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What's News At Rhode Island College

Rhode Island College

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Two RIC grads earn Milken Educator Awards

It was an October surprise of the most pleasant kind for two Rhode Island College graduates. Elementary school teachers Amy Dufault-Thompson ‘93 M ’02 and Amanda Sequin ‘99 were recipients of 2006-07 National Educator Awards from the Milken Family Foundation. Each received $25,000 in surprise ceremonies at the schools in which they teach.

The Milken Foundation praised Dufault-Thompson, a third-grade teacher at the Francis J. Varieur School in Pawtucket, and previously a special education teacher, for using "special education strategies for differentiating instruction in her regular classroom, reaching both struggling students as well as those who need to be challenged."

Rhode Island Gov. Donald Carcieri, who attended Dufault-Thompson’s ceremony, said of the Pawtucket teacher: "She provides support for those who need something extra while she challenges students to discover something extra. Her classroom environment encourages each child’s learning style and potential.”

Dufault-Thompson said she was “tremendously honored, completely shocked, and very excited.”

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION: Above, Amy Dufault-Thompson (second from left) receives her Milken Educator Award from (left to right) Gov. Donald Carcieri, Jane Foley, senior vice president of the Milken Family Foundation, and James DiPrete, chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. Below, Amanda Sequin and some of her second-grade students work on a project at the Curtis Guild Elementary School in Boston.

Continued on p 5

RIC receives $5.1 million donation, largest ever by an individual to a state college

In addition, she designated a portion of her bequest to support an endowment for the James P. Adams Library and the President’s Music Series. A theatre in the Nazarian Center was named in her honor in 2000. This is an extraordinary gift, not just for the College, but as a symbol of the growing awareness of how important private giving is to our state institutions,” said Peg Brown, executive director of the RIC Foundation.

“I was working at URI in 1991 when the university received its first $1 million gift – an insurance policy donated by Eleanor Carlson to endow the women’s studies program,” said Brown. “The announcement of that first seven-figure gift to a public institution was practically a state holiday. Today, 13 years later, we reach yet another milestone in private giving to Rhode Island’s public institutions.”

A middle-class woman with no inherited wealth, Forman and her husband Sylvan, a railway and postal worker, invested wisely in the stock market. They resided in a simple home on Tyndall Avenue in Providence, traveled occasionally, but generally lived a modest lifestyle.

“When Helen was asked why she didn’t buy this or that, she’d always reply, ‘I’d rather leave learning by an individual.

Forman died August 14, 2005 at the age of 93. An official announcement of the gift was made on Nov. 4 in a tribute to Forman in RIC’s Nazarian Center. The tribute featured a red carpet reception, silent auction and performance of Yellowman by Dael Orlandersmith, presented in partnership with the Providence Black Repertory Company.

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HELEN FORMAN ’34 HD ’99

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“When Helen was asked why she didn’t buy this or that, she’d always reply, ‘I’d rather leave..."
I have chosen this profession out of love, or rather, my thirst for knowledge translated itself into my passion for transmitting this curiosity onto my students. A trained Romance philologist/linguist (Portuguese, Italian, and Medieval Spanish), medievalist, Islamist, and Africanist, my academic expertise and interests also include Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) studies, Sophocles' studies (texts from Portugal, Spain, and their descendants throughout the world), religious studies, and women’s studies.

Though far from being affluent, I consider myself successful. My intangible richness comes from the invigorating rewards of my scholarship as well as my interaction with my students, my ultimate goal. I truly enjoy teaching, stimulating minds, opening doors where before there was not even a crack in the wall. Regardless of the subject matter, in or outside of the classroom, I enjoy bringing knowledge to my students and, at the same time, I want to make sure they are studying not to pass the test/class, but rather, that they are learning for their own future; hence, they are investing in their lives.

My frequent trips abroad, besides completing my research and publication, I also give lectures and teach on a variety of subjects, are thus a stepping stool for improving my teaching methodology here at Rhode Island College. Places like Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Macao, Japan, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Tanzania, Mozambique, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt have left an everlasting impact on my teaching methodology: they have enriched my human-relation skills and subsequent approach to teaching.

In other words, every time I take a trip abroad I just don’t bring back home wonderful memories, I acquire expertise that enables me to better help students back home. The cultural and educational differences of these countries, coupled with the subject matters that I teach by their own definition multicultural and encompassing a large radius of customs and societies – are used to widen the educational horizon of my students. As an educator, my responsibility is to see that students are well trained in their field so that they can be successful in their lives. The cultural and educational background that I am able to bring to the classroom, because of my living and teaching experience abroad, enable students to be better equipped and more competitive once they leave college.

Amanda’s commitment to her students, is not only commendable, it’s awe-inspiring.

– David P. Driscoll, Massachusetts education commissioner, speaking about Amanda Sequin ’93, who was one of two RIC alums to receive 2006-07 National Educator Awards from the Milken Foundation.

What's News at Rhode Island College

**In Memoriam – Kenneth Lewalski, professor emeritus of history**

Kenneth Lewalski of Providence, professor emeritus of history at Rhode Island College, died Oct. 18 after a short illness. He was 80.

He began his career at RIC in 1962, as an assistant professor, reaching professor status in 1969. He also served as chair of the history dept.

In 1969, he was given the Paul Maixner Award for Excellence in Teaching. The award citation noted that Lewalski had addressed issues in the civil liberties area, such as seeking the abolition of the loyalty oath for teacher certification, and seeking ways for Americans, especially Rhode Islanders, to respond appropriately to the emergence and fortunes of the trade union Solidarity, in Poland.

The citation also read: “One of his primary, continuing concerns has been to find ways to organize materials so that students may gain insight and be able to master the work. There is no teaching device, technique, or idea which he has not carefully considered, tested, and then retained, modified or discarded.”

A frequent lecturer in the community and at RIC, Lewalski was a Mellon Foundation campus representative, and an organizer of Lech Walesa day at RIC in 1983, the same year he created a Walesa-Solidarity poster exhibit at the College. He retired from RIC in 1990.

Prior to RIC, Lewalski taught at MIT and Brown University.

He was a past president of the New England Slavic Association, the RIC chapter of the American Association of University Professors, and the New England Historical Association, for which he was also a founding member and executive secretary.

Many of his articles, papers and presentations focused on Poland and greater Europe.

Lewalski earned an AM and PhD from the University of Chicago, and a PhD from the University of Detroit.

He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. According to his obituary in the Providence Journal, “He cherished family and a host of friends, and was passionate about education, music, politics, the arts, and world travel.

Lewalski is survived by his wife of 50 years, Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, a son and daughter-in-law. Donations may be made in his name to the Rhode Island Philharmonic or to the Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr. Study Abroad Scholarship Fund at Rhode Island College.
NAZARIAN NAMED TO PAWTUCKET HALL OF FAME

**BY**
Christopher E. Buonanno
*What's News Contributor*

Rhode Island College President John Nazarian was inducted into the Pawtucket Hall of Fame on Nov. 3, in a ceremony held at the Grupo Amigos restaurant in Pawtucket.

“I know of many others who would qualify (for this honor) for a number of reasons,” Nazarian said. “To be honored by my hometown…it just means a great deal.”

A native of Pawtucket, Nazarian attended Potter Burns Elementary School, Goff Junior High School and graduated at the top of his class from Pawtucket East High School (now Tolman).

“I was born there and I’ve lived there my entire life,” Nazarian said. “Although I do reside in the President’s House on campus during the week, my legal address is still in Pawtucket.”

Pawtucket Mayor James E. Doyle wrote in a letter of support for Nazarian’s nomination: “Even with his heavy workload serving as Rhode Island College’s top administrator, Dr. Nazarian has also given his expertise and time to the Boys and Girls Club of Pawtucket, TIDES Family Services, the Salvation Army, and to his church.”

Nazarian was also inducted into Rhode Island’s Heritage Hall of Fame in 2002.

Nazarian said that this induction in the Hall of Fame and his involvement with other organizations help keep RIC “on the map.” For him, it’s a labor of love to benefit the institution that he has been associated with for over 57 years, as a student, assistant/associate/full professor, vice president, interim president, and finally, president.

“This is a quality, affordable school with great faculty and great facilities,” said Nazarian. “Most of the student body comes here because of the affordability of a good education. Many students here are the first in their family to go to college.”

Nazarian was of the first generation in his family to graduate from college. Nazarian was inducted along with the late Samuel Kanakry, a Pawtucket grocery store owner, who was inducted posthumously.

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**FOCUS ON**
Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff are encouraged to submit items about their professional endeavors to What’s News, Office of News and Public Relations, Kaufman Center, or email them to rmartin@ric.edu.

**ABBAS KAZEMI**
Board of Governors. CFA recipients must complete a graduate-level self-study curriculum and a series of three examinations over two years. Only about one in five candidates who enter the program successfully complete all requirements and earn the charter.

**RICHARD R. WEINER**
dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and professor of political science, presented the paper “The Autonomy of Social Law and Institutional Complementarity” at the University of Sheffield in England. The paper will be published in a forthcoming anthology, *Reconstructing Social Democracy*, edited by Abbas Kazemi, associate professor of finance, has been designated a Chartered Financial Analyst by the CFA Institute.

John Callaghan, University of Manchester. He also presented a paper entitled “The Moral Economy of Deaning” at Saint Anne’s College of Oxford University.

Another paper he co-authored with Karl Benzinger, associate professor of history and secondary education, entitled “Piacular Subjectivity and Contested Narrative in the Imre Nagy Funerals” was presented at both the European Consortium for Political Research at the Corvinus University of Economic Science in Budapest, and at The Narrative Matters conference at Acadia University in Nova Scotia. Weiner has also been engaged as a reviewer for the *Journal of Institutional Economics* based at Cambridge University. He has been invited to make a presentation on international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and labor standards at the upcoming International Studies Association annual meeting in Chicago.

**VIVIAN LAFERLA**
associate professor of mathematics and secondary education, presented research at the ICTM3 (International Conference on the Teaching of Mathematics) in Istanbul, Turkey. Her research,

“Teaching the Proof in Geometry: Geometric Reasoning Through Visualization, Communication and Polyas Process,” was published in the conference proceedings.

She was supported by the Faculty Research Committee and the Faculty Development Fund. Her presentation, poster and paper were refereed.


The study builds on a 1996 report to UNESCO by the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century by addressing the question of how education might contribute to promoting a “true global community where countries, communities and individuals can live in harmony and where cultural diversity is not seen as a threat but as a grounds for celebration.”

The book provides a detailed summary of the research findings along with nine chapters providing in-depth analysis of curriculum frameworks that address the social and behavioral objectives cited by the research.

Woolman also attended the 21st Biennial Conference of the International Peace Research Association in Calgary, Alberta, last summer. He presented a paper “Teaching for Peace and Conflict Resolution in a Global Context” and served as a chair and respondent in two other sessions; one on “Indigenous Populations” in the Peace Education Commission and the other on “Resource Conflicts: Case Studies from Around the Globe” in the Ecology and Peace Commission.
As the season turns, and we enter a period focused on thanksgiving, family, and reflection, it seemed appropriate to focus this week’s column on all three. Nov. 14 marks the second anniversary of the College community’s loss of Nancy H. Gewirtz, distinguished professor, inspirational mentor, loyal friend, tireless advocate, and a founding member of the Poverty Institute at the Rhode Island College School of Social Work. My thoughts center on Nancy not just because we mark the anniversary of her death, but because her “fans” continue to carry on her work in so many arenas of Rhode Island’s policy dialogues. And, they continue to support the funds created in Nancy’s name both at the Rhode Island Foundation and those we hold in the Rhode Island College Foundation. The Rhode Island Foundation, a leadership donor to support the work of the Poverty Institute, created an endowed fund to provide a perpetual source of annual income for the work of the Poverty Institute. Gifts to that fund support the Institute’s research on issues such as poverty and income security, welfare reform, health care, tax and budget equity, and workforce development. Led by Linda Katz, the Institute’s co-founder, and Executive Director Kate Brewster, Nancy’s former student, the Poverty Institute continues to promote and preserve Nancy’s vision. The Rhode Island College Foundation manages the Nancy H. Gewirtz Scholarship Endowment, a fund also created in Nancy’s honor and memory to assist students in the School of Social Work as they pursue their educational goals and aspirations. It is this fund I focus on today. A donor who wishes to remain anonymous has made a commitment to match new gifts to the Nancy H. Gewirtz Endowed Scholarship Fund, dollar for dollar, up to $20,000. This long-time community philanthropist, friend, and Poverty Institute board member, is offering this match not only to build this fund for future students, but to remind us all of an extraordinary life lived on the behalf of others. The current scholarship endowment fund of $10,000 could grow, with this match, to $50,000 with your help. Please consider a gift to the Nancy H. Gewirtz Endowed Scholarship Fund to support students who will monitor, analyze, and advocate in the tradition and spirit of Nancy. Gifts should be sent to the Gewirtz Fund, Rhode Island College Foundation, 600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Providence, RI 02908. All of your gifts will be matched by our generous anonymous donor, and the Gewirtz family will be notified of your generous support. Reflect… and give thanks in the name of an extraordinary woman.

Alumni Challenge fund created to help build Annual Fund

BY Nancy Hoogasian
Director of Annual Fund

Last winter, Tim Sullivan ’78 visited the Rhode Island College Alumni Office after attending a meeting of the RIC Foundation Board, on which he serves. He expressed an interest in helping to build growth in the Annual Fund in order to keep up with the burden of increasing costs and need. As a result, Tim is leading the very first Alumni Group Challenge fund with an extra gift of $1,500 over and above his usual annual contribution to the Annual Fund. His extra contribution will be double-matched by his employer, PepsiCo, for $3,000. A total of $8,800 has been raised for the Alumni Challenge. The goal is at least $10,000.

So far, Tim has recruited Paul Bourget ’69, Michael Cawley ’71, Lorna Duphiney Edmundson ’64, Christopher ’97 and Stephanie Harrison, ’97, Patricia Marchetti ’62, Joseph Nerl ’69, Andre Polissedjian ’72, Richard Sullivan ’64, and PepsiCo to participate in the challenge by giving an additional contribution to the Annual Fund this year.

The Alumni Challenge is actually a pool of donated funds from alumni and friends that will be used to match contributions in a future appeal. Its purpose is to encourage increased giving, especially from our younger alumni of the past 10 years – the next generation of philanthropists. We will use funds from the Alumni Challenge to match a first-time contributor, or an increased contribution. “Rhode Island College provided me with the educational foundation that has been a key factor in my personal and career success,” said Tim Sullivan. “My special request is for the Annual Fund – it provides many valuable scholarships to students, programs for alumni, and of course the Alumni Association magazine, our world-class publication packed with alumni news and stories.”

Daphiney Edmundson, president of Wilson College in Chambersburg, Penn., said, “I have seen how helpful challenges can be for the annual fund. I am glad to help out.”

If you’d like to participate in the Alumni Group Challenge, please contact the Annual Fund office at 401-456-8827.

Rhode Island College

To Our Graduates and Friends

If you make your charitable Contribution through SECA (State Employees Charitable Appeal), the Combined Federal Campaign or the United Way, we have important information for you.

There are two ways you can donate to the College through the ease of payroll deduction

1. Give to the Alumni Association
Help support student scholarships, faculty research, the Alumni Magazine, homecoming, and other alumni events and programs.
Questions? Call Cathy Hanrahan at 456-9547.

2. Give to the Rhode Island College Foundation
Donations support scholarships and funds focused on specific departments and programs at the College. If there is a particular fund or cause you wish to support, designate the Foundation as your choice. Questions? Call Cathy Hanrahan at 456-9547.

United Way Contributors
The United Way has eliminated the use of donor codes, but if you would like to designate your donation to a specific fund, simply list the name of an agency and the city and state where it is located on your pledge form. If you would like to direct your United Way donation to us, please write the following on your form:
Rhode Island College Alumni Association Providence, Rhode Island
Rhode Island College Foundation Providence, Rhode Island

SECA and Combined Federal Campaign Contributors
Fund codes are still used for the SECA and The Combined Federal Campaign.
To designate the Rhode Island College Alumni Association please use code #4473
To designate the Rhode Island College Foundation please use code #4984.
This year, eight student callers are helping to raise funds in our Fall Phonathon for the 2006-07 Annual Fund. Even though more people are screening phone calls, RIC alumni usually respond positively to our courteous and friendly students. Nearly $50,000 has been raised so far towards our goal of $75,000.

Four of our callers are recipients of Alumni Association scholarships, thanks to the generosity of RIC alumni donors and friends. They are Ibilolia Holder ($500), Michelle Liese ($400), Sarah Rochon ($1,000), and Sarah Voccio ($400).

They will be calling for pledges until late November. Thank you for making a pledge when they call!

Rhode Island College Young Alumni Group Sponsors Community Service Event at the Rhode Island Community Food Bank

**FOOD SORTING NIGHT**

**Wednesday, November 15, 2006**

200 Niantic Avenue in Providence

Please help the RJC Young Alumni Group sort food for our friends and neighbors in need.

This will be the Young Alumni Group’s sixth annual community service night at the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. We are in a friendly competition between local college and university alumni clubs culminating in the “Golden Pallet Award,” presented to the club who successfully inspects and sorts the most food during their evening shift.

Join us for pizza at 5 p.m. We will sort 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Please R.S.V.P. for planning purposes.

Alumni, friends, and children over the age of 14 are welcome to attend.

* Have an idea for a future young alumni activity? Join the Young Alumni Group Advisory Committee

To R.S.V.P. or for more information, call Shana Murrell at 401-456-9625 or email alumni@ric.edu

Milken Awards

Continued from p 1

Sequin has been an “inspiration” and “one of my best students,” Martha Julia Sellers, assistant professor at Tufts University, told What’s News. Sequin said she was “extremely grateful to (RJC) for equipping me with the tools and knowledge I needed to become a successful teacher.”

Julie Wollman, dean of the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development called the awards “an honor for these outstanding teachers and also for the College, where we are very proud of our excellent teacher education programs.”

The other Milken Award winner in Rhode Island was Catherine Moffitt, a physical education and health teacher in the Charlestown School District.

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The Milken Educator Awards provide recognition to exceptional teachers, principals, and other educators around the nation. In addition to the cash award, winners receive a trip to Los Angeles for a conference and awards ceremony, and membership in a network of over 2,200 educators who have earned the award since it was first given in 1997. The awards have been presented in Rhode Island since 1990, and there have been 65 recipients so far in the state. This is the 10th year Massachusetts has participated in the program.

(Carcieri’s and Driscoll’s comments were cited in separate releases by the state education departments.)
FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR’S DESK

Donald E. Tencher
Director of Athletics

Rhode Island College celebrates 30 Years of women’s athletics

The 2006-07 school year marks the 30th anniversary of women’s varsity intercollegiate athletics at RIC. Women’s teams began participating in organized varsity athletics in 1976-77 and the College will celebrate this milestone with a gala event this spring. This event will honor pioneers, teams and individual achievements of female student-athletes and coaches over the past three decades.

If you have a nomination idea, please contact Art Pontarelli ’71 at 401-456-8863 or apontarelli@ric.edu.

The women’s soccer team is currently 13-6 heading into the playoffs. Congratulations to first-year coach Denis Chartier and his troops on a major turnaround in this year’s program. Good luck ladies!

Women’s volleyball is currently 19-12 and ranked second in the conference going into the conference championships.

The men’s soccer team enters postseason play with a 10-5-1 record, good enough for third in the conference. Going into the final week of the season the team could have finished anywhere from first to fifth – that’s conference parity.

Congratulations to the women’s tennis team on another outstanding season as it compiled a 13-1 record and lost a heartbreaker in the NCAA bid.

NET GAINS: From left, Junior Kseniya Gurvich, sophomore Meg Funk, junior Sasha Doonan and freshman Julie Bannon captured Little East Conference titles at the LEC tennis championships on Oct. 22. Bannon was the LEC champion at number six singles and teamed with Gurvich to capture the number three doubles flight title. Funk and Doonan were the conference champions at number one singles.

Athletic Hall of Fame nominations due Nov. 25

Now is the time to submit nominations for the Rhode Island College Athletic Hall of Fame, Class of 2007. Obviously, all nominees should have excelled in their sport and must be a graduate of the College. All nominations should include the candidate’s name, address and telephone number. Please submit all nomination materials to Art Pontarelli ’71 at 401-456-8863 or apontarelli@ric.edu. The deadline for submitting a nomination is Saturday, Nov. 25.

VICTORY RUN: Senior Eric Lonergan (right) placed first overall out of 128 competitors with a time of 26:44 at the Little East Conference/MASCAC Alliance Men’s Cross Country Championships on Oct. 29.

SPORTS

Events Nov. 6 - Dec. 11

Men’s Basketball
Fri. Nov. 17 vs. Endicott College ^ 5 p.m.
Sat. Nov. 18 Consolation/Championship ^ 2 or 4 p.m.
Tues. Nov. 28 Fitchburg State 7 p.m.
Sat. Dec. 2 Keene State * 3 p.m.
Tues. Dec. 5 at Johnson & Wales 7:30 p.m.
Thurs. Dec. 7 at Salve Regina 7:30 p.m.
Sat. Dec. 9 at Plymouth State * 3 p.m.

Women’s Basketball
Fri. Nov. 17 vs. University of New England # 8 p.m.
Sat. Nov. 18 Consolation/Championship # 1 or 3 p.m.
Tues. Nov. 21 Bridgewater State 7 p.m.
Tues. Nov. 28 at Wellesley 7 p.m.
Thurs. Nov. 30 Roger Williams 7 p.m.
Sat. Dec. 2 Keene State * 1 p.m.
Tues. Dec. 5 at Johnson & Wales 5:30 p.m.
Thurs. Dec. 7 at Connecticut 6 p.m.
Sat. Dec. 9 at Plymouth State * 1 p.m.

Wrestling
Sat. Nov. 11 at Roger Williams Invitational 10 a.m.
Wed. Nov. 15 M.I.T. 7 p.m.
Sat. Nov. 18 at Springfield College Invitational 10 a.m.
Wed. Nov. 29 at Plymouth State 6 p.m.
Sat. Dec. 2 at R.I.T. Invitational 9:30 a.m.
Fri. Dec. 8 at Wesleyan 6 p.m.

Men’s & Women’s Indoor Track & Field
Sat. Dec. 2 at Brown Invitational 10 a.m.
Sat. Dec. 9 at Harvard Invitational 11 a.m.

Home contests in bold.
^ at Tufts Tip-off Tournament
# at St. Joseph’s (Conn.) Tournament
* Little East Conference contest
† New England College Conference Wrestling Association contest

Log on to www.ric.edu/athletics for updated schedules and results.
Academically Speaking

Tempus fugit...and the evolution of the honors program at RIC

BY Spencer Hall
Professor of English and Director of Honors

Time flies when you’re having fun.

At my age, time flies whether you’re having fun or not, but that’s another matter. A couple of recent news stories have brought to mind the *tempus fugit* theme and got me thinking about the growth of honors at Rhode Island College since the early 1980s when I was asked to create an honors sequence as part of the College’s new General Education Program.

Both General Education and General Education Honors have undergone significant changes over the years, but one constant has been the procession of academically talented and motivated students who have made directing the program an immensely rewarding experience.

About a month ago, the picture of former honors student Amanda Sequin was featured on the front page of The Boston Globe. Amanda, an elementary English immersion teacher, had just received a $25,000 National Educator award. I remember Amanda, and I remember, too, several other honors students who went on to become Teachers of the Year in Rhode Island and elsewhere.

On this page, there’s a picture of RIC President Nazarian greeting Colleen Redihan. Colleen is a freshman English major who lives just down the street from the College and who attended Classical High School. She is the latest recipient of the Nazarian Honors Scholarship, an award given annually to an outstanding incoming freshman in the General Education Honors Program.

This year’s group of about 60 freshmen (there were 12 in the first graduating class in 1986) includes two valedictorians and one salutatorian, and provides ample evidence of something too often overlooked: that, as a “college of opportunity,” it is incumbent upon us to offer opportunity, encouragement, and nurture to all of our students, including the highest academic achievers.

Agnieszka Marczak is one of those high achievers. In the previous issue of What’s News, she recounted her “life-changing” semester abroad in New Zealand sponsored by the Shinn Fund but did not mention that she is the first recipient of the newly endowed Eleanor McMahon Rising Junior Honors Scholarship. The scholarship will be given each year to a junior who has completed the General Education Honors Program and is going on to do departmental honors in his or her major.

Agnieszka’s proposed senior honors thesis in anthropology is tentatively titled *The World of Tattoo*. A student who completes both General Education Honors and departmental honors achieves College Honors. At the Cap and Gown ceremonies last May, Christopher Furey received the Eleanor McMahon College Honors Award given to an outstanding graduating senior. Chris entered the Brown University medical school this fall, thus following in the footsteps of a lengthening procession of honors students. He will be followed in his turn by Sunny Intwala, who was accepted to the Brown medical school program last semester.

The expansion from a General Education honors program to a four-year College Honors program involved the establishment of honors programs in every department in the College, a significant goal that has now been reached. We have also instituted two college-wide courses, a Junior Year Colloquium and a Junior Year Seminar, that are designed to help students prepare to do senior honors work in their respective majors.

I am especially pleased that those two classes are currently being taught by Quenby Hughes, an assistant professor of history and one of the most consistently popular General Education Honors Program faculty members. For a number of years now, Rebecca Sparks, assistant professor of mathematics, has allayed the anxieties of non-mathematicians in one of our most consistently popular General Education Honors classes.

Of course, the passage of time brings sad as well as pleasant moments. I just learned of Kenneth Lewalski’s passing. Ken, a legendary figure in the history dept., like the late Mark Estrin, equally a legend in the English dept., was one of the first colleagues whose participation I sought in beginning the General Education Honors Program more than 20 years ago.

But let me end on a more forward-looking note. Peter Boyer, certainly one of the most accomplished and best-known alumni of the College Honors Program, graduated in 1991, and his son, Stephen Spencer Boyer, joined the graduate program in 2008. Stephen was named for Stephen Martorella, Peter’s mentor in music at Rhode Island College, and for an honors director who had the good fortune to help along a brilliant and motivated student at a critical time in his life. Time flies when you’re having fun but also confirms in its flight connections and continuities that link the past to the future and that glow gold-vermilion.
The Tempest
at Rhode Island College

The Tempest, one of Shakespeare's last plays, was first performed in 1611. It is a complex work that explores themes of magic, intrigue, and romance.

When Colonna started to develop a stage concept for The Tempest at RIC, he focused on the shipwreck and first thought “Titanic.” But then, as he was watching Pirates of the Caribbean, something clicked, he said. “The shipwreck, an island, nobles plotting to kill were all elements of a pirate story,” he noted. “You can see Alonso as a pirate king and Prospero a former one.”

Colonna believes that Shakespeare is “more accessible than we think.” When you go to see Shakespeare, he said, “Try to get the idea out your head that I’m not going to get it.”

Still it helps to have something to identify with, so Colonna takes the nontraditional approach to Shakespeare. Of all the productions in his 20 years at the Rhode Island Shakespeare Theatre, he recalled, “Only about five or six were traditional. The rest were nontraditional. For example, we did a sci-fi Coriolanus and a musical version of Merchant of Venice. That was one of our most popular productions.”

Colonna believes that music is an important part of The Tempest, so he will use live music and an original score by Corrine Wahlberg, a student at the College. “It will include sea chanties, traditional folk music, Celtic music, island music, and even hip hop,” said Wahlberg. “The instruments range from tin whistles to drum sets and electric guitars. The actors will be playing the instruments so a lot depends on their capabilities. It will be an ensemble composed show.”

Bob Colonna, who is the son of the late comedian, singer and songwriter Jerry Colonna, has had a long relationship with Shakespeare. His first equity show, in 1963, was at the Old Globe in San Diego, where he played Snug in A Midsummer Night’s Dream. More than 40 years later, Colonna is still keeping Shakespeare fresh and exciting.

Performance times are 8 p.m. November 15-18, with 2 p.m. matinees on November 18 and 19. General admission is $14. For further information call the box office at 401-456-8144.
FROGZ is fantastic fun – Nov. 16 at RIC
Rhode Island College is proud to present Imago Theatre’s FROGZ, which leaps into town with magical creatures, fun games and fancy tricks on Thursday, Nov. 16. The show, a Performing Arts Series presentation, begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Auditorium in Roberts Hall.

A theatrical menagerie of wonder, whimsy and wackiness, seen by millions worldwide on television and stage, FROGZ is creature-theatre at its best. Inspired by the circus and silent movies, the creatures of FROGZ tell their story through fluid choreography, music and magic – yet they never utter a word. See penguins playing musical chairs, introverted frogs, acrobatic worms, giant paper bags, orbs, accordions and other larger-than-life creatures beyond belief.

Guaranteed to deliver a delightful and unforgettable experience of stage illusion, comedy and pure fun, FROGZ captures animals, inanimate objects and the strangest creature of all – the human being – in a most hilarious light.

The New York Times called FROGZ a “sure-fire giggle-inducer” that “opens the eyes to the possibilities of exploration.”

Tickets for FROGZ are $30 with discounts for seniors, RIC faculty/staff/students and children. For your convenience, tickets can be purchased as follows: in advance via VISA or MasterCard by calling 401-456-8144 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays; online at www.ric.edu/pfa; or at the box office in the lobby of the appropriate performance venue, which will be open for sales two hours prior to performance start time.

RIC Wind Ensemble, Roger Williams Dance Theatre collaborate Dec. 1

The RIC Wind Ensemble, conducted by Rob Franzblau, will be joined by the Roger Williams University Dance Theatre for a night of “Songs and Dances” on Friday, Dec. 1 at 8 p.m. in the Auditorium in Roberts Hall.

Highlights of the night will include two world premieres: Taking Flight by RIC percussion instructor Michael DeQuattro, with choreography by Kathy Gordon Smith; and Two Songs for Winds by Michael Weinstein, a Boston-area composer and teacher who originally wrote the piece for his wedding. Also on the program will be Igor Stravinsky’s Circus Polka, which was composed for a Ringling Bros. Circus elephant dance, with choreography for the elephants by Franzblau as “very simple and beautiful,” will be performed by the full ensemble. So too will Serenade, originally conceived as English composer Derek Bourgeois’ wedding procession accompaniment. It’s written in a meter that reflects the fact that he would be limping down the aisle on a broken leg.

Concluding the performance will be Alfred Reed’s Russian Christmas Music. Reed, who passed away last year, was known especially for composing band music. In the piece, he uses four Russian Christmas hymns and music from the Russian Orthodox Church. The piece is “alternately very tender and very powerful in a lush, romantic way,” said Franzblau.

General admission is $7; seniors and non-RIC students, $5; RIC students, faculty and staff, free. Call 401-456-8144 for more information.

Muir String Quartet with special guest Eric Ruske to perform at RIC Nov. 20

The Muir String Quartet will collaborate with celebrated French horn soloist Eric Ruske as part of the Performing Arts Series on Nov. 20 at 8 p.m. in Sapinsley Hall in the Nazarian Center.

Ruske, born in Chicago, has been a professor of horn at Boston University since 1990, and the director of the Horn Seminar at Boston University’s Tanglewood Institute since 1998. His performances as a soloist include appearances with the Baltimore and Indianapolis Symphonies, Boston Pops Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, the Israel Chamber Orchestra, and numerous others.

Some of his recordings include the complete Mozart Concerti with Sir Charles Mackerras and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, a world premiere recording of the Concerto Evocativo for horn and string orchestra by Roberto Sierra, and a discography on the Albany Records label that includes two recordings of virtuoso transcriptions for horn and piano.

The Muir String Quartet, which is returning to RIC for the first of three performances for the 2006-07 season, is considered one of the world’s most prominent string ensembles. The quartet has appeared annually in major chamber music series throughout North America and Europe since it first performed in 1980. The quartet was

also featured on the internationally acclaimed PBS broadcast, In Performance at the White House. Muir is in its 23rd year as quartet in residence at Boston University School of Music.

Committed to furthering music education, the quartet has taught and coached the Advanced Quartet Studies Workshop in Utah, where they work with renowned composer Joan Tower, aspiring quartets and young composers. Muir has also given master classes at the Eastman School of Music, Oberlin, and the Curtis Institute of Music, from which all four members graduated in 1979.

Muir – featuring Lucia Lin, Steven Ansell, Michael Reynolds, and Peter Zazoﬁsky – “has continued to embody American quartet playing at its best,” according to the Toronto Star.

Tickets for the Muir String Quartet are $30, with discounts for seniors, RIC faculty/staff/students and children. For your convenience, tickets can be purchased as follows: in advance via VISA or MasterCard by calling 401-456-8144 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays; online at www.ric.edu/pfa; or at the box office in the lobby of the appropriate performance venue, which will be open for sales two hours prior to performance start time.
RIC Symphony Orchestra concert a memorial to Perry Rosenthal

BY Edward Markward
Conductor of the RIC Symphony Orchestra

The Rhode Island College Symphony Orchestra will dedicate its second concert of the 2006-07 season to musician and RIC adjunct faculty member Perry Rosenthal, who passed away suddenly in April. Joining the orchestra will be cellist Mihail Jojatu, an outstanding artist who occupies the Sandra and David Bakalar Endowed Chair in the Boston Symphony Orchestra. This special event will take place Monday, Dec. 4 at 8 p.m. in Sapinsley Hall in the Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts.

Jojatu, who taught cello, theory and music appreciation at the College, was principal cello of the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra. He also coached the cello section, performed with the RIC Symphony Orchestra and was a member of the Trio Rhode, the RIC faculty string trio.

Guest performer Jojatu was Rosenthal’s stand partner in the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra. He studied at the Bucharest Academy of Music before coming to the United States, where he attended the Boston Conservatory of Music.

Through Boston University, Jojatu studied with BSO principal cellist Jules Eskin. He has collaborated with artists such as Yefim Bronfman, Sarah Chang, Gil Shaham, members of the Juilliard and Muir string quartets, and Seiji Ozawa.

RIC CHORUS

Jojatu has been a guest soloist with the Boston Pops and the Radio Symphony Orchestra of Bucharest. Recently he has performed with the Berkshire and Longwood symphonies, and with the Indian Hill Symphony Orchestra under Bruce Hangen. This is Jojatu’s second appearance with the RIC Symphony Orchestra.

He will be performing Ernest Bloch’s Schelomo (Solomon): Hebraic Rhapsody for Violoncello and Orchestra. Bloch has said that it is “the Hebrew spirit that interests me, the complex, ardent, agitated soul that vibrates for me in the Bible.”

Virtually every major cellist before the public has recorded this magnificent work.

The concert opens with Richard Wagner’s Introduction to Act III of Lohengrin, and also features Felix Mendelssohn’s moving Symphony No. 5, the Reformation. The latter is based in part on Martin Luther’s famous hymn tune Ein feste Berg (A Mighty Fortress).

General Admission is $7; seniors and non-RIC students, $5; RIC students, faculty and staff, free.

RIC presents a Winter Choral Concert, featuring the RIC Chorus, Chamber Singers, and the Women and Men’s Choruses on Dec. 8 at 8 p.m. in Sapinsley Hall in the Nazarian Center. Teresa Coffman, associate professor of music, will conduct all but the Men’s Chorus, which will be under the baton of Tianxu Bao, associate professor of music, who teaches jazz improvisation, jazz theory and coaches jazz combos, will take the stage as a highlighted guest, performing songs either written by or for him. Admission is free.

Master sculptor Elaine Spatz-Rabinowitz creates paintings on cast plaster and other forms in a mixed-media, painterly manner. She will highlight her “Recent Works” at Bannister Gallery through Nov. 30.

RIC CHORUS

MIRELLE LAMB (PHOTO: BEN KELLEY)

The latter is based in part on Martin Luther’s famous hymn tune Ein feste Berg (A Mighty Fortress).

Gettin’ jazzy on Dec. 11

The Rhode Island College Jazz Band’s opening concert will be on Dec. 11 at 8 p.m. in Sapinsley Hall in the Nazarian Center.

Josph Foley, assistant professor of music, will be directing the Jazz Band though renditions of Satin Doll by Duke Ellington, Moanin’ by Charles Mingus and A Night in Tunisia by Dizzy Gillespie, to name a few.

Greg Abate, an adjunct professor who teaches jazz improvisation, jazz theory and coaches jazz combos, will take the stage as a highlighted guest, performing songs either written by or for him. Admission is free.
Astrologer and RIC alum Myrna Lamb authors book on sexuality

In the sphere of astrology, Myrna Lamb M ’88 is a star who has aligned herself with over 30 years of experience on the topic, including an ongoing radio talk show and weekly column. Now she’s entered a new realm – authorship – that combines her zest for the zodiac with a survey about sexuality. Her findings, she said, are “astonishing.”

The Astrology of Great Sex…What Your Lover Wants

In The Astrology of Great Sex…What Your Lover Wants, Lamb gleaned insights from the responses of over 1,200 men and women who were asked about their sexual preferences, fantasies and experiences. Armed with the results, she applied her knowledge of astrology – the study of the positions of the moon, sun and planets in the belief that they affect humans – to create a primer on sexual compatibility.

Lamb explores, sign-by-sign, the partnerships that complement each other and the ones likely to fizzle. Two examples: A Gemini-Leo pairing should be stable for the long haul, but an Aquarius-Pisces coupling is headed for trouble. As a counseling astrologer, Lamb suggests ways to make even the most difficult relationships work.

According to Lamb, The Astrology of Great Sex can be particularly helpful in the early stages of a relationship, when people often make mistaken assumptions based on first impressions and chemistry. The book also includes two copies of Lamb’s sexuality questionnaire for readers to answer if they wish. The new book may be a good fit for the times. Lamb said that in meeting with thousands of astrology clients over the years, sexuality was rarely discussed until about 10 years ago, when she began to talk about sexual differences.

In reviewing astrology texts on the subject of sexuality, Lamb found them to contain many things that made sense, but found gaps as well. She believed that the books were unexciting and doubted that people would spend enough time reading them for them to be of much help. So Lamb, who holds a master’s degree in psychology from RIC, decided to get some first-hand data on the subject by creating a survey and gathering personal accounts.

She hoped that the information she collected would support her astrological assumptions, but wasn’t sure that would be the case. It turned out that the extent to which her survey correlated with astrological signs was remarkable, she said.

“The degree of consistency within sun signs in answering the questions was astonishing to me,” said Lamb. “The answers were so similar – even down to using exactly the same words. For example, the sign of Aries rules the head and the features of the face. Every Aries listed kissing as a favorite sexual activity.”

The astrologer-author has plans for at least two more books on sexuality. Lamb can be heard Saturday evenings on WPRO-AM radio in Rhode Island providing astrology-based advice to callers. She also writes a weekly astrology advice and information column, Looking Ahead, which appears in Neighbors of Lincoln-Cumberland and The Times of Pawtucket.

RIC hosts Carcieri announcement on scholarship increase proposal

Incentive proposal would offer scholarship money that can be used to attend any college or university in Rhode Island. The maximum award per student would be about $8,200 (equal to the annual tuition and fees at the University of Rhode Island).

The new initiative, combined with the existing state scholarship program and expanded dual enrollment and Advanced Placement programs, would total $25 million.

RIC President John Nazarian thanked the governor for proposing the plan. Speaking about the value of a college education, he said there were “few investments one can make with a better or more reliable rate of return.”

Jack Warner, state commissioner of higher education, lauded the proposed scholarship increases, noting that nationally, students of low-income families are nine times less likely to get a college degree than a similar students of high-income families. He added that a person with a bachelor’s degree earns nearly $1 million over a lifetime compared to someone with just a high school diploma.

The Faculty Research Symposium will be held Tuesday, Nov. 14, from 5-7 p.m. in Alger Hall 110. This year’s speakers are Maureen Reddy, professor of English, who will discuss “Reinventing Irishness: Race and Nation in Irish popular Culture”; and Krisjoh Hrvat, professor of art, who will present “Behind the Curtain.” The symposium is sponsored by RIC Alumni Affairs, the RIC Foundation, the Faculty Research Committee, and the Friends of Adams Library.

To attend Brown University in 1961, Gov. Donald Carcieri said he needed the $1,000 state scholarship he received that year. Carcieri’s remark came at a news conference at RIC last month, in which he proposed a new $10 million state appropriation plan for scholarships based on a combination of need and merit. If approved by the General Assembly, the Governor’s Academic Merit
A student at the University of Connecticut, Erin McCauley worked in the school’s Community Outreach Office, running a tutoring and mentoring program. She enjoyed making connections between college students and schoolchildren and was encouraged to seek a leadership position to further her problem-solving and managing skills.

After graduating from UConn in 2005 with a BA in history and minor in human rights, McCauley put grad school on hold to join the AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer program. AmeriCorps VISTA is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, an independent federal agency created to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to give back to their communities and the nation.

McCauley arrived at RIC in July through the Rhode Island Campus Compact’s VISTA program. She is the coordinator of community engagement responsible for RIC’s American Democracy Project, working on endeavors with students and staff that involve the campus community and the community at large.

“Erin is an experienced AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer, having worked last year at the University of Delaware,” said Valerie Endress, associate professor of communications. “She comes to us with solid experience in campus program building, as well as a strong commitment to life-long public service.”

“When I work with students, my goal is to be a connector,” said McCauley. “That’s essentially what being a VISTA entails. We provide in-direct service and it’s very satisfying to not just give someone the answer to a problem, but give the tools to figure it out for themselves.”

Through the program she is tied to a network of thousands across the country in other AmeriCorps programs. As a representative of AmeriCorps VISTA, one of her roles is to be a spokesperson for the program. McCauley said she enjoys discussing national service and how it helps communities.

McCauley chose to work at RIC because she was excited about the American Democracy Project. “I’m a big proponent of civic engagement and education and RIC is starting to develop some really progressive ideas around these areas,” she said. “DebateWatch really interested me because you get to involve students in a research study and in politics. I wanted to gain experience in higher education, at a public college, because I’m thinking about working in this field.”

Currently her focus is on RIC’s Open Books—Open Minds program, where students, faculty and members of the campus community read a book selected by the committee, and discuss its themes and social implications in group discussions and at campus events dedicated to the program.

Another initiative in the works is a Student Summit on Involvement, a project based on the suggestions of students. McCauley plans to work with students to host a forum where students and student leaders at RIC can come together to discuss campus involvement, leadership, and engagement between individuals, organizations, faculty, staff, and others associated with the College.

“It’s going to be student driven, from the bottom up, so I’m really excited to see how it pans out,” she said. “We’d like to get as many student perspectives as possible.”

McCauley is also assessing civic engagement at RIC as well as service learning in classes offered at the College.

So far, McCauley’s presence at RIC appears to be making a difference.

“She’s already proven herself to be a role model for our students, and an inspiration to our faculty,” said Endress.

BY Ericka Atwell ‘09 Staff Writer

David Copperfield performance to benefit Shinn Study Abroad Fund

“Like a fond parent, I have a favorite child; his name is David Copperfield.” That, of course, comes from Charles Dickens’ famous novel, David Copperfield, which is being brought to life in a new adaptation for the stage at 2nd Story Theatre in Warren. The theatre has kindly offered its “Friends and Family Night” on Nov. 15 to the Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr. Study Abroad Fund for its annual Fall 2006 fundraising event.

The doors will open at 7:30 p.m. for an informal cash bar of wine, beer, soda, water and popcorn. The performance will begin at 8 p.m., with a cavalcade of unforgettable characters on the stage coming to vivid, comic life.

2nd Story Theatre has been delighting audiences since 1978, first above a restaurant in Newport, then on the East Side of Providence, and in Barrington before moving to Warren, where under artistic director Ed Shea, it has succeeded in becoming a permanent part of Rhode Island’s cultural scene.

The theatre is indeed on the second floor, but is not handicapped accessible at present, and operates on a limited open seating plan.

During the intermission of David Copperfield, a raffle will be held. Prizes include:
1) a weekend in the Berkshires, at a Lux, Mass. condo (sleeps 6)
2) a fall/winter Coach handbag
3) a gondola ride for 4
4) a wine basket
5) a ceramic vessel, handmade by Marguerite DeLucia Hall

Raffle tickets are $5 each, or 5 for $20. They may be purchased from Shinn Study Abroad Committee members, or at the Modern Languages Department in the afternoon (Craig-Lee Hall, 141). You need not be present at the drawing to win.

Due to the generosity of this year’s sponsors, all proceeds from this benefit event will go directly to providing financial assistance to future RIC undergraduates who apply for planned study outside the United States.

Frank Toti Jr. ’98 chairs the theatre event, and Mercine “Chris” Florio ’63 is the raffle chair.

Tickets to David Copperfield are $18. To make reservations or for more information, call Elaine or Gene Perry at 401-941-1542. Reservations will be acknowledged at the door. Tickets purchased at the door will be $20.

The Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr. Study Abroad Fund is maintained by the RIC Foundation. It provides income to support undergraduate students in planned study outside the United States.

The fund was established in the 1987-88 academic year by Professor Shinn through the generous support of his friends, colleagues, and former students. It allows any undergraduate with 30 semester hours of study at RIC who is in good academic standing in any field of study to apply. Grants are for a minimum of three months and a maximum of 24 months abroad and are of variable amounts.

BY Elaine Perry Associate Professor Emerita of Theatre

The School of Social Work open house

An open house for those interested in applying to the master of social work program at RIC will be held Tuesday, Dec. 19, from 2:30-4 p.m. in the School of Social Work. The session includes a question-and-answer period. To attend, call Eileen Ryan at 401-456-8864.
RIC students help schoolchildren with math, promote college education

BY Katharine Ricci ’07 Staff Writer

Rhode Island Writing Project partners with local schools on CSR grants

Three area schools have teamed with the RIC-based Rhode Island Writing Project to provide school-wide support for reading and writing in the content areas. The collaboration was achieved through separate Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) grants for the Ricci School in North Providence, North Providence High School, and Burrillville Middle School.

The grant named the Rhode Island Writing Project as the principal provider of support services. In each school, teachers in math, science, art and other subject areas are working together to devise journal writing assignments, interviewing activities, dramatizations — anything and everything that will engage students and help them to use writing to solidify learning.

Building on the “teachers teaching teachers” model of the National Writing Project, teachers are assuming leadership roles in working with their peers to craft interactive strategies that can help students overcome difficulties in dealing with complex texts and subject matter.

In addition, they inspire these children to attend college.

“Elementary school is when we say ‘I want to grow up to be...’” said Garofalo. “Kids still have dreams and those dreams seem attainable. By inserting the idea of college at that point, it then becomes part of the child’s dreams. Targeting students in high school is sometimes too late.”

There are 12 RIC student volunteers for the program, including three mentors returning from last year. Garofalo is pleased with this response, and hopes to add more next year.

“These students who [volunteer] are the students who are eager and enthusiastic about being in a classroom,” said Garofalo. “As preservice teachers they need to extend themselves.”

She said that mentoring helps the college students meet the education department’s 25-hour community service requirement for graduation.

Chris Weber ’07, an elementary education major, mentored in the program last year and is back for a second round.

Weber, who mentors on Wednesday mornings, tries to help his mentees see math as an “investigation,” not a process where “you’ll get the answer right paralysis.” He also aims to “take the fear, mystique” out of college by dropping subtle comments about RIC.

“If we’re working on addition, I’ll say something like, we do a lot of addition in my economics class,” said Weber.

Jamie Potvin ’08 is another second-time mentor. Potvin, an elementary education major, already completed her 25 hours of community service, but she signed up again.

“I really enjoyed it, getting to know those kids,” she said. “The kids are comfortable and feel privileged to work with a college student. It encourages me to see how excited the kids are to learn.”

Jennifer Woodruff ’07, an elementary education major and a former Hopkins Hill student, is a new Math Academy mentor. Her grandmother also volunteers at the school, and Woodruff plans to do her student teaching at Hopkins Hill.

The program is designed to be a relaxed casual learning experience.

“They create an atmosphere of students and college students hanging out, having a good time and learning math,” said Garofalo.

“Relaxed learning can be the best learning.”

There is no fixed curriculum. Materials are available in the classroom, but it is the mentor’s responsibility to identify and work with their mentees on their weakest areas. In some cases, mentors even bring in their own materials.

Potvin brought a baseball multiplication game for her student Greg.

The relationships between mentors and mentees gradually develop over time, said Kim O’Connell, one of the fourth-grade teachers.

“They end up working with someone who matches their personality,” said O’Connell. “For the first couple of weeks we ask the mentees to find a mentor to work with. As time goes by they get to know each other and that’s what we go by. They really kind of match themselves.”

Relationships are encouraged through organized exercises the first few classes. On the first day of the semester, O’Connell and Ray Raboian, the other fourth-grade teacher, set up posters around the room representing places like the beach, an orchard and a supermarket.

Kids walked around with a mentor and wrote on paper next to each poster different ways math can be used at these locations.

In preparation for the program this year, Tara Lambert from the Foundation for Excellent Schools spent time working with the students at Hopkins Hill, asking the children what they’d like to learn. She also conducted a two-hour training session with some of the mentors going over The Century Program, goals, and providing them with guidance on how to mentor and establish a relationship.

During the fall semester, mentors work with fourth graders and in the spring, fifth graders attend the academy.

This October, 60 fifth graders and parent chaperones visited the RIC campus for a discussion about college, a tour and lunch.

Hopefully when these fifth-grade guests decide if they will attend college, they will remember their visit and apply to RIC. That would make everyone proud.

Rhode Island Writing Project partners with local schools on CSR grants

The RIC Art Auction will be held Friday, Dec. 1 at 7 p.m. at Bannister Gallery. Previews will begin at 4 p.m. Alumni and friends of the College are encouraged to donate works of art for bid at this year’s event. Money generated from the auction will be used to help fund student activities.

To arrange for donations, please call the art dept. office at 401-456-8054. Deadline for drop-offs is Wednesday, Nov. 22.
RIC's Sarah Courtemanche student rep on higher ed board

BY
Alison Strandberg
Staff Writer

When speaking to Sarah Courtemanche '08, it's easy to forget that she is still in college. She is more articulate discussing the issues affecting education than someone twice her age. Luckily for Rhode Island College, this dynamic junior is the student representative for the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education.

In Courtemanche's words, the board is "the governing body for all three (Rhode Island) public higher education institutions providing an accessible and affordable system."

As the student representative, Courtemanche advocates for students at Community College of Rhode Island, the University of Rhode Island and RIC. Every two years a new student representative is appointed and every sixth year the honor goes to RIC. Appointed earlier this year, Courtemanche's term expires on Jan. 31, 2008.

Courtemanche sees the board as striving to improve the system already in place, with the bulk of its work making and editing policies that are already set.

She first heard about the opening on the board when an announcement was posted on the RIC website. Courtemanche, who is majoring in elementary education, was instantly drawn to the position. She has a history of school involvement and governance, having previously served on the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and the Residence Hall Committee. Courtemanche applied for the position without expectations. She said she was thrilled when RIC President John Nazarian asked her to come to his office to discuss the role. She must have done well: She was soon meeting state senators and government officials. Her candidacy moved ahead and her appointment was voted on the floor of the Rhode Island State Legislature. She was appointed with an official induction at the Rhode Island State House in March.

Board meetings are public and students often approach the board with questions and comments. Courtemanche and her fellow board members also visit the schools they represent. She visits different facilities and goes to as many events at the institutions as she can.

She takes her duties very seriously. "I feel like we are the guardians of the students and I am representing all three institutions," Courtemanche said. "I am always asking students, 'How do you feel about this policy? What would you change?'

The board is comprised of some well-known Rhode Island government, business and education leaders. Judge Frank Caprio serves as the chair. Many students would feel uneasy amongst such seasoned leaders, but Courtemanche said it is important to "never be intimidated because of someone's status." She said of her fellow board members that they are "just people too and want to help youth. As a young person I can give them that perspective."

In addition to her full schedule as a student and board member, Courtemanche runs a non-profit program, Teens-4-Teens, through St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Pawtucket. For the past six years she has been the youth coordinator for the Sunday school program at the church. The program pairs college students with teenagers who need help with homework and extra guidance. She and fellow RIC student Cassie Souto began the program in 2005. In the midst of their second year, the program now serves 25 area students with six Rhode Island College tutors. "I made the right choice coming to Rhode Island College," she said. "Public higher education has proved to be more beneficial for who I am as a person."
Web-based learning opening new doors to learning

BY Kerry McCartney Staff Writer

“Click, click.”

The simple use of a mouse gives today’s college student access to a cornucopia of knowledge, putting information at their fingertips in mere seconds, without leaving the comfort of their room. All it takes is a PC or laptop with an Internet connection.

“Web based learning allows students and professors to access and deliver information more easily, in a variety of forms – pictorial and textual,” said Greg Kniseley, professor of elementary education. “It provides a different way to communicate with one another.”

RIC utilizes a software program known as WebCT – World Wide Web Course Tools. Murray Goldberg, a professor at the University of British Columbia created WebCT in the 1990s. Today thousands of learning institutions in more than 70 countries utilize the software.

According to its website, WebCT is a “set of tools that facilitates the creation of sophisticated World Wide Web educational environments.”

WebCT provides an “interface for the design presentation of the course, a set of educational tools to facilitate learning, communication and collaboration, and set of administrative options to assist the designer/instructor in the management of the course.”

WebCT can be used to create entire online courses or simply publish a set of materials that supplement existing courses. The only software required to access WebCT is a web browser, which is freely available in libraries, college computer labs or in the home.

According to Richard Weiner, dean of Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the idea to introduce web-based learning at RIC emerged in the 1990s. At the time, Weiner and several other faculty members challenged the Office of Higher Education to provide resources to begin web-based learning to the state’s higher education institutions. These faculty members sought seed money to begin instituting the software and training for the faculty at RIC, as well as for the University of Rhode Island and the Community College of Rhode Island.

As a result of their challenge, six faculty members from each of the state’s three public higher learning institutions became fellows to learn this new technology and introduce web-based learning to their schools. Currently, there are 268 WebCT courses at Rhode Island College directed by 110 RIC faculty members. Approximately 4,700 students are enrolled in these courses. They learn by listening to audio clips and lectures, accessing databases and websites, and participating in chat rooms specifically designated for the course.

While some courses are only conducted online and require no face-to-face interaction with professors or fellow students, most faculty members use the technology as a tool to enhance classroom instruction, not as a sole substitute.

Often, assignments are submitted electronically and syllabi, lectures and notes are posted on their course’s website.

Email and chat rooms provide an arena to increase student participation and communication. “The online features of WebCT enable me to centralize electronic information and multimedia courses materials,” said Kniseley. “Students appreciate the organization of materials and the easy access. The discussion boards allow students to communicate easily with each other, planning asynchronously, while at home or at a RIC café.”

Maria Lawrence, assistant professor of elementary education, noted that two of the biggest advantages that web-based learning provides are access and equity.

“Students unable to travel for office hours or remain after class due to childcare, or whose work circumstances don’t permit office visits can access the course materials and instructor with greater ease providing they have reasonable, if not unlimited, Internet access,” she said.

“Equity is improved in that more students with a range of learning abilities benefit from being able to request course information be presented in multiple formats,” Lawrence added.

Susan Patterson, assistant professor of instructional technology, said that web-based learning provides an opportunity for students with a variety of personalities to participate in discussions.

“For me, the most significant difference is that online classes are more student-centered. All students participate in discussion and projects,” she said. “I often think about the student in the back of the traditional class who rarely speaks. This student doesn’t exist in an online class. Discussions are more balanced, all students participate.”

Despite the obvious benefits and increasing potential, instructors see drawbacks as well.

“A real disadvantage for some students and faculty is the technology learning curve,” said Lawrence. Time constraints prevent her from learning as much as she’d like about the technology. “The academic demands for students and faculty limits attaining an optimal use of the equipment and the software,” she said.

So, as web-based learning increases, are we witnessing the slow retirement of the chalkboard in RIC’s classrooms? Weiner thinks that the new technology should be used to enhance traditional learning rather than replace it.

“You can’t dismiss the value of students getting lost in the stacks,” said Weiner. “By that I mean, going to a library and having to research a topic through perusing books or journals not just simply ‘google’ a topic.”

“Teaching and learning is a social, interactive process and learning face to face will always be an important aspect of effective teaching and learning,” said Kniseley.

As for the students, WebCT garners mixed reviews. Kristen Saunders, a graduate student in the teaching program for elementary education, said that by checking WebCT almost daily, “I feel more involved with the class and more well-informed about my progress in the class.”

Yet, she found WebCT “tricky when you first use it,” and is constantly fearful that her teachers did not receive her assignments on time. Cara Gallagher, a graduate of the School of Social Work’s bachelor’s and master’s programs, found web-based learning more convenient for her lifestyle. However, she expressed a feeling that something was “missing.”

She said that taking a web-based course while pregnant was a plus, eliminating the need for her to travel to school and sit at a desk while tired. But, she found that she missed the discourse with her classmates on topics that might pop up spontaneously in a traditional classroom.

“For me, a lot of my learning was gained through exposure to people’s thoughts and opinions while sitting across or side-by-side with them,” said Gallagher.

Lawrence said that there are certain aspects of learning that simply can’t be taught online or through the web.

“There are learners and domains that will always require direct human interaction and direct common interaction with the world,” she said. “In science, we use all of our physical senses to conduct investigations, record data, and communicate our findings.”

The virtual equivalents for tactile and smell experiences aren’t yet available, she noted.

But who knows? There may come a day when “click, click” makes even them available, too.
Across the country, the 2006 elections were hot news, as the Democrats battled Republicans for majority control of the Senate and House, and 32 states held races for governor.

Locally, surveys were conducted by RIC’s Bureau of Government Research and Services as part of an ongoing research project to analyze the impact of media, debates, and campaign rhetoric in a mid-term election. Led by bureau director Victor Profughi, the project measures voter behavior through a series of focus groups, and polls before and after the elections.

At RIC, the election season brought politics and politicians to the campus in a big way.

Supporters of Sen. Lincoln Chafee and Sheldon Whitehouse engage in politicking in front of Alger Hall before the candidates’ debate on Oct. 16. The event was moderated by WHJJ’s Arlene Violet and broadcast live on her radio show.

Lt. Gov. Charles Fogarty (left) and Gov. Donald Carcieri (right) meet in a debate broadcast live Oct. 6 from Alger Hall on Arlene Violet’s radio show. Violet hosted and moderated the debate.

U.S. Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois (center) was the featured guest at a rally for Senate candidate Sheldon Whitehouse in the Recreation Center on Oct. 12. The event was paid for by the Whitehouse campaign. At left is U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy, at right is Whitehouse. Obama, who told the crowd “we’ve got to grow up as a country,” said recently that he was considering a run for president in 2008.

Student polltakers Karim Arias (left) and Daniela Campos track the latest trends for RIC’s Bureau of Government Research and Services on Oct. 24.

Sen. Lincoln Chafee and challenger Whitehouse debate the issues on Violet’s show in Alger Hall.