

## A new century, a fresh start

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### THE COLLEGE'S CENTENNIAL

seemed far off that August day in 2007 when I welcomed the Class of 2011 to campus. As all presidents do, I advised the new students to take full advantage of all the opportunities they would find here. I knew they would be shaped and transformed by this experience.

On May 22, as I handed diplomas to each member of the Centennial Class, I reflected on how much these students accomplished in four years — and how they, like each class that preceded them, have left their mark on the College.

Connecticut College today offers an education that teaches students to cross boundaries between different areas of study and solve complex problems by using the tools and perspectives of multiple disciplines. Just as important, this education takes place within a residential setting in which students experience firsthand how their personal choices and contributions affect the entire community.

The members of the Class of 2011 have made the most of this education: 132 completed the requirements for more than one major; 62 earned a certificate from one of our interdisciplinary centers. They have excelled on the stage,

in the studio and on the athletic fields. They have earned recognition through fellowships from Goldwater, Fulbright and the National Science Foundation, among others. They have studied economics in Argentina, cultural identity in Peru and gender-based violence in Guatemala. They have become activists and advocates with initiatives that range from threatened indigenous populations to education policy to a re-evaluation of the College's venerable Honor Code.

Our newest graduates have impressed me with their intelligence, their talent, and their passion for engaging important issues on campus and in the world. They are privileged to have completed a Connecticut College education, and I hope they will use it to help others — wherever they go and whatever they do next.

Connecticut College graduates are capable of anything. In this Centennial year, dozens of alumni have come to campus to share their varied experiences with students. Jonathan McBride '92 talked about how the College prepared him for life as a White House staffer. Attorney Lauren Burke '06 explained how her study of Mandarin led to helping youth trafficked from China. And financial analyst Carl Prather '04 said his close relationships with faculty

gave him the confidence he needed to succeed in the international equities market.

In her Founders Day keynote address, historian Linda Eisenmann '75, parent of two Connecticut College graduates, summed up the life-changing experience of this education: "It's the place where my own scholarly inclinations were nurtured and my intellectual perspectives developed."

The impact of Connecticut College is, indeed, important and far-reaching. Our graduates' success shows the value of this degree, and I look forward to seeing how the Centennial Class of 2011 will put their liberal arts education into action in the years ahead.

I hope to see our newest graduates and many more alumni at our culminating Centennial celebration, which will take place Oct. 21-23, 2011. This Fall Weekend will include a multimedia production featuring the stories of inspiring alumni, professors and students along with a host of other events and activities. More details can be found on page 10 and at <http://centennial.conncoll.edu>. Please join us for a once-in-100-years celebration of Connecticut College's Great Beginnings — and your own. ■