RIC Puts Its Stamp on the Globe
THANK YOU
You make all the difference to RIC!

THANK YOU
for answering when our phonathon students call.

THANK YOU
for being RIC’s ambassadors in the community.

THANK YOU
for your many contributions of time, talent and treasure to Rhode Island College.

We know you enjoyed your time at RIC. Your support brings the quality of our programs to new heights. Please contribute to the Annual Fund today! It’s simple: just call us at (401) 456-8086, or give online at ric.edu/go/annualfund.
The Rhode Island College Alumni Association, founded in 1887, has existed to serve and promote interest in Rhode Island College. The Association assists the college with its mission through its time, talent and resources – financial and otherwise. The Alumni Association provides financial support to the college primarily through an annual appeal.

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Dear Alumni and Friends,

This semester we celebrated completion of the first phase of our newest facilities project, Alex and Ani Hall, with a festive ribbon cutting. The vision and generosity of Alex and Ani owner Carolyn Rafaelian and its CEO, Giovanni Feroce, will make it possible for generations of RIC students to thrive and prosper in a wonderful state-of-the-art environment. Alex and Ani, a Rhode Island born-and-bred company, is devoted to bolstering the state's economy, giving back to the community, and promoting positive energy. With this gift, RIC will be able to create a world-class art center.

Alex and Ani is an international, growing brand that has invested in RIC. How fitting, then, that with this issue of our alumni magazine, we celebrate the new global landscape that shapes – and is shaped by – all members of the RIC community from alumni to faculty to students to staff and administrators. “Think locally; act globally,” is no longer just a catchy bumper sticker slogan. It is, in fact, our new way of life.

We are delighted to share with you stories of alumni whose work places them squarely in the heart of this global revolution, students whose experiences have been enriched by study abroad, and the faculty members who have guided them every step of the way. We can learn a great deal from these global trailblazers.

RIC students to thrive and prosper in a wonderful state-of-the-art environment. Alex and Ani, a Rhode Island born-and-bred company, is devoted to bolstering the state's economy, giving back to the community, and promoting positive energy. With this gift, RIC will be able to create a world-class art center.

We also share tales of students who choose to come to RIC from countries outside the United States. Says one such student of RIC, “I cannot imagine studying in a better place.” You will also read about the amazing Petschatnikov twins, artists who came from Russia to RIC as our first-ever international students in 1991 and took advantage of our national student exchange program to immerse themselves in the New York art scene. Their cutting-edge artwork is gaining worldwide recognition.

RIC embraces an international culture, as this issue of the magazine demonstrates, while the college enthusiastically continues its longstanding tradition of educating Rhode Island's educators, nurses and social workers. RIC students are out in the field, as you will read in the feature on our unique internship program with the Providence VA Medical Center. Michael Nordé '12, MSW'13 shares dramatic and moving stories of his experiences at the VA and emphasizes the value of working in an interdisciplinary team setting, an extension of RIC’s own approach to learning. You will also read about our newest nurse residency partnership, which Jane Williams, dean of RIC’s School of Nursing, calls “a great program to support new nurses and promote high quality nursing practice . . . a partnership benefiting the hospital, the care of veterans and new nurses.”

RIC’s strong commitment to our students is highlighted in the story about “Finish Strong.” This partnership among the offices of academic support, admission, financial aid, records, information services, continuing education and professional studies, and the bursar is designed to help students who leave without completing their degrees to earn the credits needed for their diplomas. More than ever, possession of a college degree is a critical factor in future success. RIC recognizes that there are obstacles facing many students. Through Finish Strong we have devised ways to overcome these barriers to success.

We have countless reasons to feel proud of RIC students, alumni, faculty and staff. I hope you will enjoy reading this issue of the alumni magazine and, as always, I invite your feedback.

Best Wishes,

Nancy Carriuolo
President
Dear Fellow Alumni,

Yogi Berra once famously said, “It is tough to make predictions – especially about the future.”

For instance, imagine for a moment that someone in 1973 had fervently insisted that someday people would communicate with one another more using their thumbs than using their mouths, data would be relayed over an invisible wireless network, or, even more fantastic, that the Red Sox would one day win the World Series not once but actually three times. Our reaction 40 years ago would have been one of both amusement and a healthy degree of skepticism. In 2013, however, we are smart enough to recognize the limitless potential of technology when it is paired with vision and a drive to succeed.

Another dramatic change that few of us could foresee and that has had a tremendous impact on our lives is the growth of international commerce. Advancements in technology and communications along with the elimination of political barriers have contributed to the explosive progress in the global economy, which now exceeds $70 trillion, according to the United Nations.

As with any change, both challenges and opportunities have emerged as a result of this development on the business landscape.

Most successful organizations have learned to adapt to the new reality of the global marketplace and have flourished. Adaptation has, in fact, led to innovation. You will see that adaptability in this fall issue of our magazine. A number of stories here point to the value of being flexible, letting go of old ways of doing business and embracing new cultures.

Perhaps, then, the most important lesson about predicting the future is: don’t stand by and settle for merely trying to anticipate what is around the corner. Instead, help to create the future with a purposeful plan – when opportunities arise, strive to expand your perspective and pursue new strategies with vigor. RIC students and alumni are doing exactly that and making our alma mater proud.

Sincerely,

William Fazioli ’86
Alumni Association President

RIC students and alumni . . . "help to create the future with a purposeful plan."
Rhode Island College proudly celebrated completion of the first phase of Alex and Ani Hall – the college’s new art center – at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in early September.

Alex and Ani, LLC, the Cranston-based jewelry and lifestyle company, generously contributed $1 million toward the new $17 million, state-of-the-art building that was funded by a bond approved by Rhode Island voters in November 2010.

“Part of the process of building a business in the United States is reinvestment,” said Giovanni Feroce, CEO of Alex and Ani. “Our company reinvests by creating workforce incubators in institutions of higher education like Rhode Island College. And we’re just getting started.”

RIC’s previous art facility dated back to 1958 and was lacking in adequate ventilation, lighting, equipment and workspace. The new building, when completed, will have 98 rooms sized for different functions and spanning two floors.

RIC President Nancy Carriuolo solicited ideas for reconstruction from the college’s art faculty and students.

“I asked our art faculty and students to think about what they would need in an art facility today as well as 10 years in the future,” she said.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was attended by Gov. Lincoln Chafee, Alex and Ani Founder and Creative Director Carolyn Rafaelian, Rhode Island College faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends of the college, as well as many dignitaries.

Rhode Island College is one of only two higher education institutions in the state that provides a jewelry-making program. For six consecutive years, RIC’s jewelry students have won honors at the annual Student Jewelry Design Awards that is sponsored by the New England Chapter of the International Precious Metals Institute.

Reconstruction of Alex and Ani Hall is a two-phase process that began in April 2012. The first phase focused on spaces for jewelry making, ceramics, sculpting and printmaking. The second phase of the project, scheduled for a March 2014 completion, will include digital media studios, photography workspaces, a student lounge-critique space, a lecture hall on the first floor with a lounge and gathering space, and eight more office spaces on each floor.

The new building will support 10 academic programs and related activities within 54,000 square feet.
RIC Professor’s Short Story Selected for Award-Winning Anthology


“Cadiz, Missouri,” is a memoir-style tale of a woman who moves with her husband to Midwest Missouri and becomes disenchanted with and disengaged from her new world, even after a tornado destroys a nearby town.

“She has all these ways of accessing the tragedy, and yet she is completely closed off from it,” Foreman said. “It illustrates how we can be these very informed observers, and yet be totally removed.”

Foreman, a native of Wheeling, W. Va, teaches an advanced creative nonfiction writing workshop and an introduction to creative writing course at RIC. His work has appeared in various publications including, The Michigan Quarterly Review, The Massachusetts Review and Pleiades.

The Pushcart Prize anthology, printed annually since 1976, has won honors from the National Book Critics Circle, Publishers Weekly, Poets & Writers and Barnes & Noble, among other outlets.

“I threw a French-English dictionary at the creature. It leapt aside to safety, just a split second before the book landed. I threw another, it leapt again. I then spent ten minutes trying to kill it in this fashion. Every time – or almost every time – it saw my literature coming, it jumped out of the way. I threw Native Son, Regarding the Pain of Others, one of Charlie’s old industry reports, and a Kafka anthology, before I finally crushed it with an old copy of Dune.”

— Excerpt from “Cadiz, Missouri”

RIC Launches Initiative to Develop Rhode Island’s Future Leaders

The college’s newly created economic and leadership development initiative is working to develop RIC students into Rhode Island’s future leaders through curriculum and training programs directly targeted at meeting the state’s future workforce needs.

“Rhode Island College is uniquely positioned to have a dramatic impact on the state’s future,” said President Nancy Carriuolo. “Most of our students choose to live and work here after they graduate. This appointment underscores our commitment to providing our students with the world-class education and training they will need to achieve success and to lead this state for generations to come.”

Leading the effort is Lawrence Wilson, who teaches in the college’s School of Management, as interim executive director of economic and leadership development.

The initiative is creating courses and curricula based on education and training identified as necessary for students to excel in their future careers.

Through collaboration with the RIC School of Management and the Office of Professional Studies and Continuing Education, the initiative also is building partnerships with local businesses and community leaders to expand student internship, training and mentoring opportunities.

“What excites me about Rhode Island College is that its commitment to the state of Rhode Island doesn’t end with providing the finest education and training possible to our students. We reach out to the various sectors – business, government and society – that strengthen the state as well,” Wilson said.

Wilson, who earned his MBA from the Wharton School, has extensive experience in corporate, entrepreneurial and nonprofit management positions.

He has taught at several colleges and is an adjunct professor in the Rhode Island College School of Management.
Rhode Island College is giving its students a global foundation by requiring proficiency in a second language as part of the college’s general education program.

“The idea is for students to have a much better sense of the world outside the United States and the way the outside world affects us and the decisions we make on a daily basis,” said Ron Pitt, vice president for academic affairs.

The goal is for students to attain novice-to mid-level proficiency in a second language as a foundation and to encourage further language and global study.

“Students are taught language and culture,” Pitt said. “As citizens and employees, they will be able to learn much more when they have that foundation.”

Rhode Island College is the only public higher education institution in the state to require proven proficiency in a second language for graduation.

The college also emphasizes global understanding in many other courses within the general education curriculum as part of an overhaul of that curriculum that went into effect last year. The changes were based on “College Learning for the New Global Century,” a study by the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Pitt said the curriculum changes, which also place a higher emphasis on written and oral communication as well as science- and math-based learning, are designed to better prepare students to be the employees and leaders that society wants and needs.

College Names STEM Center Director

Rhode Island College appointed Carol Giuriceo, Ph.D., an expert in the fields of science education and underrepresented populations, as the director of the RI STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) Center at Rhode Island College. Giuriceo joined RIC in July 2013.

Giuriceo, who earned her doctorate in education from the joint University of Rhode Island/Rhode Island College program, has more than 15 years of management and leadership experience at museums and science centers, including working with populations underrepresented in the STEM fields. She has taught women’s studies and educational foundations at RIC and at the School of Education at URI.

Ron Pitt, vice president for academic affairs, said Giuriceo will lead the RI STEM Center’s efforts to strengthen the state’s workforce.

“Carol’s knowledge and expertise will be tremendous assets to RIC and the STEM Center,” Pitt noted, adding, “She will serve the Center well in advancing its goals and objectives.”

The STEM Center at RIC is the state’s primary educational hub, resource and research collaborative for the STEM disciplines. The Center was established to increase interest in and advancement of STEM in Rhode Island.

The Center provides state-of-the-art professional development; collects and disseminates best practices; and fosters partnerships among STEM industry practitioners, PK-12 teachers, teacher candidates, higher education faculty, students, parents and community members.

Giuriceo has served as director of invention at the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City, N.J. Most recently, she was director of the Collaborative for Exploration of Mathematics and Sciences (CEMS) and was a project associate of the Higher Education Initiative for College Readiness.
An exciting collaboration among Rhode Island College, Women & Infants Hospital and an East Providence biomedical startup has caught the attention of the National Institutes of Health.

During the summer, the NIH granted $329,762 to Rhode Island College for groundbreaking neuroscience research into problems associated with brain injury in premature infants. The research is led by RIC Psychology Professor Steve Threlkeld in partnership with Dr. Yow-Pin Lim of East Providence startup Pro’Thera Biologics and Dr. Barbara Stonestreet, director of the fellowship in neonatal-perinatal medicine at Women & Infants Hospital. Threlkeld and Stonestreet in 2011 looked at the effect of anti-inflammatory intervention in neonatal brain ischemia – a restriction in blood supply that causes a shortage of oxygen.

The NIH grant is designated for enhanced academic research capacity and competitive projects aimed at improving human health. This project, which includes a team of RIC psychology students, assesses the relative influences of anti-inflammatory intervention with a protein treatment versus early-life behavioral training in auditory processing. The research team is seeking to establish whether a combination of preventative drug treatments and early behavioral therapy work better in treating brain injury in at-risk infants than either measure alone.

“We know that behavioral outcomes are poor for pre-term infants. Between 50 and 80 percent of those infants who have some kind of brain trauma go on to exhibit language problems, cognitive deficiencies or learning disabilities,” Threlkeld said. “The idea here is that combining parallel lines of research, we may be able to improve outcomes despite these challenges.”

Threlkeld, the coordinator for RIC’s minor in behavioral neuroscience, holds a Ph.D. in behavioral neuroscience from the University of Connecticut and specializes in teaching research methods in experimental psychology and behavioral neuroscience.

Research highlighted in this article was supported by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number R15HD077544.

Keefe Transportation Center Now Provides Charging Station for Electric Vehicles

RIC installed an electric vehicle charging station on campus last May, about a month before Governor Lincoln Chafee announced plans to build dozens of such stations across the state.

The charging station at RIC is located at the Keefe Transportation Center. The station supplies electric energy for recharging electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids.

The station is part of President Nancy Carriuolo’s focus on creating a more environmentally sustainable college campus.

“Electric cars eliminate the carbon and soot and everything that gets into the atmosphere that we breathe,” said Jim Murphy, RIC’s sustainability coordinator. The charging station is a component of the Keefe Transportation Center, which opened in November 2012. The center was built to provide shelter for commuters in inclement weather and to reduce the number of cars on campus by promoting alternative forms of transportation. In addition to the charging station, the center will feature Zipcar car sharing and – by next spring – rental bicycles.

Chafee in late June announced plans to build a network of 50 charging stations throughout the state to help save taxpayers money and reduce air pollution.
When Mike Ryan, Class of 1974, and vice president of government affairs for National Grid in Rhode Island, came to Rhode Island College as a freshman, he intended to study English.

“Attending Rhode Island College was a perfect fit for me and English was what I enjoyed,” Ryan said.

In the end, political science became his focus on campus as politics took over his personal and professional interests, leading to a career that has taken him from the Rhode Island State House to National Grid and that has always kept him firmly committed to his community.

Ryan chose RIC for his undergraduate studies so that he could commute and work to fund his education, including as a part-time page in the Rhode Island Senate. That, he said, is where he “really got his whistle wet” for politics and where he spent “an inordinate amount of time.”

After graduation, he spent almost a decade in the executive branch of the Rhode Island state government, including as a special assistant and press secretary to Gov. J. Joseph Garrahy before serving for eight years as the Rhode Island director of the offices of the late U.S. Sen. John H. Chafee, father of the current governor.

After the 1994 elections, in which Chafee won a fourth term to the U.S. Senate, Ryan was offered and accepted a job in the private sector. He and his wife, Lynne (who Ryan met during Governor Garrahy’s first campaign for governor), are proud parents of two grown children, Meghan (a RIC MSW graduate) and Michael Jr.

He attributes the political environment surrounding his time at RIC – he attended during the upheaval of the Vietnam War and Watergate – to helping develop his leadership style, which he describes as collaborative and collegial.

“Rhode Island College gave me the background I needed to have some success,” Ryan said. “Rhode Island College and its faculty were open to dialogue and different areas around those issues.

As a leader, I try to find where people agree and try to move everyone toward that point. You have to listen to what others have to say. Once you have that trust, you have the opportunity to do great things.”

Ryan also believes in helping to develop Rhode Island’s future leaders. He is active with Boy’s Town New England, serving as chairman from 2004 to 2012. He also serves on the boards of Navigant Credit Union and The Providence Journal Summertime Fund, and he is a member of the Rhode Island Commodores board of governors.

He served as a member of the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education from 1997 to 2011 and was the group’s vice chairman for finance from 2003 to 2011.

Ryan received the Rhode Island College Alumni Service Award in 2006. He still has a love of English and is an avid reader, but most of his free time is spent with his family in Little Compton.

His advice for Rhode Island College students is simple: take advantage of the caring atmosphere the college’s faculty provides as well as opportunities to study outside the classroom including through internships.

“I think, on a practical side, students should find a course of study that they see as something they want to do and to use their college experience not only as a time to grow personally but also professionally,” Ryan said. “I think Rhode Island College has promoted that kind of experience. It is a higher education institution that provides young people with an extraordinary educational experience.”
In a life she describes as “fantastic,” almost nothing has come to Norma Piccirilli DiLibero without a fight; and that fact is just another wonderful part of her character.

“I’ve really enjoyed being who I am,” DiLibero said. “I’ve felt good about the fights I’ve led, what I’ve brought to my community. That spirit comes from my family.”

Her family also brought her to Rhode Island College and the one goal that she was able to complete with ease.

As a housewife raising six children with her husband Joseph, a dental surgeon who passed away in 2000, she made daily treks to campus to bring her children to the Henry Barnard School, as well as to exercise, and one day something struck her.

It was time for her to finish college.

With the assistance of many RIC staff, DiLibero graduated in 1981, at the age of 52, with a bachelor’s degree in general studies.

“It was a very joyous expedition,” DiLibero said. “I think Rhode Island College is a wonderful college. It was very satisfying for me, and I thought it was important to get involved after graduating.”

DiLibero was named the honor roll recipient for the general studies degree in 1995 and served the college as an officer of the alumni association. She is a longtime Rhode Island College Foundation board member, fundraiser, donor and activist, adored and respected by the entire Rhode Island College community.

She established the Dr. Joseph L. and Norma A. DiLibero Endowed Fund for Undergraduate Research in Biology to support undergraduate research in biology and the development of junior colleagues in the biological sciences. She was named the college’s 2010 Alumna of the Year.

“I’ve been fortunate and I am happy to be able to give back to RIC, and especially to support what is most important to the college.”

DiLibero’s work with Rhode Island College is only one of many community development interests she has pursued over the years. Her involvement goes back to her early 20s, when she worked as a special assistant to Sen. John Pastore, a democrat who served from 1950 to 1976 following his term as governor of Rhode Island from 1945 to 1950.

“It was a good experience,” she said. “It sharpened me up and it was very challenging.”

After leaving the senator’s office and marrying, DiLibero continued – and still does – to make a difference in her community. Despite opposition from city government, she established a League of Women Voters chapter in North Providence 25 years ago. She also has worked extensively with the Environmental Commission of North Providence, including helping to get the organization up and running.

DiLibero is known as a savvy businesswoman, who manages her own financial portfolio by keeping a keen eye on market trends. She and her husband together owned East Providence Medical Center and Optical Care, Ltd. She is a firm believer in raising research capital to solve the problems that face healthcare professionals today.

She also believes in the importance of global exposure. She and Joseph traveled the world to give their children the opportunity to experience different cultures and interact with a wide range of people. They sent their children abroad as part of their college educations and most became fluent in other languages.

“It was a wonderful marriage,” she said. “We took the whole crew all over the world. My husband was a terrific guy. Life was great. Life still is great.”
It could be as simple as being two credits short or as complicated as the inability to incorporate studies into a life altered through family or financial obligations.

No matter the reason, a Rhode Island College student might leave school without completing his or her degree, and doing so is a setback that can be corrected. The college is actively reaching out to help former students complete their degrees.

Rhode Island College's Finish Strong program has put a formal name to an effort Holly Shadoian, assistant vice president of academic affairs, and the office of enrollment management began in August 2011.

Shadoian and her coworkers discovered that a large number of potential August graduates had not completed their academic requirements. Many of those students had participated in May’s commencement ceremony, which is allowed if students have nine or fewer credits remaining.

Those credits must be taken during the summer session following May commencement. Nearly 50 percent of August graduates that year failed to finish their credits before deadline, and some have still not completed more than two years later.

“So that summer I wrote to them and began working with several of the students,” Shadoian said. “Earning power increases with a degree. This program is about the value of an education. Former students may be passed over for a job opportunity or promotion if they do not have a degree, even if their skills or character match the job.”

The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics reported in 2012 that workers with a high school diploma earned a median weekly wage of $652, and those with some college but no degree earned $785, while workers with a bachelor’s degree had a weekly median income of $1,066.
Students “Finish Strong”

By Rebecca Keister

The U.S. Census Bureau’s 2010 report, “The Big Payoff: Educational Attainment and Synthetic Estimates of Work-Life Earnings,” found that average lifetime earnings increased from $1.2 million for high school graduates to $2.1 million for workers with a bachelor’s degree and $2.5 million for those with a master’s degree.

Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee has asked the state’s public higher education institutions to develop, by January 2014, a plan for helping former students complete their degrees as part of his focus on investing in quality education to help the state build a more robust workforce.

Finish Strong’s initial focus was on potential August graduates, targeting about 150 former students who originally intended to graduate from May 2011 to May 2013.

Among those students was Tyler McFeeters, who transferred to RIC for the fall 2010 semester as a sociology major. McFeeters required only one more course — statistics — to be completed by spring 2012 in order to graduate. He did not complete the class and walked during commencement with the intention of completing the course that summer.

“I took the class again at RIC, and I had the greatest professor in Walter Gall. Statistics turned from something I dreaded into something I looked forward to,” McFeeters said.

McFeeters was awarded his bachelor’s degree in May 2013 but admits he almost gave up on earning the degree. That was before successfully working with several college departments and RIC faculty, a collaboration that is part of Finish Strong’s plan in reaching out to other target groups.

A resource team has been formed to support the Finish Strong initiative, comprised of representatives from admissions, financial aid, records, Academic Support and Information Services and the bursar’s office. Each representative is a specialist who can focus on the specific needs or barriers for former students to complete.

Finish Strong will also reach out to former RIC students who, for any number of reasons, left school before finishing their degrees. Students who left in good academic standing, have not attended another college since leaving RIC and do not have any courses 10 years or older can be reactivated as degree students by the Records Office. Students who have credits older than 10 years, or who have attended another college since leaving RIC will be readmit applicants, and RIC will waive the enrollment deposit for those students. Students who left RIC with an outstanding financial obligation or were in academic difficulty will be able to work with a member of the resource team on personalized plans that lead to their completing their college degrees.

“IT could have been that life got in the way,” Shadoian said. “They may have started a family or moved away. Sometimes students change their minds about what they were studying or have been out of the classroom and don’t know how they can fit college back in. RIC is a welcoming place. We want students to know we can help making finishing happen for them.”

Joe Botelho was just two classes away from earning his bachelor’s degree when he left RIC in 1991 to pursue a business opportunity. He returned this fall to complete his communication studies.

His decision was based on wanting to finish what he began more than two decades ago, and on the desire to be a good role model for his children, to whom he has long advocated the advantages of a college education.

“My experience in my business life has shown me the value of a degree and what it represents,” Botelho, 54, a licensed real estate broker, said. “Who knows where this will help take me?”

The biggest challenge will be collecting updated contact information for students like Botelho. Shadoian encourages alumni and friends of the college to reach out to family members, friends, coworkers or neighbors who began at RIC but never finished their degrees. “Encourage them to take that first step and become part of Finish Strong by emailing finishstrong@ric.edu,” Shadoian said.

The Office of Continuing Education and Professional Studies will support Finish Strong by working to increase the number of hybrid and online course offerings and the number of early-spring and summer session course.

“This type of scheduling allows students the flexibility they need to meet the demands on their time,” said Jenifer Giroux, interim associate vice president for professional studies and continuing education. “It is our intention to work closely with Admissions and Learning for Life to identify trends that can inform scheduling and the methods of course delivery.”

Learning for Life, a college and community partnership that works to link students to services, supports and opportunities to remove challenges that may prevent graduation, is incorporating Finish Strong into its overall outreach plan.

Christiane Petrin Lambert, project manager, and her team are working to target former RIC students who have at least 75 earned credits but have not been enrolled for at least three years.

“Those students usually now are working, have a family, and are first generation so they may also might not have that family support that has been shown to keep them in school,” Lambert said. “They have to figure out how to fit school into that constellation.”

Students who experience life circumstances that challenge their ability to stay in college are eligible to become Learning for Life scholars. Those students will be partnered with a navigator student, response team and faculty advisor who, collectively, help Learning for Life students assess and coordinate academic and non-academic support services such as financial advisement or childcare.

A Learning for Life staff member also will be part of the Finish Strong resource team.

“It is evident that RIC is deeply and richly invested in the success of its students,” Lambert said. “I’ve seen first hand all of the concern there is for students on this campus. Finish Strong is a way to extend that community to students who left. It’s fantastic.”
Treating the Wounds of War

By Gita Brown
In the spring of 2013, a U.S. Marine was admitted to the emergency mental health unit of the Providence VA Medical Center. Less than 24 hours before, he had attempted to stab his mother and his brother. Now he faced off with the two social work clinicians attempting to make an initial assessment. The Marine was enraged by each question asked of him.

Michael Nordé ’12, MSW’13 was one of the two clinicians conducting the interview. A RIC graduate student in social work, he was engaged in 600 hours of required fieldwork. As he attempted to take down information about the Marine’s life – his marriage, his children, where he lived, where he worked and the environment that had affected his situation – the anger directed at Nordé and the other clinician was like nothing Nordé had experienced before.

“I’m on edge, the sweat is coming down, and I’m hiding it, but it’s there. And I don’t want to say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing.” Throughout the 30-minute interview, the energy in the room remained charged. Finally, Nordé ended the consultation, and the veteran was placed in lock-down.

“This unit could be likened to your typical hospital emergency room,” Nordé said, “Patients arrive in extreme mental distress. I’ve seen the physical effects of war – the missing limbs, the paraplegics – but what I hadn’t seen until I began working here were the mental effects of war.”

Along with Nordé’s patient assessment, individual assessments were also performed on the patient by a psychiatrist, a nurse, a student pharmacist from the University of Rhode Island and a clinical social worker. The team then came together to create a treatment plan. This collaborative method of care is called an “interprofessional team” approach.

“I came to the VA knowing the value of this approach after being trained in interprofessional teamwork at Rhode Island College,” Nordé said. At RIC, students from the School of Nursing and from the School of Social Work come together in a simulation lab to work on cases.

“Being a part of an interprofessional team helped me understand the role of other clinical professionals. I’ve also learned to recognize when I’ve done all that I can for a patient and have to call in another specialist for assistance,” Nordé said.

He remembered counseling a Marine who had witnessed his company perish. The vet had been wounded and paralyzed from the waist down, but the Marines are trained to leave “no man behind.” Physically, the vet couldn’t have helped his company escape, yet he returned from the war with two forms of guilt: military and religious. Nordé brought in the on-site chaplain to counsel the Marine on his religious guilt, while Nordé was able to address his military guilt.

“Empowering Veterans to see beyond their wounds and limitations to what they can be is the job of a clinical social worker. I believe we all have something special to offer, even if we don’t see it because of our life experiences.” – Michael Nordé, ’12, MSW’13
Anne-Marie Tripodi, a graduate of RIC’s BSW (‘00) and MSW programs (’05), works in the PTSD clinic at the VA. Tripodi has been a staff clinical social worker for five years. Her unit treats approximately 1,500 veterans each year.

It’s been estimated that one-third of the 2.4 million veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars suffer from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression or brain trauma. Moreover, these illnesses have been linked to a high suicide rate among veterans, particularly among those who see combat – 6,500 veterans die each year from suicide, which is more than the soldiers who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan combined since the inception of the two wars.

“PTSD is not unique to veterans of current wars,” said Tripodi. “Within the VA clinic, we see a wide range of veterans – from vets who fought in World War II to those who are returning from the Middle East. When I first began working here in 2008, the majority of our PTSD population were Viet Nam vets. These soldiers weren’t treated for this disorder when they returned because it wasn’t a diagnosis back then.”

Today treatment is available for PTSD, and Tripodi is one of the regional trainers of an evidence-based treatment called cognitive processing therapy (CPT).

“A major symptom cluster of PTSD,” Tripodi noted, “is avoidance. The person may avoid thinking about or discussing the traumatic event. The person may also avoid activities, places, people and situations. For example, a veteran may avoid crowds, because he believes they are dangerous, and, therefore, may also avoid grocery shopping, going to the mall or going to a baseball game.”

In therapy, Tripodi asks patients to test their fear-based belief for accuracy. She engages them in Socratic questioning, asking, “What is the probability that something dangerous will happen if you go into a grocery store?” Eventually patients learn to challenge or test their beliefs. “Once the beliefs are more accurate, the symptoms alleviate,” she said.

The other treatment the VA offers is prolonged exposure (PE). PE requires that the patient retell the traumatic event in as much detail as possible. The session is taped and part of the vet’s

“When you start hearing their personal stories, you gain a deeper admiration for what they do,” she said. “These vets have served willingly. There’s no draft anymore. And though there are educational benefits for military service, that cannot compare to the loss of life or the wounds of war our veterans return with.”  

– Anne-Marie Tripodi ’00, MSW’05
RIC Partners with Providence VA in New Nurse Residency Program

Recent graduates from RIC’s School of Nursing are benefitting from the new VA post-baccalaureate nurse residency program at the Providence VA Medical Center, which allows for in-depth training of new nurses within a specific branch of medicine.

Historically, the VA has funded accredited residencies for medicine, dentistry, psychology, pharmacology and other clinical professions, but not for nursing. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, when new nurses are not engaged in residencies, 30 percent leave the profession in the first year, but when nurse residencies are made available, the retention rate increases to 95 percent.

Established as an outgrowth of the VA Nursing Academy, which is a partnership between the VA and RIC’s School of Nursing, the new residency program is directed by Kim DeMasi, faculty member of the VA Nursing Academy Program, and co-directed by Nancy Blasdell, associate professor of nursing at RIC.

The residency is divided into three phases. In the first phase, new nurses take classes primarily taught by the VA nursing staff. Course content may include intravenous therapy and safe medication practices. The second phase involves less classroom time and more time with direct patient care in various VA hospital inpatient units and clinics, such as the emergency room, intensive care unit, operating room, and psychiatric and primary care clinics.

According to Blasdell, “Rotating through different units in the hospital and clinics exposes nurse residents to a variety of nursing care delivery systems and helps them understand the comprehensive scope of practice for the veteran. In addition, working with experienced nurses who enjoy sharing their knowledge and providing encouragement makes the nurse residents feel more comfortable and confident.”

In the third phase, residents continue to have classroom experiences but are also required to complete a project on a nursing unit or department that either involves evidence-based practice or quality improvement. On the last day of the program, residents present final projects to the entire community at the Providence VA Medical Center via PowerPoint and posters. “We’ve groomed them. Now it’s their day to shine,” said Blasdell. After a year of training, nurses are now confident enough to take on their full-time positions.

Jane Williams, dean of RIC’s School of Nursing, said, “This is a great program to support new nurses and promote high quality nursing practice at the Providence VA Medical Center. This partnership benefits the hospital, the care of veterans and new nurses.”

Fulfillment for Tripodi is witnessing recovery. A veteran may have been struggling for 40 years with PTSD. “To see, in a relatively short period of time, that a person’s life is returning to normalcy is extremely fulfilling,” she said.

Tripodi’s work has also given her a deeper respect for those who serve our country. “When you start hearing their personal stories, you gain a deeper admiration for what they do,” she said. “These vets have served willingly. There’s no draft anymore. And though there are educational benefits for military service, that cannot compare to the loss of life or the wounds of war our veterans return with.”
The Business of
With the Industrial Revolution, the U.S. was catapulted into the position of power base for world manufacturing, and for well over two centuries, the U.S. dominated the field. In the 1990s, however, the power base shifted to Asia, changing global economics forever.

Today, the U.S. economy is dependent on international sources for its goods and services. Many businesses require frequent communications with international suppliers and associates. Experts say today’s workforce will need a more global skill set than that of their predecessors. But what does that skill set look like?

THE NEW FACE OF MANUFACTURING

John Piotti ’77 is vice president of operations for Uncas, a manufacturer and distributor of jewelry and accessories headquartered in Providence, with factories and corporate offices in Hong Kong and China. At 57, he is cool-headed, organized, meticulous. And though he doesn’t look like baseball coach Joe Torre nor talk like football coach Vince Lombardi, he does apparently think like them.

Piotti graduated with a B.A. in communications and set his sights on a business career. Had the opportunity presented itself, Piotti would have gone into sportscasting, but his motivational leadership style launched him into increasingly responsible managerial positions, first at Pepperidge Farm, then Hallmark Cards, American Tourister and Speidel. Along the way, Piotti gained hands-on experience in every aspect of running a business, from working in warehouse shipping and receiving while in high school and college to corporate executive responsibilities.

In Piotti’s view, good business is akin to good professional coaching. “Whether I’m working with factory owners in China or in meetings with my own staff, I see business as a team effort. When you function as a team, you’re looking at what it takes for everyone to succeed.”

Torre, Lombardi and Piotti may seem like strange bedfellows, but they all mastered the one trait that leads to winning teams: stellar communication skills. Traveling to Hong Kong and China three to four times a year, in stints lasting from two to three weeks, Piotti has learned to communicate according to custom, and for Piotti that doesn’t mean becoming fluent in Mandarin, Cantonese or Chinese. It means adapting to the cultural norms.

“In China, people tend to be quiet, respectful and avoid conflict,” he said. “Americans, on the other hand, can be very aggressive and straightforward. They tend to not back down from conflict. If you communicate in an abrupt or demanding manner, the Chinese will consider your behavior barbaric. It’s important to modify your body language and the inflection of your voice, and to be respectful.”

Though this way of doing business may seem weak-kneed in corporate America, Piotti said, it is essential in China where it is important to build relationships.

During his visits to China and Hong Kong, Piotti buys from factories and looks into procuring the services of new factories. “You never stop looking for cheaper and more talented sources of producing your products,” he said.

American companies like Uncas are outsourcing because they’re looking for the lowest possible cost to manufacture their products, he said. They’re also careful to avoid allegations of investing in slave labor like those incurred by H&M, Gap, Walmart and Benetton. This is why Piotti inspects the factories he does business with. He determines their social compliance with child labor laws, standard working conditions, and sleeping and living conditions. It is also important to learn if the employees are paid well and to monitor overall operating and business practices.

Due to the high cost of travel (Uncas pays $10,000 to $20,000 each trip), Piotti has reduced his overseas flights and communicates with international associates more often through Skype, conference calling and email. Technology has made it possible for email written in English to convert to Chinese. But in whichever mode Piotti communicates, he is careful to follow diplomacy.
A LOCAL FIRM EXPORTS ITS PRODUCTS WORLDWIDE

While U.S. companies like Uncas are relying more on imports from China, Daniele, Inc., a manufacturer and distributor of gourmet Italian specialty meats, has managed to keep production stateside while exporting worldwide.

“I’m fortunate enough to work in an industry that makes food,” said Michael DeCesare ’95, M.A.’99, a scientist and director of food safety for Daniele, which has three plants in Rhode Island. “Everyone needs to eat,” said DeCesare, “so there are always jobs and a market in the American food industry, whether you choose to go into manufacturing, food service or regulation.”

Piotti’s story is familiar to DeCesare. Like Piotti, 40-year-old DeCesare gained hands-on experience in every aspect of his company’s business. “I came into this business knowing nothing about the food industry,” he said, “so I decided to spend time working on the production line. I did everything from stuffing salami and moving racks to dumping the trash. I felt I had to know the process before I could establish programs and protocols on food safety.”

A biology major, DeCesare graduated with a B.A. in psychology and in 1999 earned an M.A. in biology. His intent was to become a clinical microbiologist in a hospital setting. But when one of his professors informed him of a position opening up for a lab director at Daniele, he translated his expertise in microbiology into a career in food science.

In person, DeCesare is powerfully built, like a fitness trainer, and radiates authority. He is the mastermind behind Daniele’s first food safety laboratory, where he tests for pathogens in meat products and makes sure they are safe for consumption. Daniele’s meats come from hogs raised on American family farms. At the plant they are made into such gourmet products as mortadella, salami, sopressata, pancetta and prosciutto by using the ancient European tradition of dry-curing. The meat is then sold to domestic and international distributors in Mexico, Canada, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan and throughout Central and South America.

DeCesare also concurs with Piotti on the need for effective communication skills to do business internationally. “As lab director, I have to know how to communicate with our line workers, who were either born in a foreign country where English was not the first language or who have very minimal education,” he said. “I also communicate regularly with international government agencies to meet their food regulation requirements. Though I’m not a global manager, my impact is global. Aside from coordinating regulations across borders, I’m ultimately responsible for every product that leaves the plant.

“To break the ice” when speaking to international regulation officials, DeCesare has learned a little Italian, Spanish, Polish and Russian; however, fluency in another language is not a requirement, he said. When interfacing with the line crew, however, it does help to be fluent in Spanish, he noted.

DeCesare is now recruiting interns from the undergraduate ranks at Rhode Island College to work in the quality department at Daniele, and in 2014 he will be teaching food safety and production in a new academic track he helped establish at the college.

“The jobs in food safety are there, but it is very hard to find good, skilled workers, and there are even fewer teachers of food safety and regulation,” he said. “I’m one of only a few specialists in New England. Teaching at RIC will be a chance for me to share the knowledge and give back.”

JOB CREATORS: THE NEXT FRONTIER

While the food industry may be faring well in the U.S., many other manufacturing industries are not. Some experts say the future may belong to job creators, even if the only jobs they create are their own.
Dayan Moore ’89, an art major, stepped off the usual track to co-found her own international business, Green Goods to Go (GG2G), in 2005. But unlike many entrepreneurs, she didn’t go into business to make a lot of money. The impetus went much deeper than that.

Her business started with an interest in sustainable labor practices and manufacturing choices. Moore, 49, and a partner decided to make handbags out of eco-friendly material that looks and feels like leather. Based in Connecticut, the two women set up shop on the dining room table, using a sewing machine purchased from the Salvation Army and upholstery samples from furniture stores and cutting-room floors. Later they would use billboard material and the bolt ends of restaurant seating. They sold their bags at trade shows, to eco-friendly stores, one-of-a-kind boutiques and vegan retailers. The business did well, Moore said. Along with U.S. clients, they sold to retailers in Canada and Australia. Moore also began studying Spanish. “It just made sense,” she said, “since there are more speakers of Spanish in the U.S. than any other language.”

When her partner left the business in 2009, Moore was determined to keep it going. Her original intent was to continue manufacturing in the States, but she needed funding. So she put together a business plan for a social enterprise and presented the plan to government agencies in Connecticut in order to solicit funding.

“The root of a social enterprise is about sharing the wealth with your employees,” she said. “It works in thirds. The owner and management receive a third of the profit, their employees receive a third and the last third is invested into the community.”

Moore also proposed hiring women from underserved populations to sew her bags. She would pay them a higher-than-minimum wage and provide them with one-hour classes each day on the job, such as ESL training, GED instruction and computer and banking skills.

Nevertheless, after a year and a half, Moore could not convince the state of Connecticut to support her business plan. Her plan did, however, win the ReSet Social Enterprise Trust Award as well as the Connecticut Green Business Award in 2011.

Moore quoted cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, when reflecting on her business. She said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
In 2012 Moore was offered a fellowship by the U.S. State Department that involved a professional exchange between 10 American and 10 Costa Rican businesswomen. As a result, she met her current business partner, Natascha Moscoa of Costa Rica.

Like Moore, Moscoa was in the business of making eco-friendly handbags. Five rural women in Florencia de San Carlos agreed to sew them, but Moscoa had few places to market the bags; whereas Moore had the market but not the workers.

“All the handbag making in the U.S. has gone to China,” Moore explained, “but I didn’t want my bags made in China because it would negate my goal of reducing my carbon footprint. So, Natascha and I combined forces.”

Moore moved manufacturing to Costa Rica and enacted her social enterprise model. The workers would receive a third of the profit along with classes in needed skills, while another third of the profit would go back into the community.

GG2G’s line of handbags is called Miss Manos (“manos” is the Spanish word for hands). “And one of the beautiful aspects of this venture,” Moore said, “is that by paying a fair wage to these women in Florencia de San Carlos, we can change their economic situation. Right now, the people there are making zero income because there is very little work. And though they have a decent health care system for their basic needs, there are many long-term medical conditions, such as diabetes, that go untreated because the government will not fund long-term care.”

Moore said she “feels” for the people, and it presses her forward. “I lived with them. I’ve slept on their floor. I worry about them. I think that a fair wage can change their lives so dramatically.”

“The beauty of Costa Rica is that it’s verdant,” she said. “The land is so fertile that food drops from the trees. So hunger is not usually an issue. They also have a 95 percent literacy rate, which is better than America’s. But the people lack so many other things.”

Moore interacts with Moscoa three to four times a week and travels two to three times a year to reconnect with the workers, to teach new skills and to reinforce relationships. Like Piotti, she said the most important global skill, in her experience, is the ability to adapt to different customs and cultures.

“The challenge of adjusting to another culture is more than just being aware of differences,” she said. “Adjusting is accepting differences without seeing them as an inconvenience. That two-hour café break, for example, that interrupts your day has a purpose. You might say, I don’t understand why they do it. When you’re in a community where family and community is greatly valued, that two-hour café break becomes a very important ritual.”

Moore quoted cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, when reflecting on her business. She said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Moore hopes to expand her business model to other developing countries in South America.

**Where Does RIC Fit In?**

Whether the goal is to become vice president of a company, the scientific brain center of an operation, or an entrepreneur, a new breed of businessmen and women committed to expanding products and services beyond the borders of the U.S. must develop a new set of skills that will give them an edge in the global marketplace. Those who are bilingual will have a head start, but those who are flexible enough to adapt to indigenous customs and cultures and who develop strong communication skills are equally marketable. According to Piotti, loading up on courses in public speaking, writing and the liberal arts while he was a student at RIC built “a good communication foundation and good transferable skills.”

A report by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, entitled “College Learning for the New Global Century,” made a strong case for college-level learning framed in the reality of an interconnected world, said Ron Pitt, RIC’s vice president for academic affairs.

“Rhode Island College has not only recognized this reality but has embraced it for our students by embedding global learning into our programs, curricula, activities and expertise,” he said. “RIC’s new general education program has a growing menu of courses in which global understanding is an essential element. RIC students are encouraged and supported in study abroad, they are required to demonstrate mid-novice competency in a second language, international students are welcomed, and many of the faculty work on research and creative endeavors that are not limited to the U.S., or that, on the other hand, explicitly consider the disparities and relationships among nations.”

RIC is doing everything it can to increase the global sophistication of its students and prepare them for a borderless future.
Nick Manson ’12 has big dreams for his life, and his journey to make them come true is taking him around the world.

Manson has set his course on eventually becoming a secondary school English teacher – and plans to return to RIC to complete his education for that career – but feels there are several stops he must make along the way.

The most important of these stops, he said, is gaining global experience.

“By traveling, I’ve been able to relate to diverse situations and people, and how people deal with things in very distinct ways,” Manson, 25, said. “Everyone comes from different backgrounds and cultures. I think with my traveling, I’ll be more relatable to my future students and will be more than just a symbol of authority to them.”

After Manson earned a bachelor’s in English from RIC, he decided to take some time to gain life experience before returning to school to complete his student teaching requirement for a bachelor’s in education.

As he had for the previous decade, he worked the entire summer of 2012 at The Black Pearl restaurant in Newport, saving every penny for his first planned trip to Central America.

“It’s always been instilled by my parents and sister that travel is important to make you more open-minded,” Manson said. “To become familiar with another culture and another language is not only interesting, but also important, especially for Americans. There are tremendous benefits to experiencing different cultures on a day-to-day basis.”

From January to April 2013, Manson and Paul Marshall, a close friend, traveled all over Central America, spending time pursuing their recreational love of surfing and immersing themselves in local culture.

Manson said he chose Central America because his sister, Lauren Manson, a social worker in Boston, spent time working in Costa Rica. Lauren is fluent in Spanish. And so Nick Manson lived for two-and-a-half months in Costa Rica, taking Spanish classes there. From Costa Rica, he ventured into Panama, then to the Caribbean side of Costa Rica, up to Nicaragua and then into Guatemala.

The Guatemala stop was chosen for a rendezvous with Manson’s mother, Diane, who started an English program at an all-girls school in Antigua, a city in the country’s central highlands. Manson spent two weeks teaching there. When his mother took him to a fundraiser for Hogar de Amor, an orphanage for children who are housed there for their own court-ordered protection, Manson and Marshall grew quite attached to a few of the residents.

“After that, there was no question where we wanted to spend the next couple of weeks,” Manson said. “The home is funded entirely by donations, and it was struggling to survive when we were there.”

When Manson and Marshall returned to Newport, they decided their work for the orphanage wasn’t done. In June they held a fundraiser for the orphanage at Cappy’s Hillside Café. The two tended bar, as they do at The Black Pearl and contributed all tips and donations to the orphanage, a total of nearly $3,500.

Manson and Marshall are considering making the fundraiser an annual event.

“It really picked up the orphanage,” Manson said.

And Manson has continued his volunteer work. He helps out in the English as a Second Language tutoring lab at Bristol Community College, where his mother teaches.

He also plans to make volunteering a priority on his next global adventure. Manson hopes to embark on a surfing-immersion trip to the Dominican Republic and Brazil in November or December.

When he’s finished traveling, he’ll return to his studies, he said.

“To go to another country alone or with a friend and live there teaches you so much about the world and your own strengths and things you need to work on,” Manson concluded.

By Rebecca Keister
“Many of the students come back transformed,” said Goodwin Gomez. “They’ve lived independently, made international friends and have had experiences that they only read about in books. They’ve taken their educations to an entirely different level.”
In the spring of 2013, RIC history major Cathleen Williams spent a semester in Morocco. Practiced in three foreign languages, Williams said she took this journey to improve her foreign language skills, a passion of hers for as long as she can remember.

Williams began studying Spanish at the age of seven and continued through high school and college. At RIC, she also took up Portuguese and a course in Arabic. By her sophomore year, Williams’ language professors were encouraging her to study abroad.

Maricarmen Margenot, associate professor of modern languages, was one of her most ardent supporters, Williams said. A native of Spain, Margenot herself engaged in study abroad as a student. “It was one of the most enriching experiences of my life,” she said. “Since then, I have become a strong advocate of overseas travel, and I firmly believe it should be an integral component of the undergraduate experience. I urged Cathleen to apply for the Shinn Study Abroad scholarship because of her language skills and her strong intellect.”

With some trepidation, having never left the U.S., Williams began preparations for travel in her junior year by writing a proposal, a requirement of the Shinn fund. In deciding on a host country, she first considered Spain. However, already fluent in Spanish, she settled on Morocco in North Africa where Arabic is the official language.

“Morocco fulfilled all the purposes of study abroad,” Williams said. “It would take me out of my comfort zone, and I would be immersed in the language and culture. Morocco would also further my degree studies. As a history major, my interest is in contemporary Maghreb [North Africa].”

Through the study abroad office, Williams selected a program to Morocco that entailed traveling with 25 other U.S. students. Through the Shinn Study Abroad Fund, she was able to finance her trip.

Morocco is situated on the northwestern tip of Africa. Its aboriginal people, the Berbers, endured a series of invaders through centuries of conflict: Romans, Arabians, Spanish, Portuguese and finally French. Today the country, ruled by King Mohammed VI, is an amalgam of these widely diverse cultures. Nearly 99 percent of the population is Muslim. Aside from Arabic, three other languages are spoken – French, Spanish and three dialects of Berber.

RIC students have traversed the globe to gain educational experiences in non-native environs since 1974, when the first band of 47 students crossed the Cold War border into Poland. They were led by Dorothy Pieniadz, RIC’s first dean of students and professor emeritus of philosophy and foundations of education.

Out of this program, which Pieniadz led from 1974 to 1982, emerged opportunities for RIC students to study anywhere in the world. Today, RIC’s study abroad office, headed by anthropology professor Gale Goodwin Gomez, is the first stop for students interested in study overseas. The office’s database gives students access to national study abroad program providers who make all the travel arrangements for the students, including setting up courses at overseas universities, arranging housing, meal plans, travel insurance, transportation and excursions.

RIC students may use financial aid to fund their trips, or they may apply for scholarships through the Ridgway F. Shinn Jr. Study Abroad Fund [see related story, page 25]. In the past 25 years, the Shinn fund has supported 72 RIC students in 28 different countries on six continents.

“Many of the students come back transformed,” said Goodwin Gomez. “They’ve lived independently, made international friends and have had experiences that they only read about in books. They’ve taken their educations to an entirely different level.”

Dorothy Pieniadz led the first study abroad program at RIC from 1974 to 1982.
Williams set up her new home in a high-rise apartment building in the city of Meknès. She studied at the city’s Moulay Ismail University, taking courses in Abrahamic religions, Moroccan history and culture, intercultural development and the Arabic language.

While her Arabic progressively improved, Williams also immersed herself in the sights, smells and sounds of North Africa.

Cities throughout North Africa are comprised of the “new city,” built by the colonial powers and the “old city” or medina built by the indigenous people. The medina in Meknès is a labyrinth of narrow streets that date back to ancient times. The marketplace is lined with stalls where merchants sell handcrafted wares, fresh fruits and vegetables, appliances and furniture. “And everything in the medina is open to negotiation. The sellers expect you to haggle with them on price,” Williams said.

Williams also quickly adapted to Moroccan culture – from learning to cover up when it was hot to an appreciation of Moroccan food, which makes plentiful use of olive oil and couscous. The call to prayer sounds every day, five times a day, and Williams learned to use these moments as a time to reflect. “Throughout the day, you are able to take a minute to pause and just be present,” she said.

Openness to learning about how people live in different areas of the world consists of more than adapting to local customs, observed Margenot, “it means learning to build relationships.” In fact, Williams remarked that the relationships she established made the deepest imprint on her.

She recalled the middle-aged couple who owned a store across the street from her apartment. They discovered that she was studying Arabic at the university and helped her with the language. And there was the Moroccan friend who invited her to a traditional Berber wedding and even lent her a dress for the occasion. There were also the many warm-hearted Moroccans who would drop in at her apartment unexpectedly to chat and drink mint tea.

“Study abroad allows students to come face-to-face with ‘the other’ and negotiate gaps and subtleties that exist between cultures,” said Margenot. “It nurtures the concept of identity and explores the meaning of communication, tolerance and understanding.” Study abroad also broadened Williams’ sights on her future.

As a result of her trip, she would like to teach Arabic at the college level. “There is very little Arabic instruction in the United States,” she said, “yet it is such a rich and beautiful language.”

Other students have also expanded their career goals as a result of international study.

“Study abroad allows students to come face-to-face with ‘the other’ and negotiate gaps and subtleties that exist between cultures...”
The Ridgway F. Shinn Jr. Study Abroad Fund celebrates its 25th anniversary this fall. The fund was established during the 1987-1988 school year by the late emeritus professor of history Ridgway Shinn to provide scholarships for students engaged in planned study outside the United States. In the past 25 years, more than a quarter of a million dollars has gone to support 72 RIC undergraduates in 28 different countries on six continents.

Joy Fox ’99, director of communications for Rhode Island general treasurer Gina Raimondo, is a former Shinn scholar who traveled to Ireland. Fox said, “We are exactly what Dr. Shinn had in mind. He wanted to take ordinary RIC students out of the U.S. to explore the world. He wanted them to live abroad for the first time, to manage their own day-to-day affairs, to be exposed to new cultures and to people unlike themselves. It’s an invaluable experience personally and it’s invaluable to international relations.”

Janessa Frias is not only a Shinn Fund scholarship recipient, but also a recipient of the American Institute for Foreign Study-Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Scholarship (AIFS-HACU). This scholarship is awarded once a semester to an outstanding Hispanic student. To be eligible, students must come from a HACU-member institution, of which RIC is the only one in Rhode Island. Recipients must be Hispanic, with a minimum GPA of 3.0.

In the spring 2014 semester, Frias will study in Granada, Spain. She is only one of seven recipients of the AIFS-HACU scholarship in the country. The selection committee noted how impressed they were with Frias’ essay on how study abroad can benefit Americans.
International Students

Find a Home at RIC

By Gita Brown

RIC study abroad students blog about a range of positive experiences, from witnessing Napoleon’s massive tomb, to riding camels across the Sahara, to eating guinea pig for the first time in Peru. But what do international students find when they study in America?

According to InternationalStudent.com, the United States has the world’s largest international student population, with more than 700,000 students broadening their educations and life experiences in the United States. The majority come from China, with numbers particularly strong among students seeking English-language instruction. For Xiaofang Lou M.Ed.’12 of China, the prospect of perfecting her English and teaching the language in China is what lured her to the United States.

In her native country, Lou majored in Japanese language arts, earning a B.A. in 2009. She went on to teach Japanese for a year at the Great Wall Language Institute. In 2010 she decided to study in the United States with her fiancé, who was enrolled at Johnson & Wales University in Providence. Her goal was to earn a master’s degree in teaching English as a second language (TESL).

In searching for the best college in Rhode Island for TESL instruction, she sought out the advice of practicing teachers in the state. “They told me that if I wanted to be a very dedicated teacher, Rhode Island College’s program is the one I should look into. They said it’s the best place for a teacher to learn,” said Lou.

She applied for admission, but like many international students, she found the application process daunting. From SATs, TOEFLs and other tests, to essay writing, transcript evaluations and more, the many steps involved in applying to an American college can be intimidating for international students.

“I had to wait for transcripts from China and visa paperwork. I was all in a panic,” she said. But her academic advisor, Nancy Cloud, who is also a professor and director of RIC’s TESL program, helped her wade through the red tape.

Once she had enrolled, RIC faculty continued to assist Lou, this time in adjusting to the American classroom. “In China, classes are teacher-centered. The teacher talks and the students listen,” she noted. “In America, student discussion is a major part of instruction. I admire American students who aren’t afraid to raise their hands and ask questions. I would sit up front in class, too shy to ask questions, but Dr. Cloud, who taught three

I tell my Chinese friends that if you have relatives who want to study education in America, tell them to study at Rhode Island College. The assistance I received from my peers, faculty and staff not only helped me gain fluency in the English language in a comparatively short period of time, it also allowed me to fit into the native environment more smoothly. – Xiaofang Lou M.Ed.’12
of my four core courses, could read my face. She would say, 'Xiaofang, you look like you have a question.' She would help me to speak out. She was a wonderful teacher. I feel so grateful that during my first year – and toughest year – at RIC that such caring professors were always there to help me. Dr. Cloud was even accessible on the weekends.”

Through RIC’s International Students Office, Lou befriended other non-native students. And through the Visiting International Students Association (VISA), a student club, she forged friendships with both internationals and Americans. The VISA club is a social network for non-native students but also welcomes anyone interested in learning about other cultures. Members meet once a week to plan extracurricular activities and to share experiences. “We helped each other feel strong and confident in a foreign culture,” Lou said.

Audrey Olmsted has been RIC’s international student advisor for more than 30 years, while teaching full time in the department of communications. She remarked, “Our international students integrate quite well, not only academically but socially. Aside from VISA, on-campus employment is another way for them to socially engage with their American peers.”

Since tuition is twice as much for non-native students as it is for in-state students, international students often work on campus and earn up to $5,000 a year to help meet tuition costs. Lou was hired by RIC’s Upward Bound Program to teach Japanese. “It gave me an opportunity to implement the teaching strategies I was learning in the TESL program,” she said, “as well as a chance to share Asian culture with pure Americans.”

Upon her graduation in 2012, Lou was hired by the Chamberlain International School in Middleborough, Mass., to teach Japanese and Chinese to secondary school students with mild to moderate learning disabilities. This teaching experience resulted in a change of careers. Lou now hopes to make special education her life’s work. “I would like to teach special education in the U.S. for five or six more years,” she said. “Then I’d like to return to China to teach at a similar school.” Lou is also an applied behavior analyst for Autism Therapeutic Consultants, also in Massachusetts.

“Eventually, I will go back to RIC to become certified to teach special education,” she noted. “I cannot imagine studying at a better place. I tell my Chinese friends that if you have relatives who want to study education in America, tell them to study at Rhode Island College. The assistance I received from my peers, faculty and staff not only helped me gain fluency in the English language in a comparatively short period of time, it also allowed me to fit into the native environment more smoothly.”

In the last 30 years, RIC has hosted 2,000 international students. Many have gone on to lucrative professions either in America or abroad. Moroccan Jahwed Sefiani ’09, who completed a bachelor’s degree in communications, is currently working on his master’s degree in media studies at RIC and has opened a Moroccan café in Providence called Tea in Sahara.

A straight ‘A’ honors student, Gitanjali Sriram ’91 from India had applied to both Harvard and RIC, but decided upon RIC. She is now an international public relations executive, working for major corporations, including Revlon and Sony.

Identical twins Maria and NataliaPetschatnikov ’96 from Russia studied in New York and Paris after earning their bachelor’s degree in studio art at RIC. They are now successful artists, exhibiting their work throughout Europe. (See page 28 for full story.)

National Student Exchange program adds new dimensions to RIC experience

By Rebecca Krister

It isn’t necessary to travel or study abroad to learn, experience and embrace different cultures. The National Student Exchange program (NSE), which has operated at RIC since 1982, provides opportunities for exploration closer to home.

This fall, as part of the NSE, four exchange students are studying at RIC, and three RIC students have journeyed to schools in New Mexico and California. A RIC student will study in California for the winter and spring semesters, and RIC will welcome an additional exchange student next spring.

The NSE allows undergraduates to spend a semester or year as a student at a college or university in a different part of the United States (and Canada) from their home school.

“Living away from your home will always round you out and make you more personable,” said Shannon Dietsch, a senior communication and advertising major visiting from Portland State University in Portland, Ore.

Dietsch and fellow exchange students Edward Johnson, a junior marketing major from Montana State University in Bozeman, Mont., and Laura Keeley, a junior psychology major from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in Eau Claire, Wis., attended a NSE orientation dinner at President Nancy Carriuolo’s house in early September.

Kelsey Bailio, an elementary education major from the University of New Mexico, also is at RIC this semester.

“The East Coast is so different from Montana,” Johnson said. “I think living out here will be enriching. I really want to experience the city. The big incentive is interacting with different types of people and understanding their backgrounds.”

The students said they are aware that their future careers will most likely involve working with professionals from all over the country and, perhaps, around the world. Studying for a semester at a different college, they said, is step one in broadening their global horizons.

“I will definitely benefit from this in the long run,” Keeley said. “I had never been outside Wisconsin until a year ago. I want to travel to different states and meet people from different areas of the country.”

The NSE program is run through the Office of Academic Support and Information Services.
Spotting the Unusual in the Usual: Maria and Natalia Petschatnikov ’96

By Gita Brown
The latest installation by Berlin-based artists Maria and Natalia Petschatnikov ’96 is situated in a stark white room in the Nabakov Museum in Saint Petersburg. As viewers enter, they are immediately hit by a black oncoming tram that appears to be chalked in graffiti on the wall. The floor is littered with trash being pecked by sculpted pigeons, while small café chairs, randomly placed, are all oddly empty as if the human inhabitants had been suddenly displaced. The scene is familiar and ominous at the same time.

“A Guide to Berlin” pays homage to Russian Vladimir Nabokov and explores the destabilizing effects of exile and loss. In reviewing the exhibit, art critic Donna Stonecipher wrote: “The trams, wending their way out of the past and headed into an unknown future, remind us that we are all natives and exiles alike, only in transit through this life.”

Using the everyday environment as the fodder for their art, Maria and Natalia Petschatnikov have made it their mission to find the extraordinary in the ordinary, the evocative in what might be considered ugly or irrelevant. They push past what the uninterested eye screens out, exposing life from unusual perspectives.

The sisters, identical twins, were born in Russia. Art has been their passion since the age of five when they took art classes at Saint Petersburg’s State Hermitage Museum, one of the oldest and largest museums in the world, with collections encompassing more than three million items, including the largest collection of paintings in the world.

“Studying there was an amazing experience,” Maria said. “We saw the work of Ancient Greek artists, Impressionist and Renaissance painters, and artists from the Netherlands dating back to the 16th and 17th century. We became absolutely excited about art.”

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Petschatnikovs were among the first generation of Russians to study abroad. They came to the U.S. that year as part of a two-week student exchange program and lived with a host family – Rhode Island College faculty members Richard Olmsted, professor of philosophy, and Audrey Olmsted, associate professor of communications. After returning to Russia to complete their senior year in high school, they began looking into art academies.

“If we had remained in Russia, we would have attended the Saint Petersburg Academy of Art,” said Natalia. “But Audrey suggested we enroll at RIC because of its excellent art and theater programs. We became the first Russian international students at RIC. Through RIC’s national student exchange program (see page 27), which allows for up to one academic year of study at a college or university in another part of the U.S., the Petschatnikovs moved to New York in their senior year and studied at Hunter College. In 1996 they received their bachelor’s degrees from RIC.

“Moving to New York was extremely important for us because we would later conduct our graduate studies at Hunter College,” Natalia said. As graduate students, they would also participate in a yearlong exchange program in Paris, studying at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in 1998, and they interned at the Metropolitan Musuem of Art in New York, finally completing their graduate studies in 1999. All of their travel experiences, they said, were fundamental to the development of their work.

The perspective of a stranger in strange lands became a recurrent theme in their artwork. “Our art takes the viewpoint of a traveler or outsider,” Maria said. “In taking an outsider’s perspective, we notice those things in the environment that may no longer be visible to insiders or locals.”

For the past 13 years, the sisters have wandered the streets of the world’s cities, snapping photos of everyday things, such as pubs, trains, street pipes and signs. They also collect objects, fashioning themselves as archeologists who take a seemingly insignificant artifact and reconstruct an entire civilization. These images and objects become the basis for their paintings and sculptures. Add to that the exhibition space itself as an extension of the art, and the process of transformation is complete. Suddenly everyday images and objects appear amplified. The space opens up to the viewer, who in turn fills the space with personal associations, often reflecting larger social issues.

The Petschatnikovs have exhibited their work throughout Europe and are represented by Wagner+Partner Gallery in Berlin. In the United States, they have exhibited in galleries in New York and Rhode Island. They are recipients of the Aleksander Reznikov Award (2009), the Studio-Grant of the Berlin Senat (2010) and the Kunstrfonds Work-Stipend (2012).
Alumni and students gather for the Student Community Government Reunion

Sharen Gleckman ’84 volunteers at the Homecoming BBQ

Trivia Challenge contestants discuss possible answers

Kathleen Arnone Toolan ’65 with Kappa Delta Phi students Justin Supplee and Tyler Christo

Former All-New England and All-Little East Conference guard Kinsey Durgin ’08 (right) was inducted into RIC’s Athletic Hall of Fame on Oct. 5

Alumni and students gather for the Student Community Government Reunion

Mike Montecalvo ’84 speaks at the Student Community Government Reunion
RIC Programming wins the Homecoming Parade contest!

Joan Goralnik ’64; Judith Antonucci La Butti ’64; Professor Emerita Dorothy Pieniadz, first dean of students; Geraldine Moretti ’64; and President Carriuolo at the 50th Reunion Class Luncheon

Patricia Hawkridge ’81 and daughter Kira Hawkridge

Claire Giannamore ’64 at the class luncheon

Homecoming Weiner Cook-Off contest

Rosemary Zanfagna Andreozzi ’64 at the class luncheon

Elizabeth Moran Ahern ’64 and Richard Liscio ’64 at the class luncheon

Richard Liscio ’64, Anne Walsh Cain ’64, and Thomas Izzo ’64 at the Homecoming Parade

Joseph Andreozzi and Geraldine Moretti ’64 at the class luncheon
Dear Alumni and Friends,

Since the spring edition of the Alumni Magazine, we’ve not stopped working to engage RIC alumni! We had a delightful summer season of events with a Pawtucket Red Sox game, a gathering at the Newport Polo Grounds, and a summer party in Narragansett. Also this fall, we hosted the annual Alumni Association Liberty Mutual Cup Golf Tournament in honor of Helen Lombardi ‘40 and welcomed alumni and friends back for RIC Homecoming events October 1-5th. Check out the photos of our events on pages 30, 31, 33, 34 and 35.

If you haven’t yet attended an event or participated in a committee through the RIC Alumni Association, now is the time to begin. Your network is growing larger and stronger every year. Take advantage of the power of your degree and keep connected with the college and each other. Learn about upcoming events on page 32 or browse our brand-new alumni relations website at http://stg-www.ric.edu/alumniaffairs/index.php

We hope to see you soon!

Kate Brezina
Executive Director, Alumni and College Relations

Alumni Association Board of Directors

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Events and Important Dates!
Mark Your Calendar

Alumni Awards 2013: Nomination Deadline
December 16, 2013
Nominate online: my.ric.edu/go/AlumniAwards

RIC on the Road: Alumni Gathering
January 2014
Rhode Island College Night at PPAC: Wicked
Saturday, January 11, 2014
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Exclusive Alumni Reception with Alumnus Alan Chille ’82, General Manager of PPAC
8 p.m. – Wicked – Center Orchestra Main Floor
Ticket includes VIP parking in Central Parking Garage across from PPAC, exclusive reception and a wonderful night out in Providence!

Alumni Association Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 22, 2014
5:30 p.m., campus

Alumni Volunteer and Board Information Night
Tuesday, February 4, 2014
5:30 p.m., Alumni Lounge, campus

Alumni Association Board Meeting
Wednesday, February 26, 2014
5:30 p.m., campus

Alumni Board of Directors Nomination Form Deadline
Friday, February 28, 2014
Nominate online: my.ric.edu/go/nomination

Alumni Association Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 19, 2014
5:30 p.m., campus

Alumni Awards Dinner
Thursday, May 8, 2014
5:30 p.m., Donovan Dining Center, campus

Class of 1964 – 50th Reunion Weekend
Friday, May 16 – Sunday, May 18, 2014

Commencement
Saturday, May 17, 2014
9:30 a.m., campus

STAY CONNECTED!
Summer Gathering at Newport Polo Grounds | July 20, 2013

RIC Alumni Association President Bill Fazioli ’86, Kate Brezina and Newport Mayor Harry Winthrop ’86

RI C Alumni Day at the Pawsox, June 29, 2013

Claudia Erazo-Conrad ’94 and Michael Browner Jr. ’98

Donna Vessella ’91 and her family
Narragansett Reception | August 8, 2013

Longtime friends Christine Gattinella Robinson ’72, Elizabeth McKenna Downing ’72, Janice Kulaga Argentieri ’72 and Gin Gannon Benoit ’72

Phyllis McDole Tracy ’58, Mary Welch Eaton ’58 and Elizabeth Goselin Parrillo ’58

Narragansett Reception | August 8, 2013

Class of 1953 Luncheon

RIC student Kevin Stone reviews the 1953 yearbook with his grandmother Ann Halloran Stone ’53 and Marie Lennon Conlon ’53

Marjorie Johnson Iampietro ’53 with granddaughter Emma McGuy, a RIC student

Class of 1958 Luncheon

Marjorie Johnson Iampietro ’53 with granddaughter Emma McGuy, a RIC student

Paul Hartley, Leah Forget Mastin ’95, Josephine Sehl Millard ’94 and Christopher Millard ’96

Jennie Tetreault, Rosemarie Azar Canavan ’58 and Gerard Tetreault ’58
Classes of 1935 – 1947 Reunion

Evelyn Rocha Edge ’58 and James Edge ’58

Rachel Pinto Bessette ’58, Gail McCaughey Johnson-Sweeney ’58 and Maureen Maynard Harrington ’58

Maureen Nixon ’47, Ellen Fay Shannon ’47, Evelyn Gettler Silva ’47, A. Marion McCarthy Rooney ’47, Helen Gilligan ’47 and Nancy Hooker Hazard ’47

Evelyn Gettler Silva ’47 and A. Marion McCarthy Rooney ’47, with President Carriuolo

Nancy Hooker Hazard ’47 and Shirley Carr Suorsa ’44

Miriam Cronin Clancy ’48 with President Carriuolo

Class of 1948 Luncheon

Evelyn Rocha Edge ’58 and James Edge ’58

Robert Sullivan ’53 and Barbara Burns Sullivan ’53

Patricia Pagnano Fojo ’53, Mary Jane Macioci McConnell ’53 and Eunice Ann Toomey ’53

Stacey Swift ’53 and Marjorie Swift

Patricia Pagnano Fojo ’53, Mary Jane Macioci McConnell ’53 and Eunice Ann Toomey ’53

Stacey Swift ’53 and Marjorie Swift

Nancy Hooker Hazard ’47 and Shirley Carr Suorsa ’44

Shirley Carr Suorsa ’44 and Sam Suorsa ’44

Irene Hall Kenny ’35 and Betty Larmie

Ralph Pari, Violet Ciccone Pari ’48, Virginia Besette Fortin ’48 and Frances Nannig ’48

Frances Nannig ’48, Urban Nannig, Virginia Bessette Fortin ’48, Ralph Pari, Violet Ciccone Pari ’48 and Miriam Cronin Clancy ’48 with President Carriuolo

Frances Nannig ’48 and Urban Nannig
Kate Brezina, executive director of alumni and college relations, with Irene Hall Kenny ’35 who recently turned 100.

1933

The late Lucy (Rawlings) Tootell was posthumously inducted into the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame for her contributions in preserving the histories of Richmond, Charlestown, and South Kingstown.

1935

Irene (Hall) Kenny celebrated her 100th birthday on July 15.

1937

Louise (Grisom) Rimmel continues to spend six months in Florida and six months in Rhode Island each year.

1938

B. Madonna (Emin) Mott has been spending time with her family and her husband, who now lives at the Rhode Island Veterans Home in Bristol.

1940

Rita (Smith) McCoy enjoys the company of her seven children, 12 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

1942

Madeline (Neiderer) Boucher has three grandsons teaching at Methuen High School; a fourth grandson is principal of a K-8 school and three granddaughters also teach.

1943

Eileen (Deering) Rafferty is still driving and still living in her condominium. She enjoys going to American Health Fitness Center three times a week.

1945

Kathleen (Emin) Thornton lives in Florida and comes back to Rhode Island “for excitement.”

1947

Helen (Page) Gilligan lives in Pawtucket and spends her winters in Florida.

Mother of five sons, Maureen (Maloney) Nixon is now grandmother of nine and great-grandmother of three.

A. Marion (McCarty) Rooney keeps busy by tending to her flower garden and entertaining guests in her home on Great Island.

Ellen (Fay) Shannon is proud of her granddaughter who graduated from RIC in May with a degree in film studies.

Attleboro Historic Preservation Society president Evelyn (Getler) Silva keeps busy with the rehabilitation of an 1842 Greek revival school and entertaining her ten grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

1948

Frances (Gannon) Nannig has four children all living in North Kingstown. Her children are college graduates and six of her grandchildren are college graduates. Three of those grandchildren have master’s degrees, and one is a doctor.

In her retirement from teaching, Violet (Ciccone) Pari enjoys the unusual activity of helping to raise beef cattle.

1953

Sydney Williams has stepped down after serving as a member of the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors. We thank Syd for his service to his alma mater.

1954

Former President John Nazarian was inducted into the Little East Conference Hall of Fame on Sunday, Oct. 27, at the Providence Marriott.

1955

Wileen Coyne was inducted into the 2014 RIC Athletic Hall of Fame for her strong support of Rhode Island College athletics.
1958

Evelyn (Rocha) Edge has recently stepped down from her position as president of the Retired Officers Wives Society of Tidewater Area Virginia. Edge is currently enjoying retired life with her husband James.

1965

Retired Little Compton Superintendent of Schools Harold Devine has been named to the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors.

1969

Judge Alice B. Gibney received an honorary degree from Roger Williams University during its commencement ceremony in May. She is the presiding justice for the Rhode Island Superior Court.

Dayle (Hunt) Joseph was inducted into the Rhode Island Nursing Hall of Fame in April. Joseph retired from the University of Rhode Island in 2012, where she had been the dean of the College of Nursing since 2001; she previously served as interim dean, starting in 1995.

1974

Ann Lussier-Griffin was recently named assistant headmaster of student life at the Saint Bernard School located in Uncasville, Conn. Saint Bernard is a college preparatory Xaverian-sponsored school for grades 6-12.

Jim White was inducted into the 2014 RIC Athletic Hall of Fame for his strong support of Rhode Island College athletics.
1977

John Piotti was recently promoted to vice president of operations at Uncas Manufacturing in Providence [see story, page 17.]

Harriet (Carcone) Sukaskas was named Johnston’s 2013-2014 District Teacher of the Year. Sukaskas teaches English at Nicholas A. Ferri Middle School.

1980

In a special election, residents of District 4 elected David P. Florio to the Coventry School Committee.

Michael Ward was appointed director of finance and facilities in the Falmouth, Mass. school department in May. For the past six years, Ward worked for the Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District in Massachusetts, first as director of instructional services and then as director of finance and operations.

Gina Wesley-Silva has resigned as a member of the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors, as she will be moving to California. We thank Gina for her service to her alma mater.

1981

Lincoln School Superintendent Georgia (Boretos) Fortunato has been named to the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors.

1982

Retired banking executive Judith (Tullie) Dorian has been named to the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors.

Norwell Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice in Norwell, Mass. welcomes Judith (Wolf) Labossiere as its new chief operating officer.

1983

Audrey (Weiner) Chretien, an inventory analyst for DePuy Synthes Companies of Johnson & Johnson, has recently participated in the mentor program sponsored by Taunton Area School to Career in Taunton, Mass.

The Rhode Island State Police have promoted 21-year veteran Michael J. Rosa to the rank of lieutenant.

1984

Lajuana (Tucker) Bradford was among the inaugural group chosen as the Women Who Make a Difference, a joint venture between AL.com/The Birmingham News and Red Mountain Theatre Company. Bradford is a senior vice president at Regions Financial Corporation and serves on the boards of the YWCA of Central Alabama, the Alabama Region of the American Red Cross, the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and the Alabama Humanities Foundation.

Patricia (Horan) Doyle has stepped down from her position as vice president at RDW Group to launch her own public relations agency, Patti Doyle Communications, Inc.

1985

Gladys Corvera-Baker spoke at the Rhode Island State House in honor of Bolivia’s Independence Day.

Gladys Corvera-Baker ’85 speaking at the Rhode Island State House in honor of Bolivia’s Independence Day.

Gladys Corvera-Baker ‘85

Gladys Corvera-Baker ‘85 speaking at the Rhode Island State House in honor of Bolivia’s Independence Day.

President and founder of The Libman Group in Carmel, Ind. Steven Libman, recently started a radio show devoted to arts education. His show “The Voice of the Performing Arts” appears weekly on public radio WICR 88.7 from the University of Indianapolis.

Norwell Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice in Norwell, Mass. welcomes Judith (Wolf) Labossiere as its new chief operating officer.

Patricia (Horan) Doyle has stepped down from her position as vice president at RDW Group to launch her own public relations agency, Patti Doyle Communications, Inc.

Gladys Corvera-Baker ’85

Gladys Corvera-Baker ’85 speaking at the Rhode Island State House in honor of Bolivia’s Independence Day.
1985

Mark Paolucci has completed his second two-year term as a member of the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors. We thank Mark for his service to his alma mater.

1986

Marilyn Bellemore authored *The Night the Music Ended: The Station Nightclub, March 2000-February 2003*. According to publisher The Merry Blacksmith Press, the book “is presented in memory of that tragic night and its victims, but is also a look at the nightclub itself, its place in the community, the fire, and the aftermath.”

Al Gomes and his music firm Big Noise were hired by music icons The Beach Boys, to run the band’s successful publicity campaign, which helped them win their very first Grammy Award for ‘Best Historical Recording’ for their box set *The Smile Sessions*. Beach Boys’ founder Brian Wilson and box set producer Alan Boyd accepted their Grammy Awards with words of thanks to Al. He and his partner A. Michelle have worked on a variety of projects with The Beach Boys over the last eight years.

1987

Singer and actor Michael Janaros (Cofield) played the notary in the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera’s production of Puccini’s *Gianni Schicchi*.

After having served 11 years as the deputy superintendent of Pawtucket Schools, Kimberly (Dufault) Mercer has been named superintendent of the East Providence School System.

1988

Michael Barnes was named 2014 Rhode Island Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Barnes is superintendent of the Foster-Glocester Regional Schools.

Robert Bergeron Jr. has been promoted to assistant vice president in the corporate information systems department at Amica Mutual Insurance Company. Bergeron has been working for Amica since 1988.

Reverend William Ledoux was installed as pastor at St. Mary’s Church in Cranston in June. He had been serving as pastor of St. Mary’s Church in Pawtucket for the past four years.


1989

Thomas “Thom” Cahir has written his first novel, *9-11 Avenged*, which was published by FastPencil in July. Thom has also completed his second two-year term as a member of the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors. We thank him for his service to his alma mater.

1990

Kim Baker has written her first book of poetry, *Under the Influence: Musings on Poems and Paintings*, which was published in April by Finishing Line Press. Baker also operates an online poetry journal, wordsoup.weebly.com, with a mission “to end hunger one poem at a time.”

Michael Conforti founded kindrunner.com, the world’s first socially responsible e-commerce site exclusively for runners. Conforti’s goal is to reduce the number of non-biodegradable running shoes in landfills. Through one of its global partnerships, returned shoes are donated to those who need proper fitting footwear for basic transportation and protection from injury and disease.

Michelle (Brazeau) Lewandowski, a middle school science teacher at Our Lady of Mercy School in East Greenwich, coached the school’s Science Olympiad Team to win its sixth Rhode Island Science Olympiad Competition. Lewandowski’s students won eight gold, three silver and four bronze medals and will represent Rhode Island in the middle school division at the national competition.
1990
Pawtucket artist Joan McConaghy had her work on display in the Maxwell Mays Gallery of the Providence Art Club in July. McConaghy is an artist member of the Providence Art Club, Wickford Art Association and Pawtucket Arts Collaborative.

1991
Nidia Diez-Karbonik was named Rhode Island’s 2013 Elementary School Principal of the Year. Diez-Karbonik has served as principal of Ashton Elementary School in Cumberland since 2001.

Michael Hobin was named Rhode Island’s 2013 High School Principal of the Year. Hobin has been at Coventry High School since 2002, having served as assistant principal for four years and as principal since 2006.

1993
Hovanes “John” Emdjian has been named vice president of business and professional banking at Webster Bank.

Michael Kolesnik has been hired as assistant vice president of enrollment services for Employee Family Protection in Glastonbury, Conn.

Erin (McCarthy) Plaziak has completed her second two-year term as a member of the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors. We thank Erin for her service to her alma mater.

1994
Lisa Beaudoin-Colwell earned her Ed.D. from Johnson & Wales University in 2010 and is currently the director of special education for the Cumberland School Department.

Christopher Briery became a Honey Dew Donuts franchise owner in July. Briery’s shop is located in Seekonk, Mass.

Yasmina (Boulay) Thomas was awarded a doctoral degree in education from Johnson & Wales University in May. Thomas completed the doctoral program while teaching full time at Primrose Hill School in Barrington and raising her children.

Michael Volpe was hired as a sales and leasing associate for Coastal Commercial Real Estate. Volpe has had an extensive career in real estate as a sales agent, leasing and marketing consultant, property manager, valuator and consultant.

1995
Gary Miller has been promoted to the rank of lieutenant by the Coventry Police Department, where he has been part of the force since 1999.

Rehoboth resident Steven Morgenweck has been appointed principal of Plymouth South Middle School.

1996
Michelle (Nunes) Depot was named Pawtucket’s 2013 Teacher of the Year. Depot has been teaching at the Flora S. Curtis Elementary School for the past seven years.
Wayne Kilcline '96 was named Providence’s 2013 Teacher of the Year. Kilcline is a music teacher at the Lillian Feinstein Elementary School at Sackett Street. Photos by Kathy Borchers.

**1996**

Wayne Kilcline was named Providence’s 2013 Teacher of the Year. Kilcline is a music teacher at the Lillian Feinstein Elementary School at Sackett Street.

Jeffrey Wallace has been named territory manager for the Northern New England territory of Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company. Wallace has been with the company since 2009.

**1997**

Cranston resident Tricia (Totolo) Capaldi was appointed as principal of Clayville Elementary School by the Scituate School Department.

Central Falls High School science teacher David Upegui was one of nine teachers nationwide to receive the 2013 Amgen Award for Science Teaching Excellence.

**1998**

RIC adjunct professor of justice studies Melissa (D’Urso) Leahey has been inducted into the Rhode Island Criminal Justice Hall of Fame. Leahey has spent more than a decade advocating for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. She is manager of advocacy services for the Elizabeth Buffam Chace Center in Warwick.

**1999**

Lynn Willey Gillis has been named vice president of client services at Longfellow Benefits in Boston, Mass.

Jason Silva brings more than 12 years of experience in the mortgage industry to his new job as mortgage specialist at Bank Rhode Island (BankRI).

**2000**

Attleboro City Councilor Mark Cooper has joined Fallon Community Health Plan (FCHP) as its new senior director of clinical operations for the Summit ElderCare program.

Richard Drolet (MAT) was named Rhode Island’s 2013 Middle School Principal of the Year for his work at North Cumberland Middle School. Drolet has accepted a new position as principal of McCloskey Middle School in Uxbridge, Mass.

Playwright Leonard “Lenny” Schwartz of the Daydream Theatre Company in Providence wrote and directed the Higher Methods for the theatre’s spring 2013 show; he also wrote and will direct Lucy, its fall 2013 show.

**2001**

(Martha) Vanessa (Lopez) Alvarez received CloudNOW’s prestigious Top 10 Women in Cloud Award for her outstanding contributions to the cloud computing community. Alvarez is currently the director of product marketing at Gridstore, a leading provider of software defined storage.

**2002**

With more than a decade of banking experience, Christina (Michaluk) DelIngenis recently became the new branch manager of the Woonsocket office of Bank Rhode Island (BankRI).

Jennifer Mullen has earned her Master of Arts degree with her concentration in media studies from RIC this year. Mullen works in the admissions office at RIC.

**2004**

Fifth grade teacher Sonja (Almeida) Brown was chosen to represent Rhode Island in the 2013 Mrs. United States National Pageant in Las Vegas, Nev.

Kathryn “Kate” Donnelly (MA) was named the new principal of Walnut Grove Elementary School in Franklin, Tenn.
2005
New Leaders Council of Rhode Island presented Smithfield town councilwoman Suzanna “Suzy” Alba with the Neighborhood and Community Award for her exceptional community leadership. Alba serves as a member of the Rhode Island College Alumni Association board of directors.

Stand-up comedian and theatre alumnus Anthony “Tony” Amaral III starred in the Daydream Theatre Company play Higher Methods, which was written and directed by Leonard Schwartz (see class of 2000).

Meghan Coffey was appointed assistant director of nursing at Saint Elizabeth Home, where she has been employed since 2005.

Erin (Ouillette) Palonen was selected as one of the top five finalists for the Live with Kelly and Michael show’s 2013 Top Teacher Award. Palonen is a special education teacher at Griswold Middle School in Griswold, Conn.

Juan Zapata was promoted to plant controller at Carlisle Interconnect Technologies. He and his wife Yuliana (Alzate) Zapata live in Florida with their two young daughters (see class of 2011).

2011
Casey Belisle, current student Rosalind “Roz” Raskin and former student Justin Foster met at RIC and formed the band Roz and the Rice Cakes. They have been together for four years and play locally and around the country. They appeared at the Newport Folk Festival in July.

Lorenzo Crumbie has been accepted to the University of the West Indies School of Medicine in Jamaica.

Yuliana (Alzate) Zapata and her husband, Juan Zapata welcomed their first daughter into their home in 2011 and their second daughter was born in 2012 (see class of 2010).

2010
Professional dancer Anisha Gibbs is touring the world as a dancer for hip-hop artist T-Pain.

Allison Silvers, a clinical therapist with Arbour Counseling Services, received her Master of Arts degree in clinical practices in psychology from the University of Hartford, where she is currently a doctoral candidate.

2012
Adrianna Fargnoli has accepted a position as case manager at Communicare, a mental health care center, in Elizabethtown, Ky.

2013
The Women’s Center of Rhode Island honored Jasmine Perez with its 2013 Youth Award at the organization’s annual Women of Excellence awards luncheon, for her outstanding support of the Women’s Center and its clients during her internship with the center.

Lorenzo Crumbie ’11

Casey Belisle ’11, current student Rosalind “Roz” Raskin and former student Justin Foster met at RIC and formed the band Roz and the Rice Cakes.
IN Memoriam

1936
Gertrude G. (Sarkisian) Hakemian – April ’13

1938
Rosemary K. Cole – June ’13

1939
Frank J. Campagna – February ’13
Margaret E. (Tingley) Laliberte – May ’13
Marie B. (Rhodin) Person – February ’13

1940
Ruth F. (Pearson) Johnston – July ’13

1941
Alice E. (Collier) Bacon – March ’13
Thomas V. Lowery – May ’13

1943
Florence (Cortois) Bissonnette – April ’13
Col. Lynwood F. Hoxsie – June ’13
Nathalie T. (Caldwell) Stewart – February ’13

1944
Herbert F. Frolander – November ’12

1945
John P. Kaveny – June ’12

1946
Mildred M. (Brennen) Nugent – March ’13

1947
Mary E. (Holton) McKenney – June ’13
Virginia L. (Livingston) Nichols – February ’13

1948
Margaret “Peg” D. (O’Sullivan) Hetherman – May ’13 (101 years old)
Alice R. Hurl – May ’13
Kathryne M. (Brady) O’Donnell – May ’13

1950
George W. Gallipeau Jr. – June ’13
Marion B. (Bessette) Marshall – May ’13

1951
Hely U. (Merikoski) Moore – March ’13

1954
Nancy G. (MacLean) Johnson – December ’12

1958
Jean M. Pacheco – November ’12

1962
Rudolph E. Petrucci – April ’13 (master’s)

1964
Paul H. Mongoose – March ’13

1965
John D. Izzi – August ’13 (master’s)
Norma Kroll – July ’13
John E. Squillante – June ’12

1966
Philip “Phil” E. Higgins – June ’13

1967
Shirley M. (Collins) Plummer – January ’13
Dr. Nora M. Walker – May ’13

1968
Raymond J. Carvalho Sr. – March ’13 (master’s)
Norma T. (Murray) DiPietro – April ’13
Filomena “Mena” Lupo – July ’13
Veronica “Roni” (Thomas) McConnell – February ’13 (master’s)

1969
Moli J. (Fass) Prebluda – March ’13 (master’s)

1970
Sr. Rita E. McCoy – May ’13 (master’s)

1972
Sr. Jessie M. Kearns – July ’13 (master’s)
Kevin D. McCarthy – July ’13
Helen T. Rosetta – August ’13

1973
Cheryl A. Dellefratte – July ’13

1975
Br. Normand R. Goudreau – March ’13 (master’s)

1976
Richard M. Sousa – May ’13

1978
Jane M. (Livsey) Flory – November ’12 (master’s)
Marcia Seal – April ’13 (master’s)
Carol G. (Mulonnet) Williams – November ’12

1980
Leonard “Lenn” F. Murphy Jr. – March ’13

1981
Bertrand D. Allain Jr. – May ’13 (master’s)
Cynthia A. (Block) Dumont – October ’12

1983
Lynette T. Hendricks – February ’13

1984
Patricia M. (Whitaker) Carter – July ’13
Rebecca J. (Kenworthy) Reilly – July ’13

1985
Richard J. Sarli – April ’13

1992
Paula M. (Stone) Gardella – March ’13 (master’s)

1995
Candace M. (Ricci) Mendes – August ’13

1996
Elaine G. (Goulet) Prata – November ’12

1999
Janice E. (Pizzo) Alienello – December ’12 (master’s)

2003
Henryka (Gawron) Kukowski – March ’13
2002
Tamar Russell to Teddy Brown – May ’13

2003
Jeffrey C. Ahern to Jennifer A. Butler – September ’12
Talia Iannetta to Nicholas Eckman – October ’12

2004
Allison A. Bliss to Steven J. Mignanelli – July ’12

2005
Matthew Brocklehurst to Antonia Stefano – June ’12

2006
Justin Aromin to Lindsay Grant – July ’12
Erika Babat to Alex Entrup – November ’12
Paul Olson to Erin Canfield – June ’13
Cynthia Proffi to Jesse Alexandre – August ’13
Michael Walsh to Kerri Champagne ’09 – October ’12

2008
Rachel Siler to Mark Wheeler – December ’12

2009
Meghan M. Richard to Joshua C. Nathanson – January ’13

2010
Michelle Liese to Michael Peasley – July ’12

2013
Jessica E. Blanchette to Jared Weaver – June ’13
Save the Date
for an evening to remember...

Alumni Awards Dinner
Thursday, May 8, 2014

DONOVAN DINING CENTER, RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

The alumni awards dinner has a rich history at Rhode Island College. The professional achievements, leadership, and commitment to community service of the honorees bring great pride to the college.

Plan to join us as we celebrate our most accomplished alumni and friends.

Sponsored by the Rhode Island College Alumni Association
For more information about the event or nominations, please call Nancy Hoogasian at (401) 456-8827 or email nhoogasian@ric.edu.