University of Rhode Island’s Transitional Support Program

MARCH 7-8, 2012
NEW YORK, NY

RETHINKING THE FUTURE OF THE STEM WORKPLACE: CONVENING OF GLOBAL EXPERTS ON WORK-LIFE-FAMILY ISSUES

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UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Active Volunteer Committee, 2003-present
Paid Parental Leave Policy --- Dual Career Hiring Policy
Administrators’ Workshops, Literature, Topical Lunches, etc.
Advocacy, public awareness, etc.

THE ELSEVIER FOUNDATION

LACTATION PROGRAM
WORK-LIFE EDUCATION & AWARENESS
Program Components

LACTATION PROGRAM

FORMAL POLICY
FACILITIES
RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES
PROGRAM MODEL
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

WORK-LIFE EDUCATION & AWARENESS

WORK-LIFE WEBSITE
(WWW.URI.EDU/WORKLIFE)
WORKSHOPS/EVENTS
LITERATURE
BROWN BAG LUNCHES
WORK-LIFE SURVEY
Highlights

- 2009 Rhode Island Department of Health Gold Level “Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Award”
- Formal policy and guidelines embedded in University Manual
- 5 lactation sites, # 6 on the way
- Administrators’ Breakfast Workshops attended by over 40 administrators, including President, Provost, and Vice Presidents; Chairs’ Lunch Workshop attended by 50% of URI chairs
- Great new website:  www.uri.edu/worklife
- Program model document disseminated to 50 schools
- Connections with all Rhode Island higher ed schools
- Literature/events
- URI Work-Life Survey for Staff Employees, model for faculty survey to follow this fall
What We Learned – Top 3 Things

1. Volunteer lead versus HR lead initiative
2. Our 3-level model of change is alive and well
   1. Institutional
   2. Individual
   3. Interactional
3. How to even frame breastfeeding as an economic, equity issue rather than a “woman’s issue”
Hurdles

- Regional consortium – who cares?
- Sensitive subject
- Passive resistance (*interactional level*)
- Securing space
- Driving home the “business case” is hard to do – change is slow
Plans for Sustainability

- New construction/rehab will include lactation space
- Work-life regional consortium is gaining momentum
- Policy is policy; space is permanent (?)
- Public awareness much greater; subject is on the national radar
- Work-Life Committee now has a budget – workshops/brown bags, etc., will continue
- Work-Life position has been approved in HR, though not yet filled