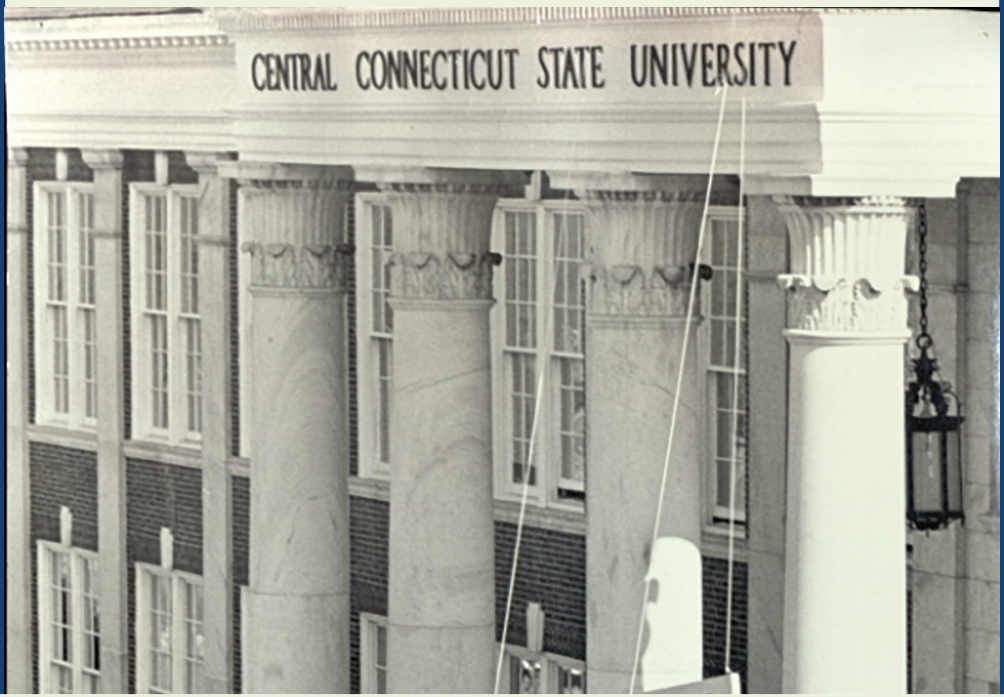
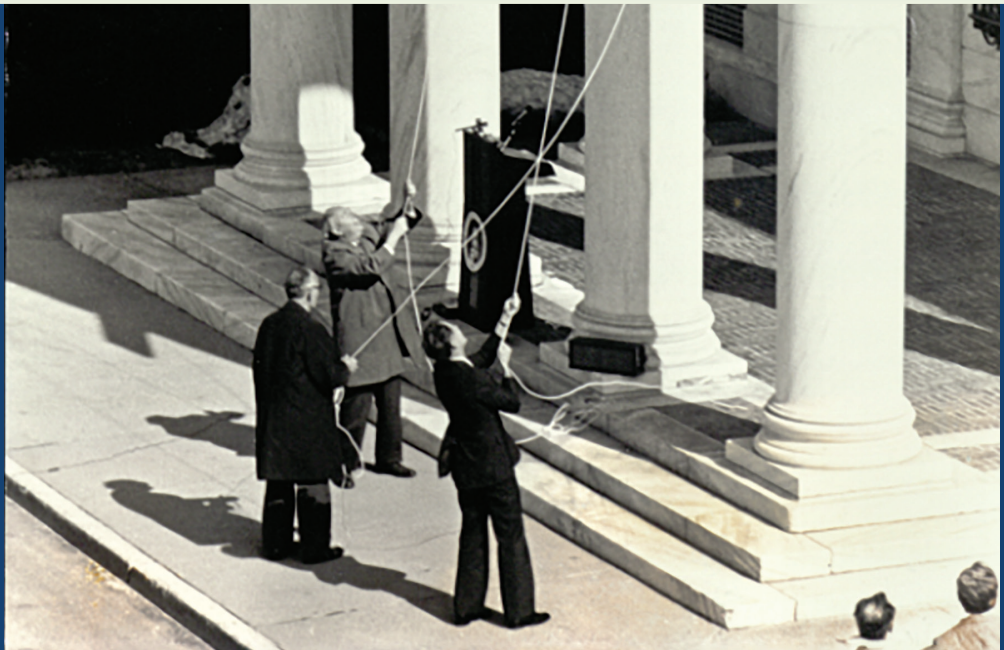


WE ARE CENTRAL:

FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY

An Interview with President F. Don James (1968-1987)
and President Richard L. Judd (1996-2004)

Matthew Warshauer



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DEDICATION

To Dick Judd — first my president, then a mentor, always a friend.

FOREWORD

In 2024, the first publicly funded institution of higher education in the Constitution State turns 175 years old. It is time to celebrate, reflect upon, and communicate how far Central Connecticut State University has come, the contributions it has made to the economic, cultural, and intellectual development of Connecticut, and the many, many lives it has transformed.

Central began as Connecticut's first and the country's sixth Normal School for educating teachers; it was located in downtown New Britain. Over the years, the Normal School became the Teachers College of Connecticut awarding the first bachelor's degrees. The institution was moved to its current location in 1922 and was renamed Central Connecticut State College in 1959. The College continued its development, and it became a regional university in 1983 when its name was changed to Central Connecticut State University.

Since its origins Central has been dedicated to educating the working class of Connecticut; making significant contributions to social mobility, and serving the state with the workforce and leaders responsible for elevating the standard of living that we all enjoy. In fact, 93 percent of Central's students come from Connecticut, 49 percent of the students are the first in their family to attend college, and 77 percent of the graduates stay in the state and contribute to the life of one of the nation's original thirteen colonies.

The impact of Central in the development of Connecticut goes well beyond the 121,059 degrees and certificates it has conferred for the last 175 years. The institution has been lending its resources and expertise to assist the communities we serve in the solution of their most pressing challenges. From establishing K-12 partnerships, supporting small and medium manufacturers, to building bridges and houses in the community, Central has been there.

While times change and new challenges present themselves, the commitment to educating our citizens and developing our communities continue to be "central" to our mission.

Central is a wonderful place. Where lives are transformed, careers flourish, and friendships are developed; where knowledge, service, and expertise are applied to create a happier and healthier future for our people. A place where those with the calling to educate can call home.

The pages of this book tell a part of Central's story. In 2012, History Professor Matt Warshauer, a 1990 Central alum, invited former President F. Don James (1968-1985) and former President Richard L. Judd (1995-2003) to come home and talk about their time at the university.

The conversation in which Don and Dick shared their memories and stories of the institution they love and care so much about happened over three days, three hours per day. It is evident that these two presidents led Central through changing and rough times, and they were committed to our students, faculty, staff, and the community of New Britain and beyond. Central was family to them.

From reading this interview I can conclude that my tenure as the 13th President of Central has many things in common with Don and Dick's presidencies. Many of the challenges Central faces today are like those they worked on. Furthermore, it heartens me to know that for the last 175 years the leaders of the institution have shared one goal; improving the lives of the people we served.

Central continues to be the place where individuals, so many of us immigrants, first in their families to attend college, come to find their passion, get an education to help their families, or become leaders in their fields and communities.

It is my sincere hope that you enjoy this fascinating conversation about Central's transformation from a normal school to a state college, to a nationally recognized university.

WE ARE CENTRAL: FROM COLLEGE TO UNIVERSITY

An Interview with President F. Don James (1968-1987) and President Richard L. Judd (1996-2004)

Wednesday, May 2, 2012

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Matt: My name is Matthew Warshauer. I'm a professor of History in the Central Connecticut State University History Department. I am also an alum of the university. I graduated from this institution in 1990. I am sitting here this morning on May 2nd with former President Dick Judd, who was president of the university from 1996 to 2004. I am also sitting here and very honored to introduce Dr. F. Don James who was president of Central Connecticut State College which then became Central Connecticut State University and served in the role of president from 1968 to 1987.

The focus of this oral interview is to talk about F. Don James' experiences as president of the university and to have a little bit of interaction and talk about the things that he achieved as president, the challenges that he had as president and primarily to leave an oral history for those who are interested in the history of the university so



F. Don James, Dick Judd, Matt Warshauer at their annual lunch in Boston, top of the Prudential Tower, 2018. Photo courtesy of Wanda Warshauer.

they can go back and take a look at what has been done and how the university has changed over the years.

As the oldest institution of higher education in the state, started as the New Britain Normal School in 1849, the university has changed and grown a lot over the last 150 years. It's a real pleasure to sit here with two former CCSU presidents, men who did a remarkable job at this institution and really changed it and brought it into the future to make it what it is today.

The focus of these interviews, we'll be doing three hours today which is Wednesday, three hours tomorrow Thursday, and three hours on Friday. My hope in doing all of this is so that posterity gets some use out of these recordings.

Matt: Good morning, Dr. Judd!

Dick: Good morning, Matt! It's also great to be here. There are few historic occasions which we all can celebrate as individuals during our