54 students participate in Hartford budget hearing

Fifty-four GCC students got a hands-on lesson in democracy Feb. 28 when they traveled to Hartford to participate in the Appropriations Subcommittee’s public hearing on the state’s higher education budget, which seeks to cut funding to community colleges by $24.3 million.

Donning red T-shirts emblazoned with the phrase “Democracy is not a spectator sport,” they boarded buses at Long Wharf that afternoon to take them to the Legislative Office Building to show solidarity and to demonstrate what the education they receive at Gateway means to them. Twenty-two GCC students and two GCC alumni gave testimony. Many of the speakers shared personal stories about how the college has had a positive impact on their lives, and expressed concern that tuition increases and other cuts could prevent them from continuing their education.

“Gateway and our student stories were heard throughout the night,” said GCC Student Government Association President Nancy Touba. “For many, it was the most nerve-wracking frightening thing to get up and speak to senators and representatives, as well as the hundreds of people in the room, but they did it and they did it well. I think it was a fantastic testament to how important our education is to us and to the need for services and tuition to remain where they are.”

The students who gave testimony were: Ashley Blasczyk, Gabriel Muniz, Majestic Dyer, Jennifer Rivera, Michael Billups, Adah Hoermann, Lila Tullock, Kim Simon, George Creamer, Wade Moore, James Pitts, Shane Feyers, Nancy Touba, Kimberly Grant, Symphony Joseph, Ann Williams, CJ Magut, Chaz Elbert, Chris Hath, Greg Smith, Jasmine Carson and Tabitha Boccarossa. The two GCC alumni who gave testimony were former SGA President Jeff Pierre and nursing program graduate Sam Osei. (In the top photo are GCC Art Club President Lila Tullock, speaking, and Kim Simon, a student employee of GCC’s Writing Center, right, with her daughter.)

Students from community colleges, public schools, and private universities attended the hearing. Among the schools represented were: Capital Community College, Three Rivers Community College, Manchester Community College, Middlesex Community College, Naugatuck Valley Community College, Quinebaug Valley Community College, Asnuntuck Community College, Western Connecticut State University,
Central Connecticut State University, Southern Connecticut State University, UConn, Albertus Magnus, St. Joseph's College and Connecticut College. As a result of the hearing, students from all 12 community colleges are in the beginning stages of planning a rally for later this spring. Also as a result of the hearing, GCC students led by Adah Hoermann and Nancy Touba will hold a student assembly on March 17 to discuss the possibility of cuts to GCC’s operating budget.

The New Haven Register covered the hearing and interviewed students on video as they were preparing to board the bus at Long Wharf. To see that coverage, click here. To view the entire hearing online, click here.

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DeLauro collects stories for education budget debate

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-3rd District) visited GCC on Feb. 24, appearing before a crowd of more than 100 students to discuss Pell Grants and collect their stories to take back to Washington and use as part of the debate over a proposed $4.9 billion cut to the U.S. Department of Education budget.

“It is a powerful testimony from people like yourselves,” she said. “You are the voice of this area, this country, and Congress needs to hear from you.”

To learn about some of those stories, click here to read the New Haven Register article on the event.

If you have a story to share about how federal financial aid has helped you or someone you know, please reach out to DeLauro and Senators Lieberman and Blumenthal over the next week. For contact information on our senators, click here. To contact DeLauro, click here.

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GCC receives grant to train pharmacy techs, CNAs

GCC’s Continuing Education and Workforce Development Division was recently awarded grant funding from the Connecticut State Legislature to provide free entry-level training for individuals who are unemployed, or under-employed, but aspire to be pharmacy technicians and certified nurses’ assistants (CNAs).

The grant is part of the Connecticut Jobs Bill Program, which was designed to enable Connecticut community colleges to provide training for in-demand skills to those who are unemployed or under-employed. The Connecticut Jobs Bill Program is a special appropriation through bond funds as approved by the General Assembly to implement Public Act No. 10-75.

Ann Cohen, coordinator of GCC’s Workforce Development Institute, is working closely with New Haven's Workforce Alliance office to identify seven to 10 individuals for the Pharmacy Technician Program and 12 to 15 individuals for the CNA Program. All costs, including course fees, books, and uniforms, will be paid for through the grant. The Pharmacy Technician Program includes 60 hours of comprehensive training, while the CNA Program provides a minimum of 100 hours of classroom and practical training to participants.
Dean of Continuing Education and Workforce Development Vicki Bozzuto said the college is especially excited for the opportunity to develop and implement the CNA Program.

“Health care will continue to be a growth area for jobs in the region and Gateway will continue to be a prime provider of trained and educated individuals to fill these positions,” Bozzuto said.

For more information about these or other educational and training opportunities provided by GCC’s Workforce Development Institute, please contact Ann Cohen at 203-285-2302 or acohen@gwcc.commnet.edu.

10 graphing calculators added to loan program
Student Group Assistance Program, which is administered through the Gateway Community College Foundation, has funded the purchase of 10 graphing calculators to add to GCC’s existing calculator loan program, increasing it by 20 percent.

Graphing calculators are required for all MAT 095 and higher courses. It’s estimated that 1,100 students are enrolled in these courses each semester — and for many the $140 expense to purchase a graphing calculator is a great hardship.

“I have been getting 12 per semester from Texas Instruments, so we have close to 50 on loan already in the library, but they are always all checked out, so this contribution from the Student Group Assistance Program is sorely needed and will be greatly appreciated,” said Rachael Schettenhelm, associate professor of mathematics in the College Advancement Studies Department.

GCC events commemorate Black History Month

The GCC community celebrated Black History Month in February with a variety of events, beginning with a Feb. 16 forum sponsored by the Black Student Association (BSA) that explored the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and included a discussion of what the “N-word” means today.

The forum, which was held on our Long Wharf campus in room 160, featured a panel of speakers that included GCC’s own Professor Rev. Scott, Jesse Davis, Claire Hendricks and Jonah Cohen. Each reflected on what the “N-word” means to them and then opened the floor for comments and questions. GCC President Dr. Dorsey L. Kendrick (photo) was among those who participated.

The BSA also sponsored a Soul Food Program on Feb. 23 in room 160 on the Long Wharf campus where Rev. Scott, the featured speaker, discussed Venture Smith, the former slave who rose to wealth and prominence in Connecticut. And on Feb. 25, Dr. Kendrick was the featured speaker at the Hamden Black History Month Celebration at the Miller Memorial Library where she discussed “Fulfilling the Dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; Only Love Can Drive Out Hate; Only We can Change the Fate of the African-American Family.” And GCC’s Early Learning Center in conjunction with the Long Wharf Library also held events to celebrate black history. To see a photo slideshow of those events, click here.

On March 16, the BSA will continue its Black History Month events with a showing of the film Sankofa at 2 p.m. on our Long Wharf campus in room 160.

March 7 forum: Impact of economy on women

On Monday, March 7, GCC hosted a public forum, “The Impact of the Economy on
Women” that featured a panel with state Sen. Toni N. Harp (D-New Haven), state Rep. Toni E. Walker (D-New Haven) and Frances G. Padilla, vice president of the Universal Healthcare Foundation.

The event, which was held at our Long Wharf campus in room 160, was moderated by Teresa C. Younger, executive director of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. It was sponsored by the Theta Epsilon Omega chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Roofing, masonry, framing continue at new campus

GCC’s new downtown campus continued to take shape in February, with roofing, masonry and wall framing continuing on the south building and steel work on the George Street bridge being largely completed.

Scott Eaton, project manager at Dimeo Construction, gave this summary of work last month:

On the south site: In addition to the roofing, masonry on the east elevation and wall framing on levels two and three continued. To complement the wall framing operation, mechanical and electrical infrastructure located above future ceilings continued on levels 2 and 3. Workers placed the first concrete slab “on grade,” which means on the first level directly on soil. Spray fireproofing started on the first level.

On the north site: Worker continued to install weather protection and place concrete slabs “on deck,” which means the levels above ground level supported by structural steel. They also began spray fireproofing.

On the George Street Bridge (photo): Now that steel erection is largely done, workers will begin to place the concrete walkways and install mechanical and electrical infrastructure work.

The construction site is made up of two parcels, one located north of the other, on 3.7 acres at 2-20 Church Street. The state Department of Public Works is administering the project, which will include two four-story buildings totaling 360,000 square feet. The $198 million campus is one of the largest construction projects the state has ever undertaken and is the state’s first public building designed to be gold-certified in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, also known as LEED.

Foundation board member ‘Citizen of the Year’

Jeff Klaus, a member of the Gateway Community College Foundation’s board of directors, has been named Citizen of the Year by Business New Haven, the area’s business journal, as part of its annual Business & Civic Awards.

Klaus, who is regional president for greater New Haven for Webster Bank, was chosen based on his numerous volunteer activities in the region, particularly those related to enhancing its public educational offerings.
Klaus has been an active volunteer in greater New Haven for the past 20 years. He is a founding board member of the Amistad Academy charter school, a founding board member of Achievement First and a founding advisory member of the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now. He also currently serves as a board member of the Gateway Community College Foundation and as board chair of the Community Action Agency of Greater New Haven, in addition to other appointments.

GCC’s Dean of Development and Community Partnerships Mary Ellen Cody was quoted in the Business New Haven article about Klaus. “There are few that give back from the business community the way that Jeff does. People are often willing to write a check, but to get them to commit their time is increasingly difficult to do,” she said. “(Jeff) has a refreshing honesty about him, and he has an ability to marry an understanding of not-for-profits and how they work with the visionary strategic leadership he brings as (regional) president of Webster Bank.”

“My chief interest is education as a vehicle to reducing poverty in our community, and that concern is borne out of a childhood in which my parents deeply believed in the power of diversity and deeply believed in the power of education,” Klaus said in the article.

Klaus and other award winners will be honored at Business New Haven's Business & Civic Awards Dinner on March 8 in New Haven. To read the article, [click here](#) and go to page 19.

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Program Spotlight: Exercise Science and Wellness

If you’ve ever wondered how you might leverage your passion for fitness into a viable career path, you might be the perfect candidate for GCC’s Exercise Science and Wellness Associate Degree Program.

The program, which began enrolling students in the spring of 2010, prepares participants for employment in the health and fitness industry and provides a basis for professional advancement, as well as continued education.

With the current spotlight on the obesity epidemic and related diseases, along with America’s aging population, the need for fitness professionals is at an all-time high.

"Most people leaving with an associate degree would enter the exercise field with careers in personal training, group exercise, corporate wellness, youth fitness or related areas," said Program Coordinator Todd Degree. "It also serves as a launching point for continued education. For instance, a bachelor’s degree can lead to becoming a strength and conditioning coach or into the rehabilitation field. I even have one student who wants to continue on for a doctorate in order to be a physical therapist.”

The program, which is part of GCC’s Allied Health Department, utilizes a three-pronged approach, incorporating the areas of exercise science, nutrition and business to put its graduates in the best possible position to succeed in the marketplace. It combines classroom education with multiple hands-on experiences through labs and
Internships to prepare students for the rigors of employment in this dynamic industry.

Bethany resident Cochi Morowitz, 46, is in the midst of finishing the program and she would recommend it to anyone who is committed to living a healthy life and wants to help others do the same.

“I've always been interested in fitness and in the last few years I started doing triathlons,” she said. “I've been active my whole life. When I was a kid, I wanted to be a gym teacher. Years ago, I started working toward becoming a nurse, but when I was ready to go back to school, I decided that I would pursue exercise science instead.”

GCC’s exercise science courses are available only at GCC’s North Haven campus, but many of the program’s other required coursework is available at both the North Haven and Long Wharf campuses. The program has open enrollment, meaning student may enter it at any time, spring or fall.

Degree said the program is also in the process of finalizing an agreement with Southern Connecticut State University’s Human Performance Program that would allow all of GCC’s program credits to transfer for further study.

For more information about the Exercise Science and Wellness Associate Degree Program, contact Program Coordinator Todd Degree at 203-285-2446 or tdegree@gwcc.commnet.edu.

GCC program coordinators who are interested in having their program featured in a future Program Spotlight should contact Alison Skratt at askratt@gwcc.commnet.edu. Articles will be assigned on a first-come-first-served basis.

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Friendly Reminders

Best All-Around Student nominations due April 15

Nominations for the 2011 Best-All Around Student must be turned in by April 15.

Each year at commencement, GCC recognizes a Best All-Around Student, someone who does not meet the college's criteria for highest academic achievement, but nonetheless make major contributions to the college and society. In addition to the award, the student also receives $200.

To be eligible, a student must be graduating and have demonstrated leadership and mentoring, personal achievements, career goals, a consistent commitment to service, participation in community and student activities, employment accomplishments and a minimum cumulative GPA of at least 2.5. All nominations should be forwarded to Carol McHugh in the president's office. If you have any questions about the award, contact McHugh at 203-285-2061 or cmchugh@gwcc.commnet.edu.

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March 18 deadline to apply for scholarships

Students who will be continuing at GCC this fall have until Friday, March 18, to apply for one or more of the 127 scholarships being offered this year by the Gateway Community College Foundation. Altogether, the scholarships are valued at more than $87,000.
Applications are available inside a brochure explaining all of the scholarships and their requirements. In addition to being available in the Foundation Office, room 130 on the Long Wharf campus, the brochure is now available in both cafeterias, libraries, the Office of College Life, Financial Aid Office, Counseling Office, Admissions Office, Student Lounge and the Records Office at the North Haven campus. For more information, contact Susan Swirsky at 203-285-2617 or sswirsky@gwcc.commnet.edu.

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Magazine drive for VA being held through March 31

GCC’s Veterans Club is holding a magazine drive through March 31 for the VA Medical Center – West Haven where they will be placed in waiting rooms for patients and their families.

Last year, the Veterans Club held a similar drive and delivered 1,400 magazines to the VA, which includes an inpatient and Ambulatory Care Center that provide health care for thousands of veterans who have served in conflicts going back as far as World War II through today’s operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. “Magazines printed within the past year are preferred, but all magazines will be accepted,” said organizer Rick Palinko.

You can drop off your donations at Long Wharf in room 107 or at North Haven in room 101.

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April 3: Foundation’s Kitchen Tour, Tapas Reception

The Gateway Community College Foundation will be holding two fundraising events on April 3, an afternoon tour of five must-see kitchens in greater New Haven and an evening Tapas Reception at Delia, the Viking Center of New England in Wallingford.

Net proceeds from the events will go toward supporting the needs of GCC students.

The Kitchen Tour will take place from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. It will include a local personality accompanying participants on a coach bus that will take them to each site, where they will learn interesting facts about the kitchen, enjoy a beverage or local food treat. Tickets are $65 per person. The Tapas Reception will feature Jane Stern, co-author of dozens of cookbooks and best known for her “Roadfood” series and “Roadfood” column in Gourmet magazine. Tickets are $85 per person. Combination tour and reception tickets are $135 per person. To make a reservation for either or both events, please contact Susan Swirsky at 203-285-2617 or sswirsky@gwcc.commnet.edu.

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Calendar Highlights

March 9-29: Job-hunting workshops for students
GCC’s office of career services will be offering five workshops for students in March that will explore job-search strategies, resume writing and interview skills.

The workshops are free and there is no registration required. They will be taught by Director of Career Services Michael Buccilli and Keith Fuller, career services associate:

**March 9:** “Finding Employment in a Tough Economy” will be held on the Long Wharf campus in room 160 from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**March 10:** “Creating a Resume That Makes You Stand Out” will be held from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the North Haven campus in room 113-A.

**March 17:** “Creating a Resume That Makes You Stand Out” will be held on the Long Wharf campus in room 110 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

**March 29:** “Overcoming the Fear and Sealing the Deal” will be held on the Long Wharf campus in room 160 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

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**March 10-31: Counseling Student Support Workshops**

GCC’s Counseling Department is holding a number of student support workshops in March on our Long Wharf campus is room 113:

**March 10:** “Myers-Briggs Career/Personality Profile,” from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

**March 15:** “Relationships,” from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

**March 16:** “Stress and You,” from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

**March 31:** “Transfer Information,” from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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**March 30: Yale Trombone Quartet to perform**

The Yale Trombone Quartet will perform on our Long Wharf campus on Wednesday, March 30, as part of the new Yale Ensembles Lunchtime Concert Series, which is co-sponsored by the Esther Haseltine Schiavone Endowment for the Arts at GCC and the Office of College Life.

The concert will be in room 160 from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. The series will continue on April 14 with Chilled Water Supply and on May 2 with The Adelpha Quartet.

The Esther Haseltine Schiavone Endowment Fund was established in 2006 through the Gateway Community College Foundation by Schiavone’s daughter Jennifer Schiavone, who set up the endowment in her mother’s memory to help the arts programs put on at GCC by her longtime friend and author, GCC Professor Franz Douskey.
Through April 15: Free tax preparation for students

GCC students are once again being offered free, personal income tax preparation and electronic filing assistance on the Long Wharf campus, this year on Wednesdays and Saturdays from now through April 15.

This program was offered for the first time in 2010 on Saturdays only. Since then, the number of individuals participating has doubled, according to Dean of Academic Affairs Mark Kosinski.

The program will be held on Wednesdays from 7:15 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. (except on March 23 when it will not be offered) and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Long Wharf cafeteria. Students are asked to bring a government-issued ID, original Social Security card or ITIN for everyone being claimed, all income forms (W-2s, 1099s, other information), last year’s tax return if possible, a list of deductions (medical, donations, taxes, interest and miscellaneous expenses), and bank account information for Refund Direct Deposit by the IRS.

The program is made possible through a partnership that includes GCC, the IRS Stakeholder Relationship Division’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program and the New Life Corporation of New Haven. Due to program guidelines, the service is available to students only; it is not open to faculty or staff.

Faculty, Staff Highlights

Schnepf family art exhibit on display until March 31

A new exhibit, "Three Generations of Schnepf Art Works," is on display at The Gallery of Art at Gateway Community College through March 31.

The gallery, located in room 161 on our Long Wharf campus, is open Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

The exhibit includes works of art by GCC Professor Chester H.E. Schnepf, who is chairman of the college’s Humanities Department, as well as works by his father Carlton H. Schnepf, his uncle August C. Schnepf, and his son Chester G.C. Schnepf. Some of the paintings are historical family portraits, including a relative who served in the Civil War, a portrait of Professor Schnepf’s uncle who died when he was 9 and a portrait of Professor Schnepf’s sister that his father began as a chalk work before she was born.

“The visual arts have always played a significant part in my family's creative endeavors,” said Professor Schnepf. "Not all the Schnepfs are represented in this show, yet I hope there is enough variety of styles and themes to interest (visitors) in viewing their different work."

Professor Schnepf has been a painter of acrylics for more than 30 years. The painting
shown here was done by him. It is called “Three Women Talking.” He also is the author of “The Sadness in Pine Needles Falling” and “The Protagonist Dilemma in the Works of E.A. Poe & J.S. LeFanu” and his poetry has appeared over the years in numerous anthologies.

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**Step Forward director to present at DDS conference**

Jaime French, GCC’s Step Forward program director, will be presenting information about her program as part of *School Days to Pay Days,* an all-day training conference being held March 31 in Menden by the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

French said that in addition to describing the program, she will also outline GCC’s plans to expand it from a one-year program to a two-year program. Also, Paige LiBrandi, a current Step Forward student who is also a DDS consumer, will present at the event, French said. LiBrandi also does motivational and disability awareness presentations for GCC credit classes.

GCC began Step Forward in 2005. It is a non-credit transition program for young adults with learning challenges and barriers to employment and education. It is designed to prepare these students for the workforce and life after high school, which may include community college and other vocational training. The curriculum includes current events, character and financial education and an internship.

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**Adjunct’s son wins international guitar competition**

The 13-year-old son of GCC foreign language adjunct faculty member Olivier Blanchardon recently won one of the most prestigious prizes for young classical guitarists in America.

Ian Blanchardon won first place in the Columbus State University Guitar Competition, Division III, in Columbus, Georgia. The international classical guitar competition on Feb. 27 was open to participants worldwide up to age 14.

The son of French and Spanish parents, and a student at Roadside Academy in Middletown, Ian was raised along with his brother Donald in a tri-lingual household that places high value on achievement in the arts, as well as academics and athletics. In his free time, Ian enjoys fencing and video games.

His first guitar teacher was his mother Ana, who learned guitar as a girl from Spanish gypsies in Andalucia. Since 2005, Ian has also been a private student of GCC adjunct music lecturer and concert guitarist Daniel Corr, a Yale graduate who has also won international prizes for his playing.

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Student to carry CT flag at PTK convention

GCC student Ashley Blasczyk has been selected to carry the Connecticut flag at the Phi Theta Kappa honor society’s annual international convention, which will be held April 7-9 in Seattle.

The mission of the Phi Theta Kappa is to recognize and encourage the academic success of students attending two-year colleges. Members have the opportunity to participate in honors and leadership programs, community service and fellowship programming. Students who are inducted into GCC’s Alpha Xi Theta chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa have completed 12 hours of course work while achieving a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

American Water Works group for students launched

GCC recently formed a student chapter of the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the Connecticut section of the organization plans to establish a section of its web site where graduates of GCC’s Water Management Program can post their resumes for potential employers.

The Connecticut section of the AWWA recognized the formation of the student chapter on Feb. 23 by presenting students with a plaque at the section’s 2011 Annual Technical Conference and Vendor Exposition, held at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center in Cromwell, said Professor Wesley L. Winterbottom, manager of GCC’s Water Management Certificate Program, which trains students for careers in the drinking water supply industry.

Student Chapter Chair Allison Bellows will be establishing a website for the chapter that will include, among other items, information on internships available at Connecticut’s public and private water utilities.

Two field trips, one to the drinking water treatment facilities of the city of New Britain and a second to an environmental engineering consulting firm, are planned for the coming spring for students in this program, Winterbottom said.

In the photo, on Feb. 23, are: Allison Bellows, Student Chapter Chair (first row, left end), Jack Keefe, Vice-Chair of the Connecticut section of AWWA (front row, third from right), Professor of Science Wesley L. Winterbottom (first row, second from right), Marcie Munoz, AWWA National Director (first row, third from left), Pam Monahan, Connecticut section AWWA Executive Director (first row, right end) and members of GCC’s new student chapter of AWWA.

GCC Chorale performed March 6 in Old Saybrook
The GCC Chorale performed March 6 at the Katharine Hepburn Theatre in Old Saybrook with the Nutmeg Symphonic Pops Orchestra, at residence at Gateway Community College.

The chorale presented an original piece written by Franklin Roosevelt, entitled Prayer for Peace. David Sylvia was the soloist.

The Nutmeg Symphonic Pops Orchestra performed music from Tschaikowsky’s Nutcracker Suite and Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess. The 55 piece orchestra has been presenting concerts to communities statewide for more than 25 years.

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