

University of Rhode Island College of Business

# BUSINESS

## Rhode Island



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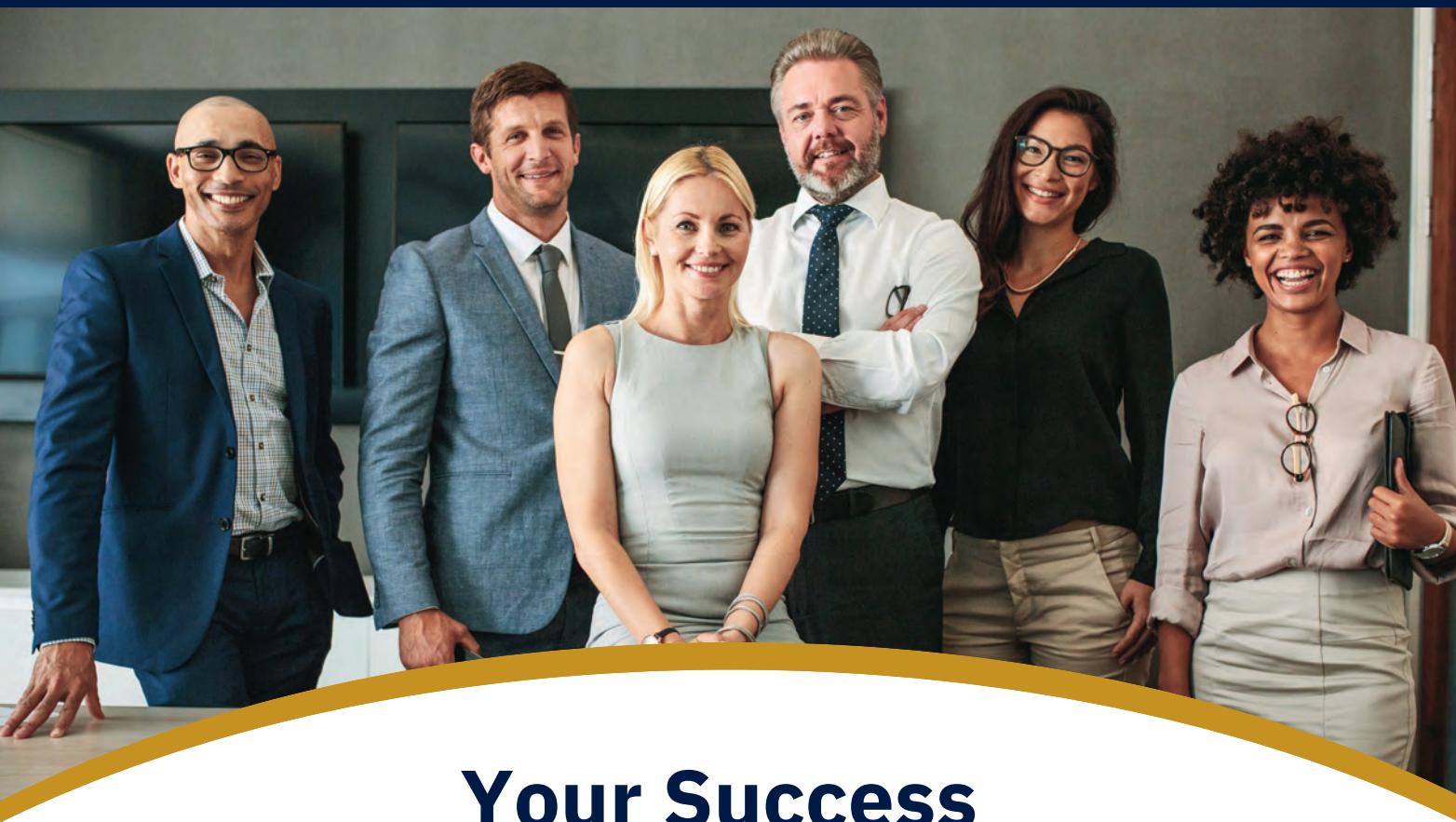
### Inside This Report

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WORKFORCE AND TOMORROW'S LEADERS



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### DEAN'S MESSAGE

Sean Edmund Rogers,  
dean and Alfred J.  
Verrecchia-Hasbro Inc.  
Leadership Chair, URI  
College of Business

#### Message From Dean Sean Edmund Rogers

Greetings from University of Rhode Island's College of Business! We're pleased to share the inaugural issue of our college's new annual report with you.

Educating nearly 3,000 students annually, the URI College of Business has been Rhode Island's flagship business school for more than 100 years since its founding in 1923. Our more than 18,000 College of Business alums have made marks in every area of business leadership and industry achievement, and current students learn at the leading edge of technology, innovation, value creation, and societal impact.

Today, students join URI from 47 U.S. states and from countries around the world. More than a quarter of our business majors are first-generation college students, and 49% of URI business graduates are women. We're proud to be a business school that advances economic impact and educational access and opportunity.



Our 11 undergraduate majors, several master's degree programs, and two doctoral degrees—a Ph.D. in business administration and an executive Doctor of Business Administration—provide exciting enrichment opportunities for learners at every stage of life and their professional careers. And with over 80 expertly qualified faculty members who speak more than two dozen languages combined, the URI College of Business offers a globally diverse, industry-informed business education that prepares graduates to be career and real-world ready from day one.

Housed within the University of Rhode Island—New England's

No. 1 public university (*The Wall Street Journal*, 2024)—the URI College of Business is committed to remaining the best business school in Rhode Island, a leader in business education in New England and the Northeast, and nationally and internationally recognized and respected. I invite you to join us on this journey.

Go Rhody!

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This annual report includes the latest news and feature stories about our programs, faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

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### From Wall Street to Kingston

Michael Ice recently retired as a professor of finance. He leaves behind a legacy training students for success on Wall Street. Read about how his success was guided by his background and relationships with CFOs in Rhode Island.



## WHO WE ARE

### VISION

The College of Business at the University of Rhode Island aspires to be among the top flagship public colleges in the nation by fostering a community of diverse and innovative business leaders and scholars who will be lifelong learners impacting Rhode Island and the world.

### MISSION

The College of Business creates and disseminates knowledge to guide current and future business leaders and scholars who will be lifelong learners, impacting Rhode Island, the region, and the world. We prepare our students to be effective communicators and critical thinkers who can perform independently or as members of a team to solve business and societal problems. We engage with local and global communities to enhance value for all of our stakeholders. We inspire our graduates to be globally informed, innovative, ethical, and socially conscious lifelong learners.

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University of Rhode Island  
College of Business  
[@uricollegeofbusiness](https://www.linkedin.com/company/uri-business/)



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### Faculty Industry Immersion Trip

Bringing textbooks and case studies to life, helping faculty guide students toward the skills and experiences that will make them competitive in the job market.



22  
**D.B.A. Program**

Doctor of Business Administration students at URI represent a wide range of industries, including mining, hospitality, banking, financial planning, and pharmaceuticals.

Read about the next steps for this prestigious program.

**About the Cover:** Dean Sean Edmund Rogers, faculty, and students gather in front of Ballantine Hall on the Kingston Campus during Commencement weekend in May.

## The Future of Business in Rhode Island

A Degree for Everyone



It's no secret that the working world has changed. No longer constrained by office buildings or international borders, businesses around the world rely on a global supply chain that presents opportunities and challenges in equal measure. For any college student hoping to enter this complex network, a new kind of education is recommended.

Preparing the next generation of leaders for today's business world is the University of Rhode Island College of Business's mission. Students benefit from the college's multidisciplinary approach and myriad experiential learning opportunities, all offered under the guidance of diverse faculty brimming with expertise.

"Our structure is perfectly aligned with today's business world," says Dean Sean Edmund Rogers. "We're producing graduates who are well-versed in global practices and possess an understanding of diverse cultures."

Majors within the URI College of Business present opportunities for merging business and management fundamentals with industry-specific knowledge. The college's nine undergraduate degrees range from traditional business-related majors like

finance and marketing to more unique options, including business analytics, AI, and textiles, fashion merchandising, and design.

"We've created an accessible program that encourages students to follow their passions in the pursuit of a well-rounded, comprehensive degree," says Rogers. A similar interdisciplinary approach informs the college's graduate studies, with specialized master's programs leveraging its strong academic departments. A prime example is the Blue M.B.A., which merges curriculum from the Master of Business Administration and a Master of Oceanography degree. The first of its kind in the country, this degree blends business education with the science of the ocean.

Global in its approach, the URI College of Business extends its curriculum beyond the borders of Kingston to locations around the world. Study-abroad programs and internships are just a few examples of its pathways to global, experiential learning.

Students may find themselves in Costa Rica, Indonesia, Germany, or elsewhere, engaged in experiences that broaden their perspectives by introducing them to diverse cultures and business

**"We provide students with the kind of international experiences that multi-national firms are looking for."**

—Dean Sean Edmund Rogers

practices. "These courses and opportunities are standard practice for us," says Rogers. "We provide students with the kind of international experiences that multinational firms are looking for."

For more than half a century, the URI College of Business has been accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), and it's one of a small group of colleges recognized by AACSB for both its business and accounting programs. With nearly 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students, the URI College of Business offers bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees, as well as an executive doctorate program that attracts high-level industry, nonprofit, and government and military leaders eager to blend theory and practice. But its most important recognition comes from students' future employers.

"Our graduates are in high demand and are known for bringing their knowledge as well as a can-do attitude to the jobs they land," says Rogers. As representatives of the college, they epitomize its approach to a modern business education: globalized, experiential, and without borders.

# College Awarded Full Accreditation by Prestigious Group

Achievement Is a Powerful Validation

Marking its continued commitment to excellence in business education, the URI College of Business has once again been awarded full reaccreditation for both its business and accounting degree programs by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the global standard in business accreditation.

The college proudly celebrated its centennial last year, and for more than half a century, since 1969, it has maintained its AACSB international accreditation. The college holds the distinction of being the oldest continuously accredited business program in Rhode Island. It is also the only institution in the state to have earned AACSB's prestigious specialized accounting accreditation, in addition to the overall business school accreditation.

AACSB's reaffirmation of the accreditation is a powerful

validation of the college's ongoing commitment to high-quality business education, research, and industry engagement. As Rhode Island's flagship business school for more than 100 years, the college provides students with a best-in-class education led by professors who are not only academic experts but also seasoned industry professionals. The college takes great pride in being among the top tier, less than 10% of business schools globally, that meet AACSB's rigorous standards.

With this extension, the college remains part of an elite network of institutions worldwide focused on delivering high-quality business education. Out of all the schools around the globe offering business degrees, only about 6% of a total of 1,026 institutions, across more than 65 countries, have achieved AACSB accreditation. Even fewer, just 194, have earned

the specialized accounting program accreditation that URI College of Business holds.

Each year, URI's accounting programs enroll hundreds of students at both the bachelor's and master's levels. The college is especially proud of its outstanding placement rate, 97% of graduates secure employment within six months, a figure that leads the industry.

environment they will face."

The college's research not only generates new knowledge but also enriches the education it provides and informs practice in the field. These research contributions benefit the college's Ph.D. and Doctor of Business Administration candidates, both here at URI and from other institutions the college collaborates with.

"I'm personally proud of what this renewed AACSB accounting accreditation represents," notes Judy Beckman, as the Vangermeersch Professor of Accounting and area coordinator for the college's accounting programs, and now as associate dean of undergraduate programs. "The accreditation provides a mark of distinction in our delivery of educational programs to undergraduate and master's degree students, for example, by requiring us to continually update learning goals for a changing work



## URI's Ranking Among the Nation's Top 500 Universities by *The Wall Street Journal*

**#1**

ranked public university  
in New England

**#12**

ranked public flagship  
university in the U.S.

**R1**

Carnegie Classification  
top-tier research university

## URI College of Business Rankings

**#16**

best online D.B.A. programs  
for 2024, *College Consensus*

**#24**

best online master's in business  
programs, *U.S. News & World Report*

**R.I.'s top-ranked**

public business school for  
undergraduate education,  
*U.S. News & World Report*





## By the Numbers: Fall 2025

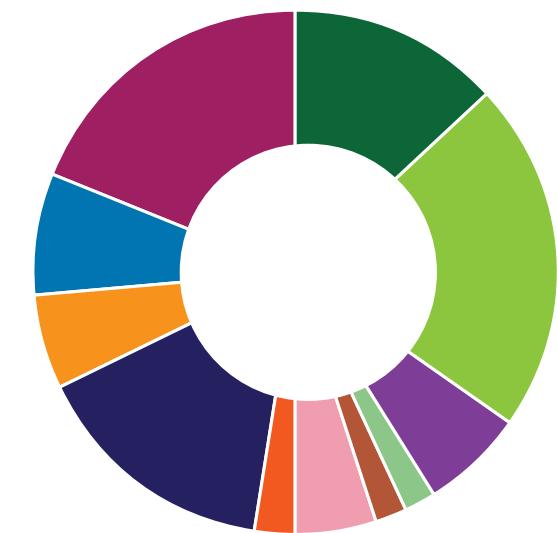
### Graduate Students by Degree



M.B.A.	217
M.S.	80
Ph.D.	14
D.B.A.	35
	346



### Currently Enrolled Undergrad Business



Accounting	343
Finance	564
General Business Administration	159
Global Business Management	51
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	51
Management	131
Business Analytics and Artificial Intelligence	62
Marketing	401
Supply Chain Management	148
Textile, Fashion Business and Design	194
Business Undeclared	488
	2,592



# Congratulations, Class of 2025: The World Is Open, and It's Ours



Klara Nelander, at the podium for her Commencement speech in May



**"URI has given me so much, it has transformed the way I think, approach challenges, and believe in myself."**

—Klara  
Nelander '25,  
B.S. finance

**M**eet Klara Nelander '25, a finance major with a minor in leadership studies from Malmö, Sweden, and this year's student Commencement speaker for the College of Business.

"Having the opportunity to address my fellow graduates is super exciting and truly an honor," said Nelander. "My time at URI has shaped me into the person I am today, and being able to share some of the things I've learned feels like a way of giving back to a community that has meant so much to me. Coming in as a freshman four years ago, I never could've imagined myself doing this today, and I'm hoping to inspire everyone that you're truly able to do anything you set your mind to."

As captain of the women's tennis team, Nelander balanced excellence both on the court and in the classroom. She took on leadership roles across campus, serving as a URI 101 mentor, a College of Business student ambassador, and an executive board member for the Women in Finance club. She also participated in the Ram Fund, where she served as emcee during the final Fidelity presentation.

Being named the College of Business Commencement speaker and earning the University Academic Excellence Award for Finance were among her proudest achievements at URI. Beyond academics, Nelander treasures the moment she clinched a match against St. Bonaventure to send her team to the Atlantic 10 play-offs—an experience she describes as unforgettable.

"If you would have asked me four years ago, I never would have believed I would be able to do something like this," she said. "I'm really proud of the journey and how much I've grown to be able to do this today."

Looking ahead, Nelander leaves URI with a deep appreciation for her teammates and mentors, especially her tennis coach, who helped reignite her passion for the game after injury setbacks. Now, she is excited to take on whatever challenge comes next, bringing with her the resilience, leadership, and team spirit that defined her journey at URI.



URI DECA club members represented the College of Business at the International Career Development Conference in San Francisco, Calif. Pictured (from left) are Gianluca Albanese, Amelia Oliveira, Sophie Reitz, and Leo Giusti.

## Strengthening Connections Within our Community

**A** fourth-generation family-owned Rhode Island business turned to the URI Consulting Club for help with sustainability efforts, and the results helped solve problems while also converting waste into currency.

Atlas Pallet in Burrillville, R.I., recycles and manufactures pallets—including new, recycled, remanufactured, and custom pallets—and serves clients from all over New England by providing new pallets and removing unwanted, broken, or surplus pallets.

But over the last few years, the company has seen a significant increase in wood waste removal costs. Ever focused on sustainability, the company is extremely conscious of appropriate "end-of-life pallet disposal." Not wanting to add needlessly to the landfill, Atlas sought out the URI Consulting Club to help with this problem.

Under the guidance of Devendra (Dave) Kale, who is the club mentor and an assistant professor of accounting, club members Daniel Gibbs, M.B.A. '24, Max Ross '23, M.B.A. '24, and Steve Wasserman, '23, M.B.A. '24, put in months of hard work not just helping to resolve the waste problem but also monetizing the waste in a sustainable manner.

"It was a pleasure working with the Consulting Club team," notes Atlas Pallet president Heather Ross. "They conducted an in-depth analysis of the problem from a 360-degree perspective. They laid

## Student Clubs A Launchpad for Leadership and Professional Growth

**A**t the College of Business, student clubs and professional organizations play a critical role in shaping well-rounded, career-ready graduates. These groups offer students more than extracurricular engagement—they offer access to mentorship, leadership development, and hands-on experiences that complement classroom learning.

By participating in these organizations, students build confidence, sharpen their communication and teamwork skills, and gain exposure to real-world business insights through guest speakers and networking events with industry professionals. These experiences often serve as pivotal moments in students' academic journeys, helping them clarify career goals and make meaningful professional connections.

Aligned with the college's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment, all student organizations are open to every member of the school's diverse student body. Through active participation, students not only enhance their business acumen but also contribute to a vibrant, collaborative community that reflects the values of inclusion, equity, and diversity.



URI Consulting Club. Pictured (from left) are: Dave Kale, Daniel Gibbs, Steve Wasserman, Max Ross, and Atlas President Heather Ross.

out clear reasons for their recommendations, as well as why some options were not deemed to be viable.

Ross said the team provided answers to all of their questions and not only provided a solution to the wood waste problem but also identified ways "to monetize the waste in a sustainable manner, thereby allowing us to achieve our sustainability goals, as well."

"I wish the team the best of luck for their future endeavors," Ross said.

### Student Clubs

American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists

American Marketing Association

Association of Latino Professionals for America URI

Beta Alpha Psi

Delta Sigma Pi

Financial Management Association

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Club

National Association of Black Accountants

Student Ambassadors

Supply Chain Management Club

URI Consulting Club

URI Distributive Education Clubs of America

URI Society for Human Resource Management

Women in Business

Women in Finance

# FROM WALL STREET TO KINGSTON

Finance Professor Retiring After Guiding Ram Fund Students for a Decade

When someone retires, it is often said their impact will continue to be felt. Though that influence may be hard to measure, for associate teaching professor Michael Ice, it's easy to quantify his impact in his decade in the URI College of Business.

Ninety-three percent of students from the URI College of Business land a job within six months of graduating. In other words, 9 out of 10 students swiftly transition from lectures and professors to boardrooms and managers.

Recently, the College of Business bade farewell to not only another graduating class but also to one of its most esteemed educators, Michael Ice, an associate teaching professor of finance, who officially retired, marking an end to a remarkable 10 years.

One of Ice's classes was the Ram Fund, a selective 15-student elective course that mirrors the operations of an investment firm. Established with a \$100,000

investment from the URI Foundation, the Ram Fund has flourished under Ice and his students' stewardship. The portfolio now has more than \$920,000 in assets.

"I'm trying to train these kids so they can get jobs on Wall Street," says Ice. "I've been through the process, and I can help them get jobs because I have a lot of friends on Wall Street and have a lot of connections to it. And I have tremendous confidence that given the opportunity, these students can excel."

Ice's success is rooted in background. He didn't take a tenure track in academia. But he was always interested in teaching and reached out to the dean of URI's College of Business about potentially coming on as a lecturer after working more than three decades on Wall Street.

"I reached out to Mark"—then-Dean Mark Higgins—"and asked if he would have a cup of coffee with me," said Ice. "We had a coffee, and I explained that,

given my background, I was hoping to teach a class or two on securities."

It was a perfect match, given the University's need and Ice's background.

In the classroom, Ice relied on his real-world experience, where he spent 30 years in the trenches on Wall Street. He held pivotal roles at HSBC Bank and Merrill Lynch, specializing in mortgage-backed securities, interest rate swaps, and derivatives and ultimately served as global head of fixed income. This

blend of practical insight and instructional clarity resonated with students, offering authentic perspectives on investment decisions and the real-world stakes of financial missteps.

"I've actually done it, and I think the students pick up on it very quickly," he said. "I am still responsible to teach the theory; I tend to teach the practical and can bring up real examples like the dot-com bubble and mortgage crisis."

Though Ice is retiring, the Ram Fund will continue under associate teaching professor of finance Charles Reilly. Yet the Ram Fund's enduring value and Ice's contribution to it are evident not only in its financial growth but in the professional pipe-

line it has cultivated.

Each year, the Ram Fund students present URI's portfolio to a group of about 60 professionals at Fidelity Investments' North Smithfield, R.I., office. Ice said when he started in 2015, the number of URI graduates

Michael Ice, on left, an associate teaching professor of finance, has officially retired, marking an end to a remarkable 10 years.



working at Fidelity was tiny. Today, the number is closer to 60—a testament to the fund's influence.

"They're, you know, supporting each other, hiring each other, endorsing each other," said Ice.

Another metric of Ice's legacy could be the number 6. That's the number of top business executives who have come to campus for a high-level roundtable to discuss current challenges facing financial officers.

In 2022, to foster industry connections for both him and his students, Ice launched the CFO Roundtable, an initiative that has not only strengthened ties with Rhode Island's corporate leaders but also served as a reminder of the exceptional talent emerging from the College of Business.

**Professor Ice launched the CFO Roundtable, an initiative that has not only strengthened ties with Rhode Island's corporate leaders but also served as a reminder of the exceptional talent emerging from the College of Business.**

"It's a home run for me to stay current and (gain) knowledge to bring back into my classroom, and it helps build a pipeline for URI," says Ice. "It's not a coincidence that each of those companies, like Washington Trust or Textron, hires one or two of my kids every year."

Having roles as a managing director at a major investment firm and as a professor at an R1 institution, Ice's influence will reverberate long after his departure. In February, URI achieved the prestigious Carnegie R1 designation, as a world-class hub for research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and public scholarship.

Ice said that the overwhelming response to his retirement, after he announced it on LinkedIn, was profoundly moving—garnering nearly 500 messages and comments from former students.

Though Ice is retired, he's leaving the door open to come back and guest lecture.

## Experienced Faculty Make the Difference



### Donna Gamache-Griffiths

For Donna Gamache-Griffiths '94, transitioning from adjunct to teaching professor at the URI College of Business has deepened her commitment to preparing students for life beyond the classroom.

"I always ask myself, what will students take away from my course that they can use in real life?" she said. "In law, you need a variety of tools to be effective—and I aim to give students those same tools for their professional and personal lives."

As both an alumna and the director of the International Business Program—a five-year, dual-degree program that allows students to earn a B.S. in one of the school's business majors and a B.A. in a foreign language—Gamache-Griffiths brings a unique perspective to her role.

"Many schools offer business and language studies, but our program is truly interdisciplinary," she said. "Students don't see the subjects as separate—they're part of one unified goal."

Drawing from her legal career, Gamache-Griffiths enriches her classes with real-world insights.

"Students appreciate hearing about real experiences—what I call the 'road warrior' stories—which make the lessons more tangible and engaging," she said.

Now a mentor in the same classrooms where she once sat, Gamache-Griffiths finds joy in giving back to her alma mater.

"If I can return even a fraction of what I received, it's a good day," she said. "It's rewarding and fulfilling to come home to URI."



### Devendra 'Dave' Kale

After a high-powered, but nomadic, travel-intensive career in global finance and management consulting and the birth of their son, Devendra "Dave" Kale and his wife decided a leap into academia made sense.

"Once our son was born, we knew we couldn't keep up with the extensive travel; something had to change," said Kale. "Academia gave us the flexibility to see our son grow and be more present without compromising our careers."

As a faculty member at the URI College of Business, Kale brings his experience and accounting credentials—as a certified public accountant and a certified management accountant—into the classroom.

"I always tell my students: The core principles of accounting are the same worldwide, but cultural, economic, and regulatory differences matter," said Kale, an assistant professor of accounting. "With increasing global connectedness, understanding why certain financial decisions are made in different countries gives students them a critical edge."

Kale centers his teaching on relevance and real-world application. He draws on global case studies and headlines to help students connect theory to practice.

"For example, let's say if a corporation Meta faces is under government scrutiny either in the U.S. or abroad," he ventured. "How should an auditor adjust their risk assessment process? Using similar instances from real-life situations, I encourage students to think like professionals, not just test-takers," he said.

Kale views his teaching relationships as energizing and reciprocal.

"The students are eager to learn, stay engaged in classroom discussions, and bring fresh perspectives," he said. "I learn from them as much as they learn from me."



### Charles Reilly

Charles Reilly brings decades of finance experience as a credit officer and chartered financial analyst to help URI College of Business students bridge the gap between academic theory and business practice in his finance classes.

"I bring students practical tools, starting with how to evaluate a business model—whether it's an airport, a manufacturing company, a bank, or even a taco food truck," Reilly said. "We need to quantify investment returns, evaluating risk and value, not just make broad assumptions. This requires rigorous due diligence, the need to do your homework."

Reilly's teaching emphasizes hands-on learning and critical thinking. Students in his RAM Fund course manage a live investment portfolio nearing \$900,000, making real investment decisions on industry weightings and individual stocks, using both qualitative and quantitative analyses. In other courses, students evaluate financial institutions like banks and insurance companies, conducting trend and ratio analyses, and use professional tools like S&P Capital IQ and Bloomberg to help assess long-term financial health.

Beyond the numbers, Reilly weaves in real-world judgment. One telling example was a bankruptcy case study, where the ultimate investment decision revealed the importance of trust and credibility in a company's management.

"It was a powerful example—not just about numbers, but about management's integrity. Trust matters," Reilly noted.

# Trash to Textiles

## Expert Hopes To Help Make Environmentalism Fashionable in the U.S.

### Faculty Fellow Izabela Ciesielska-Wrobel Is Exploring Bounds of Textile Science

An assistant professor of textile sciences at the University of Rhode Island who's tested and developed fabric for use in space and other extreme conditions is now applying her talents to the escalating ocean plastics problem.

A new faculty fellow at URI, Izabela Ciesielska-Wrobel, of Wakefield, R.I., arrived at URI in 2021, drawn by what she calls "an environment filled with people who are passionate about conservation."

#### Novel Applications in Materials Science

"Science fascinates me, because it allows me to accomplish goals that make lives easier, better, comfortable," Ciesielska-Wrobel said.

Her novel work with textiles has been a focus for some time, dating from her tenure at Ghent University in Belgium, when she began working with protective materials.

The wide-ranging applications for her interests are finding a receptive audience with students in URI's Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design program, which includes a focus on sustainability, technology, and innovation.

"Izabela's research areas and educational experiences are both intriguing and invaluable to our department and to the University," said Ji Hye Kang, chair of the department.

Ciesielska-Wrobel is studying the conversion of plastic waste into filaments and fibers that are microscopic in size (0.01 mm and smaller in diameter) but

could have a major economic impact as viable raw materials.

She's worked on projects funded by the European Union, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the U.S. Department of Energy. These experiences were eye-openers for her: "I learned a lot about the harm we've caused to our planet," she said.

Ciesielska-Wrobel is comfortable putting textiles to work in extreme conditions, such as space, combat, or fire. She created an in-flight urination system—the Easy Peezy—for the U.S. Department of Health, managed research into flame-resistant fabrics for U.S. Army uniforms, devised new combat shirts for the U.S. Department of Defense, and has created fabric that protects firefighters working in extreme conditions. She also wrote the book on ballistics protection, essentially showing how to build fabric that can stop a bullet.

#### Fashioning the Future

Now at URI, she's happy to have found a niche in the textiles program at the University.

"This is my kingdom," she laughed, referring to the textiles lab on the upper floor of historic Quinn Hall. If not there, you might also find Ciesielska-Wrobel in the Launch Lab in the library running a new 3D knitting machine that enables students to design their own textiles.

No one in Rhode Island has this kind of technology, she says.

Another machine quietly whirring near the lab entrance is treating an ancient piece of fabric from Egypt that is 2,000 years old, according to carbon dating. Ciesielska-Wrobel is in the process of conserving it.



With a long understanding of fabric impact over time, Ciesielska-Wrobel would like to change habits and policies as she looks at plastic ocean waste. But she also views ocean plastic as a raw material to be harvested and put to use.

Students in the program are looking for this kind of knowledge and skill, to connect fabric and textiles to social issues; they will need this kind of technical expertise long after they hang up their graduation gowns.

#### Textile History

Raised in Lodz, Poland, Ciesielska-Wrobel grew up surrounded by fabric and textile factories, the area's prevailing industry, drawing workers to looms instead of fields. Lodz is called the Manchester of Eastern Europe, she noted. "Textiles were the number one industry there," she said.

When a depression shuttered factories, Ciesielska-Wrobel's forays into textile science were a way to see how the industry could change with the times. Eventually, she moved into environmental work and says she enjoys making sense of the interaction between fabric, fashion, and the world.

Students today are aware of issues that previous generations were (and are) not. They are coming to URI to be part of discussions about conservation in clothing and reducing microplastics in water. Ciesielska-Wrobel envisions filters in washing machines that can scoop or sweep up microplastics before they get into waterways. Increasing public awareness could help make this a reality, she added.

Ciesielska-Wrobel believes that legislation that motivates producers and consumers is the next step to effect change.

Ava Stanley, an Alfred J. Verrecchia Business Scholar\* at the University, said she chose URI because she felt she could merge her love for design with an interest in environmental matters here. Stanley and Ciesielska-Wrobel have been talking about Stanley's independent study on ocean plastic waste. Stanley's work with ocean-harvested textiles was showcased at the textiles program's Spring Splash fashion show in April.

"Our world is in crisis," Stanley said, "and garments are contributing to problems in ocean waters."

She said her passion for the industry only expanded after taking Ciesielska-Wrobel's textile science class.

"I loved it," she said. "And then living here by the ocean, adding a sustainability minor just made sense. I've been able to make connections and am thankful for the experience I've had at URI."

Today's eco-conscious young consumers, like Stanley, who favor Savers over Saks, are making their way to URI for classes with forward-looking faculty like Ciesielska-Wrobel in a historic program that offers value for a smartly priced degree. And the University is also preparing a new general education course, "The World of Plastics," for new URI students to access this information, regardless of major.

"We have good students here," Ciesielska-Wrobel says. "They're conscious and conscientious."

\* The Alfred J. Verrecchia Business Scholars Award was founded by Alfred J. Verrecchia '67, M.B.A. '72, Hon. '04, as part of a \$15 million gift during Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island.

URI students like Payton Becker (left) understand fabric's history and are preparing for the field's future, working with faculty like Ciesielska-Wrobel, a recently designated faculty fellow at URI.



## URI Honors Employees' Years of Service With Milestone Celebration

The University of Rhode Island celebrated the dedication and service of 150 staff and faculty members at its second annual Employee Milestone Celebration, held in March in the Memorial Union Ballroom. The event recognized individuals who reached significant service anniversaries—ranging from five to 50 years—in 2024.

Among the distinguished honorees was Professor Gordon Dash, a longtime faculty member in the College of Business, who celebrated an extraordinary milestone: 50 years of service to the University. A respected professor of finance, Professor Dash has made a lasting impact on generations of students through his teaching, mentorship, and contributions to

### "What makes URI so special is its people."

—Marc B. Parlange, president

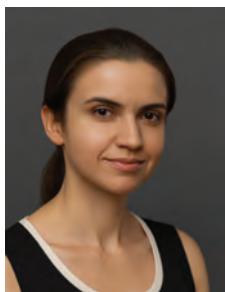
to bring your talents to URI and to work every day alongside your colleagues to serve our students, advance our mission, and educate the next generation of Rhode Islanders."

Professor Dash's five decades of service stand as a powerful testament to the enduring impact of dedicated faculty in shaping the University's legacy and the lives of its students.

academic innovation.

President Marc Parlange, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Barbara Wolfe, and Vice President for Human Resources Becky Hill were on hand to honor the recipients. "What makes URI so special is its people," said President Parlange. "You have all chosen

## Professors Named to Stanford's Top 2% Scientists List



Dara Schniederjans



Mahtab Kouhizadeh



Lauren Labrecque

Three URI professors have been recognized among the top scientists around the globe by Stanford University's Top 2% Scientists list, recognizing the most influential researchers across a broad range of fields. Mahtab Kouhizadeh, assistant professor of supply chain management, Lauren Labrecque, professor of marketing, and Dara Schniederjans, professor of supply chain management, were named to the prestigious list this year.

The Stanford list, considered the most prestigious in the world, is based on bibliometric factors contained in the Scopus database provided by Elsevier, a global information analytics company and academic publisher. The rankings consider scholars who have published multiple highly cited papers and use various metrics to evaluate the citation impact of researchers' work over their career and a single year. The rankings are based on citations from 2024.

"This ranking identifies top scientists with a percentile of 2% or higher in all fields and within the sub-field of business and management—so being included among this group is a great honor," said Kouhizadeh. "It's encouraging to gain recognition from fellow scholars, especially at an early stage in my career."

Kouhizadeh, who earned her Ph.D. in operations management from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 2021, has focused her research on supply chain management, blockchain technology, network optimization, and sustainability. In selecting her research topics, she chooses to explore issues that impact businesses, along with emerging technologies, such as blockchain, and their implications on supply chain management and sustainability.

"Supply chain management fascinates me because it connects a network of organizations involved in delivering products and services to customers," she said. "Every product you buy from a store has a journey to get there, involving various logistics, operations, and scheduling. I focus on network optimization to improve supply chain networks by reducing costs and increasing efficiency."

That includes integrating sustainable practices in supply chain management to mitigate negative envi-

ronmental impacts and promote long-term viability for businesses and society, she said.

Kouhizadeh's research has been published in such peer-reviewed journals as *Production Planning and Control* and *Industrial Management & Data Systems* and garnered more than 6,800 citations since her first paper was published in 2018, according to Google Scholar.

Her most cited papers have been on timely topics and published in leading journals in the field: "Blockchain technology and its relationships to sustainable supply chain management," published in the *International Journal of Production Research* in 2019, has been cited 3,518 times; and "Blockchain technology and the sustainable supply chain: Theoretically exploring adoption barriers," published in the *International Journal of Production Economics* in 2021, has garnered 1,068 citations.

"Having my work cited means that other scholars use and reference my research, ideas, or findings in their own work," she said. "It shows that my research is being recognized, and my insights are contributing to the advancement of the scholarly field and influencing new research developments."

Kouhizadeh, who joined URI in fall 2021 after earning her Ph.D., says she was attracted by URI's strong supply chain management program, which includes numerous faculty who have worked professionally in the field. "The College of Business stands out for its supportive and collegial environment, which I truly appreciate," she said. "I enjoy working with passionate supply chain students who thrive in this collaborative environment."

In her journey as a professor, she says her teaching and research are connected, and she finds working with student researchers rewarding, allowing her to mentor students while including their perspectives in her research.

"I view my research as a means to support my teaching by offering students current knowledge and real-world applications," she said. "My goal is to create a synergistic relationship where my research informs my teaching and my teaching, in turn, inspires new avenues of research."

**"I view my research as a means to support my teaching by offering students current knowledge and real-world applications."**

—Mahtab Kouhizadeh

### 2025 Rankings:

Dara Schniederjans, 98,721

Mahtab Kouhizadeh, 86,072

Lauren Labrecque, 17,432

## The Story of Innovation: Faculty Industry Immersion

### Academic Theory Meets Real-World Practice

The URI College of Business's annual Faculty Industry Immersion Trip (FIIT) is more than just a day of corporate campus visits; it's a strategic investment in ensuring students receive an education that is current and comprehensive. Since 2023, college faculty have visited URI's partner companies to gain firsthand insights into industry practices, workforce needs, and emerging trends across sectors.

"FIIT gives our faculty real-world insight into what's happening on the ground," says Sean Edmund Rogers, dean of the College of Business. "It brings textbooks and case studies to life, helping faculty guide students toward the skills and experiences that will make them competitive in the job market."

So far, faculty have visited Fidelity Investments and Ocean State Job Lot—two Rhode Island-based firms with deep ties to URI. For companies, the program offers a two-way exchange: Faculty better understand the complexities of modern business, and companies

**"It brings textbooks and case studies to life, helping faculty guide students toward the skills and experiences that will make them competitive in the job market."**

—Dean Sean Edmund Rogers



URI faculty and staff tour the Ocean State Job Lot warehouse in North Kingstown, R.I., for their faculty immersion trip.

gain exposure to academic thought leadership and potential research collaborations.

"It's a great opportunity to give back," says Ocean State Job Lot CFO John Conforti '77. "By opening our doors through programs like FIIT, we create a sort of living laboratory where academic theory meets real-world practice."

Jonathan Sanford, head of university relations at Fidelity, says the benefits of FIIT were mutual. "Faculty and career services staff are key partners in connecting us with students," says Sanford. "Visits like these help us broaden awareness of the career opportunities we offer—many of which go far beyond finance."

Now entering its third year, FIIT is set to expand in scope while remaining rooted in its core mission: to bridge the gap between classroom and boardroom for the benefit of College of Business students.

"The last two trips have been incredibly successful, and we want to replicate that at other companies," says Rogers. "It's been rewarding for everyone involved."

URI faculty and staff visit Fidelity Investments headquarters in Smithfield, R.I., for their faculty immersion event.

## Meeting the Evolving Needs of Today's Workforce and Tomorrow's Leaders

### New M.S. Management Program

The College of Business is introducing a new master's degree program this fall—the Master of Science in Management—crafted to cultivate students' capabilities to lead with assurance, data-driven discernment, and inventive problem-solving, allowing them to become more effective and innovative leaders for their organizations.

Designed with a commitment to adaptability, the 30-credit strategic leadership program enables students to take classes full time, part time, in person, or online, as well as the ability to flex between different class formats. The program gives students the ability to balance between their academic and professional commitments.

"The idea is that this is a shorter program, and it's more specialized, so it's more focused on career readiness," said marketing professor Christy Ashley, who also serves as the program's interim director.

The program allows students to complete a general program with a focus on strategic leadership or to specialize in sports management, financial technology, or human resources, where the tracks are designed to align with evolving industry demands.

"The initial Master of Science in Management program has been set up as an umbrella program under which we can serve different audiences with different specializations," Ashley said.

**"The idea is that this is a shorter program, and it's more specialized, so it's more focused on career readiness."**

—Christy Ashley,  
marketing professor

Another key consideration in the program's design was to offer a distinctive opportunity for students without a conventional business background, particularly those with liberal arts or STEM degrees.

"In many cases, people coming out of liberal arts majors have very strong critical thinking skills, but a lot of times there's a gap in confidence and knowing how to apply them to different business situations," said Ashley. "This program can help build that confidence."

Classes integrate critical business skills and client-based projects for hands-on experiences.

"This program was created to meet the evolving needs of today's workforce and tomorrow's leaders," Ashley said.

"Whether you're just graduating or seeking to advance your career, URI's M.S.M. will help you to stand out in a competitive job market."

The College of Business already offers graduate degrees in health-care management, supply chain management, and applied analytics; human resource management and labor relations; and textiles, fashion merchandising, and design.

The college plans to expand the M.S.M. portfolio with additional tracks, including marketing, which is set to launch in 2026, and others such as business analytics and artificial intelligence.

# M.B.A. PROGRAM and how Venture Capital and Entrepreneurship Play a Major Role

## URI Professor Uses Real-World Experience To Teach Venture Capital

When most people think of startups their minds drift to the tech-saturated corridors of San Francisco and Silicon Valley. Apple is famously headquartered in Cupertino, and Meta is nestled just outside Palo Alto. Some even point to Seattle, the birthplace of Starbucks.

These sprawling urban hubs are often synonymous with innovation. However, one professor at the University of Rhode Island is changing that narrative and shifting the spotlight away from juggernauts like San Francisco and New York.

Tom Sperry is the cofounder of Rogue Venture Partners, a firm he helped launch 15 years ago in Portland, Ore. As a venture capitalist, the goal is to invest in

up-and-coming companies and to help fuel emerging enterprises. Sperry's focus is on small cities that are often overlooked.

"We don't invest in, say, New York, Boston or San Fran-

cisco— instead we focus on smaller cities, like Providence," says Sperry.

But it's not just enterprises he invests in. He's investing in entrepreneurs in more ways than one.

Sperry is from Connecticut and growing up, he



Tom Sperry

**"Students are always excited about it because we use real-life business cases and challenges going on in the moment."**

—Tom Sperry

Curious about the local entrepreneurial landscape, Sperry began exploring the state's startup ecosystem. Come to find out there weren't many universities offering courses on entrepreneurship.

That changed when he connected with Pete Rumsey, URI's chief business development officer, who introduced him to Christy Ashley, then the associate dean of the College of Business.

"From there I started teaching an M.B.A. class on strategy and entrepreneurship, which I've been doing for the last five years," says Sperry.

Sperry doesn't see himself as a traditional academic. He prefers the title "VC in residence."

Sperry says the demand for the class was there and

would spend his summers in Jamestown. After founding Rogue in Oregon, a lot of the companies he invested in had strong ties to Oregon State University. When he returned to the East Coast, he saw an opportunity to replicate that success in the Ocean State.

notes a lot of M.B.A. students were hungry for an entrepreneur course. He uses his background as a venture capitalist to his advantage, often incorporating real-world business dilemmas into his class.

Students are forced to look at companies holistically and leverage their skills to gain perspective on each company and assess if they are a worthy investment for Rogue.

"Students are always excited about it because we use real-life business cases and challenges going on in the moment," says Sperry.

Cases delve into everything from political headwinds to the regional and economic hurdles that could impact a company's trajectory.

Sperry may have started out teaching one class, but that has now ballooned to two. A couple years ago, Sperry started offering a second course which offers students immersive, hands-on experience in venture capital. They intern at Rogue for a semester and work directly with companies that the VC firm is looking to invest in.

"Students do their own due diligence, write investment memos and think about whether we should invest in these companies or not," said Sperry.

URI stands out as one of the few institutions in Rhode Island offering multiple entrepreneurship courses, he says.

Sperry understands that not every one of his M.B.A. students will want to start their own business. But he argues that the skills are essential in retaining

talent. He also notes that more universities are starting to place an emphasis on entrepreneur tracks.

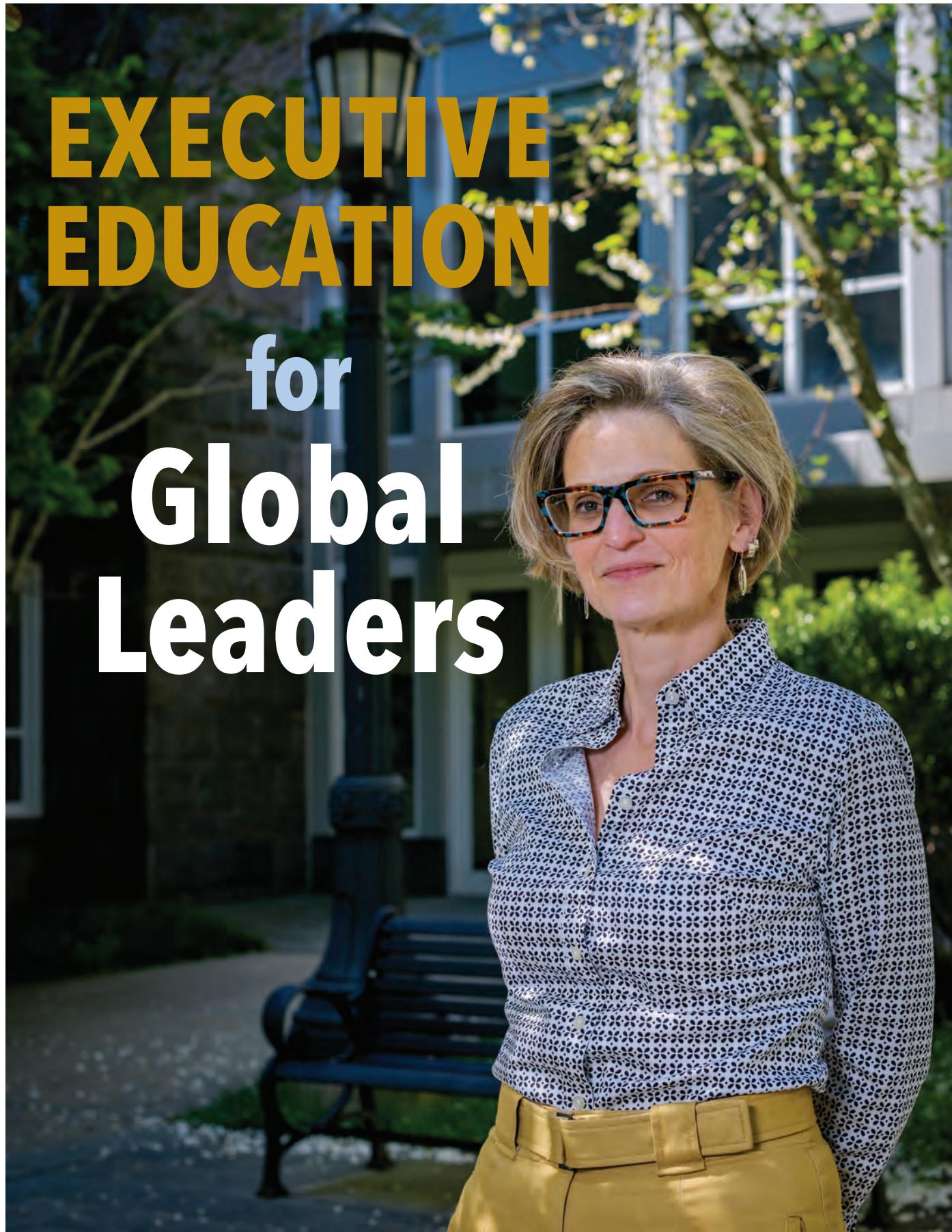
"My goal isn't necessarily to teach students about entrepreneurship—it's more to teach them about how to be thoughtful contributors to society," said Sperry. "They may never be an entrepreneur, but they're going to acquire skills to become thoughtful, well-rounded and better citizens."

**Above:** An alumni panel shares industry knowledge and expertise with students at a Career Day event.



R.I. state Sen. Victoria Gu presents to the one-year M.B.A. class at Ballantine Hall.

# EXECUTIVE EDUCATION for Global Leaders



## Practitioner Scholars, With Industry Experience and a Desire To Apply Research to Real-World Challenges

The URI College of Business's Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.) program is setting itself apart in advanced business education through its hybrid learning model, individualized mentorship, and emphasis on professional application.

Unlike many D.B.A. programs that are fully online and asynchronous, URI's format combines in-person residencies, synchronous, and asynchronous online instruction.

"Our students are practitioner scholars," said associate professor Jessica Strübel, the D.B.A. program's executive director. "They come in with industry experience and a desire to apply rigorous research to real-world business challenges."

The program's Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business accreditation—held by only about 6% of business schools globally—further distinguishes it for its academic quality, Strübel said. Mentorship is another key asset. Students are paired with faculty mentors based on mutual research interests. The mentors provide ongoing support through coursework, research design, and dissertation development.

D.B.A. students represent a wide range of industries including mining, hospitality, banking, financial

planning, and pharmaceuticals. Strübel said this diversity fuels dynamic, multidisciplinary class discussions and research collaborations.

"Finance professionals interpret materials differently than those from marketing or management," she said. "That range of perspective strengthens the learning experience."

Student outcomes reflect the program's real-world orientation. One graduate's research on mental health disclosure led to a state board appointment and a legislative testimony opportunity.

Another D.B.A. alum became CEO of a regional bank and now teaches at Boston University.

The program has added a peer-mentoring program and expanded workshop offerings and developed international partnerships to launch an executive global immersion residency. Looking ahead, the college plans to grow the program, integrate microcredentials in trending topics like AI and data analytics, and increase emphasis on global business understanding.

"I love watching students grow into researchers," said Strübel. "They arrive unsure, but leave confident—ready to lead, teach, and transform their fields."



The college plans to grow the program, integrate microcredentials in trending topics like AI and data analytics, and increase emphasis on global business understanding.

2024 D.B.A. hooding ceremony (from left)  
Jessica Strubel,  
Stephen Atlas,  
Barbara Wolfe,  
Sean Edmund Rogers,  
Helen Croskell,  
Georges Tsafack,  
Peter Ijomah,  
Doug Hales,  
Gervais Tchoutan,  
Joe Foresi,  
Bonnie Kennedy,  
Marc Parlane,  
Qi Liu, and  
Robert Glew



## Partnering for Progress

**Empowering Leaders for Tomorrow: Professional and Executive Business Education**

**A**t the College of Business, the newly implemented Department of Professional and Executive Business Education plays a vital role in extending the college's impact beyond the classroom and into the heart of the business community. Through customized training programs, graduate and certificate offerings, and nondegree credentials, the department is helping professionals and organizations adapt, lead, and thrive in a rapidly evolving marketplace.

With a strong focus on upskilling and reskilling, the department's mission is to engage business leaders across Rhode Island and beyond. It offers flexible, high-impact learning experiences that foster personal growth and empowered leadership. Whether through individualized development plans or guidance on maximizing training budgets, grant funding, or tuition reimbursement, the goal is to ensure that educational investments yield measurable results.

The department connects organizations with expert faculty, student leaders, and a robust support network that brings the latest research, innovation, and business insight into the workplace. From leadership development to succession planning and career consultations, the offerings are designed to strengthen talent pipelines and drive sustainable success.

Thanks to the support of partners and sponsors, URI continues to expand access to transformational business education—supporting not just individual advancement, but the economic vitality of the region and beyond.

## Growing a Workforce for the Future

**Christophe-Hayot  
Nominated as  
Up-and-Coming  
Local Changemaker**

**P**rovidence Monthly honored Jacqueline Christophe-Hayot in a long-standing tradition, shining the spotlight on a group of visionaries and changemakers with big plans for the capital city. She discussed her important work as the executive director of professional and executive business education at URI in her award interview.

Since joining URI's College of Business in February 2024, Christophe-Hayot has helped grow graduate enrollments, reflecting increased demand for employee development programs. Drawing on her experience living in multiple countries and navigating a nontraditional educational path, she brings a global perspective and deep empathy to her work.

"It took me 11 years to finish my bachelor's degree, another 16 before I earned my M.B.A., and five more to complete my doctorate," she said. "That journey shaped my passion for helping working adults pursue their educational and career goals."

Christophe-Hayot said the College of Business is well positioned to support the state's economic goals through accessible, practical, and innovative programs. Priorities include fostering educational equity, strengthening industry partnerships, and preparing professionals for an evolving economy.



**The College of Business is well positioned to support the state's economic goals through accessible, practical, and innovative programs.**

— Jacqueline Christophe-Hayot, executive director, professional and executive business education

Despite challenges such as economic uncertainty, time constraints, and the need to demonstrate return on investment, she remains optimistic. She cites record-breaking applications, a growing and diverse student body, and strong institutional leadership, including that of Dean Sean Edmund Rogers, as key indicators of continued success.

"The supportive environment here allows us to make a real impact," she said. "We're just getting started."



At left:  
David Barrett  
'78 and his  
wife, Kristin  
Cobb Barrett

At right:  
Michelle L.  
Chicoine &  
David A.  
Goldman

## New Scholarship for Student-Athletes

### Gift Aids Those Pursuing M.B.A.s, Long-Term College, Athletics Goals

David Barrett '78 and his wife, Kristin Cobb Barrett, have made a \$5 million multipart commitment to the University of Rhode Island.

The gift establishes the David E. Barrett Business Scholarship, an endowed fund for student-athletes pursuing a master's degree in business administration, as well as an estate bequest that will benefit the long-term interests of both the College of Business and URI Athletics.

This significant gift continues the momentum of the recently completed Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for URI, which surpassed its goal of raising \$300 million for strategic priorities across the University.

"Rhody left its mark on me," said Barrett. "I've got great appreciation for my undergraduate experiences as a student and as an athlete, which helped lay the foundation for my career and life. Our family is pleased to have an opportunity to give something back to future generations."

Barrett has enjoyed an over 40-year career as a technology entrepreneur, operating executive, and venture capital investor. He currently serves as a managing partner of Polaris Partners, a health-care and technology-focused venture capital firm where he has been general partner for the past 25 years. For the past 15 years, he has also served as a trustee of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and for the past year, he's been a URI Edwards Society advisor.

"Dave's personal interactions with our students, his active involvement as an advisor, and the commitment which he and Kristin have made will benefit business students for generations to come," said Dean Sean Edmund Rogers. "He's been an involved advocate for the leadership role URI can play in entrepreneurship education."

## Investing in the Future of Business Education

### Endowed Scholarship To Support First-Generation, Nontraditional Students



Michelle L. Chicoine '77 and her husband, David A. Goldman, have established an endowed scholarship to expand opportunity and access for future business leaders. "Our undergraduate experiences were the foundation of our professional success and personal fulfillment," they shared. "We believe education is the most powerful form of philanthropy."

The scholarship supports students in the College of Business, with preference for first-generation students on nontraditional academic paths from Providence County, R.I. Recipients must demonstrate financial need and maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

By creating this scholarship, Chicoine and Goldman are helping to ensure that promising students—regardless of background—have the opportunity to thrive.



## Supporting the URI Day of Giving

### Record-Breaking Day of Giving Energizes College of Business

URI's Day of Giving brought the College of Business community together in an inspiring show of support, raising more than \$325,000 across two days, a 12% increase from the previous year. This spring, more than 350 donors contributed, unlocking a \$100,000 challenge gift from the Dean's Advisory Council.

The campus came alive with student-led events, including a hoop challenge and a dunk tank, boosting participation and fostering a strong sense of community. Student giving rose by 70%, reflecting growing pride and engagement within the college.

These generous gifts directly support scholarships, academic programming, and opportunities that enhance the student experience—making a lasting impact on campus and beyond.

## Alum Receives '10 Under 10' Award

DeBlasio Also Returns to Campus as Emcee of Spring Fashion Event



**A**my Page DeBlasio '15—a proud Rhode Island native and the founder and creative director of her namesake brand, Amy Page DeBlasio, a contemporary and ethical fashion label—received the URI 10 Under 10 Award in the spring. The award recognizes young leaders who embody the true spirit and values of the University. She also served as the master of ceremonies for the annual “Spring Splash” event in April for URI textiles, fashion merchandising, and design students to showcase their creativity.

Since graduating from URI with a Bachelor of Arts in Italian language and literature and Bachelor of Science in business and textiles, fashion merchandising, and design—DeBlasio’s fashion-forward career has taken off.

She has been a featured designer in national runway shows and global publications and has been named *Rhode Island Monthly*’s Best Fashion Designer for the past six years. Her exuberant personality and original artistic perspective inspire her unique and authentic designs, as does her love of the local community. Although her schedule is busy, she commits time to several philanthropic volunteer positions related to her personal passions—including URI’s College of Business.



Above: Textile business and design seniors showcase their original designs in the annual Spring Splash fashion show event.

## Verrecchia Scholar Spotlights

**T**he Alfred J. Verrecchia Business Scholars program provides a full scholarship—covering tuition, fees, housing, food, books, and one Global Winter Travel J-Term experience with faculty for four years—for selected students interested in majoring in business. It also offers access to the University’s Honors Program, Honors Colloquium, Leadership Institute, an alumni business mentor, a personal career coach with internship mentoring and placement, a yearly donor retreat and roundtable CEO meeting, priority course registration, and access to special university events. Candidates will be selected from their initial applications and then asked to participate in campus visits and interviews.

### Ava Stanley '25

Long Island, N.Y.

Major: Textiles, fashion merchandising, and design “This scholarship has shown me that hard work does not go unnoticed. The Verrecchias have been huge role models for me. Their generosity and humility are inspiring, and I hope I can have an impact as great as theirs.”



### Owen Surette '25

Wilmington, Mass.

Major: Finance and supply chain management “URI offers so many opportunities for professional development and social engagement; every day is filled with excitement. I never have a dull day here. One of my best experiences was participating in the “oozeball” tournament, an amazing URI tradition. My team made it all the way to the finals.”



### Brandon Velasquez '25

Shelter Island, N.Y.

Major: Finance and global business management “Applying to colleges in 2020 was tough. I am also a first-generation college student born to immigrant parents, making the college application process harder to navigate. I was granted this opportunity which not only unburdened my family financially but also propelled my career far beyond what I ever imagined.”



## Strong Industry Partnerships for Student Success

The Career Day, Job and Internship Fairs take place in the spring and fall semesters. These annual events are designed to help students strengthen their career readiness by connecting them with employers, alumni, and career resources. These events feature a full day of activities, including a campuswide career fair, networking sessions, professional development panels, and LinkedIn photo opportunities.

Students are encouraged to attend based on their academic level, with sessions tailored for first-year students through graduate level.

The events provide structured settings for students to practice networking, explore internship and job opportunities, and gain insights into various career paths. They are supported by university endowments and corporate sponsorships, and are key to our ongoing efforts to prepare students for success after graduation.

Career Day events bring in over 150 organizations throughout the year, employing 93% of our students within six months of graduation.



**200+ industry partners participate in career events**

**1645+ students attend career events**

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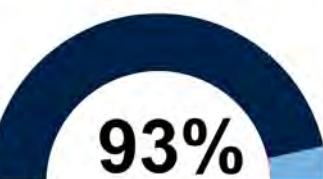
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### Where Students Are Six Months After Graduation

According to a College of Business survey, 93% of its graduates are working, joined the military, or are attending graduate school, with an average salary of \$58,766. Finance and accounting students have an average salary of \$70,000.



College of Business graduates are engaged in a career outcome six months after graduation.

#### Top Employers of Business Graduates

Aspen Square Management  
Bank United  
Baystate Wealth Management  
Burlington  
Clifton Larson Allen LLP  
Crum & Forster  
CVS Health  
EMC Insurance Companies  
Ernst & Young (EY)  
Fidelity Investments  
J.R. Simplot Co.  
KPMG  
Marcum LLP  
Pricewaterhouse Coopers  
Timmons Wealth Management  
T.J.X. Companies  
Travelers  
U.S. Bank  
Waters Corp.  
Withum  
ZRG Partners



## Dean's Advisory Council Members

**Mark E. Goulart**, '83, M.B.A. '91, chair, retired principal, Deloitte Consulting LLP

**Dan Johnson**, '82, vice chair, retired senior vice president, national accounts, Medline Industries

**David E. Barrett** '78, managing partner, Polaris Ventures

**John J. Brough Jr.** '78, partner, DiSanto, Priest & Co.

**David J. Buckanavage** '80, president, Sovereign Pacific Equity

**Stephen Carll** '87, senior vice president, California Bank & Trust

**Scott Carter** '89, global head of financial institutions coverage, BNP Paribas

**Thomas J. Chisholm** '68, CEO, Chisholm Ventures LLC

**John D. Conforti** '77, CFO, Ocean State Job Lot

**Brian S. Cook** '93, retired CEO, Juniper Industrial Holdings Inc.

**William H. Eigen III** '90, managing director, JPMorganChase

**Diane Chace Fannon** '74, retired brand management/principal, The Richards Group

**S. Kent Fannon** '74, retired partner, Chartwell Partners

**Lisa M. Ferraro** '87, tax partner, Pricewaterhouse Coopers

**Jodi Lee Fournier** '82, vice president, North America search delivery leader, Korn Ferry International

**James A. Hopkins** '62, retired vice president of operations, Wardwell Braiding Co.

**Dave Johnson** '80, partner, Bain & Co.

**Robert A. Kubica** '04, general counsel, The Davis Companies

**Roby Luna** '04, president and CEO, Aretec Inc.

**Amy E. MacFadyen** '02, audit partner, EisnerAmper LLP

**Peter J. Miniati III** '85, SVP private client advisor, Bank of America

**Robert J. Petisi** '74, president, Tween Waters Marketing Alliance

**Robert S. Russell** '75, owner, Wayland Square Fine Wine & Spirits

**Andrea K. Tarbox**, M.B.A. '75, retired executive vice president and CFO, KapStone Paper & Packaging Corp.

**Kevin J. Twomey** '91, partner, Pricewaterhouse Coopers

**Alfred J. Verrecchia** '67, M.B.A. '72, Hon. '04, retired CEO and chairman, Hasbro Inc.



## Executing our Vision

Two years ago, Dean Sean Edmund Rogers developed a strategic vision to reposition the College of Business as a leader in student success, advanced research in AI and innovation, and business and community impact. The dean's advisory council, consisting of industry-leading alumni, has been a key sounding board for the dean as he executes his vision.

The results are beginning to show with major philanthropic investments, such as David and Kristin Barrett's \$5 million commitment and the Michelle L. Chicoine '77 and David A. Goldman Endowed Scholarship, that will expand access to graduate education and support first-generation students.

Another exciting initiative that is in its fifth year is the Alfred J. Verrecchia Business Scholars program that promotes academic and professional excellence by equipping students with resources and mentorship that extend beyond the classroom. This program has been a game changer for attracting high-quality students to the college.

This past spring, the college hosted its largest career fair with over 100 companies offering students internships and career opportunities. More than ever, the 3,000 students have the opportunities to obtain real-world skills and experiences to obtain career opportunities post-graduation.

An example of this is College of Business entrepreneurial alumni and 10-Under-10 award winner Amy Page DeBlasio '15 whose story is a great example of how the college's reputation for innovation and mission-driven education creates expanded opportunities for success.

With rising graduate enrollments, expanding corporate partnerships, and strong internship and job placement rates, the college is well-positioned to lead in workforce development, industry collaboration, and the opportunity to build a dynamic future for business education in Rhode Island and beyond.

—Marc E. Goulart, chair, Dean's Advisory Council

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

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Professional and Executive  
Business Education



# THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

College of Business  
Ballantine Hall, 7 Lippitt Road  
Kingston, RI 02881



11/2025 2,850 PHOTOS: NORA LEWIS; MICHAEL SALERNO; CATHERINE SCOTT  
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