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SOUTHERN NEWS

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Students rally for protections against ICE

By Valentina Toro
Managing Editor



PHOTOS | WILLIAM GAGNÉ

Socialist club representative speaking at protest while students hold signs on the Buley Library Patio.

Students and community members gathered in the Academic Quad on Thursday, Sept. 17, calling for changes to the university's response to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activity and increased protections for students and workers.

The rally was organized by the Communists Club and New Haven Socialist Alternative following increased ICE activity across Connecticut and the detention of a student at Tweed New Haven Airport earlier this month.

"We need to come together, not just to rally and protest and say, you know, we stand against this, but to take next steps and to not just treat these detainments as isolated incidents," psychology major Tatum Kerr, a senior and president of the Communists Club, said.

Organizers called for the university to become what they described as a sanctuary campus and asked the university to limit cooperation with ICE.

Among their demands were protections for student and employee information, restrictions on sharing campus camera footage and increased resources for students affected by immigration enforcement.

Kerr said the rally was not organized solely because of the student's detention.

She said organizers viewed the detention alongside recent immigration enforcement activity throughout Connecticut.

For Sammy Albright, a member of New Haven Socialist Alternative, the detention brought the issue closer to the university campus community.

"It really felt like, oh, this isn't, you know, some far-off thing," Albright said. "This is right, you know, affecting our own community."

Organizers also called for ICE to be kept out of both Tweed New Haven and Bradley International airports.

Albright said he would like to see workers and unions organize against the agency's presence at airports.

Albright said becoming a sanctuary campus would also mean providing students, faculty and staff with information about their rights when interacting with immigration authorities.

"They should offer know-your-rights campaigns or meetings and trainings to all students, workers and faculty about ICE," Albright said.

He also emphasized that organizers want the university to establish policies against sharing immigration status information or campus camera footage with ICE and provide legal resources for students affected by immigration enforcement.

Kerr said she would like to see committees of students and workers formed to respond if immigration enforcement affect someone in the campus community.

She said those committees could alert the campus when a student or employee is detained or when ICE is present on campus.

The university is part of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system.

Kerr said she wants policies addressing immigration enforcement to apply throughout the system rather than only at one campus.

"I would hope to see CSCU pass some bold and enforceable policy for all campuses within their system," Kerr said.

Organizers said they hope the rally leads to continued involvement from students and workers and further discussions with university and system administrators about immigration enforcement.

"I hope what comes from this rally, because, like I said, I was talking to students and workers, and we can see that this issue is on the minds of many, is a drive to get organized," Kerr said.



Protesters listening to speakers at the ICE protest on Thursday, Sept. 17.



Students and staff holding signs in support of the protest.



Participant holding #ICEOUT sign during protest.

'Flow Forward Talk Series' challenges menstrual stigma

By Emma Gonzalez
Contributor

DIY bracelets, chats about experiences surrounding periods and learning about menstruation. The "Flow Forward Talk Series" became a welcoming space for students to open up to each other.

The "Flow Forward Talk Series" is a university chapter of the national organization Period, which according to their official page, aims to advocate for accessible and affordable menstrual products.

"It is about building a community," tourism, hospitality and event management major Saveena Kunchala, a senior and president of Period, said. "I really want to make it an environment where people can feel comfortable getting into advocacy."

The talk series, which took place on Sept. 16 from 12–1 p.m., began with a chat between students about their first experience learning about the menstrual cycle, some students having positive experiences, some negative.

"I like hearing other people and their feelings about it , and what they go through on theirs," psychology major Kayla Nguyen, a sophomore, said.

After each student had shared, Kunchala began to teach students about the menstrual cycle — why it happens, how it happens and common myths surrounding it.

"I want people to talk about different stigmas or different interactions they've observed and just combatting that," Kunchala said.

Students shared some misconceptions about the menstrual cycle that they previously believed, or that they have overheard from other people. One common misconception being that period blood is dirty.

"I was just curious about what you could talk about in a club about periods, I like talking about it, I don't feel weird about it at all," Nguyen said.

The event was more than just a meeting; it was an outlet for attendees like psychology major Kya Hunter, a senior, who felt as if talking about things like periods should be less taboo.

"I think it's important to normalize something that's already normal for most of us," Hunter said.

Hunter also liked the idea of having that extra support system on campus, and that more people should know about it.

"I thought that it was a really good cause. The awareness and support are needed on campus," Hunter said.

Kunchala also spoke about the mission for the university's Period chapter,

"Period at SCSU is a volunteer chapter with the national period movement organization. Our mission is to end period poverty and stigma through service, advocacy and education," Kunchala said.

In fact, the presence of free menstrual products on campus is due to the Period chapter.

"There was a lot going on politically when I came to school, and certain people that I've met at my time here have helped me get into advocacy more," Kunchala said.

Now, Kunchala wants to be the one advocating for others and helping students become more confident with that as well.

"Sometimes, you need someone like that," Kunchala said.

One thing that Kunchala stressed throughout the whole talk series was that every experience, no matter how different, is valid and normal.

"Why shouldn't we teach people about what's going on with our bodies?" Kunchala said.



PHOTOS | EMMA GONZALEZ

Attendees showing off their custom bracelets during the "Flow Forward Talk Series" on Sept. 16.



Period e-board members and attedees debunking period myths in the Adanti Student Center.