MARCH 2019
THIS ISSUE
Spring Wide College Meeting Recap
Kappa Delta Pi Wins Awards
Difficult Dialogues on Race
Hos and Correia RIDE Emassadors
URI Hosts MABE Symposium
EDC 278: From Soldier to Student
Mayor’s Luncheon
Arts and Culture Spring Calendar
Student Spotlight: Lucas Pralle
A Message from OSI
Microagressions in the Classroom
KDP Initiates New Members

BIG I.D.E.A.S
Quarterly newsletter
INNOVATIONS. DEVELOPMENTS. ENRICHMENT. ACCOMPLISHMENTS. SYNERGY.

SPRING COLLEGE-WIDE MEETING

The College community gathered on Wednesday, Jan. 16 to kick-off the Spring semester with updates and lively discussions of new academic programs, faculty research, budgets, communications and technology. Dean Anthony Rolle welcomed faculty and staff.

“We are 18 months into our adventure. We’ve been working hard,” he said. “Mid-year is a time to reflect on how we started, where we are, and where we are going.”

Dean Rolle spoke of the importance of managing and advancing knowledge by quoting John Goodlad, educational researcher and theorist who published influential models for renewing schools and teacher education. “The first educational question will not be ‘what knowledge is of the most worth? But ‘what kinds of human beings do we wish to produce,” to manage and advance that knowledge, said Dean Rolle. “The possibilities virtually defy our imagination.”

Associate Dean Anne Seitsinger acknowledged the publications by the group and urged faculty to take advantage of research and professional development funding. Deb Mathews explained the inner workings of the Office of Strategic Initiatives; Diana Laferriere gave a financial status report; Jane Fusco told of the new internal and external communication projects taking place in the Marketing, Media and Communications office; and Amanda Zelazo showcased the IDL (Interactive Digital Learning) classroom and its capabilities, and the procedure for technology purchases. Dean Rolle also gave an update from the School of Professional and Continuing Education on behalf of Assistant Dean Tammy Warner, citing the changes to the admissions processes for transfer students and upcoming events.

The Dean also gave a timeline for the approval and launch of the new programs beginning this fall.

Organizational culture and communications methods, potential program shifts and accessibility of discretionary revenue were also discussed, with the Dean aligning these issues to the launch of the new programs starting in the Fall.

URI’s KAPPA DELTA PI CHAPTER WINS FOUR AWARDS

Kappa Delta Pi, URI’s honor society in education, received four outstanding achievement awards at their annual November Convocation in Indianapolis, Indiana. The awards are:

Achieving Chapter Excellence Award (ACE) – the URI chapter was one of 24 to win the ACE, which is the chapter’s fourth ACE, for excellence in membership recruitment, service, innovation, and programming.
Literacy and Programming Award – for literacy and education initiative with the Nambale Magnet School in Kenya. Chapter officers, Elizabeth Olmsted and Colleen Bouquot (elementary education majors), spent a month in Kenya last May working with teachers and children at the Magnet school and donated literacy supplies, books, and services.

Fundraising Award – for exceeding the chapter’s fundraising goals, having raised funds to support the one month Kenya trip and to renovate a teachers’ lounge and two restrooms at the Wakefield Elementary School last Fall.

President’s Award – given to Cassandra Marques-Leach, a URI elementary education major, for her exemplary leadership.

Kappa Delta Pi is an international education honor society with nearly 40,000 members worldwide. URI’s chapter is Iota Sigma.

Dr. Susan Trostle Brand, professor of early childhood education has been a counselor with URI’ Kappa Delta Pi chapter for 27 years.

“My sessions are taking on the tone or theme of ‘contemplative.’ The content gives people so much to think about and to consider regarding personal work. We do regarding attitude and race, and professional application in a classroom or learning setting,” Murray Johnson said.

She added that these types of sessions are “planting a positive seed” for research and evaluative techniques to probe how the model might work in practice over time.

RABIA HOS AND AMY CORREIA NAMED EL AMBASSADORS FOR RIDE

Dr. Rabia Hos and instructor Amy Correia, from the School of Education’s TESOL/Bilingual-Dual Language program, have been selected as English Learner Ambassadors by the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE).

The English Learner Ambassadors use their expertise, knowledge, and connections to advance the RIDE’s 2020 Vision of Education for multilingual youth, and prepare them for postsecondary education, work, and life.

“This initiative will ultimately benefit all multilingual students in our state and your contributions will be of value,” stated the official letter to Hos and Correia.

Hos and Correia will work with other RIDE Ambassadors to develop projects for multilingual teaching and learning.

Correia’s project will support administrator’s review of laws, procedures, coaching, and evaluations of programs and requirements related to English Learners’ education in Rhode Island.

Hos’ project will focus on a toolkit for newcomer English Learners specifically for students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) and will include resources for school districts, administrators, and teachers.

URI FEINSTEIN PROVIDENCE CAMPUS HOSTS MABE PRE-CONFERENCE SYMPOSIUM

The 8th Annual MABE (Multistate Association for Bilingual Education) pre-conference symposium was held on March 22 at URI Feinstein Providence campus, in advance of the conference on March 23 at Nathanael Greene Elementary School in Pawtucket, R.I. The theme of the symposium was “Envisioning an Equitable Dual Language Education in Rhode Island.”
About 50 people attended the pre-conference symposium intended to inform and educate Rhode Island’s political and education leaders on the importance of dual language and multilingualism, in support for the World Language and Dual Language Immersion Act (Senate Bill S-0198 and House Finance Bill H-5192) that is currently being reviewed.

Rabia Hos, assistant professor of TESOL/Bilingual-Dual Language Education, and an advocate for multilingualism in Rhode Island, was one of the organizers of the symposium.

“By taking an active role in organizing the pre-conference symposium and being an active participant at the state level education organizations, I am committed to making a difference in the lives of English learners through my teaching and scholarship,” Hos said.

EDC278: FROM SOLDIER TO STUDENT

At 4 o’clock on Friday afternoons, when most college students are getting ready for weekend fun, 20 students gather in Room 242 on the Feinstein Providence campus for a four-hour class that helps prepare them for student success. Most of the students in the class are military veterans. Others are still serving in the reserve armed forces. All are full-time college students.

Instructed by academic advisor Jeff Johnson, EDC 278 is an independent study that runs two semesters for up to three credits. The first semester helps students transition from soldier to student as they learn to navigate through the educational process, including the physical, psychological and pedagogical demands as they apply to learning outcomes. The second semester focuses on professional development, internships, and making connections in the workplace.

“The students come to the class in different phases of their lives. Some have families, are ready to buy a house, while others are just learning how to be a civilian,” Johnson said.

He added that he adapts the syllabus to what is most needed within the group. “It isn’t scripted,” he said.

At the start of each class, Johnson employs a two-minute exercise called “Check-a-Vet” where students take the time to speak to a classmate and see how the week is going.

Student veterans have different needs than traditional students, he said. Some of the topics they discuss are credit transfers, best use of veterans benefits, and strategies to graduate.

Johnson said that he often notices the students gathering before the class begins to spend time talking about their similar life issues. And they continue meeting long after class is over, sometimes talking in the parking lot or going to a restaurant until the late evening hours.

“It is an education beyond the textbooks,” he said.

Mayor’s Luncheon

Rhode Island’s mayors gathered at the Feinstein Providence Campus on March 14 for a luncheon hosted by Dean Anthony Rolle to engage the leaders and inform them of the College’s new plans and programs that will impact their communities.

In attendance were Mayors:
Roberto DeSilva (East Providence)
James Diossa (Central Falls)
Allan Fung (Cranston)
Jorge Elorza (Providence) representative Leonela Felix
Charles Lombardi (North Providence) representative
former Mayor Richard Fossa
Jeffrey Mutter (Cumberland) representative Sarah King
Joseph Polisena (Johnston)
Michael Solomon (Warwick)

Former Cranston Mayor, John O’Leary, currently the College’s special assistant for external affairs, welcomed the constituency.

Dean Rolle spoke about the College’s plans to develop new degree offerings that will align with the governor’s initiative to increase degrees that will workforce development in the cities and towns. He also spoke on the College’s initial investigation into Rhode Island’s urban teacher pipeline, and how the College is rallying students to understand the importance of global partnerships.

Rabia Hos (TESOL) presented on investing in our cultural strength; Sara Sweetman spoke about science and technology applications in the schools, and Julie Coiro described the connection between communications and digital citizenship.

The mayors also took a tour of the IDL (Interactive Digital Learning) classroom.

Arts and Culture

Spring Calendar of Events

The URI Alan Shawn Feinstein Providence Campus Arts and Culture Spring Semester kicked off with a dynamic Black History Month Exhibit, Civil Rights is Equal Rights, featuring the “Icons of the Civil Rights Movement” series by Pamela Chatterton-Purdy and “A Blacker Landscape” series by Jordon Seaberry.
ARETHA! The Premiere of a Musical Performance by Cheryl Albright was presented to a standing room only audience of over 350 people on February 24. Ms. Albright performed a multi-media presentation celebrating the life and music of Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul. At the event, Steven Pennell, the College’s Arts and Culture program coordinator, was awarded citations from the Governor, Mayor of Providence, and Providence City Council, for community outreach and Black History programming.

March is the Women’s History exhibit, Telling Her Story – Creating The Future, March 4-28, featuring more than 150 works in all media from 30 area women artists of all ages and ethnic backgrounds. There will be a Gallery Night Reception March 21 from 5-9pm with performances by OutLoud Theatre.

“My Left Breast”, a play by Susan Miller, will be presented by WomensWork Theatre on March 22, 7:30 pm and on March 23, 2 pm.

April will feature the UCP of Rhode Island ADAPTIVE ARTS Program exhibit April 1-26, with Gallery Night Reception April 18, 5-9 pm.

May will exhibit the PS2019 and Gift of Art to State of Rhode Island with a Gallery Night Reception, performances and recognition ceremony on May 16, 5-9 pm. This annual exhibit features a stunning array of artwork by more than 300 Rhode Island K-12 public and charter school students. The 2019 Gift of Art to the State of Rhode Island from Westerly Public Schools will join the permanent collection of more than 200 works of art in the second floor hallways of the Providence campus.

June will showcase the work of more than 90 URI, RIC and CCRI faculty, students, alumni and retired faculty in our annual State Of The Arts in Rhode Island exhibit June 3-27 2019 with a Gallery Night Reception June 20, 5-9 pm.

All events are free and open to the public.

**STUDENT SPOTLIGHT**

**Lucas Pralle**

After four years in the U.S. Marine Corps, including two tours of duty in Iraq, Lucas Pralle faced an uncertain future.

Like many returning veterans, he didn’t have a clear career path. What he did have was an enormous amount of energy and a strong sense of camaraderie from his time in the military that he wanted to transfer into a meaningful profession.

The Wisconsin native remained in Marine Corps Reserves while enrolled in Edgewood College in Madison Wisconsin to earn a BA degree in English. That gave him the opportunity to travel to China on a cultural exploration trip in his junior year. After graduation in 2013, while still in the Marine Corps Reserves, he interned in Beijing’s Art District.

“My time in Beijing was extremely transformative for me. I was beginning to find my identity outside of the Marine Corps,” he said. After retiring from the Marines, he obtained an International Teaching English as a Foreign Language certification from the University of Washington.

“I then leveraged the connections that I had established while going to Edgewood College to work at an English training center in Suzhou, China. I was there for a year and a half. That’s where I got my first good taste of being a teacher,” he said.

There he met Carolyn Decker, from Massachusetts, who was visiting China as a Watson fellow. As their relationship intensified, Lucas decided to return to the U.S. to be with Carolyn.

“I didn’t know if I could really make it work in the U.S,” he said. “There’s a narrative of what a service member is supposed to be. We’re put in a box. But it doesn’t capture my unique talents and drive.

Lucas joined the Community Care Alliance in Woonsocket, R.I., a nonprofit social services agency that assists those with social, economic and emotional challenges, as an ESL instructor.

“Once I got back into a teaching role, I knew I wanted to get the knowledge and credentials to secure a future in education,” he said.

He began a graduate program in adult education last Fall because, he said, “they made it easy for veterans. Every phone call and question was answered.”

He also enrolled in EDC 278, instructed by Jeff Johnson, a popular course for veteran students that offers in-depth knowledge around best practices in education and student success.

“Until that class, I never spent much time socializing with other veterans,” he said. “Our veteran identity (in the class) is celebrated and embraced.”

Lucas said that his courses in adult education are challenging but that he is impressed by the program. The professors want to know the impact of how their lessons apply in practical application.

“I can learn something in class and use it the next day at my job,” he said.

Working at the community level, Lucas deals with many people who are in crisis or have been failed by the system. His military training has helped with him deal with those situations. But, he said, it is his adult education courses that have made him a better learner and will help him to make a bigger impact on his students.

Through his studies and teaching, he hopes to integrate more technology into the classroom in an engaging and meaningful way. Together with his girlfriend, he has developed a creative...
The study categorizes classroom racial microaggressions into six factors:

Exclusionary classroom dynamic, discomfort around racial/ethnic classroom conversations; racial/ethnic jokes and stereotypes, professor’s negative expectations, lack of positive classroom dynamic, and unsafe classroom learning space for racially/ethnically diverse students

Students who had been the only student of color in a classroom, at some point in their academic career, reported more frequent experiences with classroom racial microaggressions. Female students of color and those majoring in a STEM field also experienced classroom racial micro-aggressions with greater frequency.

Warner’s study also measured relationships between experiences with classroom racial microaggressions and college outcomes, such as intent to transfer, and course failure. The results suggest that negative expectations from course professors and a lack of positive classroom dynamic may lead to greater odds of intent to transfer. Similarly, an unsafe learning space and lack of a positive classroom dynamic may lead to greater odds of course failure among students of color.

The findings offer insight to higher education institutions toward increasing degree completion, and implications for how colleges can work to improve outcomes for students of color by focusing on the classroom experience.

“This work has implications beyond the collegiate experience and is relevant to interpersonal skills necessary to succeed in a global workforce,” Warner said. “Classroom interactions can closely mimic group interactions observed in the workplace.”

KDP Initiates 25 New Students

URI’s Iota Sigma chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, the international education honor society, welcomed 25 new members at the spring initiation ceremony on March 19 in the Beaupre building. Sixty-three students were also initiated at the fall ceremony.

Dr. Rabia Hos, assistant professor of TESOL, delivered the keynote address, “Celebrating Diversity is not enough: Advocating for English Learners.”

Student teachers in elementary and secondary education, early childhood education, and special education received awards: They are: Grace Gleason - elementary education; Sara Straube - secondary education; Kassandra Maragkopolou - early childhood education; Meagan Dunham - masters in special education;

Faculty awards were also presented. Dr. Peter Adamy, associate professor of education, received the science award, Merry Caswell, adjunct professor, was given the teaching award, and Dr. Kaitlin Donahue, principal of Hamilton Elementary School in North Kingstown, was the recipient of the chapter’s service and toil award.

Prior to the candlelight induction ceremony, chapter counselor Dr. Susan Trostle Brand, lit candles in memory of her husband, Dr. Stephen Brand (past chapter treasurer) and the chapter’s previous counselor, Dr. Marguerite J. Bumpus, who passed away in February.

The Iota Sigma chapter is celebrating its 57th year. Kappa Delta Pi honor society is now in its 109th year nationally.