



Changing Lives



**Western Connecticut
State University**

**President's Annual Report
2004-2005**

Changing Lives

GLIMPSES



Ed.D. student Frank LaBanca has won so many educator awards, he has to stop and think when asked to list them all. The Newtown High School science teacher has been named Connecticut's 2005 Teacher of the Year by the Teachers' Insurance Plan. He's been named the 2000 Radio Shark National Teacher for Science, Math and Technology. LaBanca is a finalist for Outstanding Biology Teacher in Connecticut, a finalist for the Connecticut Education Association Teacher of the Year, and he's on the Subaru Teaching Honor Roll. He's a 1999 GTE Growth Initiatives for Teacher Fellowship winner, and the recipient of a Best Buy teach grant and a National Education Association Innovation grant. In 2008, LaBanca will hold one of the first doctorates from WestConn when the initial cohort of students enrolled in WestConn's first doctoral program, the Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership, complete their studies. "WestConn is offering a very unique program — one designed for instructors, not administrators," LaBanca said. "The majority of my fellow students are classroom teachers, and I'm so impressed with the caliber of student. It's amazing to work with some of the best teachers in the region, and we'll take what we learn back to the local community."

The day after returning from a conference in Orlando, Fla., where she was named the 2005 Secondary School Counselor of the Year, Ed.D. student Deborah Hardy was back as chair of the guidance department at Irvington High School in Irvington, N.Y. "Once I considered school counseling as a career, I began a 'crusade' to help the unimpaired population of kids who don't speak English and don't understand the American educational system," she said. Fluent in five languages, Hardy is a bilingual, bi-cultural school counselor who has obtained master's degrees in counseling and development, and in instructional leadership. She's served as president of the New York State School Counselor Association and co-authored the New York State Comprehensive Program for School Counselors. Hardy is the first — and only — school counselor enrolled in WestConn's Ed.D. program. "The reality is that we all are instructional leaders, one way or another," she said. "Using an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach, we need to better understand, and get a holistic profile, of each student. By bringing the educational piece and the counseling piece together, we can find a more powerful way to educate children."

**Division of Graduate Studies
and External Programs**