

My name is Yineira Lopez. I am currently a senior at Eastern Connecticut State University. I am originally from Venezuela but grew up in Atlanta. In 2016, I received a full scholarship from the Dream.US foundation to attend Eastern Connecticut State University. In the past four years, Eastern has become my home and has allowed me to continue the journey to fulfill my dreams. Leaving home to pursue higher education is challenging but there could not be a more supportive campus than Eastern. Our school aids students in many areas like writing assistance, tutoring, undergraduate research, health services and career development. These are only a few aspects of support on our campus but highlight the commitment that the institution has to its students in helping them achieve success. Thankfully, I personally have not had to worry so much about tuition as it is covered by my scholarship. However, through my participation in the Student Government Association I have seen the concern that many students have with the continuous rise of tuition. Efforts like free access to community college are great to see in our society but we must not forget about other groups of students who will be affected by the decline in enrollment in their respective institutions. Your committee can assist in alleviating some of the hardships that our students will be exposed to by providing additional funds to ensure that the quality of education and support to students is not affected. President Nunez and her administration have done a tremendous job in ensuring that the quality of education and support is not negatively affected on our campus. State funding has not increased in past years but the needs of students have. I urge you today to consider that, by investing in your students, you are investing in the future of Connecticut. Thank you.