that same team come playoff time. Injuries have hurt the Cavs in recent years, with each of their top four players missing multiple playoff games, but that can no longer be the excuse. If Cleveland fails to reach the conference finals, expect Garland or Allen to be traded.

### No. 4: New York Knicks

The Knicks shockingly fired Tom Thibodeau in June, who led New York to the Eastern Conference Finals for the first time in 25 years, when Allan Houston and a 37-year-old Patrick Ewing were on the team. New York hired former Sacramento Kings head coach Mike Brown to replace Thibodeau. The Knicks viewed Thibodeau as someone who could make them competitive again, but not someone who could get them over the hump—and now that challenge belongs to Brown. Known as an offensive-minded coach, Brown takes over a team that ranked fifth in offensive rating last season. The Knicks hope he can fully unlock an attack led by Jalen Brunson and Karl-Anthony Towns. In free agency, they added Guerschon Yabusele, Jordan Clarkson and Malcolm Brogdon, all of whom should provide an offensive spark and, more important, give the starters more rest—something Thibodeau rarely allowed. As long as no major injuries occur, the Knicks should be a top-three seed in the Eastern Conference and are my biggest threat to take down the Cavaliers.

### No. 5: Houston Rockets

Kevin Durant was the biggest name to change teams in the offseason—and he's exactly what the Rockets needed: a primary scorer and half-court creator. In his 17th season, he averaged 26.6 points, six rebounds and 4.2 assists per game for the Phoenix Suns, who finished with a bottom-three defense last season. Now, Durant joins a team that ranked in the top five defensively and finished as the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference, so his transition should be smooth. He'll join a deep roster that includes budding young stars Amen Thompson and Alperen Sengun. Houston also added three-and-D wing Dorian Finney-Smith and center Clint Capela for frontcourt depth. Unfortunately, starting point guard Fred VanVleet suffered a torn ACL and may miss the entire season, according to ESPN's Shams Charania. Second-year guard Reed Sheppard will have to step up in his absence. Still, this should be one of the league's most exciting teams, and we'll finally get to see Durant as the true leader of a young, up-and-coming roster. How far can he take them?

### No. 6: Minnesota Timberwolves

Anthony Edwards and the Timberwolves continue to prove they're true contenders in the Western Conference. Even though they haven't reached the NBA Finals, they've made the conference finals in each of the past two seasons. Edwards has done nothing but improve. Last season, he averaged 27.6 points, 5.7 rebounds and 4.5 assists per game, but where he really took a leap was in his three-point shooting—he hit a career-best 39.5% from beyond the arc and led the league with 320 makes. Elite defensive wing Jaden McDaniels has also made strides offensively and will be counted on to score more often. Minnesota ranked in the top 10 in both offense and defense, and while Rudy Gobert leaves much to be desired on the offensive end, the 7'1" center continues to anchor the paint with elite rim protection. The Timberwolves didn't add much in free agency, so they'll rely heavily on the internal development of second-year players Rob Dillingham, Jaylen Clark and Terrence Shannon Jr. Even if they don't finish among the

top playoff seeds, they always seem to find a way to win. Now, the question is whether they can do it again while leaning more on their young core.

### No. 7: Los Angeles Clippers

Most of the news surrounding the Clippers this offseason has been off the court, but on it, they have one of the best rosters in the league. Los Angeles added Brook Lopez to back up Ivica Zubac at center, John Collins as a legitimate lob threat who can also stretch the floor, Chris Paul as a veteran backup point guard and Bradley Beal, who—despite criticism from Suns fans—had a strong season with Phoenix. Kawhi Leonard will also be healthy to start the year. Last season, he missed the first 34 games as he dealt with inflammation in his right knee. The Clippers finished third in defense last season, and with Leonard healthy from the start, they should improve offensively while maintaining their defensive identity. What will determine how far this team can go is whether this veteran-heavy team can withstand the grind of an 82-game season and stay healthy for the playoffs—when Leonard is at his best.

### No. 8: Los Angeles Lakers

One of the biggest storylines entering the season is Luka Dončić's body transformation—and the 26-year-old put it on full display at the 2025 EuroBasket tournament, where he averaged 34.7 points and 7.1 assists per game for Slovenia. As for the Lakers, they added three players who are expected to play key roles, each with something to prove. Deandre Ayton will start at center and look to put questions about his effort to rest. Marcus Smart, a former Defensive Player of the Year, has appeared in only 115 of a possible 246 games since winning the award in 2022. Jake LaRavia will try to find a stable role after being traded from the Memphis Grizzlies to the Sacramento Kings and not being re-signed. The Lakers



Photo Credit Official NBA Website

will be without one of their superstars for the first few games of the season, as Charania reported Oct. 9 that LeBron James will miss at least three to four weeks with sciatica. Doncic is used to carrying a heavy offensive load, so L.A. should be fine while James recovers—but once he returns, the offense should fire on all cylinders. The big question is whether the Lakers can defend, with much of the roster being offensive-minded. If they can maintain a league-average defense, they could be a dangerous team in the postseason.

#### No. 9: Atlanta Hawks

The Hawks have hovered around .500 for the past five seasons, but they've made several moves this offseason that could finally change that—and potentially make them a top-10 team in the league. Atlanta traded for Kristaps Porzingis to protect the rim and stretch the floor, signed three-and-D wing Nickeil Alexander-Walker and sharpshooter Luke Kennard, and selected big man Asa Newell with the No. 23 pick in the 2025 draft. Forward Jalen Johnson will return from a torn labrum in his left shoulder that cut short his breakout season after just 36 games. In those games,

he averaged 18.9 points, 10 rebounds and five assists per game. It's also the second year for former No. 1 pick Zacharie Risacher, who the Hawks hope can build on the strong finish to his rookie campaign. Given Trae Young's defensive struggles, Atlanta has surrounded him with good-to-elite defenders in Dyson Daniels, Johnson, Porzingis, Onyeka Okongwu and Risacher, making it harder for opponents to target him on that end of the floor. The roster also features several players with something to prove—Young was reportedly disappointed with the lack of discussion toward a contract extension, and Porzingis is entering the final

year of his deal, looking to stay healthy and earn another payday. If the Hawks can stay healthy—especially Johnson and Porzingis—they have a legitimate shot to break into the league's top tier and be in the mix for a top-three seed in the Eastern Conference.

#### No. 10: Orlando Magic

The Magic ranked last in total three-pointers made in each of the past two seasons and have long struggled with outside shooting. That changed in a big way this offseason when they aggressively traded for Desmond Bane. Over his five-year career, Bane has shot 41% from three-point range

and averaged 19.2 points per game last season. Orlando continues to hang its hat on defense—it ranked second in defensive rating last season—but finished just 27th on offense. To take the next step, the Magic need their young star duo of Paolo Banchero and Franz Wagner to stay healthy. Both missed significant time last season with torn right obliques, and they played only 40 games together. If Bane can elevate Orlando's offense to complement its elite defense, the Magic could become the biggest threat to the Cavaliers and Knicks in the East.

## Bleeding Central Blue: How Two Friends Became the Heart of CCSU Athletics

By Jimmie Clark  
Contributor

**B**ruce Biel is known around New Britain, Connecticut, as “Mr. Central.” He’ll argue that the title should belong to his longtime friend and colleague C.J. Jones. Either way, the duo has been an essential part of the Central Connecticut State University Athletics Department for more than 40 years.

The two of them are known to wear Central blue so much that when they are spotted without it, people ask if they are mourning. One has been the voice of the school since his student years in the 1980s; the other, a former athletic director who helped build much of the success that Central athletics sees today. Biel has served as the voice of CCSU athletics since 1982, while Jones, who first came to Central as a student-athlete in 1964, later led the athletics program as the athletic director from 1995 to 2009.

The duo even makes a stronger team as golfers. Alongside two other Central alums, Biel and Jones have dominated the Toys for Tots tournament at Chippabee Golf Club in Bristol, Connecticut, winning three in a row. But it all started for this duo back in the '60s. Raised in Queens, New

York, Jones played baseball and basketball at Bayside High School. But as a son of a single parent, he wasn't sure college was something he could afford.

“Wharton County Junior College in Texas [recruited me], but my mother didn't want me to go that far away,” Jones said. “I had a partial scholarship to American University, and then there was Central Connecticut.”

His guidance counselor at Bayside was John Nucatola, who is enshrined at the Basketball Hall of Fame, was the NBA's Supervisor of Officials from 1970-77, and is regarded as “The Greatest Official” by fellow Hall of Famer Clair Bee. Nucatola had officiated games at Central and reached out to then-CCSU men's basketball coach Bill Detrick to ask him to meet with Jones. Jones visited campus and bonded with Detrick.

“It was cheaper for me to come here [to Central] than it was to go to American on a partial scholarship, so I was led to Central for that reason,” he said.

It took some time for the Queens native to adjust to life

in New Britain.

“The first weekend I was on campus I decided to walk downtown,” Jones said. “Probably about six or seven o'clock, I thought I should get on a bus back to campus and come to find out, busses stopped at six o'clock.”

He went on to play both basketball and baseball at Central, which was then Division II, for four years. After graduating with an English degree in December 1969, he was again faced with two choices: to start teaching high school English in the middle of the year or to take a few graduate courses.

“I knew how the students were, and that if you walked into school in the middle of the year, it was going to be a problem,” he said. “So I decided to go to graduate school here at Central.”

Central introduced the Educational Opportunity Program designed to provide promising students with scholarships and academic help when they might not have met traditional admission standards, according to CCSU's website. So, Jones applied to become a

counselor in the program and was accepted during the summer of 1969, which kept him tied to CCSU a little longer.

“That fall, the director of the program decided to go back to the math department, and the director position opened up,” he said. “I just happened to be

at the right place at the right time, and the rest is history.”

Jones discovered that he loved the position and went on to spend the next 25 years as the director of the EOP program at CCSU, helping struggling students make the grade to get into college in New Britain.



Photo Credit CJ Jones; pictured is CJ Jones & Bruce Biel

“It was a unique program,” Jones said. “We did a 50th anniversary, and people came from Seattle and Georgia, all over the country to come and reminisce about someone they knew and the experiences they had.”

While he was working at the EOP during the summer, he was also an assistant coach for the men’s basketball program in the fall and winter.

“In ‘87 we were struggling, we had just gone Division I, and then Coach Detrick had some health issues, and I took over as the interim coach,” Jones said.

In his time as the interim coach, he posted an 8-15 record and applied for the head coach position. He did not get the job, but neither of the following two CCSU coaches exceeded the eight-win benchmark. However, eight years later, the athletic director position opened, and he applied for it. He got hired.

“When I got the job, I reached out to Howie Dickenman [about the men’s basketball coaching job], who I had played ball with here,” Jones said. “He was the top recruiter at UConn, and I’m sure a lot of people didn’t think he was going to come to Central. But maybe it was time for him to make a move, and I guess our relationship [helped]. He decided to come to Central, and the rest is history.”

Dickenman led Central to three March Madness appearances during his 20-year tenure at CCSU. He was not Jones’ only winning hire. He also brought on Mick D’Arcy, the current coach of the women’s soccer team, and Charlie Hickey, the coach of the baseball team. Jones also hired Tom Pincince as CCSU’s Sports Information Director in 2002. 17 years later, Pincince became Central’s Athletic Director. While serving as athletic director, Jones grew close to Biel, who was the main play-by-play voice announcer of Central Athletics. Biel was an

athlete in high school, playing basketball, golf and jai alai.

“I went to Central back in 1982, after I graduated from Hall High School in West Hartford,” Biel said.

As a CCSU student majoring in communications, he was approached at Elmer’s, the bar closest to campus, by another student who asked if he would be interested in broadcasting some games for the New Britain Red Sox, Biel agreed.

“I was playing pool one night at Elmer’s and I was asked if I wanted to get into broadcasting, and I said, ‘Okay, yeah, maybe I’ll give it a shot.’”

His first broadcast was a game at Beehive Field.

“I really took a liking to it,” he said.

He joined the on-campus radio station, WFCS, and went on to become its sports director. This job included the play-by-play call of CCSU basketball, football and New Britain Red Sox baseball from 1986-89.

“WFCS was invaluable to me,” Biel said. “It really was, it was great experience with not just commentary, but sports shows too.”

That experience helped him land an internship at Channel 30 WVIT/NBC Connecticut. While juggling the internship, his job at WFCS, and schoolwork, he was still the full-time play-by-play broadcaster for CCSU and traveling with football and men’s basketball. In 1986, while still a student, Biel had the call for CCSU’s very first Division I basketball game. Before the first ever Division I game played in New Britain, Central dedicated the gym to head coach Bill Detrick.

“It was awesome,” he said. “We played St. Peter’s on Bill Detrick night and won by 19 points. For a first Division I game, it was great.”

After being a strong contend-

er at the Division II level but not winning a championship, Central moved up from Division II.

“Saint Peter’s College had just made the tournament, and we had no idea what to expect,” Biel said. “Detrick Gym was jam-packed that night, and it was crazy. We won and the thought after the game was that we could do this... It was just euphoria.”

Biel and Jones have a special bond with not just each other but also the mecca of NCAA basketball, the March Madness tournament. Biel has called all of CCSU men’s basketball postseason appearances on the radio, while Jones was the athletic director at the time for each appearance. Jones loves the tournament so much, he co-wrote a book about it, “A Method to March Madness: An Insider’s Look at the Final Four.”

In 2000, Central won its first Northeast Conference championship, securing a bid to the NCAA Tournament against No. 2 Iowa State at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

“We were down 19 at the half, and at halftime, [CBS analyst] Bill Raftery walks up to Detrick, gives him a hug and says, ‘Bill, you never know,’” Biel said.

Central tied the game at 68 with six minutes left, but it was the closest Central would come to winning in the [Division I] Big Dance, but to Biel and Jones, just making it there was enough.

“I’d been a member of the Coaches Association, and I watched the selection show for years,” Jones said. “And I was hoping for years that maybe one day we’d do that.”

Central made it back to the NCAA tournament again in 2002, but with a less-than-stellar first-round performance, the Blue Devils were knocked out yet again. In 2004, the dynamic duo became a trio with

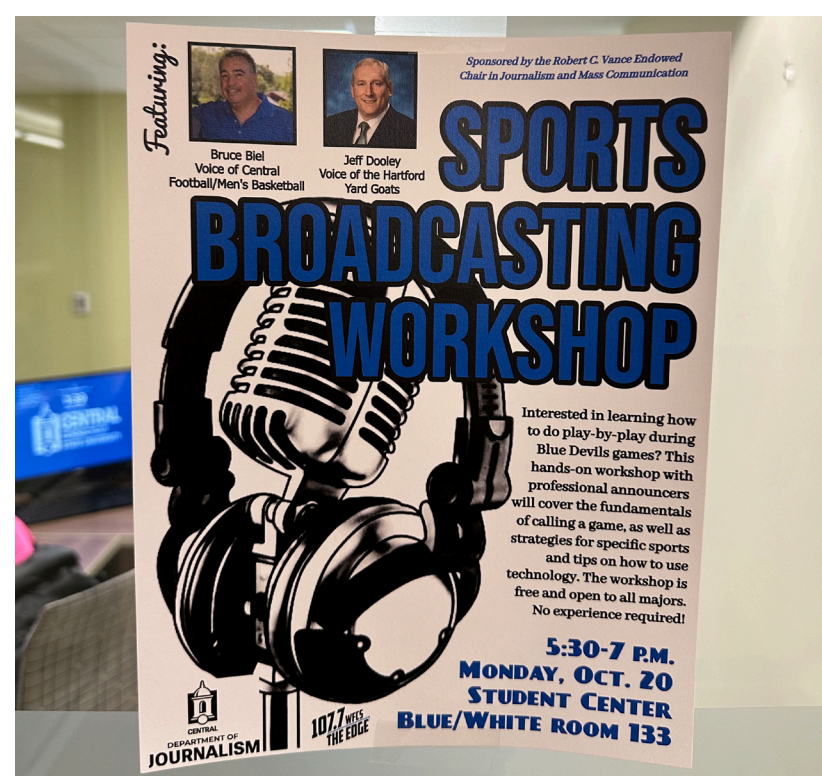


Photo Credit Elijah Hernandez; Bruce Biel will host a workshop

the addition of Marc Robbins to the broadcast booth, who Jones brought on.

“After about a half-hour interview with seven or eight members, he fired a sweatsuit at me and said, ‘Welcome aboard,’” Robbins said.

Robbins was a journalism major from Arizona State University who had a broadcast career in markets all over the country, starting in Sioux Falls, then Evansville and finally returning to New England with a job in Connecticut.

“When we started to work together, the chemistry was instant,” Robbins said. “It was like there was an instant bond, we probably started finishing each other’s thoughts midway through the season.”

Despite not being an alumnus and being the last of the three friends to arrive at Central, Robbins has been part of CCSU for the past 20 years, and over those two decades, like Biel and Jones, a budding fondness for the school has grown.

“Central is an interesting melting pot of people,” he said. “There’s strong character, and strong friendship.”

To each member in this group of tight friends, CCSU means something different for some,

it is friendship and for others it is family, but to all of them, the memories stick out more than anything else. Biel and Jones are both CCSU Athletic Hall of Famers, being inducted into the hall for their dedication to the school with Biel being inducted in 2013 and Jones was inducted in 2019. Recognized for their commitment to CCSU, Biel and Jones were inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame. Biel was honored in 2013 and Jones in 2019.

“Central gave me an opportunity that I never could have imagined,” said Jones, who was inducted into the NEC Hall of Fame in 2018. “I coached here, and I was a part of the EOP program, I met my wife here.”

Biel is still known as the Central Guy. Even at his job at the Hartford Yard Goats baseball team, his colleagues still ask him about CCSU men’s basketball and how their season went. Biel’s two children, Carolyn and Trevor, both graduated from CCSU. Carolyn played softball for the Blue Devils and then coached at Central. Trevor still produces his dad’s games at Central.

“Central is a part of me,” Biel said. “Anywhere I go, I wear blue. I mean, I wear it everywhere. I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.”

# Blue Devils Fall 3-0 to Howard in Rain-Soaked Home Match

By Eary Banushi  
Staff Writer



Photo Credit Steve McLaughlin; CCSU Men's Soccer team concluding their game together

The Central Connecticut State University men's soccer team's struggles continued Sunday, Oct. 12, in a 3-0 home loss to the Howard University Bison. Battling through a Nor'easter's wind and rain, the Blue Devils dropped their second straight match and ninth of the season.

"The boys gave everything," head coach David Kelly said. "It was a total committed effort, and we had chances to get back in the game when we were down one-nil... God himself came down and kept the ball out of the goal. There's nothing we can do when it's just not going your way."

Howard entered the match searching for its first Northeast Conference win, while Central was still chasing its first victory of the year.

The Blue Devils were coming off a 2-1 loss at New Haven the previous Sunday, dropping

their record to 0-2-1 in NEC play and 0-8-2 overall. The Bison also lost their last outing, falling 3-0 at Mercyhurst to move to 0-3-0 in conference and 1-9-1 overall.

Neither side managed to establish control in the opening half as the teams went into halftime scoreless. Central freshman goalkeeper Brio Leavitt made several key saves to keep Howard off the board, while freshman forward Youssef Shafei recorded the Blue Devils' lone shot on target.

Central controlled the early stages of the second half, creating several chances that could have changed the game. Their best opportunity came 13 minutes in when senior midfielder and captain Joey Tata sprinted down the left wing, cut along the touchline, and slipped past the Howard keeper, only for his short pass across the face of the goal to find no one waiting to finish.

With 22 minutes left, Howard finally broke through when a low pass from the left cut through Central's back line and found a teammate in the middle of the box who slotted it home to make it 1-0. 12 minutes later, the Bison doubled their lead after chipping Leavitt on a quick counterattack.

The final nail in the coffin came with five minutes remaining when a turnover in Central's half led to a Howard shot from outside the box that slipped past Leavitt into the bottom-left corner of the net, sealing the 3-0 defeat.

After the match, Tata reflected on his team's effort despite the loss.

"I gave my best, I know that" Tata said. "A couple of opportunities fell in the box — it just doesn't go our way. I know coaches always say to us, 'They're going to come,

they're going to come,' and that's what we keep doing. We keep believing."

The Blue Devils have managed just two goals in their previous four games. When asked what he thought was keeping Central from finding the net, Tata said the team just hasn't caught a break yet.

"The ball just doesn't want to go in the net for us, and that's how it's been all year," he said. "We're gonna keep fighting, like I said, and just keep working in practice and offensively do our thing. But I think it will come. I think it will come."

Kelly echoed that same belief after the match.

"I don't know what's keeping the ball out of the goal, but all we can do is keep coming to work, keep training and keep believing in ourselves and work harder and harder and harder until, like I said to

these guys, the result that we deserve comes our way. And I don't know when that's gonna be, but it will happen."

Despite the lopsided final score, the teams were evenly matched across most box score categories. Both finished with five corner kicks and three saves, while Howard held a slight advantage in shots, 8-7.

It was also a physical match, with Central committing eight fouls. Sophomore midfielder Gavin Bravado and redshirt freshman Alejandro Vigil each received yellow cards, while the Bison were whistled for nine fouls and had one player booked.

With the loss, the Blue Devils fell to 0-3-1 in conference play and 0-9-2 overall. They'll look to secure their first win of the season when they travel to face the 3-7-3 University of Rhode Island Rams on Wednesday, Oct. 15, at 7 p.m.

## CCSU SCHEDULE

### Women's Soccer

October 16 - @ FDU 4 PM

October 19 - vs. LIU 12 PM

### Women's Swimming & Diving

October 18 - vs. Stony Brook 1 PM

### Football

October 18 - @ Wagner 5 PM

### Men's Soccer

October 19 - vs. LIU 12 PM

### Women's Soccer

October 17 - vs. LIU 6 PM

