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## **Naugatuck Valley Community College Earns Eligible Institution Status to Expand Opportunities for Hispanic Students**

**WATERBURY, Conn.** – Naugatuck Valley Community College has been designated an Eligible Institution by the U.S. Department of Education under Titles III and V of the Higher Education Act of 1965. This distinction allows the College to pursue grants under the Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Program to expand educational opportunities for, and improve the attainment of, Hispanic students through enhanced academic offerings. The HSI Program seeks to help large numbers of Hispanic students complete postsecondary degrees.

“This designation belongs to the greater Waterbury and Danbury areas,” said NVCC President Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D. “It is yet another affirmation of our commitment to mission and that we are your community college.”

Hispanic student enrollment at NVCC has increased 36 percent over the last five academic years. For the 2014-15 year, 1,790 students—a quarter of total enrollment—self-identified as Hispanic.

“This is a testimony to NVCC’s commitment to serve one of the fastest-growing groups in Connecticut, Latino students,” said Dr. Estela R. Lopez, Interim Provost at the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education. “NVCC continues to demonstrate its commitment to provide access, serve the community and be an inclusive environment for all students. We are very proud of NVCC.”

NVCC joins only a handful of colleges in Connecticut to be granted Eligible Institution status. It is the only institution with the designation in the College’s 22-town service region.

“This is certainly welcome news for Waterbury, where roughly half of our public school students come from a Hispanic or Latin culture, more than 30 percent of our residents identify as Hispanic and about 11 percent of our businesses are Hispanic-owned,” said Waterbury Mayor Neil M. O’Leary, who chairs NVCC’s Regional Advisory Council. “We’re proud of our City’s rich cultural heritage and we’re pleased that NVCC has received this designation.”

The Eligible Institution designation enables the College to apply for grants to fund a variety of educational materials and endeavors including scientific or laboratory equipment for teaching; construction or renovation of instructional facilities; faculty development; academic tutoring or counseling programs; funds and administrative management; joint use of facilities; endowment funds; distance learning academic instruction; teacher education; and student support services.

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*Naugatuck Valley Community College serves Beacon Falls, Bethel, Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Cheshire, Danbury, Middlebury, Naugatuck, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Oxford, Prospect, Roxbury, Sherman, Southbury, Thomaston, Washington, Waterbury, Watertown and Woodbury. The College is located on a 110-acre campus at 750 Chase Parkway, Waterbury, Conn., and in Danbury at 183 Main Street. The College is one of 17 institutions governed by the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education. Visit [nv.edu](http://nv.edu) for more information.*