August 14, 2016

Dear URI Alumnus:

This past spring, the Academic Health Collaborative was created at the University of Rhode Island. Under this bold and innovative plan, new and existing programs were consolidated under the Academic Health Collaborative for the purpose of increasing the quality and effectiveness of our programs that educate and prepare graduates in the health fields. Though the changes are internal in nature, their impact will be externally oriented, with the ultimate goal of creating healthy futures, healthy outcomes, and better health care in our community, our nation and across the globe.

I am personally writing to share information with you about recent changes to a number of program affiliations resulting from the creation of the Collaborative. These changes impact your field of study/undergraduate major in that it now falls under a different college (see enclosure).

While the U.S. spends more than any other country on health care, it ranks only 11th worldwide among wealthy nations on measures of quality, access, efficiency and equity. Integrating our health curriculum and disciplines under this new Collaborative and establishing strong relationships with the Rhode Island Department of Health, hospitals, universities and other health and wellness related agencies and partners, are major steps to improving and delivering health care that will affect you, your family members, co-workers and friends.

This sweeping realignment of our health-related programs will place the University in a position of strength as health care undergoes rapid change in the United States. A newly formed College of Health Sciences joins the colleges of Nursing and Pharmacy as the lead academic units under the Collaborative.

Programs formerly housed in multiple colleges have been brought together in this new College of Health Sciences – the first new college established at URI in four decades. Dr. Gary Liguori, former head of the Department of Health and Human Performance at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga, was named the inaugural dean of the new college last month. We are excited to have him on board and look forward to him working with faculty across disciplines to build contemporary, robust and forward-looking educational and research programs relevant to
the evolving roles of health and health care in the 21st century.

What does this mean for you as an alumnus of the University of Rhode Island? It means that your alma mater continues to strengthen its position locally, nationally and globally in areas of critical importance to society and that URI’s impact will continue to grow well beyond the borders of our campuses, and will contribute even more to solving some of society’s most pressing issues.

On a more practical level, it also means that your program of study, whether it is kinesiology, physical therapy, health studies, nutrition and food science, communicative disorders, psychology or human development and family studies, is now part of the newly formed College of Health Sciences.

Numerous other departments and programs also supported changes and are now aligned with different academic colleges under this restructuring, which also resulted in the elimination of the College of Human Science and Services (HS&S). URI’s distinguished programs in Textile Marketing and Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design, formerly part of the College of Human Science and Services, are now a part of our College of Business Administration. Psychology has moved from the College of Arts & Sciences to the College of Health Sciences, and the School of Education moved from the former College of HS&S, to the newly configured Feinstein College of Education and Professional Studies (formerly known as the College of Continuing Education).

I am proud to share all of this exciting news with you. We place a high value on our alumni and as your success in the world enhances the reputation of URI, so too, does our effort to shift, as an institution, to better address the needs of society and the world around us.

Go Rhody!

Sincerely,

David M. Dooley, Ph.D.
President

Enclosure