Special Inaugural Edition

Profile of 10th President
Frank D. Sánchez
Inaugural Speech
Five Strategic Pillars
Alumni Events
Dear Alumni and Friends,

As many of you are aware, I was formally installed as Rhode Island College’s 10th president this past February. When I arrived back in July, one of my top priorities was to get out there and talk with, listen to and begin to understand our RIC students, faculty, staff and broader community.

What I didn’t realize was the level of quality, value and innovation that exists on our campus. From our exceptional faculty to our nationally leading nursing program to our top-notch mentorships with students, I continue to be impressed by our institution and our legacy.

A large part of that legacy is you, our alumni. Throughout this issue of the “Rhode Island College Alumni Magazine,” we highlight stories about the inauguration ceremony and the events that led up to it. You will read about and see photos of students, faculty, community and, yes, alumni, who helped make the inauguration week unforgettable. These stories reflect the Rhode Island College of today: innovative, inclusive and influential.

In the 11 short months I have been here, we have made progress in some important areas. We are finalizing a three-year strategic plan for the college that builds on our existing strengths to better position us to meet the needs of tomorrow. We are also in the midst of a significant revitalization of our campus infrastructure, which you will read more about in this issue.

A few months ago, we launched the President’s Inclusive Excellence Commission. This advisory group is made up of community leaders from around the state who will help guide us as we strive to be a regional leader in this capacity. We have also re-engineered our student services by creating a new Division of Student Success, which will focus on improving the student experience and raising retention and graduation rates.

Read on to see how we are engaging the community through mutually beneficial partnerships and about some of the exciting ways RIC students are being prepared for a 21st century workforce. As we move this institution forward, I am grateful for the support and input from our alumni community.

Yours in education,

Frank D. Sánchez
President
Dear Rhode Island College Alumni and Friends,

I sincerely hope you enjoy this special edition of your Alumni Magazine highlighting the inauguration of our 10th president, Dr. Frank D. Sánchez. We’re thrilled to share the enthusiasm generated as result of president Sánchez’s leadership.

As I have said in the past, there is no better time to re-engage with Rhode Island College. For alumni who lived in the dorms in 1974-1978, particularly Weber and Willard Halls where I served as hall director: Remember the Blizzard of ’78, Dr. Nazarian driving a snowplow in our back parking lot, sledding on DDC trays; and midnight volley and basketball games in the old Whipple Gym. Finally, for those who remember my children, Kareem the “baby” just joined the ranks of proud RIC alums as a member of the Class of 2017 …at the tender age of 43!

Take an opportunity to revisit our campus. You will marvel at the growth and changes, even if you are a recent grad. Seek out the campus’ many enhancements for yourself, you will sign up to volunteer for or attend a special event. We offer something for everyone and would welcome the opportunity to talk about your interests, ideas and your fond memories of our alma mater. We are here to serve you, to keep you informed of the exciting opportunities available to our graduates and to reconnect you with the college and one another.

You can contact us with news, ideas or suggestions at any time at alumni@ric.edu, or call us at (401) 456-8086. Follow us on social media by searching “Rhode Island College Alumni Association” on Facebook; @RICAlumni on Twitter; and “Rhode Island College Alumni Association” on LinkedIn. We offer something for everyone and would welcome the opportunity to talk about your interests, ideas and your fond memories of our alma mater. We are here to serve you, to keep you informed of the exciting opportunities available to our graduates and to reconnect you with the college and one another.

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Please enjoy this special edition of your Alumni Magazine. We hope you find it informative and enjoyable. We are excited to see you soon!

Best wishes,

Mathies Santos ’82
Rhode Island College Alumni Association President

RIC Points of Pride

- First public college in Rhode Island
- Student-to-faculty ratio 14:1
- 70% of alumni live in Rhode Island
- RN to BSN program ranked #1 in New England and #10 in nation (RNtoBSN.org)
- Ranked #4 in New England in social mobility (2016 Social Mobility Index)
- Leader in teacher certification preparation in Rhode Island (RIC Office of Institutional Research and Planning)
- 2017 Green Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education – one of only nine higher education institutions in the country

MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR | Suzy Alba

Dear RIC graduate,

I hope that you’re enjoying these summer months and taking some time to be with your family and friends. This past year has been very successful for alumni engagement, and we look forward to planning and hosting an exciting array of summer and fall events and programming for our alumni.

We recently welcomed new board members at our annual meeting, and we will spend the next few months recruiting volunteers to serve on our many boards and reunion committees. We hope that when you stop by this summer to see the campus’ many enhancements for yourself, you will sign up to volunteer for or attend a special event. We offer something for everyone and would welcome the opportunity to talk about your interests, ideas and your fond memories of our alma mater. We are here to serve you, to keep you informed of the exciting opportunities available to our graduates and to reconnect you with the college and one another.

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Please enjoy this special edition of your Alumni Magazine. We hope you find it informative and enjoyable. We are excited to see you soon!

See you soon!

Suzy Alba ’05
Director, Alumni and College Relations
From the untamed landscape of the Rocky Mountains to his appointment as the 10th president of Rhode Island College, Frank D. Sánchez’s life has been one of tenacious resilience fortified by his upbringing and a learned value for education. His life experience has shown him that education is the great equalizer capable of opening a world of opportunities to those who have access. And he has made it his life purpose to ensure that higher education lives up to its promise for all students.

Born Mar. 7, 1968, in Gunnison, Colorado, Sánchez is as much a product of his environment as he is of his family history. Gunnison, a land without water, is located in the midst of several valleys in the Rocky Mountains and is one of the coldest places in America in the winter. His family later moved to Cheyenne, Wyoming, one of the windiest cities in America also known for its bone-chilling winters. Against this harsh, unforgiving backdrop, over centuries, a remarkable breed of men and women evolved — pioneers and frontiersmen — characterized by their remarkable mental and physical strength, endurance and, as Sánchez noted, “a rugged individualism.”

“Certainly with the weather, the wind, the cold, the plains and the mountains, the generations before my family had to be determined and focused to survive,” he said.

Sánchez was also imprinted upon by the stories of his family history. The son of a migrant Mexican mother and a Mexican American father, his parents lived through an era when anti-Mexican sentiments were prevalent across the Rocky Mountains and official policies excluded Mexican Americans from organizations and businesses. He would learn and become inspired about how his parents overcame adversity through their resilience and determination, managing to rise to the middle-class.

His father, Gil Sr., a third-generation Wyoming resident and a Marine, went on to earn his GED, a bachelor’s degree and two master’s degrees, becoming a principal at an alternative high school in Cheyenne. Alice, his mother, grew up as a migrant child in the fields of Nebraska and Colorado. She received an associate degree and supported Gil Sr. and the children as they continued their education. His sister Susan received an electrical engineering degree, while his brothers Jim and Gil Jr. earned advanced degrees in educational leadership. They are a loving, warm, close-knit family and a highly competitive one, Sánchez said.

Like his elder brothers, Sánchez was an avid wrestler, competing for 14 years both nationally and internationally. Physically, he has a strong, lean, internal frame, carrying himself with a graceful, balanced, solid energy. He lives primarily by his mind and will, which is focused, driven, pragmatic, highly organized and always with an eye on the bigger picture.

A self-described introvert, Sánchez is reflective by nature. When he’s not spending quality time with family, he enjoys an active lifestyle outdoors and enjoys reading about leadership and educational innovation. He thrives on inner mastery and never stops learning. He impresses with his intelligence and inspires with his eloquence. He seems to have been born to lead.

“My strength has always been my persistence,” he said, “a quality that is still with me today. I am driven to do better while advocating for change in institutions that I know can be better.”

His early years as a change agent in higher education began at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he advocated for and, at times, protested the lack of services for underrepresented populations and the lack of diversity in the faculty, curriculum and student body.

“We protested with signs calling for funding of services and challenged the administration to change their policies and programs,” he said. “I was an activist then and I remain an activist to some degree now. Activists can help institutions evolve in ways they may or may not be ready for by pushing the evolution of policies and programs or by guiding the reallocation of resources.”
His involvement in these activities would also change the trajectory of his life. “My involvement on campus led me to ask how college administrators began their careers in higher education,” he said, “which led to my own pursuit of a Ph.D. in higher education administration.”

Once Sánchez decided to focus his career on the advancement of students in higher education, he found his stride and began carving out a path that would lead him to the presidency at Rhode Island College, a college whose mission is to provide opportunity for a diverse community.

Sánchez completed his B.S. degree in psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1991 and went on to earn an M.A. degree in student affairs and higher education at Colorado State University in 1993. While completing his master’s degree, he focused his research on how to create college environments that help first-generation, low-income and underrepresented students succeed.

It was at Colorado State that Sánchez met his future wife, Lori Brooks, who was majoring in finance. Lori was an active peer leader and a top academic student, a member of the President’s Leadership Program and a resident hall assistant. She met Sánchez in her junior year at a residence hall training session. He was in his first year of graduate school and working as a residence hall director.

“We found that we both shared an interest in student affairs and in bettering the lives of students,” Lori said. “We also shared a love and commitment to family.”

Sánchez noted that Lori brings “balance, insight and wisdom” to his life. Along with her extraordinary business intelligence, Lori has brilliant emotional intelligence. She emanates openness and receptivity and has the ability to connect with others at a deep emotional level. These are the qualities she would bring to her future MBA degree and career in health care administration.

The two married in 1994. Lori explained, “It was a commitment to create space for one another to become what we needed to become.”

In 1995 their first son, Lawrence, was born. Their second son, Dante, arrived in 1996. And in 2004 their daughter Mariana was born. With his wife and children at his side, Sánchez earned a Ph.D. in higher education administration at Indiana University-Bloomington in 2003.

It was during his Ph.D. program that Sánchez began to think more broadly, examining systemic change in higher education to improve the educational environment for all students.

He would eventually rise to the top of his field, from vice president for student affairs at Adams State University (1999-2005); to associate vice chancellor for student affairs at the University of Colorado Denver/Anschutz Medical Campus (2005-2011); to vice chancellor for student affairs at the City University of New York (2011-2016), the nation’s largest urban public university; to president of Rhode Island College (2016).

Sánchez credits his mentors for investing in him both professionally and personally, and he is committed to making the same investment in RIC students.

“There are brilliant students who only need to be afforded the opportunity to demonstrate their talents, strengths and passion to succeed,” he said, “whether it’s a talented disadvantaged student simply needing the social capital to succeed or a student who can benefit from some well-timed encouragement, mentoring and inspiration.”

Sánchez wants to expand the ways in which Rhode Island College can advance its mission as a college of opportunity for all families. He is particularly committed to helping students build 21st-century skills so that they can be competitive in the global workforce and focusing the college’s energy and resources to provide students with a truly dynamic college experience.

If all the elements of RIC’s new three-year Strategic Action Plan are realized, “the Rhode Island College of tomorrow will be a thought leader in delivering a high-quality, high-value college degree,” he said.

Sánchez envisions a college campus where visitors will immediately experience a high-energy, high-activity environment, an environment where students and faculty are engaged in project-based activities both on campus and off, including practicums, internships, service-learning projects, field studies and study abroad.

“Students, families and faculty are looking for a place that is going to engage them and empower them for the future,” he said. “Rhode Island College is known for providing an individualized, learner-centered collegiate experience. That’s our strength and it’s been our strength for a long time. I want to focus our energy and resources so that RIC is not only spoken of as a great college but as an extraordinary thought leader among public higher education institutions.”
Thank you Chairman Foulkes, Chairperson Cottam and all of our guests who have come to Providence and Rhode Island College for this incredibly special occasion.

This is an extraordinary day for me and my family, and I am moved by the friends, colleagues and the broader Rhode Island community who have joined us for today's celebration.

I hope our guests have had the chance to enjoy the wonderful State of Rhode Island and meet some of our most talented and dedicated members of our college community.

Before I recognize our dignitaries and share some prepared remarks, I’d like to acknowledge the outstanding team of students, faculty, staff and alumni who planned all of the events leading up to this day. Their tireless and creative work has captured the college’s distinctive identity and character. Please join me in thanking them.

I would like to now acknowledge many of the visiting dignitaries and honored guests here today. Let me first recognize our Governor Gina Raimondo, U.S. Congressman and Rhode Island College alum James Langevin, and U.S. Congressman David Cicilline.

We also have with us Rhode Island state general officers: Lt. Gov. Dan McKee, Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea and General Treasurer Seth Magaziner.

I’d also like to welcome State Representative and Chair of House Finance Marvin Abney, members of the R.I. House of Representatives, State Sen. Hannah Gallo and members of the R.I. State Senate.

Thank you Secretary of Commerce Stefan Pryor for joining us as well as three distinguished city and town leaders: Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza; Cranston Mayor Alan Fung, also a RIC alum; and North Providence Mayor Charles Lombardi.

I want to acknowledge our Chair of the Board of Education Barbara Cottam and a special appreciation to our Chair Rhode Island Board of Education Chair Barbara Cottam and President Frank D. Sánchez
of the Postsecondary Council William Foulkes and to the members of both the R.I. Board of Education and Council on Postsecondary Education, including Commissioner James Purcell and Commissioner Ken Wagner.

Thank you President Dooley from the University of Rhode Island, President Hughes from the Community College of Rhode Island, all the visiting college presidents and higher education delegates. I’m honored you have joined me for this celebration.

I’m delighted that our President of Student Community Government Jose Rosario and RIC Faculty Council President and Master of Ceremonies Jeff Blais are able to join us for this afternoon’s ceremony.

And I am grateful to you Bishop Williams for your heartfelt invocation.

And a special thank you to Dr. Kevin Kruger, president of NASA, for your insightful and very kind remarks. If my mom weren’t in the audience, she would not have believed anything you said about me. Thank you.

You are all an amazed student. Many thanks to the Rhode Island College Concert Chorus, led by Professor Theresa Coffman; and the Rhode Island College Chamber Winds Ensemble, led by Professor Robert Franzblau.

Finally, I’m so grateful for our gifted artists here this afternoon: Cesar Sanchez, Mexico’s ambassador of the arts; and RIC Artist-in-Residence Judith Stillman. What a breathtaking performance. In fact, there are few words that more beautifully or adequately convey how I am feeling at this moment.

I love the phrase: To my entire family . . . this day is yours as much as it is mine. To the youngest in the family, my brothers and sister carried me, held my hand and allowed me to tag along. You protected me. Even now, even more than years past, I look up to each of you.

Mom and dad, words cannot express what you’ve given me; a way of living, filled with faith, love and possibilities. Your faith inspired a love for your children that allowed all of us to reach higher. I so admire your resilience to overcome the adversity of an earlier era, clearing a path for us and altering the lives of generations to come. I can only hope, and now aspire, to do the same.

My children Lawrence, Dante and Mariana, I could not have anticipated the insight, understanding and patience you have brought to my life. Everyday I become a better dad because of each of you.

My partner in life’s journey, Lori. Thank you, sweet, for filling our shared life with love, wisdom, balance, learning and celebration. You often believed in me more than I believed in myself and for that I am forever grateful.

To my entire family . . . this day is yours as much as it is mine. Over the last seven months, I have begun to get a glimpse of what makes Rhode Island College an uncommon force in propelling students’ lives, families, communities and this state forward.

RIC has a rich and distinctive identity, with a compelling legacy, focused inspiration and a future with unlimited possibilities. Please allow me a few moments to expand on these defining and enduring college attributes.

OUR LEGACY

As a newcomer, I am incredibly proud to be associated with an institution that has among the most distinctive histories in American higher education. RIC’s 163-year history boasts a pioneering legacy that is unmatched in the state. To be a pioneer is to be one who is first or among the earliest in any field of inquiry, enterprise or progress.

Established in 1854 as the country’s first fully funded state normal school and the state’s first public college, the birth of Rhode Island College took place alongside a budding nation.

To provide some context: Our founding in 1854 was the same year the territories of Nebraska and Kansas were created, the Republican Party was formally organized in that year – 62 years after the Democratic party – and the nation’s first black college was founded.

In 1854 this college led the state’s charge to provide education for a growing immigrant population and to prepare exception educators. What emerged was an institution intentionally designed to advance the social mobility for generations of Rhode Islanders, many blue collar and immigrant working-class families . . . a foresight that continues to be realized today.

For well over 16 decades, RIC has embraced a powerful institutional saga of a deliberate and vibrant college of opportunity.

Critical to the future of Rhode Island state and, frankly, this nation, RIC has fully embraced its original value proposition as a beacon of hope, inviting talented, motivated and determined students, regardless of income, background or station in life, to receive a high-quality, high-value college degree.

I recently spent time with a brilliant RIC alum. This gentleman, based on his academic talent, could have been accepted to any college in the nation. He shared with me that the universities were too expensive and, financially, he had to help his parents and 11 brothers and sisters.

RIC opened its doors to this young man and he took full advantage. That RIC alum, and now good friend of mine, became the eighth president of Rhode Island College – President Emeritus Johnin Nazarian.

Today, more than 70 percent of RIC graduates live, work and raise their families in Rhode Island. For generations, the college has prepared servants of the state and powered the state’s economy by investing in the talents, dreams and aspirations of its students.

This legacy reminds me of Eleanor Almada Thomson West, who in 1930 enrolled at RIC as a freshman educational teaching major. Her daughter, Paula, saw her mother’s example and, in 1962, also enrolled at RIC as an elementary education major. Both spent time teaching in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

Now, 87 years later, Eleanor’s great granddaughter, Emily West, joined our community this past fall as a freshman and, you got it, she is an elementary education major. I’m honored to have Emily, her mother Mary and her grandmother Paula in our audience today. Please wave and be recognized.

Rhode Island College has a long and proud legacy of effectively expanding the social and intellectual capital of Rhode Islanders and attracting driven individuals who are leaders in their families, communities and our broader society.

Whether it was Eleanor, who was the first in her family to attend college, or RIC alum superstar Viola Davis, who, last month, became the first African-American woman actress to win five Screen Actors Guild Awards and score three Oscar nominations.

Rhode Island College has always been an educational frontunner, a producer of talent, advocate of hope and champion of the state’s human potential and it will continue to honor this vital legacy for many years to come.

OUR INSPIRATION

Students are the life-blood and inspiration of this college. Today RIC educates and serves students who represent the wonderful and vibrant diversity of this state and region.
Our students come to us with a voracious, focused and hope-filled determination for a better quality of life. Like the generation before, our students have embraced the college’s pioneering spirit with nearly half being the first in their family to attend college and with most balancing other significant responsibilities to stay in school. Many have and are serving our country; raising children and working long hours to make college possible. All of them are offering their best in the classroom; in the lab; in campus organizations; and on the mat, court and field. Rhode Islanders have come to understand that this institution is not for the faint of heart but for those that are driven, inspired and proactively determining their place in the world. Our inspiration also gathers strength from an exceptional teaching faculty. In my 25 years as a higher education administrator, working at large, small, urban and rural, public and private institutions across the country, I’ve never seen a core strength in faculty-student interactions than here at RIC.

Infused in the philosophical and physical fabric of the college are faculty who have placed a premium on guided participation in the form of mentoring, coaching, advising and counseling students as a key strategy to effective teaching. RIC’s-faculty-student interactions, supported with an unwavering ethic of care, are second to none. In fact, my first mentor as a graduate student, Keith Miser, is watching via live stream today. Keith, every single day I see the same guidance, kindness, counsel and investment you gave me over 20 years ago in our faculty and staff as they work with our students. I hope you get to feeling better soon.

From the early work of Dr. Dana Colbert, the first executive of the college in 1854 and a pioneer in early active teaching strategies, to today’s faculty, we have embraced a proven philosophy where innovative and forward-thinking, hands-on learning experiences thrive. Similarly, the college draws inspiration from its legacy of serving diverse student populations. In this state, even before the Civil Right Movement, RIC was leading and fostering an inclusive campus experience. In the 1940s, when issues of equity and affirmative inclusion were not popular, RIC’s second president, President Lucius Albert Whipple, urged students to “break down barriers caused by the distinctions of class, race, creed and nationality.”

He told the class of 1940 not to let preconceived ideas impact their studies: “Your thinking cannot be confused by your prejudices, because prejudice steals our common sense and causes instability of thought.” I could not be more proud of the relentless inspiration shown by our students, faculty and staff as they strive to understand the challenging nuances of diversity in our daily lives and, more recently, in our national discourse. I will be the first to say we are not perfect, but it is clear that RIC’s identity and character, often led by our students, is not defined by others’ background, income, race, ethnicity or gender. At Rhode Island College, our students understand that a strong sense of community is less about who you vote for, how you worship or who you love. Instead, our students recognize and value a universal language that embraces common communal values of compassion, empathy and respect.

Our inspiration at Rhode Island College is fueled by an unwavering value of the human condition. An enthused and pioneering campus that places students at the center of our work; invests in an extraordinary teaching experience led by exceptional faculty; and actively clarifies our sense of a unified, diverse and inclusive community.

Our Future
So, let me ask: “How do we build on this storied institution’s rich legacy and a one-of-a-kind inspiration? How will we pioneer our future?”

Rhode Island College has a legacy and inspiration that has positioned us with unlimited potential and an extraordinary opportunity. Looking forward, we must prepare the Ocean State’s first public college for a brilliant, and perhaps unimaginable, future.

Earlier, Dr. Kruger offered some of the complexities and challenges of a rapidly changing higher education environment – challenges that present this college with an important and necessary decision in order for us to prosper.

The unyielding and dynamic educational milieu has brought us to an inflection point and now it calls on us to take action. It is clear to me, we do not need to reinvent ourselves by grasping for the latest educational fad. Instead, our strategy for becoming the regional leader among public colleges will be to direct resources in the pioneering philosophies that have shaped our legacy. Now, they will be a catalyst for our evolution. This June we will conclude our 2017-2020 Strategic Plan, which will provide us a platform for leveraging our strengths and charting our work ahead.

Five broad strategic pillars have emerged through this process and will guide investments going forward:

- Learning Innovation
- Student Success
- Community Partnerships
- Inclusive Excellence
- Institutional Effectiveness

By nature, as an administrator, I like to under promise and over deliver. Here are my promises:

RIC will aggressively advance a core value of learning, innovation and advance a 21st-century skills initiative. A taskforce will be charged with providing 100 percent of RIC graduates with robust experiential learning opportunities, as a strategy to better prepare graduates for a rapidly changing global workforce.

RIC will reimagine a bold new design and delivery of student services, programs and resources, leveraging the digital-mindedness of today’s and tomorrow’s students. This coming fall, RIC will launch a new Division of Student Success to lead this effort. The college will embrace a collective impact approach to forging new and entrepreneurial community partnerships, advancing the state in the areas of education, health care, technology and the arts.

FIVE PILLARS

Five broad strategic pillars have emerged through this process and will guide investments going forward:

- Learning Innovation
- Student Success
- Community Partnerships
- Inclusive Excellence
- Institutional Effectiveness
RIC will capitalize on our existing strengths in the area of inclusion by striving to ensure all students have the cultural competency and emotional agility to be effective in today’s diverse society while reinforcing the fabric of our nation’s democracy.

“The digital landscape continues to barrel forward and we must be ready to meet new educational demands while not compromising RIC’s high-quality instruction and student interactions in the classroom.”

This week we announced a President’s Commission on Inclusive Excellence. An advisory commission made up of Rhode Island scholars, artists, community leaders and educators to help our college become a national leader in building stronger, more inclusive, campus communities.

Rhode Island College will preserve our pioneering legacy by honoring the thousands of Rhode Islanders who were the first in their family to attend college. I am announcing today the creation of a First-in-Family Fund. This past fall, 43 percent of our freshmen were first-generation college students and we will fortify our support of our own young, aspiring pioneers.

Finally, while embracing technology is not a new concept, I believe it is a necessary and essential element of RIC’s future.

The digital landscape continues to barrel forward and we must be ready to meet new educational demands while not compromising RIC’s high-quality instruction and student interactions in the classroom.

In this spirit, I am introducing to the college today, A Decade of Technology:

This signature initiative will require us to marshal resources toward enhancing our exceptional faculty-student interactions while advancing high-tech, high-touch classroom instruction and student services in a traditional college setting.

Many of our students were born in this new era of mobile devices, social media communities and access to information around the world. Tomorrow’s RIC experience must be designed with these new realities.

CLOSING REMARKS

I want to convey that the future of Rhode Island College is not just bright. It’s brilliant.

RIC has always been a pioneer. We are the brave ones, the ones willing to step forward when others shy away, “the ones who are first.”

For 163 years we have enthusiastically and unapologetically embraced this element of our legacy.

I have been asked to join a community with a long and proud history of pouring its heart, intellect and collective talent into the stewardship of Rhode Island’s first public college.

I have been entrusted to preserve our distinctive institutional saga by embracing our historical role as a leader and a pioneer among higher education institutions.

As president, I will embrace our core values of the academy by reinforcing our historic ethos of forward-thinking and innovative instruction inside and beyond the classroom.

I am compelled to invest in the strength of our collegiate family as a strategy to enhance the learning environment in a welcoming and inclusive manner.

As president, I am called on to place students at the center of a teaching and learning enterprise, providing them with unparalleled opportunities to show their talents on the local, state, national and international stage and to uphold an unwavering educational belief that every interaction with a student is a Rhode Island College moment of truth and that in every student interaction there is a life in the balance for this great state.

It is because of our unmatched legacy, a student-focused inspiration and the unbound possibilities of a brilliant future that I proudly, and with great optimism, accept the 10th presidency of Rhode Island College.

To view video of speech, go to https://www.ric.edu/inauguration/

First-in-Family Fund

Honoring the legacy of Rhode Island College, the inspiration exemplified by his parents and the promise of future first-generation students who will walk the halls of Rhode Island College, RIC President Frank D. Sánchez has established the First-in-Family Fund. This fund will support the enrollment of freshmen who are the first in their families to attend college, who have graduated from a Rhode Island high school and who have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or better.

To achieve economic mobility, as well as economic and social independence, a college degree is essential. Since its founding in 1854, Rhode Island College has hosted thousands of first-generation college students, significantly contributing to the economic vitality of the state. In academic year 2016-2017 alone, over 43 percent of RIC’s freshmen class of 1,700 students identified as the first in their families to attend college. Furthermore, 49 percent were Pell recipients, indicating the challenges associated with college attendance with modest incomes.

Sánchez is the son of parents who deeply value education and, despite significant financial hardship, both achieved a college degree. His father, Gil, earned two master’s degrees and his mother, Alice, attained an associate degree in an era when few diverse students thrived in the Rocky Mountain region. Their four children subsequently achieved four-year college degrees and three went on to earn advanced degrees. Sánchez credits his success in higher education to the example set by both his parents and hopes the First-in-Family Fund will afford other Rhode Island students, and the generations after them, that same opportunity.

Eleanor Almeada Thomson West
Class of 1934

In 1930 Eleanor Almeada Thomson West was the first in her family to attend college, enrolling at Rhode Island College as a freshman elementary education major. Inspired by her mother’s example, in 1962 Eleanor’s daughter, Paula, enrolled as an elementary education major at RIC. And, like her mother, Paula also taught in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. This past year, 87 years after Eleanor enrolled at RIC, her great granddaughter, Emily West, joined the Rhode Island College community, as a freshman elementary education major.
**INAUGURAL WEEK EVENTS**

**Alumni Brunch and Family Day**

3-4, 7. RIC alumni and the campus community kicked off Inauguration Week with an Alumni Brunch in Donovan Dining Center; 5-6. RIC Family Day in the Recreation Center featured volleyball and basketball, athletics clinics, DJs, and live music.

**President’s Inclusive Excellence Commission and Community Reading Day**

8-9. In celebration of inclusive excellence, Gov. Gina Raimondo addressed the first round-table discussion of the President’s Inclusive Excellence Commission, attended by government and community leaders; 10-11. On Community Reading Day at Henry Barnard School, RIC President Sánchez read “Rolling with Nia,” by late alumna Dana Wright ’04.

**Student Showcase and Student Performances**

18, 20. Student organizations shared their respective groups’ missions and accomplishments during a “Student Showcase” in Donovan Dining Center; 19, 21. RIC students in the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance highlighted their diverse talents through various performances.

**Learning Innovation “RIC Talks”**

Faculty, staff, students, and industry leaders demonstrated connections between learning innovation and 21st-century workplace skills at a series of “RIC Talks.”

12. Assistant Professor of Art Yefang Wang presented the latest developments in digital visual technologies in ALEx AND ANi Hall’s digital media lab. 13. Learning for Life staff demonstrated their innovative safety net system designed to increase student-support networks. 14. Students in the Langevin Center for Design, Innovation, and Advanced Manufacturing shared their hands-on experience with Corel Draw, laser cutting, and robotics. 15. School of Nursing and School of Social Work students collaborated to take care of a patient experiencing physical trauma and spiritual distress. 16. Medical Imaging and Food Safety students discussed experiential learning and the array of internships in health sciences. 17. Youth Development students engaged in “purposeful play,” an activity that encourages groups to learn from and with each other.
INAUGURAL DAY & GALA

1. 10th President Frank D. Sánchez delivering his Inauguration Remarks; 2. Rhode Island Concert Chorus sings the National Anthem; 3. Rev. Jeffrey Williams; 4. From left: Rhode Island Board of Education members Tim DelGiudice, Joyce Stevos, Colleen Callahan, Rachelle Green Taps, Lori Forbes, President Sánchez; Thomas Lino, Heather Crosby and Chair Barbara Cottam; 5. Municipal Credit Union Vice President of Business Development and Member Relations Casey Fernandez, CUNY Executive Assistant to the Vice Chancellor Ian James, President Sánchez and CUNY Athletic Conference Assistant Director for External Relations and Compliance Joseph Awadie; 6. U.S. Rep. James Langevin ’90; 7. RIC Professor of Chemistry James Magyar, President Sánchez and RIC Professor of Chemistry Elaine Magyar; 8. President of NASPA Kevin Kruger and President Sánchez; 9. RIC Professor of Political Science Richard Werner, President Sánchez and RIC Associate Professor of Nursing Darra Hunter-Newby; 10. RIC Professor of Nursing Joanne Castells, Assistant Professor of Nursing Marie Wilks, Assistant Professor of Nursing Debra Servello, President Sánchez, Professor of Nursing Cynthia Pelakula, Associate Professor of Nursing Nancy Bladell and Assistant Professor of Nursing Géraldine DeNuccio; 11. RIC Professor of Biology Lloyd Matsumoto and President Sánchez.
Rhode Island College will create a culture of learning innovation that involves and supports our students, faculty and staff in a dynamic and stimulating environment of critical thinking and inquiry.

How do I get a job at Pixar?” asks Assistant Professor of Art Yefang (Frank) Wang, parroting the kind of question he’s often asked by students in his digital media course. “I tell them you can get a job in a commercial environment as a machine part, but if you eventually want to get to the top tier, you will need a very strong conceptual background. They will require your ideas, not only your skills.”

We’re chatting in his office at ALEX AND ANI Hall, a space cluttered with 3-D modeling prototypes and coffee-table books of cutting edge art. He takes me on a tour of the facility, a symbol of Rhode Island College’s investment in a modern, forward-thinking Art Department. Wang proudly shows off sophisticated computer labs alongside gallery space and is just as eager to point out high-tech gear like 3-D printers as he is works of student art. The physical environment itself is a testament to the way art education is embracing learning innovation.

The intersection of the art world and the digital world is precisely where Wang is most comfortable, both as instructor and as practicing artist. He works in digital imagery, 3-D animation, digitally manipulated photography, video installations, virtual environments and other formats that might broadly be labeled “new media.”

“The so-called ‘new media’ genre has been around for a long time. It’s not unfamiliar,” he says, noting that digital media in various forms have become ingrained in our daily lives. “We’re surrounded by all this media, so there isn’t any reason not to do this. It’s ubiquitous.”

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The “this” to which he’s referring is the digital media concentration he was hired to build; his courses can also be taken by art students concentrating in other areas, such as graphic design or metalsmithing and jewelry design. He arrived in 2013 after completing his M.F.A. in art and technology studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Before that, he attended Shanghai University as a student of sculpture, a discipline that clearly still informs his digital work. “I teach what I like. I teach what I do,” Wang says. “Digital media is very essential to our daily lives nowadays. As an Art Department, we look at it as a critical curriculum.”

That critical focus ensures that students don’t simply get caught up in the whiz-bang gimmicky made possible by digital media. High-tech gadgets and ambitious formats don’t matter if students aren’t using them to explore ideas. “One of the challenges when teaching digital media is that this technology makes it very easy to make cool things happen,” he explains. “But we want students to focus more on having a profound idea and developing their concepts.”

The kinds of projects Wang pushes his students to develop are often collaborative and multidisciplinary and engage with the weighty issues of modern life. One student is currently on a
“As a sculptor, if you’re submitting a proposal for a public work and you can visualize it in a multimedia program, you have a lot more weapons than other people.”

mission trip to Peru. The photos he is taking will later be processed into textures for a 3-D modeling project. Wang points to it as a model of “community-based, socially engaged art.”

Covering everything from basic Photoshop skills to vector-based animation to advanced prototyping using 3-D printers, Wang’s coursework is on the cutting edge of visual arts, technology and learning. Despite that, he shrugs off the novelty of thinking about his curriculum as something revolutionary; he prefers to view it as a fundamental piece of any art education in the Digital Age. “This should just be a natural part of the program,” he says. “It’s a program that the Art Department is supposed to have, that’s the way I look at it.”

Though Wang’s program emphasizes the critical and conceptual possibilities of digital media, he values the practical applications, as well. For students from other artistic disciplines, learning foundational new media skills like Photoshop, 2-D and 3-D animation, and digital modeling opens new avenues to both creative expression and career success. While students from the Metalsmithing and Jewelry Design Program can use 3-D printing to create wearable art pieces that would literally be impossible to produce with metal or clay, graphic design grads can also add video editing, animation and 3-D modeling skills to their resumes.

“For me, that’s just necessary knowledge for any artist in the 21st century,” he says. “As a sculptor, if you’re submitting a proposal for a public work and you can visualize it in a multimedia program, you have a lot more weapons than other people.”

RIC’s Finance Lab, a Leader in Bloomberg Technology

by Gitta Brown

Established in 2011, RIC’s state-of-the-art Finance Lab boasts Bloomberg technology — the “gold standard” in the financial industry.

“Bloomberg Professional software is used by every large investment bank and brokerage firm in the industry,” said Jeff Mello, dean of the School of Management. He added that among educational institutions in the region, RIC has been a forerunner in the use of this technology.

In order to remain ahead of the curve and to make the most use of the technology, Mello wants to extend the use of Bloomberg data services across disciplines.

“Most colleges and universities employ this data service strictly in their finance courses and are not fully leveraging its capabilities,” Mello said. “I’d like to find out how Bloomberg’s vast database can be used in other majors. I think it has capabilities above and beyond what we are using right now and I am very excited to explore that.”

Recently Mello hosted a campus Bloomberg Day wherein a Bloomberg rep was invited to lead a daylong session attended by faculty and students. The purpose was to explore how to use Bloomberg data in courses outside of finance.

Mello also asked the rep to examine all of the other School of Management majors — accounting, computer information systems, economics, health care administration, marketing and management — and suggest ways that the data service might be used in these curricula.

Lisa Church, professor of accounting, attended two of the evening sessions. She found the presentations “electrifying,” and noted, “our students’ questions and participation reflected the energy in the room. Following the presentation, I received a great deal of positive feedback from our students.”

Kemal Saatcioglu, visiting assistant professor of finance, agreed: “There was immediate feedback from several of the 100-plus students who attended. I think Bloomberg Discovery Day was hugely successful in generating interest and fueling curiosity. We plan to make it an annual event.”

All School of Management students are trained to use the software and, upon completion, receive Bloomberg certification. Training and certification are built into FIN 301: Managerial Finance and Control, a required course for all School of Management students.

“To my knowledge, we are the only business school anywhere that builds Bloomberg certification into the core curriculum,” said Mello. “Certification tells a potential employer that their candidate knows how to navigate a massive database.”

The ability to analyze and synthesize “big data” was cited by William Foulkes, chair of the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education, as one of the most important 21st-century workforce skills.

Foulkes noted that with the explosion in new technology and the massive amounts of data that technology is able to collect, along with the infinite possibilities for its application, employers are looking for people who can take big data, synthesize it and create something new.

“Bloomberg data services personifies big data,” Mello said. “It’s so vast that it can be difficult to get a hold of, and it has seemingly limitless capabilities. In our business school, we teach students how to research and collect what seems like overwhelming data and make sense of it.”

Mello added that Bloomberg data services will be an important component in the School of Management’s delivery of new academic programs in the coming year, particularly the undergraduate minor in data science and the master of science in operations management.

As of June 21, 2017, Rhode Island College changed the name of the School of Management to School of Business.
SMIF
Experiential Learning, a Smart Investment in the Future
By Gita Brown

As Rhode Island College, finance students aren’t waiting to trade on Wall Street, they’re investing now, using capital from the Student-Managed Investment Fund (SMIF).

With assets in excess of $100,000, the SMIF allows students to take the financial strategies learned in the classroom to make investments in the real world.

RIC’s SMIF was established in 2007 by a $100,000 donation from RIC alum Ken Weakly ‘89 and was one of the earliest among business schools, said Dean of the School of Management Jeff Mello. “Within the network of business school deans, I discovered that a lot of business schools are only now in the planning stages of creating a fund,” he said. “It makes me proud that we have been a benchmark for other institutions.”

This semester, after a competitive selection process, RIC students Michelle Asels, Adetokumbo Oni, Justin Pereira, Kelli-Jo Vanquz and Shabu Nouyi Yang were selected to take charge of the SMIF portfolio.

Students must be enrolled in FIN 463: Seminar in Portfolio Management, taught by Professor of Finance Abbas Kazemi. Once selected, the SMIF team works within the parameters of the fund and are given complete responsibility and autonomy in managing the fund, with Kazemi acting as advisor.

Though the fund decreased in value by 35 percent in the first three years, since then, it has outperformed its tracking index every year. Currently the portfolio is valued at $115,000, underscoring the utility of practical, hands-on learning. “I am very proud of our students,” said Kazemi.

Analytics are carried out in the School of Management Finance Lab, which offers 12 Bloomberg terminals powered by Bloomberg Professional software – the “gold standard” for financial research. The terminals allow students access to up-to-the-minute news, financial market data and global trading as it is happening. This data not only informs their research, it aids them in making smart business decisions.

Though the fund’s objective is to generate annual income and capital appreciation for the SMIF portfolio, the learning objective is for finance students to build skill sets that they can transfer to the real world. Kazemi and Mello cited leadership, teamwork and communication as three critical skills students gain from this experience. A strong advocate of experiential learning, Rhode Island College President Frank D. Sánchez said RIC plans to make greater investments to increase these opportunities.

“What we want for RIC graduates is to make them more competitive and to give them the practical project-based experiential learning opportunities so that they can be competitive and excel,” he said. “Our developing Strategic Plan calls for significantly more experiential and project-based learning opportunities for students, including internships in local industries, practicums in the classroom, senior capstone projects and study abroad opportunities.”

“Today, over 90 percent of RIC students are already engaged in some form of experiential learning, making us a regional leader in this area,” he said. “It is our intent to make experiential learning a requirement for all of our students. In the spirit of learning innovation, RIC will be launching a 21st-Century-Skills Task Force this spring to examine how to provide 100 percent of its graduates with the skills they’ll need for tomorrow’s workforce.”

LEARNING FOR LIFE
Sails Beyond Initial Pilot

T here’s no single way to describe Learning for Life’s (L4L) mission,” said Christiane Lambert, M.S.W. ’14, director of L4L, a network of initiatives that aligns RIC students with support systems to meet any academic and personal challenges. “Our mission is as diverse as the students we serve.”

“If anything is affecting a student’s ability to be successful at RIC, we aim to connect him or her to a resource to help get through it,” Lambert said. “It could be related to the need for a public benefit, health care or legal services program. And sometimes, a student simply may need someone to sit and talk to.”

Since its inception at RIC in 2012, L4L has grown significantly, from serving about 150 student “scholars” in its inaugural year to nearly 700 this academic year.

“We were meant to be a pilot to see if our model works, and the data shows that something about it does work,” Lambert said. “It could be related to the need for a public benefit, health care or legal services program. And sometimes, a student simply may need someone to sit and talk to.”

Nonetheless, Lambert said she wishes more students would access their services earlier in their college career.

“I want students to know from day one that if they find themselves in the weeds, they don’t need to struggle alone – they can come here,” she said. “Oftentimes, we are not the place to
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give them the help but we can direct them to it. We don’t say, ‘Hey, you need to go to the Counseling Center,’ we actually walk them over there, make their first appointment, sit in the waiting room and follow up afterward.

L4L links students to a range of services on and off campus, from housing and transportation to financial planning and career exploration. Anecdotally, one L4L scholar’s mother lavished praise on the group, calling it her daughter’s “parents on campus,” Lambert said.

If L4L collectively represents parents, then the organization’s network of trained peer advocates, known as “navigators,” stand in as big sisters and brothers.

“Their the people who get what L4L scholars are going through. Because they’re going through it, too,” Lambert said of the navigators, who generally are graduate or senior-level students from RIC’s School of Social Work.

Toyni Drameh and LaTanya Monteiro ’12, a L4L navigator and educational facilitator, respectively, teamed up to help scholar Javier Juarez achieve his goal of “finishing strong,” and graduating this academic year.

“(Six years prior) he had to leave RIC because he couldn’t afford it,” Drameh said. “But he returned this year totally intent on graduating.”

Without the financial aid L4L helped him secure through scholarships, Juarez, a history major, said he wouldn’t have been able to continue college and “would probably be working a dead-end job.” He added that students in his situation may not know there are other options. When L4L intervened, they helped remove barriers. He said, “I will be forever grateful to Learning for Life, their staff and their mission.”

Monteiro said she witnessed major growth in Juarez. “He’s been very diligent,” she said. “If I asked him to do anything, he’s followed through on it. He knew he had us as a resource and has done the work he needed to do.”

Some scholars like Juarez may move on to become navigators.

Within the last five years, nine scholars have gone through 30 hours of certification training to earn navigator status. The first scholar to become a navigator was Jaklin Gotay ’14. She has gone on to start a nonprofit in New York to help students who come from underprivileged backgrounds similar to her own.

“I start talking to scholars pretty early on about the potential to become a navigator,” Lambert said. “You can get the technical skills, but I believe navigating is about reaching a level of self-efficacy, where you realize there’s a desire to help the next person. And I believe that being a scholar first has made some of the best navigators.”

What’s one essential quality that navigators should possess? “Empathy,” Lambert emphasized, without missing a beat. “A lot of our scholars have already been judged and oppressed in other ways, and the last thing we want is to contribute to that. Scholars need to be heard and accepted at face value.”

When asked how L4L has grown in ways she didn’t anticipate, Lambert said, “I was meeting with a student whom I’m a navigator for,” Lambert said. “She’s a Rwandan refugee who has started a nonprofit to work with other refugees. She said to me, ‘What you’ve built here is kind of like [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s] Beloved Community. There are all kinds of people who come in and out throughout the day, and they feel safe here.’ ” To have her say that this is a place where she feels safe and comfortable is striking. It is a powerful thing to hear.”

When he arrived at Rhode Island College in 1995 as director of athletics and recreation, Don Tencher came with a vision: he wanted to grow a program in which students would not only succeed at local, regional and national tournaments, but a program which would be equally successful in life-skills preparation.

Fast forward 20 years and Tencher’s idea of creating a totally supportive athletic program has transformed the lives of countless RIC student-athletes.

“We’ve had a lot of success and received tremendous publicity for our championships in sports, such as basketball and softball,” Tencher said. “However, developing a successful life skills and academic support system is one of the things I am most proud of.”

When Tencher arrived two decades ago, the athletic department did not have its own support network in place. Thanks to a generous donation from Steve Marocco of Elmwood Sports, a Student-Athlete Academic Center was dedicated on October 3, 1998, as part of the Murray Center. Still, Tencher’s vision of providing student support on a greater scale came to full fruition when the department opened the Student-Athlete Success Center in September 2011.

Housed in a former administrative building adjacent to the college’s baseball complex, the center was completely renovated thanks to generous donor support. The renewed facility now offers student-athletes a variety of services, including academic mentoring and support; and life skills programming in areas such as résumé writing, job marker skills, financial planning and food nutrition.

Student-athletes also receive awareness training on sexual assault, alcohol and drugs.

Led by Coordinator of Student-Athlete Support Dolores Passarelli ’74, the center’s staff routinely places the well-being and academic success of student-athletes above all other concerns.

“We use the term ‘student-athlete’ because we emphasize being a student first and an athlete second,” Passarelli said. “If you can organize your study and schoolwork, you will more likely be successful as a student and as an athlete.”

To ensure student-athletes excel in college life, the athletics department requires that all freshmen spend five hours each week in study hall. Plus, to ensure these freshmen explore the meaning of higher education, the transition to college, academic organization and terminology and time management, they are also required to take College 101: The College Experience.

“We monitor mid-term and final grades so that we can help students who are having issues connect to tutors or any of the learning labs we have on campus in an effort to improve their grades,” said Passarelli.

Beyond academic excellence, the department also requires student-athletes to engage in a variety of community service programs.

As Passarelli has noticed, several student-athletes have become more confident in their course selections and in class due to the center’s services. In the fall 2016 semester, 162 student-athletes earned a 3.0 or better, 116 made the Dean’s List and six earned a perfect 4.0. “They can spot when something doesn’t feel right and make changes early enough so that problems can be avoided,” Passarelli said.

“Our student-athletes are doing outstanding work,” said Tencher. “They are achieving at a higher level than the general student body while still balancing practice, travel, competition and jobs.”

However, Tencher notes that “this program would not be where it is without the generosity of our supporters and such great people as Dave Bouthillier, G. Gail Davis ’66, Dolores Passarelli ’74 and Jo’Ann D’Alessandro ’87 who work so hard for the benefit of our student-athletes.”

“Together, we expect a high standard of performance from our student-athletes. It is our job to put them in the best position to succeed in all areas of their collegiate experience and that will always be our philosophy.”
Winning Projects by Student Artists by Gita Brown

Crossing between different styles and mediums, the work of four RIC art majors was recognized by both national and international galleries during the 2016-2017 academic year.

Painter Ashley Pelletier’s “Self-Portrait in Green” won for Best Representation at the Attleboro Arts Museum’s Members’ Exhibition. She was also awarded a $100 cash prize. One of Pelletier’s major influences is Rembrandt, who is known for reflecting a deep sense of humanity in his subjects. In creating “Self-Portrait in Green,” Pelletier referred to Rembrandt’s Baroque theatrical lighting to create a focal point.

The sculpture of Alyssa Stuart caught the attention of Imago Gallery of Art & Fine Craft during its 2016 Open Community Exhibit. In recognition of her talent, the gallery asked Stuart if she would feature her work in an exclusive three-person exhibit at Imago. Using wood and steel, Stuart sculpts images inspired by the internal parts of the female body.

Four of James Sundquist’s paintings attracted international attention when they were selected for entry in the International Higher Education Art Institutions Youth Art Exhibition at the China Academy of Art. Of the 400 artists and 1,000 pieces exhibited, Sundquist was one of only three artists honored with the Outstanding Creativity Award. Sundquist had never engaged in art classes prior to enrolling at RIC, focusing more on physics and math. He is now an exhibiting artist, and like the other students profiled here, he intends to make art his life.

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Through the encouragement of his art professor, Mauro Decarvalho applied for entry in a select exhibit at AS220’s Project Gallery and was accepted. Decarvalho’s 2-D and 3-D artwork deals with popular culture, using cartoon characters as his subjects. Though cartoons have been separated from the fine art world, Decarvalho would like to change that. In his piece “Commitment,” he injects humor as he reflects on the human experience.

Associate Professor of Biology Breea Govenar, director of RIC’s Center for Research and Creative Activity (CRCA), coordinated the daylong expo. She noted, “The poster session and all the other events that feature student work have a transformative effect on our students, boosting their confidence and opening their eyes to their own capabilities and potential for future endeavors. Ultimately, research and creative activity encourages a lifetime of exploration and learning.”

Govenar encouraged RIC faculty to revise their existing undergraduate courses or to design new courses that integrate research and creative activity. Such projects, she said, increase student engagement and lead to greater academic success for the student, enhanced professional satisfaction for the faculty member and higher rates of student persistence, retention and degree completion at the institution.
Launch of the President’s Inclusive Excellence Commission

By Gita Brown

“We will not wait for others to show us how to be inclusive. We will lead the way,” said RIC President Frank D. Sánchez to members of the President’s Inclusive Excellence Commission.

On Feb. 15 the President’s Inclusive Excellence Commission (IEC) convened for the first time during Inauguration Week. In his introductory remarks, RIC President Frank D. Sánchez spoke of a time when diversity and inclusion was not part of the fabric of America and that despite the hardships his parents faced as Mexican-Americans, they both managed to achieve college degrees.

One of the top priorities of his presidency, Sánchez said, will be to ensure that RIC promotes diversity and inclusion regardless of ethnicity, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion, politics or culture. His efforts to move forward on this issue include the establishment of the IEC as well as the establishment of a new division at the college – the Office of Community, Equity and Diversity, led by Associate Vice President Anna Cano Morales, M.S.W. ’99.

The IEC is comprised of 23 members of the Rhode Island community, all working for greater diversity and inclusion in the state. (See list of members at end of article.) Their role is to:

- Advise the president on matters of diversity.
- Identify policies and practices that pose barriers to the engagement and success of underrepresented constituents.
- Increase awareness of best practices.
- Guide innovations that advance RIC’s diversity goals as outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- Advise and provide input on comprehensive goals and measurable objectives for the campus relating to inclusive excellence.
- Monitor and evaluate the progress and success of campus efforts to achieve inclusive excellence.
- Review and recommend revision of freedom of expression, Title IX and diversity policies and practices from the perspective of inclusive excellence.
- Position Rhode Island College to be a regional leader on issues of diversity and equity for higher education.
- Review and recommend change to the organization, they are rendered “invisible.”

He also exhorted the old analogy of America as a melting pot. He explained that a melting pot dissolves each ingredient into one homogenous soup. Rather, inclusion should be like a salad bowl that maintains the uniqueness of each ingredient and “the integrity of each flavor.”

The latter analogy reflects the composition of the IEC as well as the collective voice of RIC’s community. The commission’s directive is to provide a forum where representatives from various segments of the campus community can come together to provide input and feedback and react to staff-led, proactive strategies, methods and approaches to advance diversity and equity at the college.

The IEC will meet four times a year. Members can submit thoughts and suggestions at any time to the president and his staff.

Guest speaker R.I. Gov. Gina Raimondo noted that equity includes having equal access to higher education, which leads to greater economic opportunity.

“Out of the 11 million jobs created since the Great Recession,” she said, “only 80,000 [less than one percent] went to those without degrees.”

Access to higher education comes down to affordability, she said, adding that her number one agenda for 2017 will be to make public higher education more affordable.
campus community about the progress and success of campus efforts to achieve inclusive excellence.

“The work ahead of us is a testament to the strong commitment that our college and our state have made to inclusive excellence,” Sánchez said. “We will not wait for others to show us how to be inclusive. We will lead the way.”

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

- Rhode Island Department of Health Chief of Minority Health Angie Ankoma
- United Way of Rhode Island Policy and Research Director Kyle Bennet ‘08
- Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island Executive Director Kathy Cloutier
- Rhode Island Office of Post Secondary Education Sophia Grice
- Foster Forward Executive Director Lisa Guillette
- Principal of the Islamic School of Rhode Island Abdelnasser Hussein
- Rhode Island Latino Arts Executive Director Marta Martinez
- Central Falls School District Family & Student Support Director Patricia Martinez ‘86
- College Visions Founder and Executive Director Simon Moore
- International Charter School Director Julie Nota ’07
- Providence Police Department Commanding Officer of Patrol Bureau Operations Major Oscar Perez
- President and CEO of YWCA Rhode Island Deborah Perry
- Bank of America Senior Vice President and Private Client Advisor Yahaira Placencia
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island Vice President of Human Resources and Diversity & Inclusion Visael Bobby Rodriguez
- Rhode Island State Council for the Arts Director Randall Rosenbaum
- Rhode Island State Council of Churches Governing Board Member Barbara Silvis
- Tomaquag Indian Museum Director Loren Spears
- OIC of Rhode Island Founder and CEO Michael Van Leersten ’65
- Providence Calmoral Equity Initiative Founder and CEO Ray/Two Hawks Watson
- The Kings Cathedral’s Very Right Rev. Dr. Jeffery Williams
- Providence Juvenile Hearing Board President Kira Wills
- Providence Police Department Commanding Officer of Patrol Bureau Operations Major Oscar Perez
- Providence Public Schools Chief Transformation Officer Heather Tow-Yick
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Over the past several years, Rhode Island College has seen a dramatic shift in the demographics of its undergraduate student body. Recognizing diversity as a basic strength and committed to supporting those of differing beliefs and backgrounds, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender and ability, RIC has made “inclusive excellence” one of its core missions.

In alignment with that mission, a new division was created in February 2017 – the Division of Community, Equity and Diversity, led by Associate Vice President Anna Cano Morales.

A native of Central Falls and a RIC alumna, Cano Morales earned her Bachelor of Science degree in 1991 from the University of Rhode Island, where she specialized in human development, counseling and family studies, with a minor in Latin American literature. In 1999 she earned a Master of Social Work degree at RIC, specializing in policy, administration and systems.

For a decade, she worked as associate vice president for grant programs for the Rhode Island Foundation and most recently served as director of the Latino Policy Institute at Roger Williams University. There she was responsible for stimulating public policy discourse and enhancing the public’s understanding of the Rhode Island Latino experience through data and research.

Cano Morales has also served on several nonprofit and state boards, including the Rhode Island Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the University of Rhode Island Foundation Executive Board of Directors and the Rhode Island Latino Political Action Committee. She is currently chairwoman of the Central Falls School Board of Trustees.
Trainings for faculty, staff and students are also planned, along with partnerships with faculty to further education on diversity and inclusion.

The goal, she said, “is to create a campus culture that embraces and fully engages diversities across divisions, schools, departments and offices.”

“I cannot do it alone,” she added. “I am the chief diversity officer, but all of the departments on campus have a responsibility and a role to play in diversity, equity and inclusion. It really involves all of us working together.” Cano Morales believes “we will never perfect a culture of inclusion,” for it is an ongoing process involving daily mindfulness. “It involves asking ourselves every day how we can do the best by our students,” she said.

Assisting Cano Morales is another new hire and RIC alumna, Director of Institutional Equity Margarita Lynch-Gadaleta, Esq. ’85. Lynch-Gadaleta leads the Affirmative Action Office and has the additional titles of affirmative action officer and Title IX coordinator. She supports Cano Morales by serving as the main point person regarding issues of access, equity, opportunity and Title IX.

Cano Morales not only leads her division, she is the president’s lead coordinator for the Inclusive Excellence Commission, and works with the Dialogue on Diversity Committee, a longstanding, campus-wide, presidential committee.

“I cannot do it alone, I am the chief diversity officer, but all of the departments on campus have a responsibility and a role to play in diversity, equity and inclusion. It really involves all of us working together.”

Looking back on the past five months, the new vice president has felt extremely welcomed by the campus community and has accepted almost every invitation to attend student, faculty, staff and alumni events. She said she looks forward to deepening partnerships, both on- and off-campus, and investing in initiatives that enhance communication, promote active involvement and support RIC’s highest priorities.

“President Sánchez has charged all of his vice presidents to become regional and national leaders in our areas,” she said. “That’s exciting. I know if President Sánchez publically commits to something, he is committed to succeed. So, we’re going to get there. We might not get there as soon as we may want, but by the next three to five years, we’ll get there.”

RIC School of Social Work Awarded $486K Grant for Substance Abuse Intervention Training

by Jeff Theodore

“The hope with [Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment] is to make referrals earlier so there can be better treatment outcomes,” said Christopher Donovan-Dorval ’12, M.S.W. ’16.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Rhode Island College will actively seek to partner with organizations, governmental entities, foundations and businesses to promote community well-being and to provide beneficial opportunities for our students, faculty and staff.
American Democracy Project at RIC Promotes Statewide Political Engagement

“When we learned that the state was seeking a partner to deliver SBIRT training, I thought we needed to become that partner,” said Dean of the School of Social Work Sue Pearlmutter.

For nearly two years, faculty and students in RIC’s Schools of Social Work and Nursing and the University of Rhode Island’s College of Pharmacy have been receiving training in SBIRT as part of Brown University’s Alpert Medical School’s $916,000 federal grant from the national Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

“When we learned that the state was seeking a partner to deliver SBIRT training, I thought we needed to become that partner,” said Pearlmutter.

Whereas the grant with Brown was designed for students intending to enter health-care professions, this grant is designed to train outside professionals and paraprofessionals in the community. Any agency is eligible to receive SBIRT training for free.

Nimmagadda said that “substance use touches all kinds of people. The SBIRT process teaches professionals a way to have a conversation about substance use without any judgment and by not bringing up feelings of shame and guilt in the patient. Thereby, you can identify someone who is a high-risk user or who could already be dependent but is simply not aware.”

“Operating these trainings over the next few years will help us examine carefully how screening, brief intervention and, if necessary, referral to treatment make a difference in substance use or misuse,” Pearlmutter said.

In mid-April, RIC launched the SBIRT website (www.risbirt.org), containing details on the training as well as information on upcoming events and resources.

To assist in the effort to transform Rhode Island’s health care system, RIC’s School of Social Work received a three-year $486,000 state grant to train health-care professionals screen clients for substance use and abuse.

RIC Dean of the School of Social Work Sue Pearlmutter and Professor of Social Work Jayashree Nimmagadda worked collaboratively to secure the grant, which began in December 2016 and will continue through June 2019. Training sessions will be conducted by social work faculty and students both on campus and at off-campus sites.

The training is modeled on years of evidence-based research known as Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment (SBIRT). Here is how SBIRT works: a health-care professional asks a patient standardized questions to assess substance use. If the patient screens for unhealthy substance use, the provider gives feedback and advice to increase the patient’s understanding of their risk. The hope is that the patient’s motivation to bring about a positive behavioral change increases with this feedback. If treatment is needed, providers will make referrals.

RIC alum Christopher Donovan-Dorval ‘12, M.S.W. ’16 is grant project coordinator. He said that in his prior work as a clinician he witnessed many cases where people continued their substance use too long before a provider screened them.

“It’s equivalent to waiting until someone is in Stage 4 cancer,” he said. “The hope with SBIRT is to make referrals earlier so there can be better treatment outcomes before people cross that line and become dependent.”

Christopher Donovan-Dorval discussing SBIRT with RIC M.S.W. students.
O n the night of February 6, 2016, just three days before the Republican primary in New Hampshire, Donald Trump used the F-word in a campaign speech. It was widely covered by media across the country, but among the first to report on the story anywhere was Rhode Island College student Anthony Vega, who was live tweeting the rally on behalf of NBC 10 News.

Why was a RIC student in a position to report late-breaking developments from the front line of the campaign? Vega was one of a dozen students who traveled to New Hampshire to witness the first-in-the-nation primary up close as part of a campaign class taught by RIC Associate Professor of Communication Valerie Endress.

From February 3-7, the students followed the campaigns, attending events, snapping photos and reporting developments on Twitter through a special partnership with NBC 10. The experience was part of Endress’ work with the American Democracy Project (ADP), a nonpartisan initiative of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in partnership with the “New York Times.”

“The students have to use every single skill they’ve learned,” said Dean of the School of Nursing Jane Williams. “We also needed a distinctive building for our school as well as an updated simulation area.”

Now most of the simulation learning activities have moved to the new wing. There is a simulation lab for health assessment with physiologic responses mimic real patients. Additionally, there is a control room with state-of-the-art equipment and computers that control the software system installed in the simulation rooms.

Williams explained that simulation learning is the most effective way to prepare students to take care of real patients. RIC and Yale have the only accredited nursing school simulation labs in the Northeast.

The new wing includes offices for the dean, the undergraduate department chair and program directors, administrative staff and the simulation coordinator/educator. In the lobby is a gathering space, where students can hold small group meetings or simply socialize.

Endress has been ahead of the curve on this one. From the beginning, her ADP class projects have relied on partnering with organizations to provide students opportunities for real-world application of what they’re learning in textbooks. Students have organized debate watch parties, panel discussions and forums during elections, and focus groups and have helped local nonprofits, such as Shri Yoga, expand and improve.

The Shri Yoga project speaks to both the importance of strong partnerships and ADP’s commitment to civic engagement beyond politics. The nonprofit creates yoga outreach programs for underserved and at-risk populations, and also makes and distributes a proprietary health-food product, Shri Bark. Endress’ students decided to focus on four areas to help the organization grow: improve and assist with social media, expand retail opportunities, develop new community partnerships, and assist with surveys and reporting to fulfill grant obligations.

“The students have to use every single skill they’ve learned in the Communication Department to put this together,” Endress said. “They transition from students with a professor giving them assignments to understanding that they have real responsibilities. In some ways it has taken focus off the traditional classroom. Students aren’t asking about grades as much.”

Partners for recent projects have included the Junior League for a 2016 debate watch party; RIC’s office of Alumni and College Relations for the alumni focus groups; and in the Civic Engagement class, NBC 10 News anchor Alison Bologna, founder and director of Shri Yoga.

Endress has learned that “your project is only as good as your community partner. You need a partner that is going to trust the students and give up a little control so students feel as if they’re making a contribution and actually learning,” she said. “I’ve been lucky to have community partners as invested in the students’ education as I’ve been – guiding when they ask for it, but letting them do what they think is best on their own.”

ADP was launched in 2003 with the goal of “preparing the next generation of informed, engaged citizens for our democracy,” and now operates on more than 250 campuses in 46 states and the District of Columbia. Despite the name, its mission is not strictly about getting students involved in politics; ADP also strives to foster civic engagement more broadly. Endress helped launch the Rhode Island College College Relations for the alumni focus groups; and in the Communication Department to put this together,” Endress said. “They transition from students with a professor giving them assignments to understanding that they have real responsibilities. In some ways it has taken focus off the traditional classroom. Students aren’t asking about grades as much.”

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Rhode Island College now has a new School of Nursing Wing in the Fogarty Life Science Building.

This $6.3 million, 9,190-square-foot wing was funded by a $50 million bond approved in 2012 for the renovation of three RIC buildings: Craig-Lee Hall, Gaige Hall and Fogarty Life Science. Fogarty Life Science is the first to be completed.

“One of our emerging themes here at RIC is ‘learning innovation,’” said RIC President Frank D. Sánchez. “Boasting the latest technology in nursing simulation, this facility demonstrates what our college is capable of when you combine one of the nation’s best nursing programs, top-notch faculty and the collective investment made by Rhode Islanders.”

Though RIC has the largest baccalaureate nursing program in the state, “we were well below the guidelines for square footage per student in our classroom, laboratory, office and student gathering space,” said Dean of the School of Nursing
In so many ways, the new wing will help us continue to educate outstanding nurses who serve Rhode Island,” said Dean of the School of Nursing Jane Williams. “Our students reflect the social, ethnic and economic diversity of the state and our faculty encourage a cooperative, collegial learning environment that benefits all.”

RIC’s School of Nursing has had numerous benchmark successes over the years. Its R.N. to B.S.N. program has been ranked #1 in New England and 10th out of more than 700 programs in the United States by www.RNtoBSN.org.

The pass rate of B.S.N. graduates on the NCLEX-RN licensure examination is consistently above state and national averages, and RIC graduates are being accepted to prestigious nurse residency programs in Rhode Island and across the nation.

M.S.N. graduates also continue to have high pass rates on their certification exams and the graduate-level certified registered nurse anesthetists program was awarded the highest level of accreditation allowed.

This past year the school also established a new Doctor of Nursing Practice program this year and is partnering with the Providence VA Medical Center on a post-baccalaureate residency program.

“I am hopeful that by providing a more interactive teaching and learning environment, this remodeled lab will sow the seeds for success for all students who study in this laboratory,” said Professor of Biology Lloyd Matsumoto.

On the first day of Spring Semester, Professor of Biology Lloyd Matsumoto initiated the newly renovated biology lab named in his honor. He also bequeathed his students with a unique legacy.

“You are the first students to be taught in this space. I am the first professor to teach in this space. And this is my last semester at Rhode Island College,” he said. “At the end of this class, I will be retiring. So this is a unique occasion.”

For more than 30 years, Matsumoto has taught Introductory Biology I, choosing to teach this course over the more advanced courses because he felt that this course set the foundation for student success at the college. Successful they have been.

Former students are now award-winning teachers, doctors, biologists and medical researchers. They speak of Matsumoto as they would a great Japanese master – esteemed for inspiring excellence yet known for his unflinching discipline.

“He holds his students to the highest standards,” said Chair of the Department of Biology Rebeka Merson. “Despite being called a hard, intense, trial-by-fire teacher, he is also highly respected and loved by his students.” Thus it was right and fitting that the lab be named in his honor, she said.
Gaige Hall’s two-story multipurpose room has a wall of glass overlooking RIC’s quad. After the completion of Gaige, work commences on Craig-Lee Hall. The project will be a gut renovation similar to Gaige, including new HVAC and upgraded classrooms. A new student lounge will be constructed at the ground level on the quad side of the building, and the back area currently used for parking and loading will be converted into a courtyard. Fitta notes that the renovations of Gaige and Craig-Lee are similar in that both buildings’ needs were the same. Architects reorganized both so that offices and classrooms are separated into clearly delineated wings.

“MORE THAN HALF OF THE GENERAL-PURPOSE CLASSROOMS ON CAMPUS ARE LOCATED IN GAIGE AND CRAIG-LEE. SO THE COMPLETION OF THESE TWO PROJECTS WILL RESULT IN A REAL BENEFIT TO THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AT RIC,” FITTA EXPLAINED.

“The organization is much clearer and more intuitive,” he said. “The renovations will bring more uniformity, with standardized designs, sizes and features in all offices and classrooms to allow for more flexibility.”

“More than half of the general-purpose classrooms on campus are located in Gaige and Craig-Lee, so the completion of these two projects will result in a real benefit to the student experience at RIC,” Fitta explained.

Probably the newest development this summer will be at College Park Apartments, the former group home near the campus entrance at Mt. Pleasant that recently became RIC property. The apartments will be turned into a multi-use facility housing a welcome center, the campus police station and the capital projects office.

Roof replacements at Donovan Dining Center, the Student Union, Fogarty Life Science Building and Alger Hall will also take place over the summer. Work will also begin on the east wing elevator in Roberts Hall along with exterior painting on the Forman Center. While Fitta anticipated that roof replacements will be completed before the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year, the projects at Roberts, the Forman Center and College Park Apartments are expected to continue into the fall.

Elsewhere on campus, Levels 1 and 1A of Adams Library are getting a facelift. OASIS and Learning for Life will move into new office spaces on Level 1, while the reading room on Level 1A will be upgraded and expanded. Plans also include some exterior restoration work on windows and siding.

Improvements to basic infrastructure are on the to-do list as well. In response to student requests for more parking, which Fitta said is a common refrain, parking lots E1 and E10 on East Campus will be expanded. Work on the sewer system will occur in various locations throughout campus, part of a phased plan based on a comprehensive study that identified areas in need of repair or replacement. Pedestrian walkways near the residence halls will also receive some repairs.

“It’s a consolidation of crossing areas and an improvement of safety for residents on campus,” said Fitta.

All of this work is in keeping with RIC’s comprehensive 2010-2020 Master Plan. The facilities condition assessment included in the plan, which gave poor ratings to Gaige and Craig-Lee, was the driving factor behind the $50 million state bond referendum approved in 2012 to fund the renovations.

Several other projects called for in the plan have already been completed, such as the renovation of Parking Lot B, with the addition of a pedestrian connector between East Campus and the main campus, and the new nursing wing in the Fogarty Life Science Building. Additional feasibility studies on other campus infrastructure needs, such as new roofs, HVAC and electrical work for a variety of buildings, along with improvements to meet the school’s changing programmatic needs have also complemented the Master Plan.
Rhode Island College Alumni Awards Dinner

Each spring, the Rhode Island College Alumni Association presents awards to exceptional graduates and community leaders. Candidates are chosen on the basis of professional achievement, community service and service to the college or Alumni Association. We also recognize seven outstanding students with $1,000 scholarships made possible by the RIC Alumni Association. The Alumni Awards dinner is a time-honored tradition at Rhode Island College.

Alumni Awards Dinner Emcees
Michael Nordé ’12, M.S.W. ’13
Inpatient Case Manager
Providence VA Medical Center
and
Deloris Davis Grant ’88, M.A.T. ’94
H.D. ’16
English and Drama Teacher
Central Falls High School

2017 Alumni Award Honorees

John Nazarian
Alumnus of the Year
Retired School Principal
Cumberland Public Schools

Alumni Faculty Awards
Alumni Faculty Award
Jana Williams
Dean, School of Nursing
Rhode Island College

Charles B. Willard Achievement Award
Lisa Zapata’81
Regional Chief Nurse Executive
Tenet Healthcare Corporation

Young Alumni Award
Lisa Bradley ’12
Associate Editor
Cake Mix Studios
Harbors Inc.

Alumni Service Award
Daniel Castro ’85
Fulfillment Center Manager/Director
Staples Inc.

Alumni Staff Award
Antoinette Gomes
Director, The Unity Center
Rhode Island College

2017 Honor Roll Recipients

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Psychology
Kelly LaChance Guerini ’02
Founder
Bellani Maternity

Theatre
Lake Sutherland ’92, M.M.A. ’98
Associate Professor of Theatre, Design and Technology
Community College of Rhode Island

Studio Art
Russel Gusetti ’88
Executive Director
Blackstone River Theatre

Accounting
Jeff Barba ’97, CPA
Founder
Barba CFO

FEINSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Music Education
Alexander Lucini ’09
Music Teacher
Wear Broadway Middle School
Providence Public Schools

School of Nursing

Nursing
Kathleen Lehmann ’77
Evening Charge Nurse,
Japanese Psychiactry
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Music Education
Alexxander Lucini ’09
Music Teacher
Wear Broadway Middle School
Providence Public Schools

Social Work
Jayson Watts, M.S.W. ’10
Trans* Health Program Manager
Thundermist Health Center

2017 Honor Roll Recipients

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Nursing
Kathleen Lehmann ’77
Evening Charge Nurse,
Japanese Psychiactry
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Accounting
Jeff Barba ’97, CPA
Founder
Barba CFO

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Work
Jayson Watts, M.S.W. ’10
Trans* Health Program Manager
Thundermist Health Center

2017 Honor Roll Recipients

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Nursing
Kathleen Lehmann ’77
Evening Charge Nurse,
Japanese Psychiactry
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Accounting
Jeff Barba ’97, CPA
Founder
Barba CFO

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Work
Jayson Watts, M.S.W. ’10
Trans* Health Program Manager
Thundermist Health Center

Left column:
1. Lisa Zapata ’81, Willard Achievement Award recipient and RIC President Sánchez.
2. Daniel Castro ’85, Alumni Service Award recipient and family.
3. Unity Center Director and recipient of the Alumni Staff Award Antoinette Gomes gives remarks.
4. Alumni Association President Mathias Santon ’82, John Nazarian Alumnus of the Year Award recipient.

Right column:
5. RICochet Grant recipient Michelle Arias ’17 speaks to the crowd about the impact of the RICochet Fund.
6. Feinstein School of Education and Human Development Honor Roll recipient Alex Lucini ’09 with faculty from the Music Department.
7. Alumni Faculty Award recipient Esther Quiroz ’18 and RIC President Sánchez.
December 2016
RIC Alumni
Friends & Family
Night at the Alex
and Ani City
Skating Center

1. Nathan ’03 and Jennifer Brown ’01
   and daughter; 2. Rionda Geraldes ’08
   and daughters; 3. Roosevelt Mastonado
   ’16 and guest; 4. Audra Cornell ’16 and
   Aaron Joseph ’16

January 2017
RIC Alumni
at Providence
Bruins

1. Victor Dosoito ’98 (right of photo)
   and guest; 2. Loren Richards ’85 (right
   of photo) and guest; 3. Lisa MacLean
   ’87 (left of photo) and guest.

RIC on the
Road: Florida

Alumni and friends of the college had the
opportunity to meet and greet RIC President
Sánchez during a three-day visit to Naples,
Ft. Lauderdale and Sarasota, Florida.

1. Naples event hosts Robert ’58 and Ann
   Berlam with RIC President Sánchez and
   guests; 2. Michele Farelli ’04 and Director
   of Athletics Don Tencher; 3. Kelley ’83
   Stiness, Sánchez and John ’81 Stiness in
   Sarasota; 4. Elayne Moe ’62 and husband
   Alden and William Palmer ’67 and wife
   Donna; 5. Vin Cullen ’55 talks with Kristen
   Wilkinson ’14 and Jeffrey Conner ’16;
   6. Sánchez talks with alumni at
   Ft. Lauderdale luncheon

April 2017
RIC Alumni
NYC Chapter
Meet & Mingle

1. From left, Kathi Bacon ’05, Erica Bacon ’17
   and Anne Purdy ’69; 2. From left, Jens Norman ’18,
   Mandara Mackinnon ’18 and Patricia Cronin ’86, featured speaker;
   3. Chapter Leaders Scott Allinson ’97 and Nicole Donje ’95 talk with attendees which included alumni and current students;
   4. Current student art majors talk with alumnus Richard Lisco ’94; 5. Event attendees on a tour of The Players, a private social club for members of the international theatre community and related fields
   of film, television, music, and the arts
RIC Alumni at Newport Polo

Join us for this thrilling international contest! Dating back more than 130 years, the polo matches at this venue are one of Newport’s most popular traditions.

Space is limited. Register online today: https://newportpolo.eventbrite.com

New and Recent Graduate Welcome Party

Join us in congratulating the 2017 graduates and celebrate our recent graduates from the classes of 2012-2016 as you enjoy networking, appetizers, cocktails, entertainment and give-a-ways while learning about the benefits and services of the Alumni Association! Registration required for all attendees online: https://newgradparty.eventbrite.com

Friday, August 25
7:10 p.m. – Game
Fenway Park
Boston, MA

*Seats located at right field
Grandstand 4

Pre-game party 5-7 p.m.
$30 per person includes game ticket and pre-game party (just steps from the park!)

RIC Alumni Boston Chapter Hosts the Boston Red Sox vs. Baltimore Orioles

Join us for a pre-game buffet dinner, networking, give-a-ways and the game! Space is limited. Register online today: https://ricatredsox.eventbrite.com

Saturday, August 5
4 p.m. – USA vs. Mexico
Newport International Polo Grounds at Glen Farm
Portsmouth, RI

ALEX AND ANI Pavilion
Upper Deck
$20 per guest includes hors d’oeuvres, match ticket and reserved parking
Cash bar available

RIC Alumni at
Newport Polo

Join us for a pre-game buffet dinner, Boston Red Sox vs. Chapter Hosts the RIC Alumni Boston Registration required for all attendees online: services of the Alumni Association!

AQUA Providence
Providence Marriott
1 Orms Street
Providence, RI
Free for RIC alumni
Guests are welcome for $5 each

Wednesday, August 17
5:30-8 p.m. – Welcome Party
AQUA Providence
Providience Marriott
1 Orms Street
Providence, RI
Free for RIC alumni

"We had wonderful speakers, dinner and dancing," Erazo-Conrad said. "It was great to see people reconnecting."

"The event was a wonderful opportunity to reunite alumni, friends and some of the original Upward Bound staff members," said Claudia Erazo-Conrad '94, Upward Bound interim director. Deloria Davis-Grant ’88, M.A.T. ’94, H.D. ’16, a well-known program alumna and benefactor, informed the audience about RIC Upward Bound's current initiatives while Gregorio Benitez, a member of Upward Bound's 2016 class, spoke about inspiring the future and shaping young leaders.

"We had wonderful speakers, dinner and dancing," Erazo-Conrad said. "It was great to see people reconnecting."

Hosts for the event were alumni Aderito Dos Santos and Monsurat Ottun. U.S. Representative David Cicilline, U.S. Senator Jack Reed and RIC President Frank D. Sánchez offered remarks. A toast to RIC Upward Bound was given by the program’s first director, Maureen Lapan ’53.

The event also served as a benefit for the RIC Upward Bound Scholarship Program, which was established in 1988 by Davis-Grant and her sister, noted award-winning actress Viola Davis ’88.

RIC Upward Bound serves students enrolled in Central Falls High School, East Providence High School, Shea High School in Pawtucket and Central, Hope and Mount Pleasant high schools in Providence. The program receives federal funding for 150 students, who are challenged to reach rigorous benchmarks in standards-based English (literature and composition) and math (algebra and calculus) and summer courses in science (biology and physical sciences) and foreign languages (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, German, Swahili and Modern Greek). Additionally, extensive programmatic partnerships were developed between RIC Upward Bound and target schools, area colleges and community organizations.

Of the 52 students enrolled in the program's class of 2016, 21 graduated from RIC Upward Bound with distinction, earning a GPA of 3.25 or higher. Members of that graduating class also received acceptance letters from 67 different colleges and universities nationally.

Erazo-Conrad, who rose through the program from tutor counselor to counselor and now interim director, credits RIC Upward Bound's strength to a sense of cohesiveness. "One of the things that makes me very proud is that we have such a diverse community in every sense of the word," she said. "The students all respect and work with each other, and you don't see the kind of issues that occur elsewhere just because you're different."

Mariana Boyajian '70, M.A. ’72, RIC Upward Bound's former director for 30 years, agreed, adding that "the beauty of Upward Bound is that the students stay connected to each other. We instill in them that this is a family.”

Boyajian said she’s most proud when “family” members accomplish great things in the world and return to give back to the program. “We have one graduate who is an attorney, one of the first students I met, and he guided two of our students through the process of emancipation on a pro-bono basis. He’s also met with parents and students about immigration issues, pro bono,” she said. “That’s the kind of success you can’t truly quantify, but you know this program works when you see it happen. That’s joyful to me.”
Susan Donovan
associate and director of religious
of Mercy in East Greenwich
two Rhode Island churches;
Simms has shown devotion to
minister to those in greatest need
Roman Catholic Diocese of
Lumen Gentium Award by the
Simms
Margaret “Peggy” Hardiman
where she earned her doctorate.
and she is on the faculty of
for vocational and adult education
for more than 35 years as a preschool
teacher. In the time since, she has
taught kindergarten, third grade,
and fourth grade in addition to
serving as principal.

Brenda Dann-Messier has been
appointed acting commissioner of postsecondary
education for the state of Rhode Island. She served in
the Obama administration as assistant secretary of education
for vocational and adult education and she is on the faculty of
Johnson & Wales University, where she earned her doctorate.

Margaret “Peggy” Hardiman
was granted the 2016 Lumen Gentium Award by the
Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence. This award formally recognizes individuals who
minister to those in greatest need in
their parish or community. Simms has shown devotion to
two Rhode Island churches; her home parish of Our Lady of Mercy in East Greenwich
and Holy Apostles in Cranston, where she serves as pastonal associate
and director of religious education.

Susan Donovan was elected
Rhode Island state representative
district for 69 in Bristol, one of
16 new members in the
General Assembly. Susan is a retired schoolteacher, and a board
member of the environmental advocacy organization Save
the Saltwater Harbor.

Joseph Pavone Jr., M.D., 78,
received the Amby Smith lifetime achievement award from
WOMPA Unlimited, a Rhode Island-based organization of sportswriters, sportscasters and publicists. He retired from CCRI after
35 years, where he was athletic
director and chair of the Physical
Education Department.

1976
James Seveney is the new
state senator for District I
(Providence, Bristol, Tiverton). A retired Naval officer he graduated from
Portsmouth High School in
1972, earned a bachelor’s degree from Rhode Island College in
1976, a master’s degree from the
Naval Postgraduate School in
1990 and an MBA from Salve
Regina University in 2005.

1977
George Kennedy retired in
January 2016 from St. Peter’s
Parish in Plymouth, Massachusetts, as a part-time maintenance worker. He was co-owner and
vice president of As You Like
It Cleaning Services, Inc., in
Plymouth, Massachusetts, from
2004-2016. He also served six years with the Libby Reserves from 1968-1974 and
six years with the Massachusetts Army National Guard from 1993-
1999.

1980
Barbara Moulton, a registered
nurse in the dialysis unit of Kent
Hospital in Warwick, Rhode
Island, was accorded the DASY
Award, which recognizes above-
and-beyond efforts performed by nurses. “It is a pleasure to
recognize Barbara for all of her
hand work and dedication to her patients and to Kent Hospital,” said Rebecca Burke, senior vice
president of patient care services and chief nursing officer at Kent Hospital.

1981
Jay Grenier was honored at
the fifth annual Night of Legends on
Nov. 18, 2016, organized by
the Boys & Girls Club of
Cumberland-Lincoln. Grenier was a standout baseball and
basketball player at Providence
High School from 1972-1975 and
continued his baseball career at
Massachusetts Community College in
Brookline, Massachusetts, and
at Rhode Island College.

1982
The Association of Rhode
Island Administrators of Special Education (ARIAE) named
John Magner Special Education Director of the Year. Magner has been
director of the Northwest Special Education Region for
the past 24 years, serving the
communities of Scituate, Foster
and Glocester. He has also
served on the executive board of ARIASE for the past 10 years.

U.S. Attorney Peter Neronha
has named career prosecutor
William Ferland criminal chief
for the Rhode Island state prosecutor for more than 26 years, joined the
United States Attorney’s Office in
Rhode Island in May 2010, after
having served as a Rhode Island state
prosecutor for more than 20 years. He has led numerous
high-profile criminal investigations and prosecutions, including the
impeachment of the New England’s
La Nostra in Rhode Island.

1983
Tony Mascaro, WPRO program
director and longtime 92 PRO
FM DJ, was inducted into the
Rhode Island Hall of Fame. As a student at RIC, he
worked on the air part time at
WPRO-FM and upon graduation
he could be heard full time on
PRO-FM. He was music director at WJOL-FM in New York from
1997-2001 and program director of WACAP-FM in New York from
2012-2013. Mascaro returned to
Rhode Island in 2014 to assume programming duties at 630 WPRO.

1984
Warwick Neck Elementary
School Principal Ann Stratton,
who retired in 2011 and died
unexpectedly in September 2015, was honored on June
2, 2016. Her school, family and
friends joined to dedicate the school library in her name and
unveiled a school-wide mural depicting a lighthouse and
a “harp hole,” as Stratton was an
avid golfer. During the ceremony,
nearly 20 teachers who worked
under Stratton at Warwick Neck
shared why they “loved and
missed her.”

1985
Davidos Lindsay-Harewood
completed his educational degree in June 2016 at Seton Hall University. She is currently
employed as an education administrator for the Montclair
New Jersey School District.

Susan Moniz-Grubbs has
landed a major role in the first
national tour of the 2015
Tony Award-winning Broadway
musical “Fun Home.” The show
had its premiere in Chicago on
Nov. 2, 2016. It will be staged in
 Providence from Nov. 7-12, 2017, as part of the SarahWhite Family Foundation Broadway Series.

1986
The Eastern Massachusetts
Association of Community
Theatres nominated Anthony-
Alexander Torelli for the annual Distinguished and Special Honors award for Best Musical Direction. Torelli has been musical director of the Norton Singers since 2003, he conducted the Mansfield
Music and Arts Societies since
2006 and in 2015, he was appointed
music director of RIC theatre in 2009 and
has conducted Opera Providence since 2013.

Debra Reddy, a health, physical
education and adaptive physical
education teacher at Northern
Middle School, was named 2016-2017 Lincoln
Teacher of the Year for her
commitment to collaboration and involvement with students and
her attentiveness to each child’s
individual needs. Reddy has taught in the Lincoln School District since 1986 and at Northern
Middle School since 2003.

In the November 2016 election,
Harry Winthrop, former mayor of
Newport, Rhode Island, won the most votes for Newport city
council at-large. He served terms
on the Newport City Council from
1993-1995, 1997-1999 and from
2011-2012. He was mayor of Newport from 2012-2014 and
in 2015 RI Gov. Gina Raimondo
appointed Winthrop to the Rhode Island State Labor Relations Board.

Demis Morrill, who served as
principal at Nicholas A. Ferris
Middle School in Johnston, Rhode
Island for the past six years,
has been appointed principal of
Johnston High School. His previous
appointments include assistant
principal of Nicholas A. Ferris
Middle School for two years
and many years in the Cranston
Public School District both at the
high school level and as district
leader.

1987
The Eastern Massachusetts
Association of Community
Theatres, presented Edward “Ted” Mitchell for the annual Distinguished and Special Honors
Award in the category of Best
Musical Direction for his
performance of “Jekyll & Hyde.”
Mitchell has worked with the Norton Singers for the past 12 years.
He is also the self-published
author of the novel, “Pictures of
You,” under the pen name T.J. Almanu, which was nominated for a BRAG Medal by the Book
Readers Appreciation Group.

Col. Ellis Hopkins III was
promoted to brigadier general on
Dec. 1, 2016. His duties include
mission and administrative command of an 800-plus soldier
brigade-sized organization. He is
responsible for an aviation
battalion, a special forces
company, two infantry companies (one airborne), an engineer
support company, a public affairs
detachment and an army band.

1988
North Providence prosecutor
James Carullo was appointed to
associate justice of the Rhode
Island District Court. Prior to
his private practice, Carullo
was prosecutor in the office
of the Attorney General in the
Appellate Division, District Court
Unit, and in the Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit. He has
been an attorney since 1991 and
is also a colonel in the U.S. Army National Guard, serving as the
state judge advocate. He also
served as assistant town solicitor/prosecutor for the town of North Providence.

Kris ten Street, M.D., ‘92, C.A.G.S. ’99, continues as executive director of the South Kingstown School District since 2009, was
named 2017 Rhode Island Superintendant of the Year.
Street has served as assistant
superintendent of the South Kingstown School District since 2009, and as assistant
superintendent of the East Provience School District, crisis
superintendent, and teacher in
Cranston, Cranston and East
Providence. Street also
served as assistant superintendent of the town of North Providence, where she served as pastonal associate
and director of religious education.

Karen Santilli was appointed
president and CEO of Crossroads in
December 2015. Crossroads
is responsible for an aviation
battalion and an army band.

Viola Davis won the Academy
Award for Best Actress in a
Supporting Role for her portrayal
of Rosie in the film “Fences.” The Oscar is the first in her career. She is also a
time Tony Award winner, and
last year became the first black
woman to win an Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series. This year she has
also won Best Actress of the
Year by the 48th Annual NAACP
Image Awards and she earned the

Class Notes
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Clas Notes
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51

52
works for former U.S. Rep. to projects overseas. Specialists expertise and to strengthen institutions abroad to share their program pairs highly qualified Fulbright Specialist Roster for Kathleen Keefe-Cooperman Counselor of the Year. honorariums include 2005 school counseling. Her past hired as an adjunct faculty Motion Picture. was advisory board member of the bar associations and a corporate Association of Corporate member of the Massachusetts trustee and executive committee is a recommendations. Steinmetz led the firm’s New England markets leader for Ernst managing principal and the New England markets leader for the Providence School Company, senior 

Kathleen Keefe-Cooperman was selected to join the Fulbright Specialist Roster for her expertise in the area of childhood and digital media. The program pairs highly qualified U.S. academics with host institutions abroad to share their expertise and to strengthen institutional linkages. Specialists are chosen based on their knowledge, skill sets and ability to make a significant contribution to projects overseas.

Christine Mattos now works for former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton, director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University, manages the congressman’s intellectual, scholarly and academic portfolios, and his media relations requests and appearances. She engages in research, writing and editing provides front-line support; serves on university administration, trustees, faculty and staff as well as domestic and foreign government officials and other professional staff.

Jane Steinmetz brings over 20 years of experience to her new appointment as Boston Office managing principal and the New England director for Ernst & Young LLP. Steinmetz formerly led the firm’s New England financial services practice and national indirect tax practice and will now guide strategic, client service and operational recommendations. Steinmetz is a trusted and executive committee member of the Massachusetts Taxpayer Foundation, board member of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Association of Corporate Directors, a member of the Connecticut and Massachusetts bar associations and a corporate advisory board member of the Boston Club.

Lori LeBrun, M.Ed., ’92, was hired as an adjunct family member of the Rhode Island College graduate program in school counseling. Her past honorariums include 2005 Coventry Teacher of the Year and 2012 Rhode Island State Counselor of the Year.

After a competitive peer-review process, Professor Kathleen Keefe-Cooperman was selected to join the Fulbright Specialist Roster for her expertise in the area of childhood and digital media. The program pairs highly qualified U.S. academics with host institutions abroad to share their expertise and to strengthen institutional linkages. Specialists are chosen based on their knowledge, skill sets and ability to make a significant contribution to projects overseas.

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Alison Samolis, a partner at Partridge, Snod & Hahn, LLP, was appointed chair of the firm’s Labor and Employment Group. She will represent businesses and manage labor and employment litigation and compliance matters.

Prior to joining Partridge Snod & Hahn, Samolis served as law clerk for the Honorable Justice Francis J. Dargan, Jr., Providence County Superior Court.

2003

Marcia Ranglin-Vassell, a special education teacher at Providence Career and Technical Academy, won the recent race for Rhode Island State representative for District 5 in Providence, defeating incumbent House Majority Leader in the primary election in September and going on to defeat her opponent in the November General Election. Ranglin-Vassell was a first-time candidate for this office.

Brian Silver was appointed treasurer for the City of Warwick, Rhode Island. He has served as internal auditor for the City of Warwick and finance director for North Smithfield, West Warwick and Cumberland.

Shannon Cornicelli received the Rhode Island Ambassadors Award by the Providence Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau as part of the Worldwide Global Meetings Industry Day Celebration. She is owner of Dream Big, Inc., which offers gymnastics instruction for all levels, from beginners to competitive teams. Dream Big also offers a variety of programs, including wrestling, competitive gymnastics teams, Ninja Warrior, and more. Shannon is a former standout gymnast and coach at RIC.

2004

Jason Masterson, principal of McCourt Middle School since 2012, was named 2016 Secondary School Principal of the Year by the board of directors of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals. He was formerly assistant principal at North Cumberland Middle School (2008-2012) and began his tenure as principal of McCourt Middle School in the fall of 2012. That same year he was also named Rhode Island Assistant Principal of the Year and earned his doctorate degree from Johnson & Wales University.

Jennifer DeOliveira, M.Ed., 17, was appointed principal of Good Shepherd Catholic Regional School in Woonsocket. She earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology and elementary education, with teaching certification in special education at RIC. Her M.Ed. degree is in special education with coursework in administration.

2005

Michael Hassell became associate principal of Southeast High School on July 1, 2014, after serving as assistant principal of Smithfield High School since 2014. Prior to that post, Hassell served as an assistant principal during the previous school year. Keegan was a special education teacher at Hope High School before taking a one-year residency in administration at Hope High School. She received her doctorate in educational leadership at Johnson & Wales University.

Erin Palovenon assumed the role of principal of Griswold High School in 2005. She has been a special education teacher at the high school for over ten years, most recently serving as director of special education for the Griswold School District. After earning her bachelor’s degree at RIC, she went on to earn a master’s degree at Southern Connecticut State University and a sixth-year Administrative Certificate at Sacred Heart University’s Griswold campus. She is currently a teaching assistant in a special education course at St. Joseph University’s Killington, Connecticut, campus.

Filmaker Jason Mayoff recently debuted his full-length documentary film “Tales of Rocky Point Park” at the Park Theatre in Cranston. The film suggests that Rhode Island’s beloved summertime playground had a dark side, combining accounts of misfortunes at the park with stories and urban legends. Since graduating from RIC, Mayoff has worked on many of the movies that have been shot in New England. He most recently worked on “The Polka King,” a Jack Black movie filmed in Rhode Island.

2006

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2007

Kyle Teixeira was inducted into the Little East Conference Hall of Fame Class of 2016. Formed in 1986, the Little East Conference serves as the premier athletic conference for public institutions in the NCAA Division II. Teixeira is considered one of the greatest men’s soccer players in the history of RIC. He closed out his career having placed fifth all-time in scoring and third in assists. He also holds the school record for the most goals and points in a career and is second in career assists. Currently, he serves as an assistant coach at the Providence College mens soccer team. Teixeira is a currenty a music teacher in the Pawtucket School District.

2008

Anaridis Rodriguez is the new weekend morning news anchor for WII in Providence. Prior to this post, she was network correspondent and anchor for The Weather Channel (TWI) for three years. An award-winning journalist, Rodriguez’s professional experiences span nearly a decade. Before her time at TWI, she was an anchor/reporter at WWLP in Springfield, Massachusetts, and a contributing reporter for The Boston Globe and Telemundo Boston. Rodriguez also received the 2017 Distinguished Award from Rhode Island High School in Providence.

Dariel Blainco was appointed assistant vice president and community lending officer for BankNewport. He is responsible for identifying, developing, and originating residential mortgage loans in the Providence metropolitan area. In addition to originating new loans, he serves as an advocate for customers to improve the overall mortgage experience.

2009

The Dominican Independence and Heritage Award Committee honored Reyna Zapata with the 2017 Outstanding Dominican Leadership in Education Award. The ceremony was held at the Rhode Island State House on Feb. 23, 2017.

Christopher Lee was appointed vice president and a residential lending manager for BankFive. He is responsible for the overall management of Residential Lending Operations, including processing, underwriting, closing and secondary marketing. With 15 years of banking experience, Lee has achieved FHA Direct Endorsed Underwriter designation and is a member of the Rhode Island Mortgage Bankers Association and Mortgage Bankers Association of America.

Eric Thibault was inducted into the Somersett (Massachusetts) High School Athletic Hall of Fame at its April 2017 induction dinner. Thibault was the starting quarterback at Somerset High in 2003 as well as pitcher on the baseball team, where he has a three-year pitching record of 18-9. He was also a two-time Eastern Athletic Conference all-star while at RIC. Thibault helped pitch the Anchors to the 2005 Little East Conference championship.

2010

Tonya Curt Hoard, M.Ed., was appointed assistant principal of Somerset Middle School in Somerset, Massachusetts, after serving as assistant principal of Woonsocket Middle School from 2014-2016. Her previous posts include seventh-grade English/language arts teacher at Woonsocket Middle School for 15 years, and teacher and subject coordinator for the Woonsocket School Department, where she taught teachers how to integrate technology into their classrooms.

Jeremy Rix, Esq., joined Lewis, Brisbois, Biggar & Smith LLP in Providence as an associate, previously serving as judicial law clerk for the Appellate Division of the Rhode Island Workers’ Compensation Court. In addition to his law experience, Rix was recently elected to the Warwick City Council Ward 1. After graduating from RIC, he attended Roger Williams University School of Law, graduating magna cum laude.

Kanagaratnam Sajeevamohan was appointed math interventionist at Nowell Leadership Academy, a Central Falls public charter school dedicated to educating high school students who are pregnant or raising children. In this, his first education job, Sajeevamohan supports math teachers and provides one-on-one tutoring to students. He and his family arrived in the United States 20 years ago as refugees from the Sri Lankan Civil War. He took English classes at the International Institute of Rhode Island, earned a GED, and went on to graduate from RIC with a B.A. in math. He has worked for the past several years at TD Bank and later Webster Bank before being hired by Nowell Leadership Academy.

2011

Rachel Legend, M.M.W., was appointed to the Rhode Island Board of Social Work Examiners in July 2016. She is currently clinician of the outpatient clinic at the Providence Center in Providence, Rhode Island.

Timothy Forsberg was named editor of the Johnston Sun Rise newspaper. He had worked for the paper in Special Projects for the past four years prior to his new appointment.

Lydel Hall received the 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award of the College of Rhode Island at their November 2016 Believe Breakfast. The award is given to College of Griswold alumni in honor of their contributions to the community. Hall is currently a music teacher in the Pawtucket School District.

2012

Jason Mayoff was named director of public relations at Salem State University. She is responsible for creating and implementing the university’s public relations and communications strategies. Previously, she worked for O’Neill and Associates, a communications firm where she engaged in planning for higher education clients. Giambusso graduated from Rhode Island College with majors in communications and political science.

Tim Lanterman’s “Who Did It? The Clue/VCR Game” won first place in the 2021 Rhode Island State Historical Documentary at the Northeast Region Alliance Community Media (ARM). The award was announced at the 2021 ARM Video Recognition Award Ceremony.

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2018

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2012
Nicole Carroll was named 2016 Rhode Island Youth Super Ligue Female Coach of the Year. She began playing soccer at age five and has been in the sport ever since. Carroll has played for the Johnston Recreation Soccer Program (now known as Johnston Lightning), the Nicholas A. Ferrini Middle School and for the Johnston High School Panthers. She currently coaches Johnston Lightning’s Boys U-14 team.

2013
Brennan Srisirikul, a singer and actor who happens to be in a wheelchair, brought his one-man show, “In My Own Little Corner,” to the Metropolitan Room in New York City on June 18, 2016. The show chronicles his journey rolling through life as a disabled man. Brennan is part of the diversity and inclusion movement in the entertainment industry and is involved with an arts advocacy organization based in New York City called Inclusion in the Arts.

Nysh Fox recently started the lead role of a revival of the Broadway Classic “Pippin” in Wilmington, Delaware. After earning a B.A. in dance performance at RIC, Fox continued his studies at Jacobs Pillow in Massachusetts, went on to study at the Atlantic Conservatory in New York City and to take voice lessons with Metropolitan Opera tenor Eduardo Valdes. Fox’s resume includes regional productions of “West Side Story,” “Legally Blonde,” “The Wizard of Oz,” “Footloose” and “London Rocks.”

2014
Victor Moroetae was appointed press secretary for Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza in December 2016. He began his career with the mayor as an intern during his senior year at RIC. In January 2017 he began the naturalization process to transition from legal permanent resident to U.S. citizen—a dream that he has pursued for more than 20 years.

2015
Rachael Perry, a theater and communications major, won the leading role in a pilot for a new television show “Mystic.” Although “Mystic” is her first television acting role, she has been acting since she was a student at North Kingstown High School and throughout her years at RIC. She has appeared in a Dunkin’ Donuts commercial, as a number caller for the Rhode Island Lottery on local television, and is currently an assignment editor for ABC News in Providence.

Ava Delasanta, who earned her bachelor’s degree in dance performance at RIC, was recently awarded one of only two prestigious Fellowship Awards in Choreography by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. After graduating from RIC, she was awarded an internship in production management at Dance Place in Washington, D.C., which she parlayed into a staff position as production and programming associate.

Milford Federal Savings & Loan Association in Milford, Massachusetts, appointed Sherice Riel as mortgage loan specialist. Employed at Milford Federal since 2012 as teller, loan processor and, most recently, mortgage originator, Riel will now be responsible for mortgage loan business development within the Greater Woonsocket area.

2016
BSN graduate Shady Reyes was selected from 175 applicants for a paid internship at Hasbro Children’s Hospital’s Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. She hopes that her 12-month internship at Hasbro will lead to a permanent position in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. Landing her first position as a pediatric nurse is momentous for Reyes on a number of levels, she said, “I am a first-generation college student, a member of the medical profession, a Hispanic nurse and a bilingual.”

Frank Paul, who earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in social work at RIC, hopes to make an impact on poverty through his work as coordinator of the Rhode Island Chapter of Results, a nonprofit grassroots advocacy group that addresses poverty on a national and global scale. He is currently working on two major poverty-related projects: passage of the Reach Every Mother and Child Act, a bill introduced in the U.S. Senate that calls for a 10-year strategy to end preventable maternal, newborn and child deaths by 2035; and replenishment of the Global Fund, which raises and invests funds to prevent the spread of AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis worldwide.

Joseph Sherry, a film studies major, won a Foreign Language Teaching Assistantship administered by Fulbright Austria on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Women’s Affairs. In 2016 Sherry began a 10-month fellowship teaching English at two post-secondary schools in Klagenfurt, Austria. Before heading for Austria, he held a paid internship at New York City’s Museum of the Moving Image.

Alumni Weddings

1992
Patricia Pratt, M.A.T. ’09, to Sean McGrath in December 2016

2000
Kevin Kirby to Jaclyn Forster in August 2016

2005
Paul Sousa to Lauren Prino in July 2016

2006
Melissa Pinga to Joshua Gilman in June 2016

2009
Michael Javareno to Cory Richards in July 2016

2011
Carol McGaughlin to Brian Blake in April 2016

2013
Melissa McKenna to Sean Oliver in September 2016

2014
Aaron Guttin to Hillary Schulman in November 2016

2017
Danielle Duffy to Steven Ricci in October 2016

In Memoriam

1935
Mary (McLaughlin) Houge in July 2016

1937
Elaine (Famiglietti) Ricci in November 2016

1940
Rita (Maullin) Kirby in June 2016

1945
Barrett Buskaw in September 2016

1946
Nancy (Robinson) Brown in July 2016

1953
Annette (Archambault) Carpenter in March 2017

1947
Jean (Alexander) Ryding in December 2016

1948
Irene (Ventresca) Bruno in April 2017

1949
Mary (Golden) Moran in January 2016

1950
Virginia (Dawson) Stamp in April 2017

1951
Sherry (Shady) Reyes in October 2016

1952
Anne (McDonald) Bowland in September 2013

1953
Joan (Alexander) Ryding in December 2016

1954
Barbara (Gardner) Cartwright-Fiske in December 2015

1955
Virginia (Dawson) Stamp in April 2017

1976
Robert Lee (Toni) Shutler in April 2015

1979
Patti (Rio) Cohen in October 2016

1980
Carolyn Cohen in December 2016

1981
Melinda (Paris) Tremblay in June 2016

1982
Mary (Dawson) Stamp in April 2017

1983
Aimee (Corr) Nimmo in December 2016

1984
Audrey (Brown) Noonan in June 2016

1985
Joyce (St. Lawrence) Smith in May 2016

1986
Jane Latham in November 2016

1987
Barbara (Gardner) Cartwright-Fiske in December 2015

1988
Annette (Archambault) Carpenter in March 2017

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Elizabeth (Hills) Combs in December 2016

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Barrett Buskaw in September 2016

1996
Nancy (Robinson) Brown in July 2016

1997
Irene (Ventresca) Bruno in April 2017

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Margaret (Shea) Griffin in November 2016

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Rebecca Ratsey ‘12 to Casey Botsis ‘14 in March 2017

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Notes

Nearly 300 people attended the Celebration of Life gathering in honor of Claire Brady White ’59, hosted by her children in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 10, 2016. Claire graduated from Harvard University School of Law and was a child labor law expert for the U.S. Department of Labor. She received the Trumpeter Award—the highest tribute of the American Bar Association Women’s Affairs. In 2016 Sherry began a 10-month fellowship teaching English at two post-secondary schools in Klagenfurt, Austria. Before heading for Austria, he held a paid internship at New York City’s Museum of the Moving Image.
Your support of the RIC Annual Fund is not only critical to students like LaBrina, your generosity enhances each student’s experience and enriches the RIC community overall by:

• Providing much-needed scholarship money to help make college affordable.
• Investing in updated technology and campus improvements to provide a state-of-the-art learning environment.
• Improving campus residence halls to provide students with quality places to live and study.
• Funding faculty research to attract top-notch faculty.
• Partnering with the Alumni Association to promote relationships outside the RIC campus.

Please consider a gift to the RIC Annual Fund today. Your support is truly appreciated and will have a positive impact on the lives of our students.

To make a gift, please use the envelope provided or go to www.ric.edu/annualfund to make a gift online.

Read our donor profile on the adjacent page and see how one donor is making a difference.

My Reason for Giving
Gloria Haddad ’73 believes in paying forward the value of a good education

“As a high school senior, my plan was to become a teacher,” recalls Class of ’73 grad Gloria Haddad. “It just seemed to make sense to come to RIC because of the excellent teacher preparation program here.”

It proved to be one of the smartest decisions she ever made. Haddad, a Pawtucket native, got a job teaching in her hometown immediately after graduation and remained there for 35 years until retiring in 2008.

The combination of memorable moments at the college and stable employment made possible by her education has made Gloria a loyal donor over the years—starting in her very first year after graduation. “It becomes a habit,” she says. “You start doing it every year.”

For Gloria, giving to RIC was as obvious a choice as enrolling. “I got a letter requesting a donation. I didn’t have to think hard about justifying why I should do it,” she says. “It’s a good cause.”

The cause, as she sees it, is ensuring that further generations of Rhode Island students have the same access she enjoyed to a quality, affordable education and the job opportunities that come with it.

“I don’t think people realize the tremendous value there is if you look at what it costs to go to RIC and what you get in return,” she explains.

“My education enabled me to be comfortable financially without interruption, until I retired. For a relatively low cost, that’s quite a payoff.”
RIC FEST 2017
SEPTEMBER 28-30
HOMECOMING & REUNION WEEKEND

Save the Date!

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE RECREATION AND EVENT CENTER

This year RIC Fest 2017 will be a combined indoor/outdoor event at a new location!

For more information, call (401) 456-8086 or email alumni@ric.edu

Rhode Island College Student Union
50th Anniversary Reunion
Friday, Sept. 29, 2017, at 6 p.m.
Donovan Dining Center/Student Union