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What's News At Rhode Island College

Rhode Island College

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RIC’s 2006 Commencements May 18, 20 –
1,500 to receive degrees at ceremonies this month; six honorary doctorates to be conferred

RIC, the state’s oldest public institution of higher learning, now in its 152nd year, will award six honorary degrees, and confer more than 1,500 advanced and undergraduate degrees during upcoming commencement exercises.

Rhode Island College will celebrate the graduation season with ceremonies for advanced degrees on May 18 and undergraduate degrees on May 20. Six honorary degrees and over 1,500 advanced and undergraduate degrees will be awarded.

Advanced degree commencement will be held on Thursday, May 18 at 5:30 p.m. in the Murray Center. Honorary degree recipients are Stanley Maynard Aronson, M.D., founding dean of the Brown Medical School, who will be given a doctor of human letters and deliver the advanced degree commencement address; activist, labor leader, former state representative, and one of World War II’s Tuskegee Airmen, George S. Lima, will receive a doctor of public service degree; Diane Postoian, well-known performer, arts educator and once a driving force of the Looking Glass Theatre, will be awarded a doctor of fine arts degree.

Undergraduate commencement will take place on Saturday, May 20 at 9:30 a.m. on the College’s esplanade. (If inclement weather, it will be moved indoors to the Murray Center). Honorary degree conferrals will go to Marian Wright Edelman, advocate for disadvantaged Americans and founder of the Children’s Defense League, who will receive a doctor of laws degree and will also present the undergraduate commencement address; educational leader and one of the founders of RIC’s Upward Bound program, Raymond Warren Houghton, will receive a doctor of humanities; and Anne M. Sliney, nursing specialist for the Clinton HIV/AIDS initiative, is to be granted a doctor of science degree.

Members of the class of 1956 will celebrate their golden anniversary at commencement, leading the graduation procession. Representatives from each graduating class of the College from
Thanks to the Shinn Study Abroad program I was given the opportunity to pursue an academic year of study in Hungary at the Zoltán Kodály Institute of Music. At age 21, I had never been abroad and suddenly found myself immersed in the richness of an international school (where I was the only American). The benefits from this opportunity were multi-fold. The rigorous schedule and superior level of instruction enhanced my musical and academic development, and the exposure to the diverse cultures, languages, and traditions of my peers evoked a curiosity to learn more about other countries and people. As a small community of students, we shared holidays, traditional meals, folk songs, laughs, and stories. This camaraderie was one of the most enriching aspects of the study abroad experience, and one that I had not expected.

While living in Europe I discovered that my limited foreign language skills placed me in the minority, since I was the only person at the Kodály Institute who did not speak a second language. Upon my return to the United States I worked, saved, and planned for my next journey. Within two years I enrolled in a full-immersion Italian course in Florence, where I lived for the next 18 months. After gaining fluency in the language, I was able to serve as assistant conductor to Animae Voci, a Florentine choir. What an incredible opportunity – to be able to instruct a group in their native language! It was my schooling and experiences in Hungary that made this international opportunity possible.

Currently I am a master of music candidate in choral conducting at Boston University. Through the rigorous schedule and experiences in Hungary, I was able to study abroad, and the experience has profoundly affected my professional and personal life. By hearing some of Europe’s finest choirs, I now have a standard of choral singing against which I measure every ensemble I deal with today. Whether I am conducting a university choir or a group of children, I consistently draw upon the methods and techniques I learned at the Kodály Institute and from my international peers. I am grateful to Dr. and Mrs. Shinn, the committee, and the generous contributors for making the experience possible.
Tourette Syndrome doesn’t stop RIC student

By Jane Fusco
What’s News Editor

When Alicia Vanasse walks into a crowded room, she’s not concerned about finding a seat. At a restaurant, her food choice is secondary. Going to a movie takes much more consideration than what to see. And attending class for this RIC junior isn’t just about getting good grades.

What worries her most in any situation is the uncontrollable, high pitched squeaking sound that she might make at any time, and how those around her will react to it.

Vanasse suffers from Tourette Syndrome, a neurological condition that causes an afflicted person to emit shrill vocal noises (called tics) without warning, and sets off involuntary muscular movements or twitches.

Vanasse was 13 years old when she was diagnosed with Tourette’s. Doctors believe it was the result of a throat infection that spread to her brain. There is no known cure.

“It changed my life and my family’s life,” she said.

School was especially difficult for Vanasse. Her absenteeism was longer than most, majoring in college education, taking a little twitching.

Today, she follows an advanced form of therapy and medication that helps minimize the tics and twitches. And she is pursuing a college education, taking a little more consideration than what to see. And attending class for this RIC junior isn’t just about getting good grades.

Vanasse now tells her professors and classmates about her condition at the start of the semester. She said she has found that after a while, her classmates forget she has the condition.

“It becomes easier when people understand,” she said.

Valerie Endress, assistant professor of communications, has been a mentor and an occasional campus intermediary for Vanasse. Endress has urged Vanasse to become involved with campus activities such as the American Democracy Project and last year’s Congress to Campus program at RIC. Vanasse had former members of congress for a three-day visit. Vanasse is also a participant in this year’s Emerging Leaders program, the student component of the statewide Leadership Rhode Island program that cultivates community leaders.

In addition, she is a consultant for a national organization for Tourette’s, often speaking about the condition and helping fellow sufferers with their plight. And she coaches a softball team.

“It’s easy to understand why Alicia was chosen to represent RIC in Leadership Rhode Island. For those who are curious, it might help to know that it takes only a few moments to look beyond the tics and to see her extraordinary talent,” Endress said.

Ann Roccio ’79, the campus coordinator for students with disabilities, helps Vanasse with course selection and placement, and said she is a determined and an enthusiastic student who tries 150 percent.

“Initially, her friends stuck by her even when she was asked to leave stores, restaurants or theaters when the ticking got loud.

“I finally found a place [at RIC] that I felt comfortable,” she said. “I’m accepted here, a part of things and not shunned. I’m encouraged and I’m pushed.”

Vanasse now tells her professors and classmates about her condition at the start of the semester. She said she has found that after a while, her classmates forget she has the condition.

“She apologizes a lot. I tell her she doesn’t have to, that she isn’t any different than anyone else, and to have confidence in her abilities,” Passarelli said.

Vanasse admits that her confidence wanes at times, especially when she’s highly stressed and has to carefully divide her time not to overtax herself. Mornings are better for her to take classes. Some mornings are not good at all. She must avoid coffee, chocolate, flashing lights and other forms of quick stimuli or she will tic and twitch excessively. The change of seasons in March throws off her body chemistry.

She has had several challenges dealing with law enforcement officers who thought her blinking eyes, twitching and excessive energy were caused by stimulant drugs. All are symptoms of Tourette’s.

Vanasse said that movie and TV portrayals of people with Tourettes jerking and cursing rampantly are not accurate and have greatly damaged the image of Tourette’s sufferers.

Through it all, her disability has been a learning experience more about other people rather than herself, she said.

“It’s almost like having radar. People’s instant reactions are their true feelings,” she said.

But, she is driven, and her condition drives her to do and want more for herself.

“Sometimes, she opts for vanilla shakes instead of her favorite, chocolate, and soft, relaxing music to help her cope. She is completely focused on her courses, activities and something else that she hopes to do after college – create a Miracle League slow pitch baseball club for children with disabilities.

More so, she doesn’t want sympathy or special treatment, she wants to be known for her caring attitude and accomplishments and not because she has Tourette’s.

“Just because you have a disability, you’re still a real person,” she said.

She said that she will endure no matter how difficult it gets. “When I have bad times, it makes the good times better,” she added.

Those who know her best know that she has her condition under control and she will persevere.

“This young woman is destined to become one of our most distinguished alums,” Endress said.

Open Books –
Open Minds

The Common Book Project

AUTHOR! AUTHOR! (and dare we say, stand-up comic) Lynda Barry entertains the audience with stories, gestures and the rare ability to sing with her mouth closed (above) during An Evening with Lynda Barry April 5 in Sapinsley Hall in the Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts. Barry’s book The Good Times Are Killing Me was the focus of the spring “Open Books-Open Minds” project at the College.
As we prepare for the end of the academic year and look forward to a new one, the nominating committee of the Alumni Association’s board of directors has prepared a slate of officers and directors for 2006-08. According to our by-laws “by May 15, the director shall notify all active alumni of the proposed slate, at-large nominees, and the date, time and location of the June board meeting. Election of officers and directors shall take place at the June (21) board meeting.”

**Officers for 2006-2008**

- **President** – Ellen Kitchell ’81
- **Vice President** – Vic Ventura ’71
- **Treasurer** – Bill Fazioli ’86
- **Secretary** – Jason Anthony ’99
- **Past President** – Marianne Needham ’59

**Terms to expire in June 2008**

- Kathleen Swann ’79
- Maggie Dooley ’76
- Erin O’Gara ’90
- Ann Ganz-Teixeira ’82
- Kathy Sasso ’69
- Brian Majeau ’02

**At-Large position, one year**

- Joe Roch ’90
- Bernie Treml ’93

**Reunion time**

- **May 18-20** – Class of 1956
- **May 25** – Classes 1924-1938
- **May 31** – Class of 1941
- **June 1** – Class of 1951
- **June 6** – Class of 1945
- **June 7** – Class of 1946
- **June 9** – Class of 1940

**Reunion Committees**

Are you a member of the Class of 1961 or 1966 and interested in planning a class reunion during homecoming weekend on Sept. 29 and 30? Please call Shana Murrell in the Alumni Office or email alumni@ric.edu.

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**FUNDRAISING HONOR:** Peg Brown, RIC vice president for development and college relations, was chosen Outstanding Fundraising Professional of the Year by the Rhode Island Chapter of the Association for Fundraising Professionals (AFP). She was selected for her contributions to the profession and the Rhode Island community. Brown was honored at a special luncheon at the AFP conference on May 12 at the Rhode Island Convention Center.

**ESTATE PLANNING** was the topic of a workshop April 26 in Alger Hall 110. Above, David Prentiss, a Massachusetts attorney and adjunct professor in the School of Management, tells the audience (right) about revocable trusts. The workshop was sponsored by the Alumni Association and the RIC Foundation.

**The Young Alumni Group**

welcomes you to

“The Next Career Move – Job Transitions for the Recent College Graduate”

Tuesday, May 23
Helen Forman Theatre
6-8 p.m.

This presentation is for recent college graduates seeking their first professional job, and those looking for promotions, or to switch careers.

Presented by Ellen Weaver Paquette ’76, CAGS ’88, principal, Developpe, LLC, and Sharon Mayeck ’74, M ’91, interim director, Career Development Center.

Reception and hors d’oeuvres will follow the presentation. Although there is no cost for this event, for planning purposes we ask you to pre-register.

Sponsored by the Young Alumni Group, the event is also open to all alumni, faculty and staff. If you have any questions, please contact Shana Murrell at 401-456-9625 or email alumni@ric.edu.

**BIG APPLE RECEPTION:** RIC President John Nazarian (front center) and representatives of the Alumni Office visit with RIC grads in New York City. Alumni from 1951-2004 attended the bi-annual RIC on the Road event, held in April at the Roosevelt Hotel. Bill Hutchinson, professor emeritus of theatre, and wife Jeri McElroy, made the trip to catch up with former students.
Thank you, phonathon student callers

Despite juggling studies, part-time jobs, and student activities, eight RIC students showed up faithfully to phone alumni and raise an overall total of $85,000 in pledges this year.

Our thanks to Erin Clements, Juliet Fowler, Bibilola Holder, Michelle Liese, Sarah Rochon, Jessica Scott, Amy Shield, and Sarah Voccio.

Our 2005-2006 Annual Fund campaign is wrapping up and depends on pho- nathon donations.

Last year, the Annual Fund provided $100,000 in scholar- ship aid to 120 qualified students as well as funding for faculty research projects and alumni-related pro- grams like homecoming, the alumni awards, class reunions, and the Alumni Magazine.

If you haven't yet done so, please fulfill your pho- nathon pledge – send your donation today. The Alumni Association needs your help to continue providing scholar- ships and alumni pro- grams.

For further information or to make a donation, call Nancy Hongrissan at 401-456-8827 or give conve- niently online at www.ric.edu/givenow.

The fiscal year ends June 30.

RIC alumni publish memoir, science fiction novel

By Lauren Mesale ’06

Staff Writer

Mary Ellen Sinclair ’78, and Christine Major-DePetrillo ’97, M ’04, have something in common. They each have recently made their mark on the literary world. Sinclair has published Why the Plum for Courage (a memoir) and DePetrillo has co-authored Hybrid Seed (a sci- ence fiction novel).

Sinclair’s book, Why the Plum for Courage, takes place over a num- ber of years, beginning in Rhode Island in the 1950s and end- ing in New York City where she currently resides. Why the Plum for Courage follows Sinclair from childhood to adulthood as she finds the strength to overcome the obstacles life places before her. Making it through family crises and deaths, and moving out of state to follow her dreams, shows readers just how much courage Sinclair really has.

The novel also offers a take on the history of Rhode Island, as it references places like Roger Wil- liams Park Zoo and Rhode Island College.

Sinclair said that like My Enemy, Myself, a book written by RIC alumna Meri R. Kennedy ’85, Why the Plum for Courage addresses the issue of sexual abuse. Kennedy was abused by her oldest brother; Sin- clair by her father. Perhaps some readers who may identify with Sinclair’s ordeal will be able to help themselves just as she did.

“I know that it [the book] can help a lot of people,” said Sinclair. Major-DePetrillo’s work does not have a connection to Rhode Is- land – Hybrid Seed is science fic- tion novel for adults. The back cover of Hybrid Seed reads: “[E]xiled to the Mars Penal Colony for thirty years, Shikari Hawks emerges four years later as a Ter- raForce recruit…[A]s Shikari acclimates to military life, she discovers that a savage enemy, the Xaracs, is stampeding through the galaxy to add Earth to its list of conquests.

Constant nightmares send Shi- kari messages of both destruction by the XaracsX and a mysterious hope from an ancient race, the Khrusymians…[N]ow Shikari must make a choice. Succumb to the XaracsX or fight, accepting that she is…the Hybrid Seed.”

According to Major-DePetrillo, she and her co-author, Joseph Mazzenzga, “had a bunch of short stories that we had started independ- ently but due to life’s other pressing issues, never got the chance to develop.”

Major-DePetrillo earned her bachelor’s degree in elementary educa- tion, and her mas- ter’s in elemen- tary educa- tion at RIC. Her cousin Ja- son Major ’98, who received his BFA in paint- in- and printmaking, designed the cover of the book.

Major-DePetrillo said that Hy- brid Seed could benefit the RIC community, because it sends out the message that everyone is im- portant. Why the Plum for Courage and Hybrid Seed can be purchased at www.amazon.com and www. barnesandnoble.com. Hybrid Seed is also available through www. publishamerica.com.

Faculty promotions, tenure announced

Five RIC faculty members were promoted to the rank of professor, and 17 were elevated to associate professor, announced RIC President John Nazarian on April 5. Also, 18 faculty members were granted tenure. Promotions will take effect July 1, 2006; tenure will begin July 1 of the year indicated.

Promoted to professor

John Aflague  Nursing
Karen Boren  English
Douglas Bosch  Art
Patricia Brennan  Anthropology
Krista Cournoyer  English
Mary Ellen Sinclair  History
Christine Marko  Physical Sciences
Diane Martell  Communications
David Filipik  Accounting
Colette Materese ‘82  Computer Information Systems
Peter Mendy  English
Alan Pickart  Psychology
Patricia Quigley  School of Social Work
Thomas Schmeling  Nursing
Zubeda Jalalzai  History
Christine Marco  Music, Theatre, and Dance
Diane Martell  Nursing

Promoted to associate professor

John Aflague Nursing
Charles Boisvert ’91 Counseling, Ed. Leadership and School Psychology
Karen Boren English
Douglas Bosch Art
Patricia Brennan Anthropology
Krista Cournoyer English
Mary Ellen Sinclair History
Christine Marko Physical Sciences
Diane Martell Communications
David Filipik Accounting
Colette Materese ‘82 Computer Information Systems
Peter Mendy English
Alan Pickart Psychology
Patricia Quigley School of Social Work
Thomas Schmeling Nursing
Zubeda Jalalzai History
Christine Marco Music, Theatre, and Dance
Diane Martell Nursing

Granted tenure

John Aflague Nursing
Charles Boisvert ‘91 Counseling, Ed. Leadership and School Psychology
Karen Boren English
Douglas Bosch Art
Krista Cournoyer Anthropology
Glémonon de Oliveira Physical Sciences
Valerie Endress Communications
Zubeda Jalalzai English
Christine Marko Psychology
Diane Martell School of Social Work
Colette Materese ‘82 Nursing
Peter Mendy History
Alan Pickart Music, Theatre, and Dance
Patricia Quigley Nursing
Thomas Schmeling Political Science
Zubeda Jalalzai Psychology
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Diane Martell Nursing

For further information or to make a donation, call Nancy Hongrissan at 401-456-8827 or give conve- niently online at www.ric.edu/givenow.

The fiscal year ends June 30.
FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S DESK

Donald E. Tencher
Director of Athletics

• Congratulations to alum Ed Lemoi '64 who was inducted into the Rhode Island Wrestling Hall of Fame. Also, congratulations to alumni Bill Nicynski '64 and Ron Felber '61 on their election to the Central Falls High School Hall of Fame.

• I want to thank everyone who supported and contributed to our 10th Annual Sports and Celebrity Memorabilia Auction held on April 27. It was another successful event that will enhance student-athlete support.

• Though the women’s lacrosse team’s record doesn’t indicate it, the ladies have played extremely well this year, and junior center Caitlin Gavin is having another All-American season. She is one of the top players and scorers in the country.

• Congratulations to the women’s softball team and Coach Maria Morin. The ladies clinched the conference regular season championship for the second year in a row and will host the post-season tournament at Bazar Field. Additionally, the New England polls have the Anchorwomen ranked as the best team in New England and 30th in the nation.

• Head Men’s Golf Coach John Fitta and his team are having their best year since the golf program was instituted several years ago. Coach Fitta is going out very successfully as he announced his retirement recently. I want to thank Mr. Fitta for all of his efforts in getting the program going and attaining a level of competitiveness. Because of Mr. Fitta’s effort, the new coach will be inheriting a top-notch program.

• The baseball team is approaching another 20-win season. Head Coach Jay Grenier and his program continue to get better every year.

• Everyone will want to circle the date of July 14 on the calendar. That’s the day that RIC will be having “An Endless Summer Party” on the beach in Narragansett. The event (see related information on this page) is one you won’t want to miss and is sure to be a sellout. I want to thank Pat ’61 and John Maciel, Maryann ’70 and Tom ’73 Dolan, and Carolyn ’66 and Charlie ’64 Wilkes for agreeing to chair this great new event.

• Congratulations to junior men’s basketball player, Anthony Pierlioni, who has been chosen by the NCAA to attend its student-athlete leadership conference at Disney World later this month.

Rhode Island College sports camps

RIC will once again offer its summer sports camps from June 26-Aug. 4 for ages 8 and up.

Camps are offered in baseball/softball, tennis, basketball, gymnastics, soccer, volleyball, and cheerleading. Participants also go swimming daily in an indoor pool. Cost is $140 per week, per student. For a brochure or further information, call 401-456-8007.

Anchor Club Golf Day set for July 17

The sixth annual Anchor Club Golf Day is set for Monday, July 17 at Pawtucket Country Club.

If you would like to play, or register a foursome, please call Mike Morrison in the RIC Athletic Office at 401-456-8260 to receive a brochure.

The cost is $165 per golfer, which includes greens fees, favors, golf cart, refreshments, lunch, social hour and food stations. Lunch and check-in will begin at 11:30 a.m., followed by a shotgun start at 12:45 p.m.

There will be a reception with food stations at 6:30 p.m., followed by awards and prizes at 7 p.m. Don’t miss this great event. Register today!

Barrette honored by the RIAIAW

Rhode Island College senior Liz Barrette received a Distinguished Student-Athlete award from the Rhode Island Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (RIAIAW) at a reception hosted by Rhode Island College on May 5.

Barrette, a physical education/health major, owns a cumulative grade point average of 3.52, and concluded a stellar career in women’s tennis last fall.

She leaves RIC with a 43-18 career singles record and a 50-15 career doubles mark for 68.0 career points. Barrette is third all-time at RIC in career points, third in career doubles win percentage, seventh in career singles winning percentage and 12th in career singles winning percentage.

As a senior in 2005, Barrette was the Little East Conference champion at number one doubles. While teaming up with freshman Megan Hall, the 15 doubles wins established a new RIC single-season record. Barrette was named Little East Conference Player of the Week once on the season and was named the team’s MVP.

She was named to the Rhode Island College All-75th Anniversary Women’s Tennis Team in 2005.
11 honored by Rhode Island’s Speaker of the House and House of Representatives

By Scott Gibbons
Sports Information Director

Ten current Rhode Island College student-athletes and one alumnus were recognized by the Honorable William J. Murphy, speaker of the house, and the Rhode Island House of Representatives, at a reception held in the House Chamber at the Rhode Island State House on Monday, May 1.

The event was designed to give public recognition to men and women from RIC, the Community College of Rhode Island, and the University of Rhode Island who have had significant achievements in their academic and athletic pursuits at their respective institutions. The honorees have also demonstrated exemplary citizenship and community service.

The 10 scholar-athletes from Rhode Island College were Liz Barrette, a senior women’s tennis player from North Providence; Todd Bloom, a senior wrestler from Wantagh, N.Y.; Kinsey Durgin, a junior women’s basketball player from Providence; Christie Lotti, a sophomore softball player from Waterford, Conn.; Kevin Payette, a senior men’s basketball player from Wantagh; and Kyle Teixeira, a senior men’s soccer player from Warren.

Chris Reddy ’92, a Cranston native and resident of East Falmouth, Mass., was RIC’s Athletic Alumnus Award recipient. Reddy received a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Rhode Island College. He was a 1992 NCAA Division III Wrestling Academic All-American, and a three-time All-New England wrestler and a finalist in the 167 lbs. weight class his senior year, during which he served as team captain. The Anchormen captured the New England College Conference Wrestling Association (NECCWA) championship in each of the years he was on the team.

He went on to become a graduate student at the University of Rhode Island’s Graduate School of Oceanography, earning his PhD in 1997.

RIC grad wins pageant crown

by Ericka Atwell ’08
Staff Writer

Imagine you are at a beauty pageant and as each contestant approaches the runway, you are struck by her elegance. But this is not a typically pageant because these ladies are not walking, they are gliding in their wheelchairs.

The Ms. Wheelchair pageant, sponsored by the Ms. Wheelchair America Program Inc., involves more than just beauty. It allows women of achievement who utilize wheelchairs to successfully educate and advocate for individuals with disabilities.

Stephanie Booth ’01 was named Ms. Wheelchair of Rhode Island last month.

Booth decided to fill out an application for the Ms. Wheelchair of Rhode Island pageant, in hopes of encouraging young children with disabilities to reach their goals.

The pageant requires two interviews with judges and a speech. Her speech was on teaching awareness of disabilities to children. “I want to teach children that we are more alike than different,” said Booth.

She was diagnosed at a young age with muscular dystrophy. Muscular dystrophies are a group of genetic and hereditary diseases characterized by progressive skeletal muscle weakness, defects in muscle proteins and the death of muscle cells and tissue.

Booth was fairly mobile as the MDA’s yearly walk. “It’s hard for me because it kind of breaks your pride, but it is what it is, and I can’t let it get to me,” said Booth.

Being responsive to her disease, Booth joined the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) to help others like her.

She has become an advocate for people with disabilities and plans fundraising events that raise money for their cause, such as the MDA’s yearly walk. “It’s cool because you get to meet others with the same disabilities and it is fulfilling for you,” Booth said.

In August, Booth will travel to Arkansas to be a contestant in the Ms. Wheelchair of America pageant.

“I never felt like I was different, even though it was obvious that I was,” Booth said.

Applying to RIC was an easy decision for Booth. She wanted a campus that was not too large, with classrooms that let her communicate and build closer relationships with her professors, which she did.

At first, Booth fought against using a wheelchair. She remembers using automatic door openers and elevators in the buildings on campus.

After graduation, her condition worsened. She became more wheelchair dependent. “It was hard for me because it kind of breaks your pride, but it is what it is, and I can’t let it get to me,” said Booth.

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Admitted freshmen enjoy a day at the beach, compliments of Admissions Office

By Holly Shadoian
Director of Admissions

The Admissions Office in April hosted a very successful Admissions Spring Party – our largest yield event for admitted freshmen. The theme was beach party and despite cool, rainy weather, there was standing room only for a crowd of over 600 in Donovan Dining Center.

The College radio station, WXIN, and Shryne, a live RIC band, provided music. Shakaz, a group of RIC dance students, performed a hip-hop routine to a cheering crowd. Faculty from every academic department along with a number of other academic and student offices (Financial Aid, Athletics, OASIS and more) were on hand to answer questions from students and parents.

Donovan Dining Center was transformed into a beach party paradise – complete with surfboards, lighted palm trees, shells, windows decorated like an aquarium, RIC beach balls on tables and hanging from the mezzanine, and a lifeguard chair complete with a lifeguard from the Recreation Center.

Students received surfboard key chains as they were greeted by the RIC Admissions student staff. Students competed for prizes – including the grand prize of a $250 gift certificate to the Campus Store donated by RIC President John Nazarian – in limbo and beach trivia contests. Guests were treated to Del’s lemonade, a Rhode Island tradition, as well as food and other refreshments.

The Admissions Enrollment tables were set up to look like a marine aquarium complete with dolphins and whales appearing to swim across the windows. Students who enrolled that day (and students who had already enrolled) received a RIC Class of 2010 oversized beach towel.

Dan King, vice president for academic affairs, addressed students and parents on the strengths of Rhode Island College and urged them to speak with the administrators, faculty and staff in attendance.

Outside, under a tent, the RIC picture board was set up for students to “picture themselves” at RIC. Student Community Government funded a surfboard simulator for guests to try.

Residence hall tours were one of the more popular features of the day. Over 40 RIC students served as guides for the five residence halls – and the rain didn’t stop the guests from touring!

In connection with the Spring Party, the Alumni Office hosted its annual legacy luncheon in the Café for admitted children and grand-

children of alumni. Over 65 people attended.

Given the multitude of college choices available to prospective students, the RIC community put its very best foot forward and provided excellent support to Admissions for this important event.
New residence hall construction underway

Work on the residence hall project, which is being funded by a voter-approved 2004 state referendum, began in April.

Next time you’re on campus, check out the west side of Sixth Avenue, across from the Office of Security and Safety. That’s where construction has begun on the 367-bed residence hall slated for occupancy in the fall of 2007. The Bacon Construction Company of East Providence is building the new hall, which will encompass 125,000 square feet of floor space, making it the largest structure on campus. Designed by RGB Architects of Providence, the facility has a projected cost of $30 million.

The new hall will feature a mix of suite- and apartment-style units. The College’s on-campus housing capacity will rise to 1,195, a 44 percent increase over the current capacity of 828 students, who reside in five existing residence halls.

The project also includes construction of a new parking area for over 200 vehicles to be located adjacent to the future hall. Fencing has been installed to isolate the construction area, resulting in curtailed parking on Sixth Avenue next to the site.

In addition, that segment of Sixth Avenue will be narrowed to accommodate the project, necessitating extra care when driving in the area.

“We anticipate that the new residence hall will serve as a source of great pride to the College as it contributes to the recruitment and retention of students, a richer and more vibrant campus life, and the expansion of educational opportunities for the students that we serve,” said RIC President John Nazarian.

An official groundbreaking ceremony is slated for later this month.

Shipbuilder donates cruise ship to three New England institutions

By Jane Fusco
What’s News Editor
Rhode Island College, Roger Williams University, and Wentworth Institute of Technology will assume ownership of a 175-foot cruise ship from Rhode Island businessman.

Luther Blount ‘00, shipbuilder and owner of American Canadian Caribbean Lines of Warren, is donating the M/V Niagara Prince cruise ship to Rhode Island College, Roger Williams University, and Wentworth Institute of Technology.

An agreement to transfer the ownership of the ship, valued at $6.5 million, to the three schools was signed on May 1 at a press conference held at Blount Boats Inc. in Warren. The schools will accept joint ownership at the end of the ship’s scheduled summer and fall foliage cruises in October.

It is the first time that a cruise ship has been donated to local colleges, Blount said.

“Education gave me the foundation to be where I am today and I am thankful to give something back,” said Blount. “I chose these three institutions for many personal reasons, coupled with my awareness that area schools are in need of funds for programming and campus improvements.”

RIC awarded Blount an honorary doctor of commercial science degree in 2000. To date, it is the only degree of its kind issued by the College.

Roger Williams University President Roy J. Nirschel said that the university has had an association with Blount for years and awarded him an honorary doctorate in marine science in 2003.

“Our marine science students and faculty have teamed up with Mr. Blount to manage his shell-fish hatchery on Prudence Island, which grows and releases millions of oysters a year,” Nirschel said.

Roger Williams University operates the only shellfish hatchery in the state of Rhode Island.

Blount graduated from Wentworth Institute of Technology in 1937 with a degree in machine construction and tool design. The college recently named one of their auditoriums for Blount after receiving a $1 million donation from him.

“Having a relationship with Wentworth Institute of Technology for over six decades, Mr. Blount has set an example of alumni dedication that will benefit students for generations to come,” said Zorica Panic, president of Wentworth Institute of Technology. The Niagara Prince was commissioned in 1994 and is certified to carry up to 90 passengers and crew. The vessel can navigate shallow waters and under low-lying bridges using a retractable pilothouse, “so it can travel anywhere in the world,” Blount said. In its 12 years of service, the ship has carried thousands of guests along all the cruise line’s routes, including its most famous one from New Orleans to Chicago.

“By gifting one of his grandest creations to the three institutions of higher learning, Dr. Blount reaffirms his lifelong appreciation for the power of education. Rhode Island College joins with Roger Williams University and Wentworth Institute of Technology in extending its deepest gratitude to this exceptional individual on behalf of all the future students who will benefit from his philanthropy,” said RIC President John Nazarian.
RIC to host R.I. Coalition for Affirmative Action event
The Rhode Island Coalition for Affirmative Action (RICAA) will offer a Spring 2006 program to help women and minorities achieve economic equity. The free event, "Women and Minorities Make Your Money Work For You – How the Economy/Business/Commerce Affects You," will take place Wednesday, May 31 at 2 p.m. in the Rhode Island College Faculty Center.

Leading Rhode Islanders from the business world will be featured, including Keith Stokes, executive director of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce; Laurie White, president of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce; Jose Brito, president of the Greater Providence Merchants Association; and Juana Horton, chair of the R.I. Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce.

Refreshments will be served. For more information about the event, donations or advertising in the program booklet, contact Donna Fishman, RICAA chair, at 401-423-0397 or donnafishman@cox.net. The website for RICAA is www.ricaa.net.

William Aho, professor emeritus of sociology, recently delivered the keynote address at the symposium "Pan in the 21st Century: The Scholarship and Music of Steel Drums," held at Clark Atlanta University in Georgia. Aho also presented and discussed his DVD Steel Band Music in Trinidad: The Creation of a People's Music. Research forming the basis for the keynote address and DVD production was conducted under a National Endowment for the Humanities Research Fellowship for College Teachers awarded to Aho while he was teaching at RIC.

Ezra Stiegitz, professor of elementary education co-wrote a paper titled "The Case for Development of a New Test of Health Literacy," which appeared in the Oncology Nursing Forum journal in March. Other authors were Patricia Agre, director of patient and family education at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, N.Y.; and Glen Milstein, assistant professor of psychology at City College of New York.

The Massachusetts Association of Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages (MAT SOL) and the Massachusetts Association for Bilingual Education (MABE) awarded Patricia Medeiros Landurand, professor of special education, with the MATSOL-MABE Achievement Award at the annual conference held recently. Medeiros Landurand was presented this award for her 30 years of work on behalf of English language learners with disabilities at the local, state, national and international levels. Medeiros Landurand was also acknowledged for being a caring mentor and colleague to others in the field and for her leadership, commitment and contributions to mentoring teachers and encouraging them to become staff developers and advocates for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

RIC’s dean of social work joins United Way of R.I.’s board of directors
Carol Bennett-Speight, dean of social work at Rhode Island College, was recently elected to the United Way of Rhode Island’s board of directors, and will chair the Children, Youth and Families Impact committee.

Prior to joining Rhode Island College, Bennett-Speight was an associate professor and chair of the Social Work Dept. at Cabrini College in Radnor, Penn. She has been on the faculties of the University of Pennsylvania and LaSalle University in Philadelphia, and has worked as an employee assistance counselor and social worker.

Bennett-Speight is a member of several community and professional boards, including the Executive Board of Girl Scouts of America and the John Hope Settlement House. According to their mission statement, United Way works to “break the cycle of poverty by giving children the tools to succeed in school, and by making sure that adults have the necessary skills to earn reasonable wages so that they may afford decent and safe housing.”

“She brings to the table significant community and professional experience in a major area of concern for us,” said Anthony Maione, president and CEO of United Way of R.I.
TREE DEDICATION: On April 28, a dawn redwood tree was planted to mark the retirement of Prof. Jerry Melaragno of the biology dept. Melaragno, a botanist, cellist, catamaran sailor, cyclist and, according to the program, a “tree hugger,” has taught at the College for 31 years. The ceremony also became an opportunity to distribute a new publication that Melaragno created, which describes and maps 60 different trees on the College campus. Above, Melaragno and biology dept. chair Edythe Anthony display the new publication. The redwood (Metasequoia glyptostroboides), planted in his honor, is an unusual, deciduous conifer, and has a history of at least 50 million years.

THE FIRST C. ANNETTE DUCEY AWARDS were presented to students in the English dept. on April 25. Recipients are (seated l to r) Daniel Reyes, Larry O’Brien and Holly Hunt. Standing from left are Peg Facker, Veronica Bruscini, Chris Sorel, Oneika Castro, Karen Sylvia and Kristen Cook. Awards varied from $300 to $3,500. The Ducey Scholarships, presented for the first time this spring, were funded by an endowment established by the Ducey estate.

CHEMISTRY AND BIOLOGY students presented their year’s research work in the Sigma Xi Physical Sciences Dept. Spring Student Research Symposium in April. Presenters, pictured above, included (seated from left) Kathleen Lopes, Brenda Cordeiro, Laura Hartnett and Por-Kim Seng. Standing l to r: Christopher Furey, Sam Adeidran, Thomas Watson, Dennis Bennett, Sean Hersey, Gennadiy Berzutskiy, Yelene Trubitsyna, Christopher Latendresse and Sabrina Montfort. The senior students were inducted into the RIC Chapter of Sigma Xi as associate members on April 27.

MAKING A SPLASH: Stephanie Bailey, a sophomore, gets a little wet in the dunk tank April 19 during RIC-End, the traditional end-of-semester celebration that this year included a stand-up comic night, a D.J. “beach” dance party, and quiz show games.

NOT TAKING THE STAND: When Donna Christy ‘79, assoc. prof. of math and computer science, delivers her Maisner Lecture, she elects to sit down with her laptop rather than stand at the podium. The lecture, “Down a Path Filled with Whimsy and Math: A Photographic Journey into Their World,” was given April 13 in the Faculty Center.
1935 to 2005 will also march be-
mittee to Combat Huntington’s
Neuromuscular Diseases, the Com-
pany, the National Foundation for
National Academy of Sciences, the
Association, the American Acad-
vity in Washington, D.C.
He has served on the faculty of Columbia University, College of 
Physicians and Surgeons; State 
University of New York, Down-
state Medical Center, and at the 
Brown University School of Medi-
cine. He has also served as visit-
ing professor and adjunct faculty 
at institutions around the world, 
including Mexico, Brazil, Canada, 
England, Israel, and India, as well 
as institutions closer to home such 
as Yale, Dartmouth, Tufts, and 
Rhode Island College.
Aronson’s hospital appointments 
have included chief of pathology 
and director of department labo-
ratories at Kings County Hospital 
Center; neuropathologist and re-
search neurologist at Kingsbrook 
Jewish Medical Center; and pa-
thologist-in-chief at the Miriam 
Hospital in Providence. He has 
also been a consulting physician at 12 
different hospitals. A veteran of the 
armed forces, Aronson served in the 
U.S. Army Medical Corps, 
attaining the rank of captain.
His professional service includes the 
American Academy of Neur-
ology, the American Public Health 
Association, the American Acad-
y of Cerebral Palsy, the Interna-
tional Society of Neuropathology, 
the Rhode Island Medical Society, the 
Association of American Medi-
cal Colleges Council of Deans, the 
National Academy of Sciences, the 
National Multiple Sclerosis Soci-
ety, the National Foundation for 
Neuromuscular Diseases, the Com-
mittee to Combat Huntington’s
Disease, the Medical Advisory 
Committee of Planned Parenthood 
of Rhode Island, the National Tay 
Sachs and Allied Diseases Associa-
tion, and others.
Aronson’s community service 
includes numerous board mem-
berships, corporation memberships, 
trusteeships, and other leadership 
positions including institutions and 
organizations such as Butler Hos-
tal, Women and Infants Hospital, 
Hospice Care of Rhode Island, the 
Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, 
the Jewish Home for the Aged, 
Interfaith Health Care Ministries, and 
of the Jewish Home for the Aged, 
Interfaith Health Care Ministries, 
and others.
A prolific author, Aronson has 
published over 400 books, scientif-
ic articles and chapters in medical 
and biological journals and texts, 
and has also served on the editor-
ship of several professional journals.
His service has been recognized 
with numerous awards and honors, 
including the Charles Hill Award 
from the Rhode Island Medical 
Society, the Sturgis Award from 
the Hospital Association of Rhode Island, the Founder’s Award of 
Hospice Care of Rhode Island, and 
the John H. Chafee Award of the 
American Heart Association. He is 
also a member of the Rhode Island 
Heritage Hall of Fame and holds an 
honorary doctorate from Tougaloo College of Mississippi.

Marian Wright Edelman
Marian Wright Edelman, Found- 
er and President of the Children’s 
Defense Fund (CDF), has been an 
advocate for disadvantaged Ameri-
cans for her entire professional 
life. Under her leadership, CDF 
has become the nation’s strongest 
voice for children and families. 
The mission of the Children’s Defense 
Fund is to Leave No Child Behind 
and to ensure every child a Healthy 
Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, 
and a Moral Start in life and 
successful passage to adult-
hood with the help of caring 
fi-
cies and communities.
Edelman, a graduate of Spelman 
College and Yale Law School, 
has led her career in the mid-60s 
when, as the first black woman 
admitted to the Mississippi Bar, she 
directed the NAACP Legal Defense and 
Educational Fund office in Jackson.

Raymond W. Houghton
Raymond W. Houghton’s re-
markable career in educational 
leadership has been rooted in the 
belief that personal and collective 
improvement of human existence 
resides in the education and 
enlightenment of people. A graduate 
of Pawtucket West High School, 
he entered the U.S. Army Air Force 
as an early enlistee during his senior 
year in high school at the height 
of World War II. Returning to Rhode 
Island after the war, he earned an 
AB in English literature and Eng-
ish expression from Brown Uni-
versity in less than four years, 
and subsequently earned an MA 
in English and education. He sub-
sequently earned a PhD in curricu-
um and foundations of education 
at the University of Connecticut.
Houghton began his career in 
teaching in the Warwick public 
schools, where he would become 
director of Curriculum and Re-
sources in 1960. In 1961, he joined 
the faculty of Rhode Island College 
as professor of secondary educa-
tion. He was responsible for the 
development of teacher preparation 
in teaching (MAT) program at RIC, 
a program that was established 
to enable graduates of liberal arts 
colleges to attain the educational 
basis necessary for them to 
become certified as teachers.
To serve under-prepared and 
disadvantaged youth from urban 
settings, Houghton was a founder 
of the Urban Educational Center of 
Rhode Island College. In 1968, 
he conceived and founded the Ur-
ban Educational Center of Rhode 
Island (UEC) in order to bring 
his ideas to a broader audience 
in the urban core of the state’s capital 
city. The UEC was initially admin-
istratively associated with RIC and 
later evolved into the Liston (Providence) Campus of the Community College of Rhode Island.
In the 1980s, as Houghton’s ca-
reer as an active faculty member at RIC began to wind down, he 
developed a relationship with historic 
Rhode Island College of Dublin, Ireland where, in addition to teaching, re-
search, and service, he founded and 
served as director of Saor Oilscoil 
h’a Eireann (The Free University 
of Ireland). He was later honored 
for his service at Trinity with the award 
by that institution of the Magisteri in Artibus (Honoris 
Causa).
Houghton served as author, co-
author, or editor of many publica-
tions, including the books Educa-
ton On the Brink: In Education, 
Emerging Goals In A New Millen-
niunm; Images of Berkeley; The 
World of George Berkeley; Ques-
tions Beyond: Educational 
Queries for a New Millennium; and 
Learning and Intelligence: Conversa-
tions with Skinner and Wheeler; and 
Life and Work Days: Life on the 
Farm (1916).
Houghton served on the board 
of directors of Looking Glass The-
atre, Notre Dame Hospital, and the 
Salvation Army, among others. 
He served as president of the Interna-
tional Berkeley Society, the Rhode 
Island Chapter of the American 
Guidance and Personnel Associa-
tion, the Rhode Island Historical Theater Association, and the Rhode 
Island Philosophical Society, and 
was active in numerous other orga-
nizations.

George S. Lima
George S. Lima’s life, which is 
profiled in the documentary film, 
Black Men Can Fly, demonstrates a 
lifelong commitment to social jus-
tice and economic opportunity. His 
remarkable life includes the roles of phi-

Continued from p 13
Diane Postoian

A 1976 graduate of Rhode Island College, Diane Postoian is a well-known performance artist. She has served on the organizing committee of the non-profit Looking Glass Theatre, an organization that offers performance opportunities for young people to advance socially and economically. During her tenure, she served as artistic director, executive director, grant writer, program director, and performer, and also served as a director for the Looking Glass Youth Theatre. Her career has included working with waveforms, as well as a career in filmmaking as a career assistant to the national director.

Lima served as a director at the Providence Chapter of the NAACP, as the president of the East Providence Community Development Corporation, as an independent candidate for the House Labor Committee, and as a member of the United Way Social Development Allocation Committee. As a board member of the National Catholic Council for Interracial Justice, and as a member of the Organizing Committee of the Congress for Racial Equality, among others.

Lima’s most recent project is his founding of the Black Air Foundation, a non-profit organization for which he served as CEO and president. The word “air” is both literal and symbolic, as the mission of the organization is to provide opportunities for black and minority youth to advance socially and economically by introducing them to aviation, radio and television (airwaves), and filmmaking as a career choice while also providing other support.

Mr. Lima is fluent in four languages and is a world traveler.
William Finlay '72, chair and associate professor of theater at RIC and what superb training at RIC and what superb training was offered and has continued to be offered at the College," he said. “And even though I sensed this many years ago, I now know for certain that dance at Rhode Island College is vitally important to the soul of the school and also in many ways to the cultural fabric of the city.”

The National Museum of Dance & Hall of Fame in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., is the only museum in the nation dedicated to American professional dance. Established in 1986, it is located in Saratoga Spa State Park.

The museum features a growing collection of photographs, videos, artifacts, costumes, biographies and archives examining seminal contributions to dance. In 1987, the Museum recognized Fred Astaire, George Balanchine, Katherine Dunham, Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Lincoln Kirstein and Bill ‘Bojangles’ Robinson, among others, as founders and innovators of American professional dance. Over the years, more than 30 dancers, choreographers, teachers, designers, critics and patrons have been similarly honored.

The duties of a board member of the National Museum of Dance are similar to many other boards in that they are responsible for the financial well being of the organization," said Finlay.

This aspect of the board’s work is especially important now because the museum has recently become a sole entity, after separating itself administratively from The Saratoga Performing Arts Center, added Finlay.

A 2002 RIC Alumni Honor Roll recipient, Finlay has positive thoughts about his days as the College. “More and more I have come to realize what a wonderful experience it was to have been a dancer at RIC and what superb training was offered and has continued to be offered at the College,” he said. “And even though I sensed this many years ago, I now know for certain that dance at Rhode Island College is vitally important to the soul of the school and also in many ways to the cultural fabric of the city.”

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RIC grad opens young minds to new ways of learning

by Christopher Farrell ’06 Staff Writer

A classroom full of eight and nine year olds are staring at you. They’re waiting, sitting on the edge of their seats, anticipating the next word you are going to say. Are you intimidated yet? Jen Jendzejec ’93 isn’t. This Coventry third-grade teacher’s task is to open the mind of each student, and she does it every day. And it’s not only the students and their parents who are noticing. Jendzejec recently became one of 19 teachers across America to be awarded the prestigious Amgen Award for Science Teaching Excellence.

The recipients of the award will receive $5,000, and their schools will be given the same amount in a grant towards the expansion or enhancement of a science program. The award recognizes extraordinary contributions by educators who are elevating the level of science literacy through creativity in the classroom and motivation of students.

The description fits this Rhode Island College graduate to perfection.

“T...
TV-TURN-OFF WEEK was celebrated April 24 to 28 at Henry Barnard School. Each day the students had a diversion (such as read a book or play a game) to substitute for TV watching. On Thursday it was “Drop Everything and Read.” Above, first grader Jasmine Hyppolite reads in the schoolyard.

WHO’S WHO: Forty-nine students from RIC were selected to be included in the 2005-2006 edition of Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges. Above, at ceremonies in the Student Union Ballroom April 19, Jose Lobaton receives his certificate from Michael Smith ’79, assistant to the president.

A CHECK FOR 5,000 EUROS is presented to College President John Nazarian by Ricardo Cortes, consul of the Providence Portuguese Consulate. The gift was made during a reception for the Friends of Portuguese Studies April 4 at the President’s House.

RENOVATIONS BEGIN: Workmen begin taking down gutters and down spouts on the College’s yellow cottage, one of the remaining buildings of the State Home and School, the state’s former orphanage, in preparation for lead paint abatement of the exterior.

GRAD FEST ’06 was a new initiative by the Commencement Office and the Campus Store to help graduating seniors prepare for commencement. For one day (April 5) in one place (the Student Union Ballroom) seniors could purchase caps, gowns and hoods; order class rings, graduation announcements, diploma frames and yearbooks; visit Career Services, Financial Aid, and the Alumni Association; check their status with the Records Office; learn about Senior Week activities; and have a formal picture taken. At left, Brook Reid and her aunt, Myrna Messier (right), look over college rings.

WRITING PANEL: A panel discussion and dinner for reading teachers was held April 5 in the Faculty Center. Titled “Helping Diverse Learners to Become Better Readers,” the discussion included panel members (below from left) Eni Desmond, ESL teacher in Cumberland; Eusebio Lopes, principal of George J. West Elementary School in Providence; and Celeste Bowler, director of elementary education in West Warwick. The moderator is Robert Carey, assoc. prof. of elementary education (left).