CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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‘We Live Here/New London’ brings housing history, public art and community dialogue to downtown New London

Free exhibition opens Sept. 25 at The Garde Gallery; public StreetLight event set for Sept. 24

NEW LONDON, Conn. — Connecticut College and the Housing Collective’s Center for Housing Opportunity Eastern Connecticut will open We Live Here/New London, a free public exhibition that traces a century of residential life in the greater New London area and places local housing history in a broader state and national context.

The exhibition opens to the public Sept. 25 and runs through Dec. 18 at The Garde Gallery, 305 State St. Admission is free.

We Live Here/New London looks at housing as the framework of community life. Through historical images, photography, architectural designs, resident testimony and interactive displays, the exhibit examines how communities have lived, how housing has shaped daily life and how New London’s history connects to larger questions of housing access and security.

“Housing is often discussed through numbers, policies and cost, but it is also about memory, design, daily life and belonging,” said Anna Vallye, exhibit curator and associate professor of art history and architectural studies at Connecticut College. “This exhibition brings those pieces together and invites people to look at New London’s housing history as part of a much larger national story.”

The exhibition includes a detailed visual timeline of the past century of housing in New London and the nation; resident portraits; recorded video interviews with local residents, building professionals and business owners; data visualizations and other graphics; a map display of notable historical and contemporary residential architecture; and architectural proposals for future living in the New London area, envisioned by graduate students at the Yale School of Architecture.

The physical exhibition will be accompanied by a website and digital publication featuring expanded display content, commissioned essays, more than 20 studies of New London residential history and buildings written by Connecticut College students, and additional educational materials.

The project includes contributions from Connecticut College students, alumni and multiple Connecticut College faculty and staff members.

“New London has always been a small city made up of different people, different neighborhoods, and different housing stories. We Live Here gives us a chance to listen to those stories and ask important questions about who can live here, who can stay here and what we want this community to look like in the future," said Beth Sabilia, Director of the Housing Collective's Center for Housing Opportunity Eastern Connecticut. "The partnership between Connecticut College, the community, and the Center for Housing Opportunity Eastern Connecticut makes that conversation richer by bringing together both learning and lived experience."

The exhibition opening will be celebrated Thursday, Sept. 24, with StreetLight, a free public outdoor moving image projection and music event from 7 to 9 p.m. outside the Garde Arts Center and The Garde Gallery, 305-325 State St., New London.

StreetLight will animate the facade of the Garde Arts Center with a real-time moving image and sound collage incorporating original artwork, historical photography, music and video. The event will feature Brisa Azul, a Connecticut College student band.

We Live Here/New London will also include public events, community engagement workshops and exhibition tours at The Garde Gallery, Connecticut College and other downtown New London locations. Program partners include the Garde Arts Center, The Day, New London Landmarks, the Southeastern Connecticut Community Land Trust, the Connecticut Tenants Union, the New England chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians and other institutions.

We Live Here/New London is part of A Right to Housing: Case Study Connecticut Project, funded by the Mellon Foundation. The three-year public scholarship project is directed by Vallye and is a collaboration between Connecticut College and the Center for Housing Opportunity Eastern Connecticut. It aims to build a platform for public research and dialogue around housing access and security through a regional lens on national housing challenges.

The exhibition research associate is Daniela Sheinin, executive director of the Urban History Association. Identity, exhibition graphics, data visualization, and website design and development are by Aarya Kini, Chase Booker, Greg Mihalko and Matt Khinda of Partner & Partners. Exhibit design is by Jessica Chen, Polo Dong, Deirdre McDermott and Nicholas McDermott of Future Expansion Architects.

The exhibit is sponsored by A/Z Corporation. Special thanks to the Garde Arts Center.

The exhibit will be open Tuesdays through Fridays from 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from noon to 4 p.m. It will be closed Nov. 24-28 for Thanksgiving week.

For more information, visit welivehere.site.

For interview requests, contact Christina Flowers, director of media relations, Connecticut College, at cflowers@conncoll.edu.

Photography by Sean Elliot, Connecticut College.

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About Connecticut College

Founded in 1911, Connecticut College is a premier private liberal arts institution of 2,000 students located on a 750-acre arboretum campus in New London along the Thames River. The College's mission is to educate students to put the liberal arts into action as citizens of a global society.

Through an innovative four-year curriculum called Connections, students combine theory and practice to integrate every aspect of their experience — from classes and research to internships and studies abroad — in preparation for meaningful careers that contribute to the public good. For more information, see www.conncoll.edu or find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

WE LIVE HERE

We are 28,000 people.

We descend from sailors, merchants, ship-builders, soldiers, farmers. We are newcomers. A fifth of us are foreign-born. About half of us are under 30.

We build machines, we tame the wind for offshore energy, we teach and study, we ailing. We watch the sea.

we are America. We live want to live together?

sidential life in New London in tion. Shelter is at the heart of health, family, good education, ion in civic life. Today, more and to find homes that meet their needs. bility challenges are not new and must tion. The history of dwelling is our social how our communities have lived up better in the future.

Our homes do not fit our lives

More than half of US households today—and nearly three quarters of New London households—are composed of one or two people. But homes with one bedroom or less compose just 13% of US housing stock—14% in the New London metro area. We are a nation of too big houses.

HOUSING TYPES

THE STATE OF HOUSING

New London

NEW LONDON

WHERE IS HOME?

ADES OF
VE THINKING

1975

BOOM
& BUST

1992

2006

2025

1960

PRODUCTION

Connecticut

Gentrification & Displacement Categories

1860

REGULATION & REFORM

1914

THE STATE TAKES THE HELM

This timeline of events in the history of housing is organized in three sections. The NATIONAL band follows significant events, policies, legislation, and trends nationwide. The LOCAL band focuses on New London and Connecticut. The CONNECTIONS band highlights moments when national developments resonate locally.

Names of private individuals have been omitted to protect their privacy.

NATIONAL

1920

② WHAT IF...

③ WHAT IF...

vulnerable low-lying land became a walkable, flood resilient neighborhood of homes and small businesses?

④ WHAT IF...

small-scale maritime craft production using local resources supported a different way of building homes, community, and business?

⑤ WHAT