Ethan Napolitano
Northwestern Connecticut Community College
Resident of Torrington

Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Ethan Napolitano. I am a student from Northwestern Connecticut Community College, and resident of Torrington Connecticut.

I grew up in Litchfield Connecticut, my family was not wealthy, and I had ten bothers and sisters, so it was not feasible to have a large college fund. I as well as my siblings had a home school education, and my parents gave us the best that they could.

For my early years, my sister Jesicha took it upon herself to be my mentor. She gave me the skills to pursue my ambitions, and her value for school and learning is a quality that I inherited and hold to this day. She will unfortunately never know the heights that I carry her guidance, as she passed away in 2011.

For people like me, the only suitable option is a Connecticut Community College. The cost is reasonable enough to remain accessible even to the financially burdened such as myself, and the courses are flexible enough for me to maintain work commitments.

In my time at Northwestern, I have worked as a valet near Bradley Airport, and I would regularly start work at 4 am, and had a 45-minute commute. I understand what it's like to manage a difficult schedule

I became an active member of Student Government, and was elected President and awarded the 2014 Student of the Year. I was an active member of 2 other clubs on campus as well.

I was given an exceptional education at Northwestern with the faculty there providing the support and guidance for me to find my love for behavioral psychology. The tutoring staff is fantastic. I know that the faculty cares about me, and I reciprocate that sentiment. Most of them serve multiple roles, so that the school can continue to provide essential services, such as advising. Past cuts I have experienced, reduced library hours and part time faculty, which has strained the resources needed to maintain a quality education. Through dedication, and even sometimes giving their personal time, the faculty at Northwestern have been able to serve students well, but there is simply nothing left to cut at Northwestern, and raising tuition would put costs out of reach for people most in need.

I feel well prepared, as I will be applying to colleges before my graduation this May.
I would not be where I am today, without a Community College, and I fear that the access to that opportunity, that I once cherished, is fading away for future generations. I hope that you keep this in mind when making your decisions on the budget for higher education,

Thank you for your time.