During an 11-day period in August, the Barton Corner Bridge, which carries Rt. I-95 over one of the state’s busiest commercial corridors along Route 2 on the Warwick/West Warwick town line, was replaced by RIDOT.

Using accelerated bridge construction, the contractor, Warwick’s D’Ambra Construction, built two halves of the bridge on land adjacent to the overpass. The two halves were then “driven” into place using self-propelled modular transporters, the same devices used to move the Iway’s signature arch bridge onto barges at the Quonset Business Park before they were floated up Narragansett Bay to Providence.

The process allowed the Barton Corner Bridge to be replaced in less than one month, versus two full construction seasons if conventional methods were used.

While the project was going on, a website dedicated to the bridge replacement featured real-time updates on road closures and detours, as well as live cameras to see the work taking place.

The former bridge was built in 1958 and was in an advanced state of deterioration prior to replacement. A steel shoring system had to be added to prevent a reduction in carrying capacity, as its main girders had been struck by oversized vehicles, requiring lane shifts for both I-95 North and South. The new bridge raised the height of the structure to reduce the likelihood of these types of crashes in the future.

The project cost $6.4 million.

Photos from RIDOT’s Flickr album.
The URI Transportation Center was established in 1999 to conduct multidisciplinary education, research, technology transfer and outreach for surface transportation systems and advanced transportation infrastructure. The Center is one of 66 national centers funded under SAFETEA-LU.

An executive director manages the operations of the Center and an outreach director directs all technology transfer activities. The Center has an executive board, chaired by the URI Vice President for Administration, whose members represent the Center’s stakeholder groups.

Theme: Connectivity through Sustainable Transportation Systems.

Mission: To advance U.S. technology and expertise in the many disciplines composing transportation through the mechanisms of education, research, and technology transfer at a university-based center of excellence.

National UTC Goals
Education: a multidisciplinary program of course work and experiential learning that reinforces the transportation theme of the Center.

Human Resources: an increased number of students, faculty and staff who are attracted to and substantively involved in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs of the Center.

Diversity: students, faculty, and staff who reflect the growing diversity of the U.S. workforce and are substantively involved in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs of the Center.

Research Selection: an objective process for selecting and reviewing research that balances multiple objectives of the program.

Research Performance: an ongoing program of basic and applied research, the products of which are judged by peers or other experts in the field to advance the body of knowledge in transportation.

Technology Transfer: availability of research results to potential users in a form that can be directly implemented, utilized, or otherwise applied.

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URITC Marketing Material .............................. back cover
On Oct. 17, the URITC and RIDOT held its annual Transportation Research Forum at the Coastal Institute at URI’s Bay Campus in Narragansett. The theme of the 2014 research forum was “Intersections: Transportation, Planning, and Research.”

The purpose of the forum was for URI researchers to share their areas of expertise and interest with personnel from RIDOT and Rhode Island’s Division of Planning in hopes of discovering some mutually-beneficial areas of research.

Some of the topics discussed included transportation and the environment and the preservation of structures and pavement.

The guest speaker was Luisa Paiewonsky, director of Infrastructure Systems and Technology for the Volpe Center. Prior to joining Volpe in 2012, Paiewonsky served as the highway administrator of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Paiewonsky was appointed by Governor Deval Patrick as the first administrator of the newly formed Highway Division, created from the merger of the Massachusetts Highway Department and Massachusetts Turnpike Authority.
2014 Researcher of the Year
Dr. Mayrai Gindy, Associate Professor
URI’s College of Engineering

Rhode Island has the highest percentage of structurally deficient bridges in the country.

Mayrai Gindy’s research and analysis of the state’s bridges could help improve the design and construction of bridges going forward. In recognition of the valuable research and for her mentoring of engineering students, Gindy has been named the 2014 URITC Research of the Year.

“I was very honored to be nominated and selected for the Researcher of the Year award,” said Gindy. “It is encouraging to have my research recognized and highlighted in such a way.”

The professor’s most recent research project involves field testing several concrete bridge decks around Rhode Island using a ground penetrating radar (GPR) system and a fully automated surface profiler to examine the correlation between subsurface deterioration and surface roughness.

According to Gindy, results from this project will allow the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to implement mitigating measures in the design and construction of decks to minimize concrete volume loss over the rebars. The data will also provide a true estimate of the concrete cover over rebars before diamond grinding to ensure that adequate cover is maintained.

Gindy’s project has been featured in the media and a video showcasing the project was used to help pass a bond in the last election for a new engineering building at URI.

Another ongoing project Gindy is working on is the “Analysis of Vehicle Loads in Rhode Island,” which will develop legal and overweight load models that will directly impact current bridge design and evaluation in Rhode Island.

Between the two projects, Gindy has involved five graduate students and two undergraduate students. Five of the seven students are from under-represented groups in engineering (women and minorities).

In his nomination letter, George Tsiatas, chair of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, wrote, “In all aspects – research, teaching and mentoring – Professor Gindy has proven to be dedicated and effective. I strongly urge you to consider her past work and her potential impact on advancing the transportation field in Rhode Island.”
For FY2014 (and those not previously reported)

**FY2014**

**PIs: Austin Becker and Richard Burroughs**

**Vulnerability Assessment of Rhode Island’s Key Maritime Infrastructure**

**PI: William Green**

*Green Design Studio*  

Becker, Austin and Will William. A Sustainable / Resilient View of Providence Waterfront. URI Transportation funding with and work with the Port Study Group. A class of 17 graduate and undergraduate students analyzed the port, ran a stakeholder work and developed recommendations for conditions associated with coastal flooding and storm surge. Student presentation Dec. 2014.

Green, William. “A green design academy? What is it and what can be achieved in a one week non-residential summer program for high school students?” Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture, CELA 2015 Annual Meeting, Manhattan KS, abstract accepted, fall 2014. Funded by URITC.


**FY2013**

**PI: Peter August**

*Open Access to High Resolution Elevation Data for Transportation Planning in Rhode Island*

August, Peter, Comparing Sea Level Rise Scenarios for Rhode Island. Rhode Island Interagency Vulnerability Coordinators Meeting, May, 2014

August, Peter, Municipal Planning: Hands-On Workshop for Accessing and Utilizing the STORMTOOLS Map Viewers. Rhode Island BeachSAMP Stakeholders meeting. January, 2014

**PI: Vinka Craver**

*Contraminant Accumulation in Best Management Practices: Implications for the Performance of Retention Ponds*


**PI: Douglas Hales**

*Port Competitiveness Workshop*


**FY2012**

**PIs: Thomas Boving and Vinka Craver**

*Stormwater Management with Enhanced Tree Filter System*


PI: Rebecca Brown

*Development of New Seed Mixes and Establishment Guidelines for Roadside Grasslands in Rhode Island*

Fava, Edwin, Jose Amador, Rebecca Brown, and Angela Possinger. 2014. The use of biosolids to promote the growth of perennial grasses along Rhode Island highways. Presentation by E. Fava at the ASA-CSSA-SSSA annual meeting November 2-5, Long Beach, CA. Project funded by URITC.

**FY2011**

PI: Jyn-Hone Wang

*Studying the Bottleneck Issue at Work Zones and Assessing the Effectiveness of a Portable Merging System in Promoting Zip Merging Behavior*


On Dec. 12, students from a studio class taught by URI professors Dr. Austin Becker and Dr. Will Green presented “A Vision for a Resilient and Sustainable Providence Waterfront” to the Providence Planning Department.

The presentation highlighted storm resilience strategies, sustainable design recommendations and policy proposals for the working waterfront in Providence Harbor.
The URITC held its annual breakfast on May 13 at the Radisson Airport Hotel in Warwick. The keynote speaker was Mark Fenton, a national public health, planning, and transportation consultant. Fenton works with organizations and communities around the country to build environments, policies, and programs that help to create places where more people walk, bicycle, and take transit more of the time.

The topic of Fenton’s speech was “Designing Transportation Systems for Public Health.” Fenton works closely with organizations and communities around the country to build environments, policies, and programs that help to create places where more people walk, bicycle, and take transit more of the time.

Fenton believes that active community designs lead to economically, environmentally, and socially thriving cities, towns, and rural settings where people of all ages, abilities, and incomes lead long, vibrant lives.

Following Fenton’s presentation, RIDOT announced its ninth annual Quality Awards.

- **Transportation Excellence Award**
  - Natick Bridge
  - Manafort Brothers, Inc.
  - Commonwealth Engineers & Consultants, Inc.
  - Mary E. Vittoria-Bertrand, P.E. – RIDOT
  - Paul DelCioppio – RIDOT

- **Transportation Pioneering Award**
  - Frenchtown Brook Bridge
  - Gordon R. Archibald, Inc.
  - Rahmat O. Noorpavar – RIDOT

- **Transportation Innovation Award**
  - Master Permitting for I-195
  - The I-195 Redevelopment District Commission
  - Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council
  - RI Department of Environmental Management

- **Highway Safety Award**
  - Lloyd P. Albert – AAA Southeastern New England

- **Media Advocacy Award**
  - Bruce Landis (Retired) – Providence Journal Transportation Beat Reporter

- **Lifetime Achievement Award**
  - Daniel J. Berman (Retired) – FHWA, RI Division

From left: RIDOT Deputy Director Phillip Kydd, Highway Safety Award winner Lloyd Albert of AAA Southern New England, and RIDOT Director Michael Lewis.

From left: Joseph Giordano of Gordon R. Archibald, Inc. and Rahmat Noorpavar of RIDOT were presented with the Pioneering Award.
On May 16, the URITC hosted the eighth annual Engineering Career Day at URI's College of Engineering.

Close to 115 high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors from nine high schools were introduced to career opportunities in civil engineering through hands-on activities.

Divided into groups, the participants rotated through four learning labs: storm water management & environmental planning; bridge & geotechnical engineering; surveying; and highway & traffic engineering.

The labs were led by URI professors, URI students and engineers from some of Rhode Island's leading firms, such as Bryant Associates, Inc., CDR Maguire, Crossman Engineering, Gordon R. Archibald, Inc., GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc., Pare Corporation, The Beta Group, Inc., and Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Engineering Career Day is sponsored by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT), the Rhode Island Consulting Engineers (RICE), the University of Rhode Island Transportation Center (URITC), University of Rhode Island, College of Engineering, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
The 14th annual Rhode Island Construction Career Days (RICCD) event was held April 30 and May 1 at the Rhode Island Department of Transportation’s (RIDOT) midstate maintenance facility in East Greenwich.

Close to 1,000 students from 60 schools and organizations across the state learned about the many career opportunities in construction and transportation industries.

Exhibitors represented state agencies, public works departments, private industry, police and fire departments, colleges and universities.

The 40-plus pieces of equipment the students got to work with included excavators, mini excavators, backhoes, man lifts, a paver, a roller, a snow plow truck, bucket trucks, a street sweeper, a line stripper, the jaws of life and jackhammers.

The students also received a hands-on introduction to welding, plumbing, electrical work, carpentry and sheet metal work. The URITC’s driving simulator tested their skills behind the wheel.

One of the most anticipated parts of RICCD was the bridge building competition. Over the two days, model bridges were tested for strength. Trophies were awarded for first, second and third place each day.

Using balsa wood and glue, and specifications provided by the URITC, teams designed and constructed their bridges during or after school. Some advanced physics and mathematics classes incorporated the competition into their curriculum.

Another highlight was the computer station, featuring the West Point Bridge Builder and Gridlock Buster programs. The Rhode Island Consulting Engineers (RICE) showed the students how to use the software.

RICCD is sponsored by URITC, RIDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), RICE, the New England Laborers Union, the Construction Industries of Rhode Island and Beacon Mutual Insurance Company.
On May 2, 135 middle school students from Central Falls, South Kingstown, West Warwick, Pawtucket and Woonsocket came to URI to participate in the SMILE Engineering Challenge. SMILE is an acronym for Science and Math Investigative Learning Experiences.

This year, the students were asked to design and build truss bridges using just bamboo chop sticks and glue. To build the bridges, students had to follow a set of specifications and work within the limits of a budget. They tested their designs, made changes, and then watched their structures perform under high stress testing.

SMILE students spent several weeks prior to the event learning about bridges, earthquakes and their effects on structures. In each club, groups of students designed and constructed small truss bridges made out of balsa wood that could withstand severe ground shaking that occurs during an actual earthquake.

During the challenge, Dr. George Tsiatis, Chair of URI’s Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, tested the balsa bridges’ ability to support transverse acceleration using an earthquake simulator (shake table).

The construction and testing of model bridges promotes the study and application of some fundamental principles in mathematics and physics. This experiential learning activity teaches basic principles of load and force transfer through truss design. The activity also helps students develop teamwork and problem solving skills. SMILE students worked with students from other school districts and with college student mentors in science and engineering majors. The students quickly learned that the collaborative synergy of the group often produces the best results.
The 10th annual URITC Summer Transportation Institute (STI) was held for two 2-week sessions from July 7-18 and Aug. 4-15 at the URI Kingston campus.

Representing diverse backgrounds, 32 middle school students learned about transportation careers and the respective education and training requirements.

Classroom instruction, guest speakers, field trips and hands-on projects were key components of the program.

Activities included:
- Introduction to bridges
- Computer bridge building contest
- Balsa wood bridge building contest
- Safety sessions at the Kingston Railway Station

Working in small groups, the students designed and built model bridges using balsa wood and glue.

- Writing in daily journals
- Transportation math
- Tour of T.F. Green Airfield
- Hands-on activity at RIDOT maintenance facility and sign shop
- Boat tour of Narragansett Bay
- Tour of Boston

As part of the enhancement program, the participants experienced a multi-modal trip in which they rode a commuter rail, a subway, a bus and walked.

At URI, the students visited dorms, classrooms and sports facilities, met staff and ate in a dining hall.

As part of the enhancement program, the participants experienced a multi-modal trip in which they rode a commuter rail, a subway, a boat and walked.
In 2014, the URITC hosted five summer academies for high school students: the Business Academy, the Construction Academy, the Engineering Academy, the Green Design Academy and the Maritime-Freight Academy.

A total of 79 students from diverse backgrounds participated. Funding for the academies was provided by RIDOT through a FHWA grant.

Goals of the Summer Academies
These initiatives were designed to:
• give first-hand knowledge of transportation construction work
• provide many opportunities for mentoring by industry role models
• spread the message that the transportation sector offers many rewarding career options
• make students aware of necessary courses early enough in their education to be prepared to move on to a career or college with the right tool kit
• increase diversity in the transportation workforce

Construction Academy
A one-week Construction Academy for 19 high school sophomores, juniors, seniors and recent graduates took place July 28 – Aug. 1.

The curriculum included:
• OSHA 10-hour training for the construction industry
• Tour of Route 165 road reconstruction project
• Tour of the RIDOT Providence River Viaduct project
• Flagger certification
• Work zone safety training
• Introduction to heavy equipment and the construction trades
• Hands-on welding and electrical training
• Hands-on fire protection training
• Preparing for a job interview
• Completing a W-9 form and submitting a time sheet

Construction Academy students visited the New England Institute of Technology SAMI Program where they were given a lesson in hands on welding.

Construction Academy students review the plans for the the Providence River Viaduct project with the resident engineer before taking a tour of the site.
Business Academy
The Business Academy was attended by 16 high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors from July 21 – 25. The participants learned about all aspects of a company’s supply chain. Classroom instruction, guest speakers, field trips and hands-on training were key components of the program.

Activities included:
- Ropes Confidence Course Team Building Exercise
- Interactive Supply Chain Management Group Exercise
- Tour of an Ocean State Job Lot Distribution Center
- Tour of businesses along Narragansett Bay
- Tour of the Quonset Point Business Park and Port, including the Port of Davisville
- Transportation Team “Quiz” Competition

Business Academy students visited the Ocean State Job Lot distribution center, where they learned about supply chain management.

Engineering Academy
Eighteen high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors attended this academy from July 21 – 25.

The curriculum included:
- Tour of College of Engineering
- “How Do I Become an Engineer,” led by Ray Wright, Dean of URI’s College of Engineering
- “Speed Dating” with practicing engineers from the Rhode Island Consulting Engineers (RICE)
- Structural Engineering Lab
- Transportation Engineering Lab
- Environmental Engineering Lab
- Geotechnical Engineering Lab
- Tour of Transportation Management Center
- Tour of bridge construction in North Kingstown
- Tour of South Kingstown Wastewater Treatment Plant

URI College of Engineering professor George Tsiatis taught students in the Engineering Academy about the qualities of different building materials.
Green Design Academy
The Green Design Academy was attended by 12 high school students from July 14-18.

Participants learned what sustainability means and how it influences the design of communities and landscapes.

Activities included:
• Tour of the URI botanical gardens
• Tour of a local nursery
• Bike tour of the South County Bike Trail
• Visit to a landscape architecture design firm in Boston
• Studying Rhode Island’s coastal ecology

Green Design Academy visited several local gardens and nurseries to learn about different plant species.

Maritime-Freight Academy
The Maritime-Freight Academy was attended by 14 high school students from July 7-11.

Participants learned about careers in the maritime industry, specifically the transportation segment of the industry.

Activities included:
• AST&L, 10-hour training for the maritime industry
• Tour of companies that ships globally
• Harbor operations and safety training
• Vessel operations and safety training
• Maritime customs and global seaports
• Loading and unloading of automobiles at Quonset Point/Port of Davisville
• Hands-on vessel operation using a maritime simulator

Students in the Maritime-Freight Academy used a simulator at the Maritime Simulator Institute in Middletown, RI.
2014 Student of the Year
Sara Wigginton

In recognition of her research on sustainable transportation infrastructure, the University of Rhode Island Transportation Center (URITC) selected Sara Wigginton as its 2014 Outstanding Student of the Year.

Wigginton is a Master’s student in URI’s College of Environmental and Life Sciences, in the Biological and Environmental Science Program, with a concentration in Ecology and Ecosystem Sciences. Her thesis is on the effects of road and roadsides on invasive plant species and storm water filtration.

“Sara’s work on the management of roadside vegetation to enhance stormwater filtration and reduce the spread of invasive plant species will contribute to improved understanding of the solutions needed to address these challenges,” said Arthur Gold, professor and chair of the Natural Resources Science department at URI.

Gold and URI Associate Professor Laura Meyerson nominated Wigginton for the award. Meyerson is also Wigginton’s major advisor and the Primary Investigator (PI) for her lab group.

“Professor Meyerson has taught me how to think like a scientific researcher, lead smalls teams of undergraduates, and think ‘outside the box’ about conservation and restoration efforts – a necessity when performing research on roadsides and other highly constructed ecosystems,” said Wigginton.

Like most people, Wigginton admits that she never really considered roadsides as important ecosystems prior to conducting her research.

“I now appreciate the role roadside ecosystems can play in habitat restoration and species conservation,” stated Wigginton. “I have also learned that managing roadsides for native biodiversity can save money through reduced mowing regimes and reduce the emissions of the greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.”

Wigginton’s research involved working closely with members of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT).

“Working with RIDOT has allowed me to understand the complexities that are involved in managing unnatural systems, such as stretching limited budgets, dealing with public opinion and overseeing large amounts of public land,” said Wigginton.

The young researcher’s career goal is to find employment with a government organization, such as the Department of Environmental Management or the Nation Park Service, or an non-governmental organization (NGO), such as The Nature Conservancy. Her ideal position would be a land manager for one of these organizations.

“I’ve learned how to lead small teams, communicate the importance of my research and extend ecological theory to real world applications has made me well-equipped for a career in public land management,” stated Wigginton.
2014 Transportation Graduate Fellows
Thomas DaLomba
Eric Kretsch

In recognition of their transportation-related research and their commitment to further their education in pursuit of a career in the transportation field, Thomas DaLomba and Eric Kretsch were awarded Transportation Graduate Fellowships by the URITC.

DaLomba has enrolled in URI’s Civil and Engineering Master’s program and Kretsch has entered the Master of Marine Affairs program at URI.

The objective of DaLomba’s thesis, “Development of State Legal and Overweight Live Load Models” is to analyze and model the effects that legal and overweight trucks have on Rhode Island’s bridges.

The database that DaLomba is using to conduct his research includes more than 44,000 truck records spanning a 5-year time period, from 2008-2013.

Currently, Rhode Island has the second highest percentage of structurally deficient bridges in the country.

DaLomba’s thesis could have a direct impact on the Rhode Island Department of Transportation’s bridge design policy and would represent a true transfer of knowledge – from research to practice.

Kretsch’s thesis focuses on developing a damage function that will capture and explain the various impacts, including associated costs, that a major hurricane would have on Rhode Island.

This topic was a result of the work that Kretsch did as a research assistant on the URITC-funded project “Vulnerability/Resilience Assessment for Maritime Infrastructure: Pilot Method Development for the Port of Providence.”

“At the first project steering committee meeting, someone stated that if a major hurricane hit the Port of Providence, decision makers have little understanding of how damaged transportation infrastructure would translate into state-level economic losses,” recalled Kretsch. “That comment served as the motivation for my thesis topic.”

DaLomba was nominated for a fellowship by Dr. Mayrai Gindy, Associate Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at URI.

“Thomas has displayed a strong sense of professionalism and leadership,” said Gindy. “I am confident that he will make significant contributions and advances to the transportation profession as he continues his diligent work.”

Dr. Austin Becker, Assistant Professor of Coastal Planning Policy and Design at URI, nominated Kretsch for a fellowship.

“Eric consistently demonstrates initiative, both in his research endeavor and as a mentor to other students at URI,” stated Becker. “Eric is by far my strongest Master’s student and I cannot recommend him more highly for this honor.”
The URITC’s Technology Transfer (T2) Center provided workforce development opportunities for public works and transportation practitioners throughout the year. Many classes took place at the T2 Center’s training facility in Warwick, but some were offered elsewhere.

In 2014, the Center held 102 T2 workshops and events, 3 National Highway Institute (NHI) workshops and 1 (National Transit Institute) workshop. Class sizes ranged from 2 for a Preparing for the Hoisting Exam class to over 500 for the Indoor Expo. The largest class was 47 for Elgin Street Sweeper Operations and Maintenance class.

Here is a partial list of the workshops that were held:

**Safety-Related**
- Chain Saw Skills and Safety
- Wood Chipper Operations and Safety
- Flagger Certification
- OSHA 10 Hour Certification
- OSHA 30 Hour Certification

**Roundtable Discussions**
- Winter Operations
- Cooperative Bids

**Job Performance-Related**
- Sander Calibration
- Computer Training
- Introduction to Computers for Mechanics
- Diagnosing Auto Electric Issues
- Hands on Welding
- Elgin Street Sweeper Operations
- Customer Service
- Brake and Wheel End Seminar
- Succeeding as a Foreman
- Basic Surveying and Layout
- Introduction to Setting Grades

Chain saw safety classes were held in Glocester, Scituate, Newport and Richmond.

- Safe Driving Using the Truck Driver Simulator
- Bucket Truck Safety
- Tractor Mower Operations

Sander calibration classes were held in Smithfield, Tiverton, Middletown and Portsmouth.

Wood chipper safety training classes were held in Warwick, Coventry, Newport and South Kingstown.

A two-day workshop on diagnosing auto electric issues was held in September.
Source of Funds as of 12/31/14

This chart represents the composition of funds committed for Grant Year 2013.

Use of Funds as of 12/31/14

This chart illustrates the composition of allocations against the total source of funds for Grant Year 2013.
To give the URITC greater visibility at events and a stronger brand identity, the Center had two new banners made in 2014. The “pop-up” banners, pictured above, were designed by Bo Pickard, a graphic designer in URI’s Department of Publications and Creative Services.

The picture on the left depicts an engineer teaching a high school student how to use surveying equipment at URITC’s annual Engineering Career Day. The photo on the right, taken by Joe Giblin, shows Varun Kasaraneni (left) and Laura Schifman testing water samples as part of the “Installation of Stormwater Management with Enhanced Tree Filter Systems” research project.