

# QUINEBAUG VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027





# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER WELCOME

Colleagues,

Informed by the completion of our self-study and based on the input of faculty, staff, students, and community, Quinebaug Valley Community College presents its strategic plan for 2022- 2027, outlining our goals and priorities for the next five years in alignment with the soon to be formed Connecticut State Community College (CSCC). This plan is bold and once implemented will position the college for a prosperous future.

Since our humble beginnings at Ellis Technical High School in 1971, to our current day sprawling campus in Danielson and our branch location in Willimantic, QVCC has been a staple in Windham County, advancing the economic trajectory of our students and their families by providing a comprehensive array of academic programs aligned to our regional labor market needs.

Our diverse study body have varied lived experiences. Many of our students are the first in their families to go to college and work full-time while going to school. Others have served our nation proudly as member of our military. Some are also raising their families or actively serving as caregivers. Our students come from a continuum of ages and life stages, from our high school partnership students-- to our traditional aged student, to the adult learner, to our senior citizens who are part of our Learning in Retirement(LiR) program. QVCC meets our learners where they are and provides them the resources and support to achieve their educational and career goals.

As we commence this plan, the college, our community, and nation are in the midst of significant transformation under the perfect storm of circumstance. The world is in the second year of an international health crisis with no quick end in sight. In light of the ongoing isolation and loneliness that accompanied the pandemic, we continue to face another epidemic around mental health and access to high quality care. According to a national study, one in five are suffering anxiety, depression, or another form of mental health issue.

The Northeastern region of the United States, including Windham County, Connecticut, continues to see a declining population, which began in 2011. A decade later, the region sees smaller numbers of students in the K-12 school system with an increasing percentage of ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse populations comprising the traditional higher education population pipeline.

The country is divided along political extremes. We are experiencing unprecedented labor and supply chain limitations. The great resignation has begun leaving many jobs regardless of required training and skill level unfilled. The labor shortage

coupled with the national shipping and trucking crises are resulting in historic levels of inflation and shortages on basic needs.

In the wake of several high-profile murders of black individuals and the wave of anti-Asian sentiment in the wake of COVID, a national spotlight was raised regarding systemic racial inequities and discrimination. People from all walks of life united nationally to bring attention to the need for change and a call for a laser focus on equity ensued.

Community colleges across the nation have seen a decade long decline in enrollment. At QVCC alone, we have seen our enrollment decline by fifty percent in the last decade. In the last three years, over 570 colleges and universities have closed their doors or merged as a result of declining enrollment and strained budgets. In fact, QVCC is in the midst of the planned merger of the 12 independent public community colleges of Connecticut into one singularly accredited institution of Connecticut State Community College scheduled for 2023.

With high levels of uncertainty, the onset of COVID, the mental health crisis, the move to more online operations, increasing racial tensions, and the constant hiring crisis in higher education, faculty and staff morale are at times challenged.

Our faculty, staff, and students are resilient. Our community is engaged and extremely supportive of the mission of our college and the need for our very existence. Throughout our history, we have benefited from the tremendous support and generosity of our Foundation and Regional Advisory Council. With this strategic plan, our college's future is bright and vibrant. We will emerge from the COVID pandemic and the merger to become part of the Connecticut State Community College, stronger and more able to provide the resources and support for our students to experience a premiere higher education.



Sincerely,  
*Karen Hynick, Ed.D.*  
QVCC Chief Executive Officer



# MISSION

## **CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES MISSION STATEMENT**

The Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU) contribute to the creation of knowledge and the economic growth of the state of Connecticut by providing affordable, innovative, and rigorous programs. Our learning environments transform students and facilitate an ever-increasing number of individuals to achieve their personal and career goals.

## **CT STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT**

As part of the Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (ConnSCU) system, the twelve Connecticut Community Colleges share a mission to make excellent higher education and lifelong learning affordable and accessible. Through unique and comprehensive degree and certificate programs, non-credit life-long learning opportunities and job skills training programs, they advance student aspirations to earn career-oriented degrees and certificates and to pursue their further education. Colleges nurture student learning and success to transform students and equip them to contribute to the economic, intellectual, civic, cultural, and social well-being of their communities. In doing so, the Colleges support the state, its businesses and other enterprises and its citizens with a skilled, well-trained, and educated workforce.

## **QUINEBAUG VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S MISSION STATEMENT**

Quinebaug Valley Community College provides exceptional opportunities for northeast Connecticut residents to learn in an affordable, challenging, and supportive environment that enables students to become fully engaged citizens in an ever-changing global community. QVCC believes education transforms lives.



# QVCC STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

To prepare for these significant shifts in the evolution of our college and ensure quality service to our students and our community, the following strategic goals and priorities have been identified to frame our anticipated focus areas in the next five years in alignment with the transition to the one college concept.

- **CULTIVATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF RESILIENCY IN THE MIDST OF CHANGE**
- **FOSTER ACADEMIC INNOVATION AND EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE TO OUR STUDENTS**
- **INVEST IN WILLIMANTIC**
- **EMBRACE EQUITY AND ANTIRACISM AS A FRAMEWORK AND CULTIVATE A SENSE OF BELONGING**
- **STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

# PRIORITY 1 CULTIVATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF RESILIENCY IN THE MIDST OF CHANGE

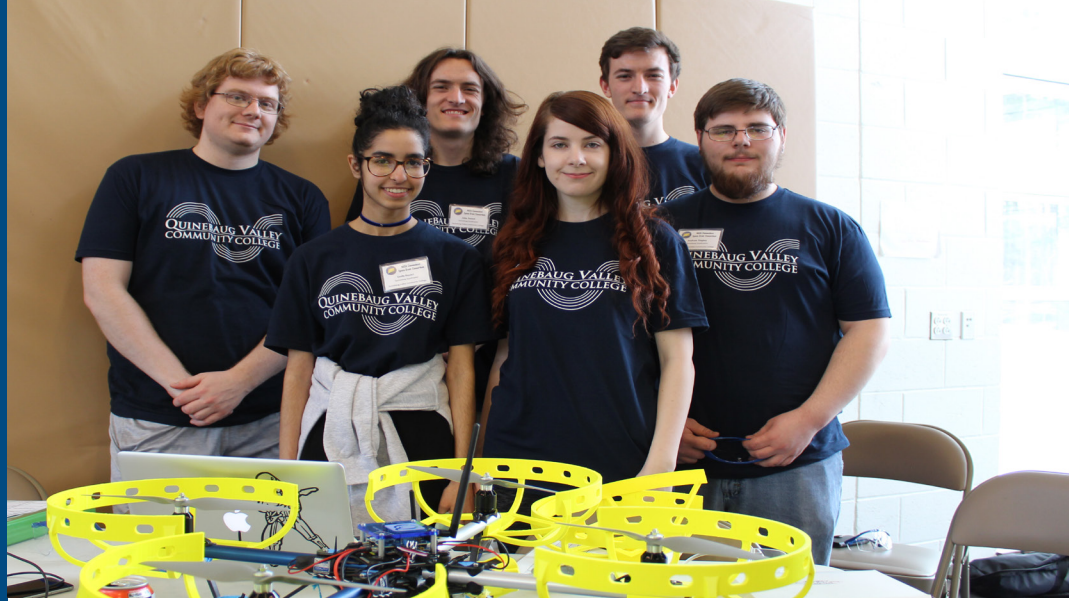


- Create clear communication, pathways, structures, and measurements of accountability as we actualize [Students First](#).
- Implement and proactively engage in the transition to Connecticut State Community College.
- Design ongoing feedback loops and input opportunities through re-imagined shared governance and formal/informal organizational structures.
- Recruit and retain talented and diverse students and employees.
- Promote opportunities for recognition, morale building, advancement, focus on wellness and professional development for all students and employees.
- Capitalize on opportunities to continue to define QVCC's culture by expanding partnerships to optimize the use of facilities and grow on site programming to enhance student and community engagement.
- Continue to monitor and adapt our college's response as needed in light of the COVID pandemic or future unforeseen variables.

## PRIORITY 1 METRICS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

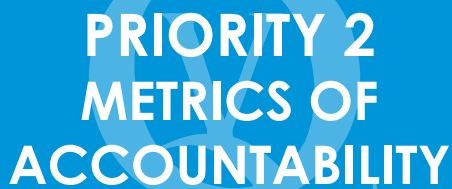
1. Continued growth and progress with each [Guided Pathway KPI metric](#) and each of the [seven equity pillars](#).
2. Meet the timeline associated with the transition to CSCC.
3. Demonstrate number and percentage of QVCC faculty/ staff who are on transition committees with CSCC.
4. At a minimum, maintain student enrollment at QVCC when we transition to CSCC.
5. Improved results of experience for students and staff through e once we transition to CSCC.
6. Implementation of a new shared governance model and updated organizational chart that reflects the matrixed organization.
7. Increase percent of diverse students and employees.
8. Increase retention rates of diverse student and employees, and overall increase retention rates of all students and employees.
9. Expand number of professional development opportunities for students and employees.
10. Higher number of and percentage of students and employees participating in expanded professional development and training.
11. Increase events of recognition, morale building and employees who are promoted.
12. Improve CCSSE and SENSE results of students and employee satisfaction.
13. Increase building use for community partnerships and on-site programming.
14. Explore feasibility of an Entrepreneurship Center at the Danielson campus.
15. Monitor COVID indicators including vaccination levels, attestation, and testing compliance and positivity levels.

## **PRIORITY 2 FOSTER ACADEMIC INNOVATION AND EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE TO OUR STUDENTS**



- **Align and develop new academic program offerings to mirror our regional labor market and transfer needs.**
- **Enhance our orientation processes for students and their families to ensure access to our academic and student support resources.**
- **Implement guided pathways, intentional advising, and expand academic and early alerts to increase retention and completion.**
- **Develop, scale, assess, and adjust flexible learning and course modalities while affirming and supporting face-to-face instruction to better meet the need of all learners.**
- **Strengthen the assessment of student learning outcomes for continuous improvement through academic and student services program review.**
- **Embed tutors into courses with high failure/high withdraw rates including Math pathway courses and librarians into gateway courses in English and First Year Experience to expand learning/information literacy.**
- **Create CSC 101 First Year Experience course and tie to majors in alignment with CSCU requirements and overtime contextual the course to majors and pathways.**
- **Enhance our physical footprint with development of our early childhood lab school and mechatronics programming.**
- **Secure federal, state, and philanthropic grant funding to promote innovation and best practice.**
- **Enhance and scale open education resources (OER), low-cost texts, course reserves, and free-to-student library e-resources.**





## PRIORITY 2 METRICS OF ACCOUNTABILITY


1. Align all QVCC programs to CSCC.
2. New or redesigned programs are launched in credit and non-credit in alignment to labor market needs including health, IT, and manufacturing sector.
3. Redesign orientation process is implemented, including training on Blackboard and online learning, fall to spring and spring to fall new student retention rates increase.
4. Increase retention rates, increase completion rates, increase number and percentage of students using guided pathway advising sessions, increase rates of students on early and academic alerts with higher levels of success and lower rates of probation and suspension.
5. Increase offerings of online modalities (online, hybrid, hyflex and LRON), increase student success in online modalities (online, hybrid, hyflex, and LRON), and increase and equivalent success rates in online modalities by ethnicity groups.
6. All programs and departments are part of a 5-year cycle of program review, additional trainings offered to faculty on student learning outcomes and assessment measurements, and student services departments also put on a 5-year cycle of review.
7. Increase student success rates in Math Pathway courses, English and First Year Experience and baseline data and metrics on student learning outcomes established for informational literacy outcome.
8. Increase retention and completion rates for students who took the CSC 101 course. Decrease changes to major for those who took CSC 101 course. Similar outcomes across KPI equity framework indicators.
9. Facilities upgrades occur related to the early childhood lab and mechatronics labs.
10. QVCC opens early childhood lab school, baseline data on number of students served, and impact on their retention, and completion rates is recorded and studied.
11. QVCC applies for and acquires additional federal, state, and philanthropic grants to expand programming and pilot best practice.
12. Increase the number and percentage of courses with OER, low cost or course reserves or free-to-student library e-resources.
13. Study the number of students impacted and quantify savings to students of implementing this goal.

## **PRIORITY 3 INVEST IN WILLIMANTIC**



- **Secure a more permanent facility in Willimantic.**
- **Identify complete programs that can be offered at the Willimantic site including aligned credit and non-credit offerings to high wage/high demand programs to position economic development in Willimantic.**
- **Create an Entrepreneurship Center to serve as an incubator for small businesses.**
- **Invest in and appropriately staff academic and student support services and infrastructure that meet the needs of our Willimantic population.**

1. A permanent location is secured for our Willimantic site and a facilities plan is created to identify needed repairs and renovation for ongoing and expanded programming.
2. An analysis is conducted to identify needed programming at the Willimantic campus in alignment to the regional labor market, culminating with a report that outlines next steps and future new programs to be offered in the space.
3. A space is identified in the permanent Willimantic location to house the Entrepreneurship Center.
4. The college establishes a partnership with the Eastern Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) and the Connecticut Small Business Association (SBA) to support the Entrepreneurship Center.
5. Staffing plan and schedule are developed for the Willimantic site, reviewed each semester, and adjusts based on enrollment and course offerings.
6. Student facing services and hours are communicated to the public via the website and other social media means.




## **PRIORITY 3 METRICS OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

**PRIORITY 4  
EMBRACE EQUITY  
AND ANTIRACISM  
AS A FRAMEWORK  
AND CULTIVATE  
A SENSE OF  
BELONGING**



- Analyze benchmarks and publish QVCC's Equity Audit Report.
- Develop proficiency among faculty and staff in tracking, disaggregating, and applying data findings in order to make data-informed decisions that close equity gaps.
- Enhance cultural awareness and recognition programming and events.
- Develop diversity/cultural competency-based coursework and build academic and student resources to support the curriculum.
- Participate in Leading for Change/ Race, Equity and Justice Institute (REJI) and Achieving the Dream Training (ATD).
- Foster opportunities to create stronger connections with and celebration of our Hispanic/ Latinx and other diverse populations.
- Explore opportunities to build international/ study abroad and regional student exchange experiences.
- Grow and emphasize Pledge to Advance Connecticut (PACT) free tuition program and full-time student enrollment to build retention and degree completion.



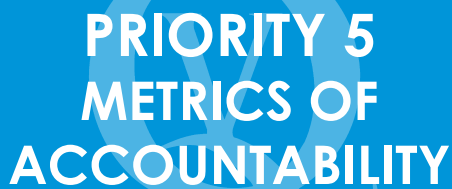
## PRIORITY 4 METRICS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

1. QVCC publishes an Equity Audit Report annually focused on the 7 equity pillars, KPI Equity Measures, and makes consistent improvement in each indicator annually.
2. All-Staff Meeting professional development trainings are offered on data informed decision making and analysis of equity gaps.
3. Faculty and staff survey is conducted and shows increased understanding of how to work with and analyze data.
4. Cultural Committee creates an annual cultural awareness and programming calendar of events, increase number of events, increase number and percentage of students and staff who participate in the programming.
5. Align curriculum to new CSCC diversity/cultural competencies for general education.
6. Identify courses that meet this requirement and additional Increase the number and percentage of staff who are trained by ATD and REJI and decrease rates of affirmative action cases.
7. Increase sense of belonging in SENSE and CCSSE in students and employees. Resources are purchased to support diversity in the curriculum.
8. Increase partnerships with Hispanic/ Latinx populations, increase enrollment, retention, and completion of Hispanic/ Latinx students.
9. Increase Hispanic cultural programming.
10. Create new bilingual programming focus in Willimantic.
11. Offer international and regional student exchange experiences, study the increase in student retention, and completion who experience one of these exchanges. Increase full-time enrollment numbers and percent.
12. Study the impact on degree completion.

**PRIORITY 5  
STRENGTHEN  
PARTNERSHIPS  
AND BUSINESS  
AND COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**



- Maximize dual and traditional enrollment and QVCC graduates (16–24-year-olds) through alignment of curriculum and programming with Quinebaug Middle College and area high schools.
- Grow the adult learner population (25–75-year-olds) through engagement and programming opportunities with local and regional business and industry, adult basic education, ESL, Brooklyn Correctional Institute (BCI), and non-credit programs.
- Engage the Regional Advisory Council, Chamber of Commerce, and EWIB in proactive listening sessions to identify emerging opportunities to collaborate and leverage resources to better meet business needs and strengthen connections with our local and regional employers.
- Strengthen articulation agreements with regional partners, Eastern Connecticut State University, University of Connecticut (UConn), and Nichols College.
- Expand prior learning assessments and recognition of the demonstration of competency to coordinate partnerships with area businesses and Eastern Workforce Investment Board including expanded internships/externships and field experiences.



## PRIORITY 5 METRICS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Increase the number and percentage of students enrolled in high school partnerships, increase the student success and retention rates of these students, study their rates of high school graduation and matriculation to QVCC, and see incremental growth in these areas.
2. Increase the number and percent of adult learners enrolled at QVCC, increase their retention, and complete rates.
3. Increase course offerings and enrollment at BCI and study their retention and completion rates.
4. Host three listening sessions with a focus in the following sectors: health care, information technology, and manufacturing to learn how the college can better support the needs of local business and industry.
5. Conduct a survey of local business and industry to learn their thoughts on how the college could better support their needs.
6. Measure the baseline data of students who are benefiting from our existing articulation agreements, meet with senior leaders at each institution and identify areas of potential expanded collaboration and create next steps.
7. Review the process for awarding credit for prior learning through local and state curriculum boards and expand opportunities with non-credit and national technical attainment measures to be awarded credit equivalencies.
8. Code students who acquire credit for prior learning to study rates of retention and degree completion.

# CT STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE EQUITY DEFINITION, STATEMENT, AND PILLARS

## DEFINITION

Equity is the removal and reduction of barriers that negatively impact student success within structures, policies and practices and ensuring that students receive targeted resources and supports to achieve their academic, professional, and personal goals. Equity is achieved by identifying and intentionally addressing structural racism, systemic poverty and other forms of marginalization, upholding the expectation that administrators, faculty and staff act as anti-racist institutional change agents.

## STATEMENT & PILLARS

CT State Community College commits to bold and disruptive change by actively:

- identifying, naming, and dismantling structural racism, systemic poverty, and other barriers;
- establishing equitable and anti-racist policies and practices; and
- empowering students, faculty, staff, and administrators to advance racial, social, and economic justice.

Our core collective responsibility is to continuously assess practices and policies and transform the world we live in by eliminating inequities. The strategy we use to galvanize our dedication to our community's success has seven pillars:

### Recruitment, Hiring, and Talent Development

We recruit and enlist talent to our teams whose passion, talent, energy, and diverse experiences are beneficial to the work and lives of our students, faculty, staff, and administrators. We invest system-wide fiscal, institutional, and personnel resources in professional learning programming and opportunities by and for administrators, faculty, and staff to develop and support equity-minded practice competencies that are job-embedded, tied to performance evaluations, and sustainable.

### Collective Leadership

Our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, parity, and student success spans across our campuses and throughout our classrooms, offices, cabinets, and boards. We actively and collaboratively work in pursuit of a just and equitable world. We further demonstrate our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) by upholding equity-minded practices in every aspect of our policy and curriculum design and implementation, management, business processes, and daily interactions with all community members.





## Community

We hold a public commitment and invitation for accountability to ensure our programs, certificates, services, and offerings allow the communities we serve to flourish.

## Cultural Competence

We invest in professional learning opportunities that build upon each campus community member's cultural competence, one's ability to respectfully engage with individuals whose backgrounds and beliefs are different than ours. This requires strengthening culturally affirming awareness of self and reflection on social position, privilege, power, (dis)advantages while seeking out the perspective of others to increase our sound decision-making ability that recognizes the strength of diversity, reduces traditional exclusionary practices, and propels us toward an environment of inclusion.

## Innovation

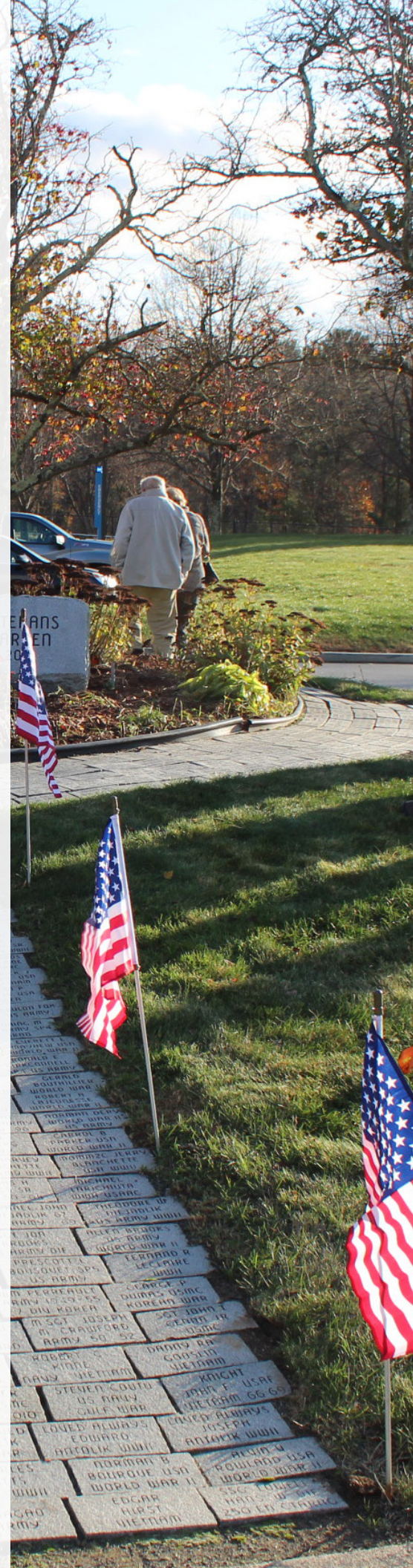
We drive disruptive innovation that creates an intentional culture and climate where the impact of policies, procedures, and practices are continuously assessed by dis-aggregated data trends and holistic student success indicators. The findings from these assessments inform our choices and actions at every level of campus operations and services.

## Advocacy

We advocate for the interruption of practices that hinder equitable and inclusive opportunities, by leveraging our powerful position as one community college in CT to identify and address the extreme economic, health, and educational disparities that impede our students' success. We demand movement on policy that increases financial and educational resources that meet our students' holistic needs by using our platforms and voices to sponsor legislation, champion community action, and lead institutional efforts to achieve systemic equality.

## Assessment and Reflection

We engage in continuous robust personal, departmental, and institutional assessment and reflection to ensure that all established policies and practices are anti-racist, close existing equity gaps, and support social mobility by making disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data, as well as key performance indicators, accessible and actionable to all to improve student outcomes particularly for low-income and racially minoritized populations.





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729 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226

Quinebaug Valley Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex (including pregnancy, workplace hazards to reproductive systems, or sexual harassment), national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, intellectual disability, learning disability, or physical disability, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment based on veteran status or criminal record.