

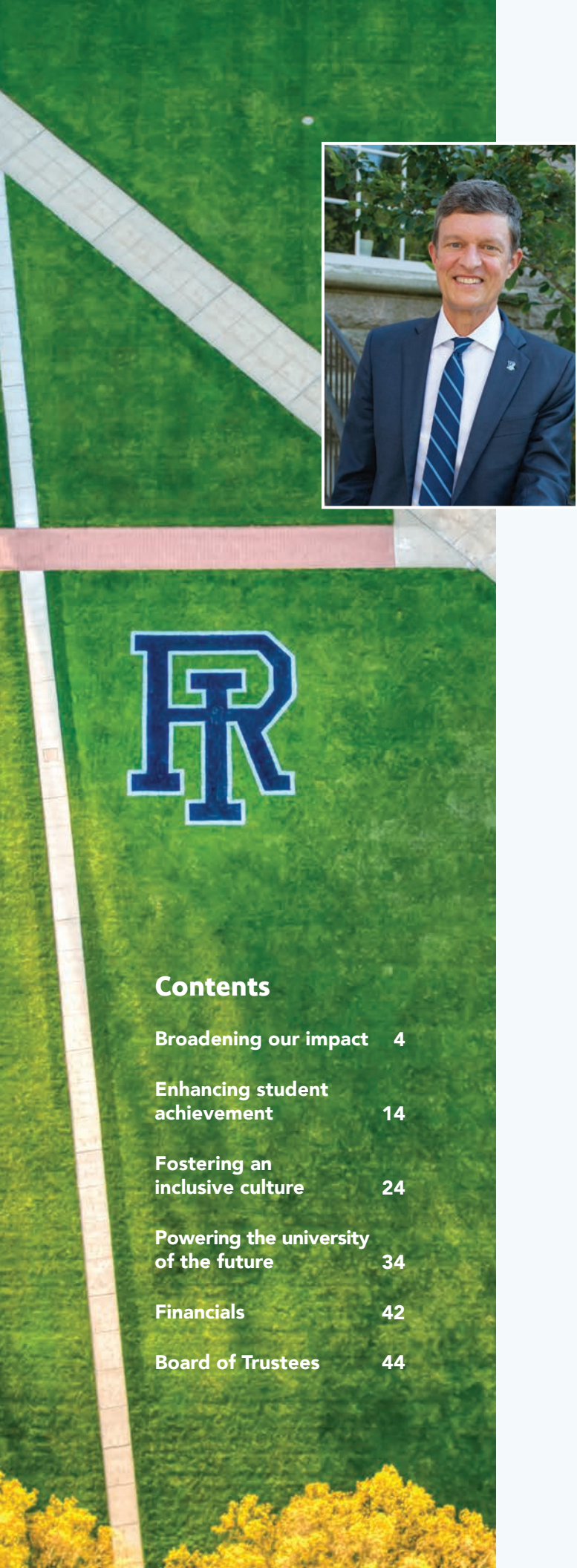


THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND

# Focus Forward

PRESIDENT'S  
REPORT 2025





Letter from the President



This has been another remarkable year for the University of Rhode Island. Everywhere I go—on campus, in our community, across the state, and beyond—I meet people who are proud of URI and excited about our future. We’ve celebrated national recognition, record-breaking applications, historic gifts, and championship seasons.

At the same time, we’ve faced headwinds. Shifts in federal policies on student aid and research funding have created uncertainty across higher education, but they have also sharpened our focus on the importance of our mission. Guided by *Focus URI*, our 10-year strategic plan, we continue to move forward with purpose, and the highlights in this report reflect the significant progress we have made across each of our four strategic priorities.

BROADENING OUR IMPACT

Earlier this year, when we earned Carnegie R1 status, we joined the nation’s top tier of research universities. This recognition has expanded our opportunities and affirmed decades of important work by our researchers. Our faculty advanced discoveries in quantum science, ocean engineering, pharmacy, behavioral health, and more, positioning Rhode Island as a hub for next-generation technologies and statewide responses to the opioid epidemic.

Major capital projects are also strengthening our research infrastructure. Construction on the Ocean Robotics Laboratory at the Narragansett Bay Campus is well underway, and design has begun on the new Biomedical Sciences Building, thanks to voter approval of the \$87.5 million bond referendum. Planning is advancing on phase II of the Bay Campus, and the transformative new Fine Arts Center is taking shape in Kingston. These investments will continue to expand Rhode Island’s role in the blue economy, the life sciences, and the arts, while creating new pathways for the community into our campuses.

URI also played a leading role in a Rhode Island state Senate special commission to explore establishing a medical school at the University, which will culminate in a comprehensive feasibility report that outlines how a public medical school at URI could address physician shortages, improve health outcomes, and drive long-term economic impact. This work aligns our research and workforce strengths with a pressing statewide need and sets the stage for transformational public-private partnerships.

Beyond Rhode Island, URI continues to have a place in global conversations. From our partnership

with Technische Universität Braunschweig in Germany to groundbreaking human rights reporting through the GlobalRights Project, our reach extends far beyond our borders, providing our community with opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue about pressing world issues.

ENHANCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

At the center of our mission are our students. URI welcomed more than 17,000 students this year, including 3,100 first-years and 500 transfers. Over 30% are the first in their families to attend college—a powerful reflection of our commitment to access. Applications reached an all-time high for fall 2025, evidence of our growing reputation and competitiveness among peers, and our graduates remain highly sought-after, with more than 90% employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation.

This was also a year of extraordinary student achievement. We celebrated the 5,000th graduate of our Talent Development program and welcomed the inaugural class of Schilling Scholars, supported by the largest gift in URI history. Students earned Fulbright and Boren scholarships, won national championships in pharmacy competitions, and excelled in marine science and business case competitions. More students than ever engaged in experiential learning—from faculty-mentored research and clinical placements to real-world business and engineering projects—that directly enhance postgraduate outcomes.

And our student-athletes delivered historic seasons. Football won the Coastal Athletic Association conference and reached the playoffs for the first time in nearly four decades. Baseball won the Atlantic 10 Conference and earned an NCAA tournament bid, the men’s track and field team won its fifth-straight Atlantic 10 indoor track and field championship, and women’s rowing claimed its 11th Atlantic 10 title. These achievements not only strengthen Rhody pride, they bring important national visibility to the University.

FOSTERING AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE

URI’s progress has always been powered by its people. This year, we expanded financial aid to a record \$150 million, honored staff and faculty with new service awards, and elevated students, faculty, and alumni through our Inclusive Excellence Awards. We also welcomed Becky Hill as our inaugural vice president for human resources, who, together with our Office of Community, Equity and Diversity, is building a culture of appreciation, transparency, and inclusion.

We continued to expand opportunity through programs such as MakerspaceURI outreach and new

school partnerships that brought hands-on learning to young people from underserved communities. Inclusion and belonging remain essential to retention, satisfaction, and student success, and we are listening closely to our students, who are asking for spaces and programs that foster deeper and more meaningful connections.

POWERING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE

Building on our momentum also means preparing for what’s next. This year, we advanced our new budget model, which is improving transparency and aligning resources more closely with strategic priorities. We also continued to invest in our physical campus. The Comprehensive Campus Plan—with input from hundreds of community voices—is nearing completion and will guide the next two decades of physical growth. Planning is advancing on athletics and recreation facilities with historic state support, and we launched URI’s first public-private partnership to deliver new undergraduate and graduate housing.

We remain grateful to our elected state officials who have supported this tremendous growth, while also deepening our philanthropic efforts to accelerate our progress. The \$65 million Schilling Scholars gift represents a transformational investment in our students. Our Day of Giving saw record new donor participation and the inaugural Rhody Athletics Challenge engaged over 1,700 donors, including more than 600 first-time athletic supporters. These results reflect growing pride in URI’s direction and provide resources to keep our programs strong.

LOOKING AHEAD

Our R1 status, national rankings, and record enrollment all signal a university on the rise, but challenges will require us to stay nimble and innovative. We must continue to focus on delivering world-class education, preparing for future ambitions, and ensuring that our facilities help us conduct leading research and cultivate a stronger people-centered culture.

We can do this, and this past year is proof. Now is the time to build on our momentum, accelerate where we have strength, and lead with purpose. Our responsibility to our students, our state, and the greater good remains our greatest calling—and our greatest opportunity.

*Marc Parlange*

Marc B. Parlange  
President, University of Rhode Island

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## R1 status: Embarking on a new era

Amid blue and white balloons and banners, URI faculty, staff, and students joined university leaders, R.I. Gov. Dan McKee, and state lawmakers, including Sen. Alana DiMario, and Reps. Kathy Fogarty, Carol McEntee, and Teresa Tanzi, in the University's Memorial Union earlier this year to celebrate the official announcement that URI had achieved R1 designation in the latest Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

The recognition reflects URI's broad impact and evolution into a world-class hub for research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and public scholarship.

The Carnegie Classification is widely recognized as a standard for evaluating institutions based on research activity. The R1 designation signifies that URI has achieved the highest level of research activity, measured by the number of doctoral degrees awarded and the amount of spending on research and development. To earn the designation, institutions must grant at least 70 doctoral degrees per year and spend more than \$50 million annually on research.

In 2023, the U.S. Department of Education counted 3,896 degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States. The designation places URI among 187 R1 institutions—the top 4.8% of degree-granting postsecondary institutions nationally. URI is one of only two Rhode Island universities to earn the R1 distinction.

"This milestone is not just about rankings," said President Marc Parlange. "It's about impact. We are a powerhouse for research and education, fueling discoveries that benefit not just our students and faculty but Rhode Island, the nation, and the world."

Parlange added that the R1 classification puts URI on the map, enhancing the value of a URI degree, while garnering recognition locally, nationally, and internationally. But the work is far from over.

"Public universities like ours have a unique responsibility—and we're rising to the challenge," he said. "While this is a moment to celebrate, it is also a call to action. Achieving R1 is not the finish line—it's the beginning of a new era at URI."

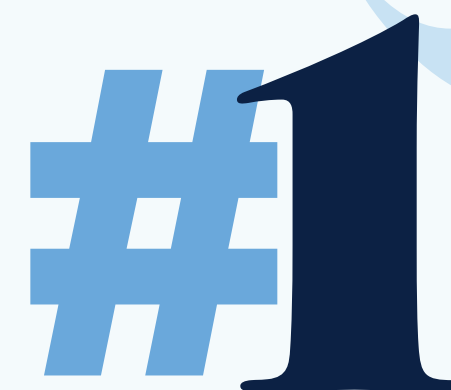
## Leading in student outcomes and student success

URI is ranked the No. 1 public university in New England and the 35th-best public university nationally in the WSJ/College Pulse 2025 Best Colleges in the U.S. ranking released by *The Wall Street Journal*. The WSJ/College Pulse 2025 Best Colleges in the U.S. ranking rates the top 500 universities in the country. URI ranks 12th among public flagship universities nationwide, and 84th out of 500 among all ranked universities—15 spots ahead of the next closest New England public university.

The ranking considers how well colleges prepare students for career and financial success, as well as overall student satisfaction, providing a comprehensive measure of schools excelling in these areas and responding to concerns about the rising cost of college tuition.

"URI makes a difference in people's lives, and that's what this ranking recognizes. We are committed to providing broad access to a high-quality academic experience and to ensuring that students have the support and resources they need to succeed. And we are incredibly proud of the success and impact of our graduates, who are making

Interest in the state's flagship research university reached an all-time high in 2024–25. URI received a record 26,900 first-year undergraduate applications for the fall 2024 semester.



**Public University  
in New England**

—*The Wall Street Journal*

a real difference throughout Rhode Island and around the globe," said President Marc Parlange.

On average, more than 90% of URI graduates are employed or pursuing graduate studies within six months of their graduation, according to a survey of recent graduates.

The ranking scores colleges based on student outcomes (70%), learning environment (20%), and diversity (10%). Student outcomes include salary impact, years to pay off net price, and graduation rate impact.



STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 1

# Broadening our impact

The University of Rhode Island will serve as a national model for the role a flagship public research university can play in driving transformative change for the betterment of its state and the global human condition.



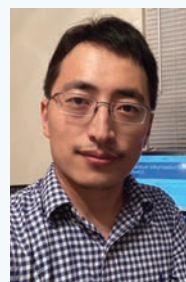




## Growing quantum research



Two URI physics professors were awarded National Science Foundation grants to grow quantum research at institutions of higher education across the U.S.



The two research projects, by URI assistant professors Vanita Srinivasa and Wenchao Ge, are among only 23 projects awarded nationally this year to advance knowledge in areas such as quantum computing, sensors, and materials. The grants are part of the \$39 million NSF Expanding Capacity in Quantum Information

Science and Engineering (ExpandQISE) Program. “Quantum information science and engineering promise to transform the very landscape of fundamental scientific knowledge and technological capabilities,” said Srinivasa, director of URI’s Quantum Information Science program.

“This program will give us a great boost in terms of support and attracting students and researchers to URI,” added Ge. “We received two grants from the NSF program, but I think the impact will be greater than the sum of the funding.”

The grant program supports research, training, and education by developing partnerships between established and up-and-coming quantum information science and engineering programs at research institutions.

“The granting of these awards clearly indicates that URI holds the potential to become a regional hub for quantum efforts both in education and research,” said Department of Physics chair Leonard Kahn.

URI’s grants will foster collaboration with other respected institutions involved in quantum research, Kahn said. They will also support the growth of graduate student enrollment

in quantum information science at URI because of the availability of additional research assistantships.

“The impact of these grants on our program will be felt for many years and will change our trajectory,” Kahn said.

## Combating the opioid epidemic

Two URI professors will help combat the state’s ongoing opioid epidemic as the new leaders of the Community Engaged Research Core of Rhode Island Hospital’s Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) on Opioids and Overdose.

In December, URI psychology associate professor Nicole Weiss and pharmacy clinical professor Jeffrey Bratberg were named director and deputy director of the organization, which brings together leaders from institutions across Rhode Island to support research needed to treat and prevent opioid misuse and overdose. The organization aims to help researchers recruit and retain study participants and promote community engagement, leading to more robust and rigorous research.

Weiss, director of the STRESS Lab in URI’s Department of Psychology, studies the co-occurrence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance use disorder. She is developing a mobile app to help individuals with PTSD who are transitioning out of residential opioid use disorder treatment.

Bratberg studies the role of community pharmacists in the opioid epidemic, advocating for their expanded role in medication access,



public health promotion, and policy change through his professorship and clinical practice site at the Rhode Island Department of Health. He recently coauthored a national report calling on the federal Drug Enforcement Administration and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to simplify regulations to allow pharmacies to dispense methadone to people seeking treatment for opioid use disorder.





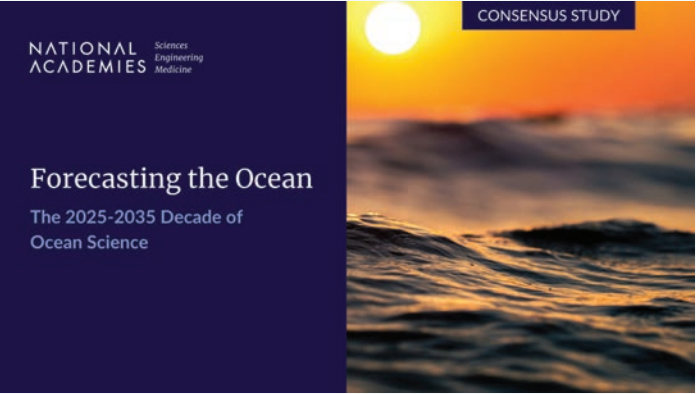
# Training the next generation of health care workers

The URI College of Nursing’s simulation education program offers students hands-on experience in a safe environment without risk to patient safety. It enhances critical thinking, teamwork, and communication skills, helping prepare future nurses to provide excellent patient care.

The program received international recognition for its success in training the next generation of health care workers, earning accreditation for the next five years from the Society for Simulation in Healthcare, which aims to improve performance and reduce errors in patient care through the use of simulation. Established in 2004 by doctors and nurses using simulation for education,

testing, and research in health care, the society fosters the improvement and application of such programs, including human patient simulators, virtual reality, and standardized patients.

“This is the gold standard for simulation evaluation,” said Jessica Skaltis, simulation coordinator for the college. “Having this accreditation helps us recruit students and faculty members. It allows for safe, repetitive practice, so when students find themselves in a real situation, it’s almost a reflex—giving them a foundation to draw from, a sort of muscle memory so they’ll be able to react in a real-world situation because they’ve had exposure to it.”



A report produced by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine outlines a critical need to invest in ocean science research, infrastructure, and workforce development to meet national and global challenges.

# Making the case for investing in ocean science

Five researchers with ties to URI contributed to a report that emphasized the vital need for the United States to invest in ocean science research, infrastructure, and workforce development to meet national and global challenges over the next decade, or risk being left behind.

The report, titled *Forecasting the Ocean: The 2025–2035 Decade of Ocean Science*, was published by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in February. It makes the case that investing in ocean science research and upgrading and replacing infrastructure that supports that research is critical for national security, economic competitiveness and prosperity, environmental stewardship, and the well-being of humans and the ecosystems on which they depend.

The 23 members of the committee that authored the report represent some of the leading

research universities and organizations across the United States.

Those with connections to URI included committee cochair James Yoder, URI professor emeritus of oceanography, M.S. ’74, Ph.D. ’79, and dean emeritus of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution; Carlos Garcia-Quijano, URI professor with a joint appointment in anthropology and marine affairs; S. Bradley Moran, former oceanography professor at URI (1993–2016) and current dean of the University of Alaska Fairbanks College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences; James Zachos, professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, who earned his Ph.D. in oceanography at URI in 1988; and Richard Murray, senior scientist emeritus and former deputy director and vice president for science and engineering at Woods Hole, who was a postdoctoral scholar at URI’s Graduate School of Oceanography from 1991 to 1992.



# Developing tomorrow's skilled workforce

URI and the University of Connecticut were awarded a joint five-year contract from General Dynamics Electric Boat to provide regional workforce development support to the U.S. Navy's Maritime Industrial Base Program. The award will support ongoing activities and drastically expand the work of the UConn/URI Navy STEM Coalition, which, since 2017, has developed a K-16 pipeline across southern New England to encourage both the skilled trades and engineering careers needed to build submarines.

Established under the leadership of professors David Taggart at URI and Michael Accorsi at UConn with funding from the Office of Naval Research, the program is now led by professors Valerie Maier-Sperdelozzi at URI and Alexandra Hain at UConn and is funded by a grant

from the U.S. Department of Defense STEM National Defense Education Program.

In the past three years, the coalition has increased its regional presence, engaging more than 13,000 students in the fundamentals of naval science and engineering, such as buoyancy, additive manufacturing, and the core trades essential to submarine production. The coalition has visited more than 75 regional classrooms, conducted outreach events nationwide, and trained dozens of teachers through programs ranging from day-long workshops to yearlong residencies.

The new contract will enable the coalition to increase activities in the region, including the development of new summer programs at URI and UConn for K-12 students, undergraduate summer researchers, and preservice teachers.

# Filling a skilled labor shortfall in the life sciences industry

URI's College of Pharmacy and its Pharmaceutical Development Institute (PDI) hosted a Biotech Boot Camp—a two-week intensive program offering in-depth, hands-on training for Rhode Islanders interested in biotechnology careers.

A partnership with RI Bio, Skills for Rhode Island's Future, and the state Department of Labor and Training, the goal of the DLT-funded program is to help fill a shortfall in skilled labor for life sciences, biotechnology, and biopharmaceutical firms around the state and the region.

In addition to gaining marketable skills in biotechnology, boot camp participants attend a job fair with interested companies and have access to resumé-writing and interview-preparation workshops that can help them secure entry-level positions in biotech, pharmaceutical, and health care fields. The boot camp is part of the PDI's mission to increase innovation opportunities for biotechnology and biopharmaceutical ventures in Rhode Island.



# Broadening STEM participation, strengthening the state research ecosystem

URI is leading an \$8 million effort to strengthen science and technology efforts across Rhode Island.

The Rhode Island Network for Excellence in Science and Technology (RI-NEST)—a partnership between URI, the Narragansett Indian Tribe, Brown University, Rhode Island College, Rhode Island School of Design, and Roger Williams University—will work to bolster the state's research competitiveness, growing the state's science and technology ecosystem as well as supporting economic growth.

RI-NEST comprises four capacity-building themes: administration, workforce development, partnerships, and science communication. RI-NEST will facilitate greater collaboration between partner institutions and local nonprofit and industry organizations to strengthen workforce development programming, broaden STEM-career pathways, and encourage and support research and entrepreneurship.





# Building international collaboration

With over 100 international partnerships and agreements, URI’s influence extends well beyond the Northeast—across the Atlantic and around the world. Among these collaborations, one of the most enduring and consequential is URI’s partnership with Technische Universität Braunschweig in Germany.

Together, URI and TU Braunschweig have built one of the most enduring and impactful academic partnerships in higher education. What began as a pioneering collaboration has grown into a vibrant, multidisciplinary alliance spanning research, teaching, and cultural exchange.

Rooted in URI’s Colleges of Engineering and Arts and Sciences through the International Engineering Program, the partnership also includes the Colleges of Pharmacy, Business, Education, and the Library Innovation Labs.

“This partnership really demonstrates a relationship that’s based on intentionality and stewardship, representing the core curricular components at each university,” said Kristin Johnson, vice provost for global initiatives.

Since its inception three decades ago, nearly a thousand students have participated in the TU Braunschweig-URI exchange.

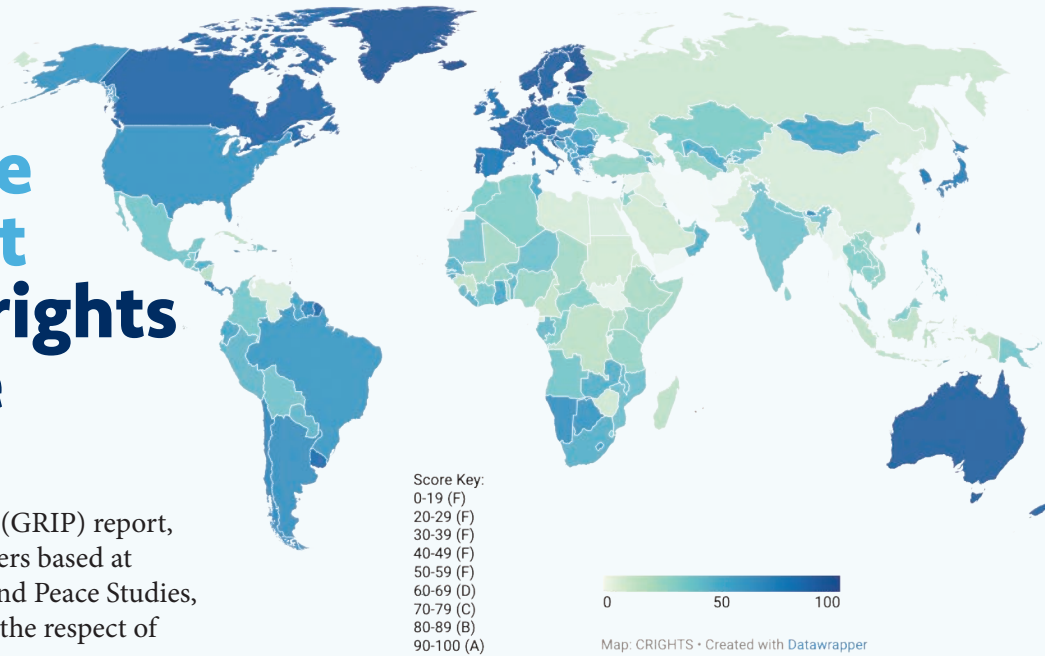
# Leading the assessment of human rights worldwide

The 2024 Global Rights Project (GRIP) report, produced by a team of researchers based at URI’s Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies, finds an alarming disregard for the respect of human rights around the globe.

Launched in 2023, the GRIP report draws on the world’s largest quantitative human rights dataset—the CIRIGHTS Data Project—to grade each of the world’s countries on a 100-point scale. Report grades are based on the extent to which countries respect a suite of 25 individual human rights, including physical integrity rights, such as freedom from torture or political imprisonment; empowerment rights, such as freedom of speech and assembly; worker rights, such as the right to unionize and freedom from child labor; and justice rights, such as the right to a fair trial.

In its 2024 report card, 62% of the world’s 195 countries receive an F (scores from 0 to 59) for their human rights practices, while just 18% earned between an A and a B (scores between 80-100). The global median score was 52, up two points from the 2023 report.

“The global rise in democratic backsliding, inequality, and digital repression make me pessimistic about the future of human rights,” said Skip Mark, URI assistant professor of political science and director of the Center for Non-violence and Peace Studies. “The CIRIGHTS project shows that global respect has declined over the past decade. Despite growth in human rights law, institutions, NGOs, and technology to document and disseminate information about human rights, things are getting worse.”



**INSPIRING FUTURE SCIENTISTS**

PBS KIDS’ Molly of Denali, flanked by Ari the Bat at left and Elinor at right, greets Hazel Flynn, 4, of Greenville, R.I. Molly, Ari, and Elinor were at URI’s DeChristofaro Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences in May as part of a celebration of the National Science Foundation’s 75th anniversary. The event, “Inspiring Future Scientists through Media,” celebrated the collaboration between the NSF and PBS KIDS.



STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 2

# Enhancing student achievement

By fostering an active and engaged learning environment, the University of Rhode Island will be a community where students are empowered to lead their own academic journey with access to resources and support that places value on inclusion, well-being, and holistic development.







## Providing life-changing scholarships

Last fall, URI announced an extraordinary \$65 million gift that will support scholarships for high-achieving students. The gift—the largest in the University’s history—is from the estate of the late Helen Izzi Schilling, a 1954 URI graduate.

The result of a commitment made with her late husband to include URI in their will, the gift established the Helen Izzi Schilling ’54 and Francis Schilling Scholars Program, providing up to \$20,000 per year for four years to high-achieving undergraduate students majoring in a science, technology, engineering, or math field. The scholarship also supports students with leadership development and career guidance.

“This transformational gift shows that alumni believe in our University and in our students,” said President Marc B. Parlange. “We

are incredibly grateful for the Schillings’ support of our mission and our students. URI has never been in a better place, due, in no small measure, to our remarkable community—the students, faculty, and staff across our campuses and the extraordinary alumni who carry their URI experience with them wherever they go.”

The support adds to the momentum generated by URI’s recently completed comprehensive campaign, which exceeded its goal of \$300 million for priorities across the University and raised over \$73 million for financial aid.

## Earning national recognition in nursing education

URI’s College of Nursing undergraduate program is once again ranked among the nation’s best, soaring into the top 8% of nursing colleges in the country, according to a *U.S. News & World Report* ranking.

The college’s B.S. in nursing program is tied at No. 54 among 686 ranked colleges in the country, according to the rankings. The college has made an impressive rise in the rankings, climbing from No. 96 just three years ago, the first year the publication ranked undergraduate programs, to No. 67 the last two years.

*U.S. News & World Report* surveyed deans and senior faculty members at each of the 686 colleges that qualified for the list. The rankings are determined by the average of scores received from surveys of top officials at nursing schools or departments.

# 52

**52 URI students** have received Boren Awards since the program’s inception in 1991.

## Preparing students for global success

Four URI students—all members of the University’s Chinese Language Flagship Program—will spend the 2025–26 academic year studying in Taiwan as recipients of David L. Boren Scholarships.

Boren Scholarships are among the most competitive study-abroad awards offered to U.S. college students. The National Security Education Program, a federal initiative to expand the pool of U.S. citizens with foreign language and international skills in world regions critical to U.S. interests, sponsors the awards. Recipients agree to work for the federal government for at least one year after graduation.

This year’s URI recipients—Priyanka Shanker of Napa, Calif.; Annie Liang of Westerly, R.I.; Anashelly Herrera of Woonsocket, R.I.; and Carolyn Rohr of Clifton, Va.—bring URI’s total number of Boren Scholars to 52 since the program’s inception. The four, who major in Chinese along with a second major, will spend the next academic year in Taiwan as part of the Chinese Flagship Program’s capstone year abroad.

URI’s Chinese Language Flagship Program combines intensive instruction in Mandarin Chinese and Chinese culture with two summer immersion sessions and a yearlong capstone trip to help students reach professional proficiency in a language considered exceptionally difficult to learn for English speakers.



# Winning Fulbright Awards



This year, a recent URI graduate and two other young alumni were selected for Fulbright U.S. Student Program Awards. Scholars selected by the U.S. Department of State and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board are among the best and brightest in their respective fields and have opportunities to conduct research, study, or teach English overseas. Joceline Rodrigues '25 of Norwich, Conn., and Zack Harden '24 of Newport, R.I., were selected for Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Awards, and Alyssa Botelho '21 of Fairhaven, Mass., was awarded the Fulbright/Azores Government Open Study/Research Award.

From left: Botelho, Rodrigues, and Harden

# Earning prestigious marine science awards

Eleni Mouyos, a URI sophomore from Windham, N.H., who is double-majoring in marine biology and ocean engineering, was awarded a 2025 Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The most prestigious scholarship awarded to undergraduates in marine sciences, the Hollings Scholarship program is designed to increase undergraduate training in oceanic and atmospheric science, foster public support of stewardship of the ocean and atmosphere, and recruit and prepare students for public service at NOAA and other natural resource agencies.

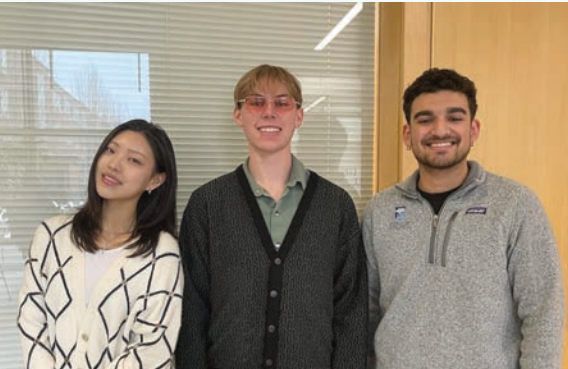
“This is an exciting opportunity to collaborate with other students and work alongside experi-

enced NOAA professionals and scientists,” Mouyos said. “I am looking forward to the immersive experience working at a NOAA facility and the valuable skills I will learn along the way.”

Mouyos’ award marks the 17th-straight year that URI students have been named Hollings Scholars. Since the inception of the Hollings program in 2005, URI students have been awarded 49 scholarships; 16 URI students have received this prestigious scholarship in the past four years.



# Setting a national standard in student pharmacy success



From left: Hailey Joo, J.T. Berard-Moore, and Sami Gangi

URI College of Pharmacy students continue to impress at the national level, beating out 79 other colleges of pharmacy to win first place in the 2025 National Clinical Research Challenge of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy.

The latest victory comes on the heels of another major national win in the Clinical Skills Competition at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists national conference in December, marking the first time a single school has held both championships of the nation’s top student pharmacy competitions in one academic year.

# Solving supply chain problems—sustainably



Two URI seniors in the College of Business supply chain management program finished among the top teams in a fall 2024 global sustainability case competition.

Sam Andres of West Warwick, R.I., and Jordan O’Connor of Matamoras, Pa., teamed

with two students from the Kuwait University Business School to reach the finals of the Global Sustainability Supply Chain Student Competition, which is sponsored by the United Nations Group of Friends for Sustainable Transport.

The competition tested the supply chain skills of college students from around the globe in several team categories. A total of 84 teams from 18 countries were tasked with solving real-world sustainability problems faced by international companies.

Sixteen URI College of Business students, split into eight teams, took part in the competition paired with students from eight countries. Five of the eight URI teams reached the semifinals, with Andres and O’Connor capturing second place in the paired teams category.





## Building Rhode Island's biotech workforce

The Rhode Island IDEa Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (RI-INBRE) Program received a \$1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to continue training future leaders in the region's biomedical and biotechnology industries.

RI-INBRE's Workforce Development and Training Program was created in 2023 to provide hands-on biomedical training for students in the program's well-equipped research facility on URI's Kingston Campus. The program's mission is to provide trainees with valuable biotech skills, and to give those trainees a leg up in the industry once they graduate.

"It's a very intensive program. Students participate in project work by choosing a major professor during the summer and working in their lab. They learn techniques by carrying out the projects. The people who hire these students like to see that kind of additional experience," said Bongsup Cho, director of RI-INBRE and professor of pharmacy at URI.

The advanced facilities in URI's College of Pharmacy and RI-INBRE's lab allow rising juniors and seniors to learn hands-on with professional equipment. Students travel to URI from one of the RI-INBRE participating schools—which include URI, Brown University,

Bryant University, Rhode Island College, Providence College, Johnson & Wales University, Roger Williams University, Salve Regina University, Community College of Rhode Island, and New England Institute of Technology.

RI-INBRE is a cornerstone in building Rhode Island's biomedical research capacity. Over the past 24 years, it has expanded its scope from basic biology, chemistry, and pharmaceutical sciences to engineering, data science, and health sciences. This expansion has increased research funding, bringing more than \$100 million for biomedical research capacity to Rhode Island.

## Fostering young researchers

New URI grad Lindsey Reimels, a marine biology major and whale researcher, is the latest URI student to be awarded a prestigious National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship.

The fellowship recognizes and supports outstanding students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines pursuing research-based advanced degrees in the United States.

The NSF instituted the fellowship in 1952, with the goal of encouraging scientific research and ensuring comprehensive research programs for students in the U.S. Since then, the NSF has funded more than 46,500 fellowships. Many former graduate fellows have gone on to become Nobel laureates and members of the National Academy of Sciences.

Reimels plans to use her NSF fellowship to pursue a Ph.D. in ecological sciences, focusing on the relationship between baleen whales and microplastics—a topic she studied at URI.

Reimels is one of several dozen URI students to be selected for the NSF program in the last decade.

## Providing students real-world investment experience



A competitive course in URI's College of Business offers students real-world experience in investing and buying stocks.

Officially listed as BUS 422/423, the course is widely known as the Ram Fund. Started in 2001 with an investment of \$100,000 from the URI Foundation, the fund, managed by students in the course, has grown to a portfolio of more than \$920,000.

Unlike popular retail trading platforms, the Ram Fund demands a far more rigorous approach. Students are divided into five groups. Each group is assigned a specific sector to research. Within each group, members collaborate to identify and evaluate a potential investment. Once a company is selected, the team must formally pitch it to the rest of the

class. Shares aren't purchased unless most of the class is on board.

"There are really two purposes, experiential learning and then getting a return, because it's real money," says Michael Ice, retired URI associate teaching professor of finance, who advised the class along with executive-in-residence for the College of Business, Deborah Imondi. "Students need to be competent, because it's a whole different ball game when you have a fiduciary responsibility and are dealing with someone else's money."

The portfolio currently comprises about 30 distinct securities—to help mitigate risk. While the Ram Fund inevitably experiences fluctuations, real-world exposure is the most valuable takeaway that students gain.



## CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES

During festive Commencement ceremonies in December 2024 and May 2025, the University of Rhode Island celebrated the outstanding achievements of approximately 4,000 undergraduate and graduate degree candidates along with their family, friends, and the greater URI community.



# Building Rhody pride



## FOOTBALL

2024 was a historic season for Rhode Island football. The Rams rewrote the program’s record book, reaching the playoffs—and winning their first playoff game—in 39 years.

While winning the Coastal Athletic Association conference title and qualifying for the NCAA Division I playoffs, URI compiled its most wins (11) in a season in program history. The Rams also were undefeated at Meade Stadium for the first time since 1985. And for the first time, they had a 1,000-yard rusher (Malik Grant) and 1,000-yard receiver (Marquis Buchanan) in the same season.

Coach Jim Fleming, in his 11th season, was selected the Division I Coach of the Year by the New England Football Writers, and linebacker A.J. Pena and Buchanan were named All-Americans—first and second team, respectively.

## MEN’S TRACK AND FIELD

In the 2025 indoor season, the men’s track and field team captured its fifth-straight Atlantic 10 indoor championship—and just missed capturing its fifth-straight A-10 outdoor title, finishing second to George Mason by a mere 1.5 points. At the conference indoor championship, Matt Santy took the gold in both the high jump and long jump. A week after winning the conference indoor crown, the Rams won their seventh-straight indoor New England title and swept the postseason by taking the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America (IC4A) indoor championship a day later.



## WOMEN’S ROWING

In May, Rhode Island women’s rowing claimed its 11th Atlantic 10 title—its second in a row—when the Varsity 8+ boat captured its race by a three-second margin. With the championship, the team was one of just three teams in the nation to repeat as automatic bid qualifiers for the NCAA Women’s Rowing Championship. Eight URI rowers received national scholar-athlete recognition from the Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association.

offensive categories, was named an All-American by several organizations. Just weeks after the season ended, DePino was drafted by the Chicago White Sox in the Major League Baseball draft, and teammate Eric Genter signed a contract with the New York Yankees.

## BASEBALL

URI baseball turned in an exciting season, finishing with an automatic bid to the NCAA Championship. The Rams racked up 38 victories over the 2025 season and swept the Atlantic 10 playoffs for the team’s third conference crown. Senior third baseman Anthony DePino, who finished in the top 20 in the nation in several

## WOMEN’S LACROSSE

In its inaugural Division I season, women’s lacrosse turned in an exciting 8-8 season and just narrowly missed the conference playoffs, setting a solid foundation for a budding program. Five team members were recognized with postseason conference accolades. Redshirt first-year Ram Caralie Basuel was named the conference’s Rookie of the Year; she was joined on the All-Rookie Team by fellow Rams Calli Dunn, Brinley Myers, and MJ Timpanaro.



STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 3

# Fostering an inclusive culture

The University of Rhode Island will be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community—a vibrant, integrated university that celebrates the uniqueness of its members and fosters a culture of valuing people, excellence, and giving back.







## Celebrating a TD program milestone

Commencement 2025 marked a milestone for URI's Talent Development program—the graduation of the 5,000th TD scholar since the program's start in 1968.

From that first class of 13 students to the 1,000 current TD scholars and more than 5,000 alumni, TD is a proud community of accomplished individuals with significant impact in the state, across the nation, and around the world.

"I wouldn't be here without TD," said Milan Gil, a communications major and the first college graduate in his family. "Financially, I couldn't afford college, and TD provided a really good support system. My advisor checked up on me a lot to make sure I stayed focused; he was really involved in my academic career."

Strategic Priority 3: Fostering an inclusive culture



## Strengthening commitment to inclusive excellence

Yahaira "Jay" Placencia, a founding member of the URI Board of Trustees, was honored with the Inclusive Excellence Lifetime Achievement Award during the University's annual Inclusive Excellence Awards in April.

Placencia '01, a senior vice president for Bank of America, is focused on addressing the needs of small business owners, entrepreneurs, and nonprofit organizations, and is the executive sponsor of the Hispanic/Latino Organization for Leadership and Advancement at Bank of America.

The Inclusive Excellence Awards recognize students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of the University who are committed to demonstrating and promoting inclusion at URI in the areas of community leadership, academic excellence, and service.

Among those honored in the spring ceremony were John Carl Cruz and Shirley Consuegra for staff/administrative excellence; Joseph Nardolillo for faculty excellence; Britny Brown for faculty excellence in teaching; Nina Schiarizzi-Tobin for staff/administration excellence; the Black Student Union for student organization excellence; Meilin Quiroa Reyes for undergraduate student excellence; and Samuel Filiaggi for graduate student excellence.

"Inclusion IS excellence," said Markeisha Miner, URI vice president for community, equity and diversity. "We simply cannot be excellent without the contributions of each community member."

PHOTOS: CATHERINE SCOTT, URI PHOTO

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# Helping students meet financial challenges

The Donald P. and Elaine M. Hayden Foundation established a \$750,000 scholarship to help URI students experiencing financial hardship. Since then, the scholarship has helped 197 students—71% of whom are first-generation college students—remain in school.

The scholarship program, which provides \$250,000 annually for three years, is matched by the University, expanding URI's resources to help students experiencing financial obstacles.

"Being able to support students when they face unexpected challenges often makes the

difference for them staying in school and completing their degrees," said Dean Libutti, associate vice president for enrollment management and student success.

"We are excited to see the impact that the Hayden Student Success Scholarship has had," said George Panichas, executive director of the Hayden Foundation. "When we first met with URI administrators and heard about the need, we recognized that this was exactly the type of initiative that the Haydens want to support with their foundation."

# Designing courses that promote real learning

Personal finance courses are intended to help college students manage their finances after college. But such courses can be challenging, especially for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who may have limited financial literacy. URI human development and family science professor Jing Jian Xiao came up with a novel approach to help students feel more

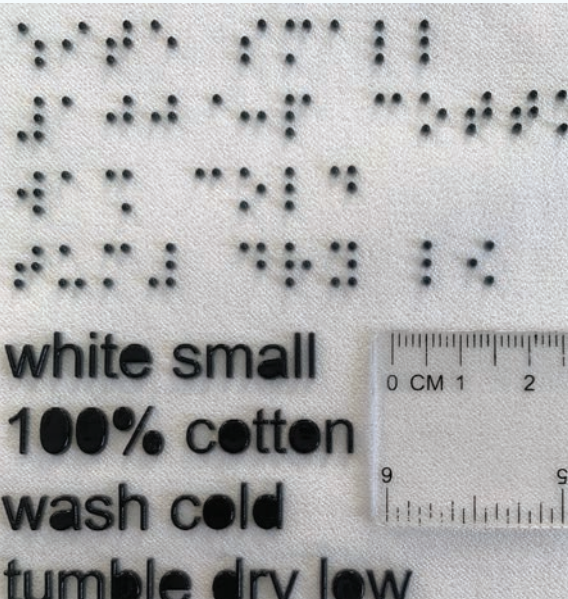


comfortable and increase their chance of success in his personal finance course.

Xiao's approach is inspired by a workshop taught by former URI biology professor Bryan Dewsbury. Rather than drawing on traditional, prepared case studies,

Xiao asks students to create their own based on personal experience. The exercise helps students grasp personal finance concepts by bridging classroom teachings with real-life applications.

An article summarizing the course's success was selected as the *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal's* best paper in the subject of personal finance and consumer economics for 2024.



## MAKING ACCESSIBILITY POSSIBLE

According to the National Institutes of Health, 1.1 billion people globally suffer from some form of visual impairment. This includes a spectrum of those with total blindness and other forms of severe impairment.

"Nothing has changed for visually impaired shoppers in the last 50 years except for assistive tools," said Izabela Ciesielska-Wrobel, assistant professor of textiles, fashion merchandising and design in URI's College of Business. "But when they have to go alone to buy a piece of clothing, that's a challenge."

She is exploring how 3D polyjet printing technology can be used to create tactile braille labels for clothing, potentially transforming the shopping experience for those with a visual impairment and blindness.





# Expanding access through community partnerships

Backed by a state grant, MakerspaceURI is opening its doors to local high school students from the Jonnycake Youth Center in South Kingstown R.I., in a program intended to teach new skills and inspire a love for learning. In the spring, about a dozen teenagers from the center brought their creative spirit to MakerspaceURI, one of six innovation labs in URI's Robert L. Carothers Library and Learning Commons.

URI students and staff taught the teens how to custom design and fabricate T-shirts, hats, bags, buttons, and key chains using such technology and equipment as graphic design software, embroidery machines, heat presses, vinyl cutters, laser engravers, 3D printers, and button presses.

The program is one of the initiatives funded through a \$325,000 Learn365RI grant, established in 2023 as part of Gov. Dan McKee's Advancing Learning Beyond the 180-Day School

Year program, which supports out-of-school learning projects.

It is one of several Learn365RI grants awarded to URI, in partnership with the town of South Kingstown. URI's Alan Shawn Feinstein College of Education and the Jonnycake Center for Hope were awarded a grant to partner with the South Kingstown School District to provide academic tutoring for students in the town and support school attendance and postsecondary access to education. The grant also helped launch the Jonnycake Youth Center.

"One of the goals of the initiative is to provide opportunities for South Kingstown youths to access postsecondary education," said Diane Kern, professor of English language arts and literacy teacher education at URI, and coprincipal investigator of the grant with Kate Brewster, chief executive officer of the Jonnycake Center for Hope.



# Celebrating years of dedication to URI

URI honored 150 staff and faculty members for their years of service last spring at the Employee Milestone Celebration in the Memorial Union Ballroom. President Marc Parlange, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Barbara Wolfe, and Vice President for Human Resources Becky Hill celebrated the honorees who had reached milestone anniversaries at the University, from five to 50 years.

Among those honored were finance professor Gordon Dash, who marked 50 years of service in

2024, and Michael McDonald, a building construction inspector with Housing and Residential Life, who was celebrating 45 years at URI.

In its second year, the Employee Milestone Celebration joins URI's annual Lifetime Service Society ceremony for retired URI employees with 40 or more years of service to the University, providing another opportunity to bring employees together, promote collaboration and fellowship, reward excellence, and express gratitude for commitment to URI.





# Bringing STEM lessons to life

Sixth-grade science lessons at Governor Christopher DelSesto Middle School in Providence R.I., were more interactive this year thanks to a partnership between the school and URI’s Graduate School of Oceanography.

The pilot program, developed by the Rhode Island Department of Education and funded by a STEMx Challenge Grant, brought four GSO students to the school to work with about 200 middle-school students. Through hands-on activities and a field trip to URI’s Narragansett Bay Campus, the GSO students helped the sixth-graders understand the real-world applications of the lessons in their science classes. The middle-school students also learned about careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The middle school’s enrollment data shows that 92% of its students are from groups that are underrepresented in STEM fields and 39% are multilingual learners. “The graduate students were incredibly receptive to our suggestions for creating support for our multilingual learners,” said Nicole Elliott, a science teacher at the school. “This ensured that all our students were included in the discussions.”

“It was important to me that the middle schoolers understood that a scientist can look like anyone and do anything,” said Jasper Meagher, a URI oceanography doctoral student. “I hope the demonstrations and campus visit solidified how important the ocean is and how there is so much out there to study and learn.”

## HONORING STAFF AND FACULTY EXCELLENCE

URI’s greatest asset is its people, and this past May four community members were honored during the URI Foundation’s 2025 Excellence Awards ceremony. Professors Jason Dwyer and David Smith were honored for their scholarly and teaching pursuits. Ryan Carrillo and Kim Hindle received awards for administrative and staff excellence. Nominated by colleagues and students, all share the same exceptional work ethic, positive impact on the URI community, and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

2025 Excellence Awards (from left): Colleen Gouveia Moulton, M.B.A. ’98; Marc Parlange; Ryan Carrillo; Kim Hindle; David Smith; Mark Antonucci; Mary Parlange. Not pictured: Jason Dwyer.



## URI HONORS ASIAN CULTURAL AMBASSADORS

URI’s third annual Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month spring luncheon celebrated the diverse communities at URI and honored four students as Asian cultural ambassadors. Sudishma Acharya, Sara Cho, Kyanna Lin, and Megumi Sinniah were presented with cultural ambassador awards provided through the sponsorship of longtime engineering faculty member Qing (Ken) Yang, the first person from the Chinese mainland to join the URI faculty.



STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY 4

# Powering the university of the future

The University of Rhode Island will invest in and implement administrative and financial practices that position the University for long-term success and that transform the institution into a high-performing, fiscally sound, and agile university with the physical facilities necessary to achieve its strategic vision.







## Pursuing solutions to the primary care shortage

With Rhode Island experiencing a loss of primary-care clinicians—a shortage that is expected to worsen in coming years—a Rhode Island state Senate study commission and URI partnered with one of the nation’s leading medical education consultants to study the feasibility of launching the Ocean State’s first public medical school.

The study, conducted by Tripp Umbach, followed the formation of a 21-member state Senate special commission, appointed by late Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio in July 2024. The panel—cochaired by President Marc Parlangue and state Sen. Pamela J. Lauria, a URI nursing alumna—is charged with studying the state’s health care workforce with a focus on educating and retaining primary-care physicians, and examining how a medical school at URI could help alleviate the critical shortage of primary-care providers.

The feasibility report, a draft of which was shared with the commission in June, found a shortage of about 300 primary-care physicians statewide and noted that URI’s existing programs in pharmacy, nursing, and public health are advantages to adding a medical school at the University.



## Accelerating biomedical research in Rhode Island

Rhode Island voters strongly supported a higher education bond for URI in fall 2024, approving a referendum for \$160.5 million for URI and Rhode Island College. The general obligation bond includes \$87.5 million for the construction of a biomedical sciences building on URI’s Kingston Campus.

The new biomedical sciences building supported by the bond will provide state-of-the-art laboratory space for researchers in biomedical, biotechnology, and science-related fields. The building will be located on the

University’s science quad, providing synergies with researchers in neuroscience, and a range of other science disciplines.

URI is also home to the Rhode Island IDEa Network of Biomedical Research Excellence, a statewide research and training network with nine participating Rhode Island colleges and universities. With robust support from the National Institutes of Health, Rhode Island INBRE’s investment in biomedical research and training in the state totals more than \$100 million since 2001.





# Expanding opportunities to live and learn on campus

As part of its 10-year strategic plan, URI is expanding on-campus housing that will foster an engaged and inclusive learning environment. The University is partnering with Gilbane Development Co. to construct new housing that will add some 1,000 additional beds for undergraduate and graduate students on the Kingston Campus.

The public-private partnership with Gilbane is a unique and innovative approach to housing more students on campus in university-supervised buildings.

Under the plan, Gilbane, a globally known retail estate development and building company, will lease university-owned land, on which they will plan, finance, design, construct, and operate the new apartment-style residence halls.

“This public-private partnership offers many benefits to the University and our students,” said Abby Benson, vice president for administration and finance. “The partnership enables us to address the growing demand for on-campus housing and to develop new housing on an accelerated timeline while ensuring fiscal responsibility.”



# Making space for the arts to shine

URI’s new Fine Arts Center—a \$99 million revitalization of the 57-year-old facility that will benefit students and the public—received a \$2 million gift from Howard S. Frank ’62 and his wife, Mary E. Frank. The gift supports the landmark project endorsed by the state’s voters in a bond issue in 2021.

The renovated Fine Arts Center will include a gallery atrium, gallery, and student/experimental gallery named for the Franks in recognition of their generosity.

“We are proud that the Franks’ names will forever be associated with the arts here at URI,” said President Marc Parlange. “The Fine Arts Center will be a transformative space that serves

not just our campus, but all of Rhode Island, and especially our neighbors in South County.”

The Fine Arts Center houses art, music, and theater classes for about 5,000 students each year and welcomes about 50,000 visitors to scores of concerts, gallery shows, and mainstage plays. The renovated center will include more than 166,000 square feet of new or revamped space. The centerpiece is a 71,000-square-foot, three-story academic building featuring a new theater lobby and an art gallery on the first floor. The center will also boast modern classrooms, cutting-edge technical areas for digital art and media, recording studios, improved acoustics, and more public space and natural light.



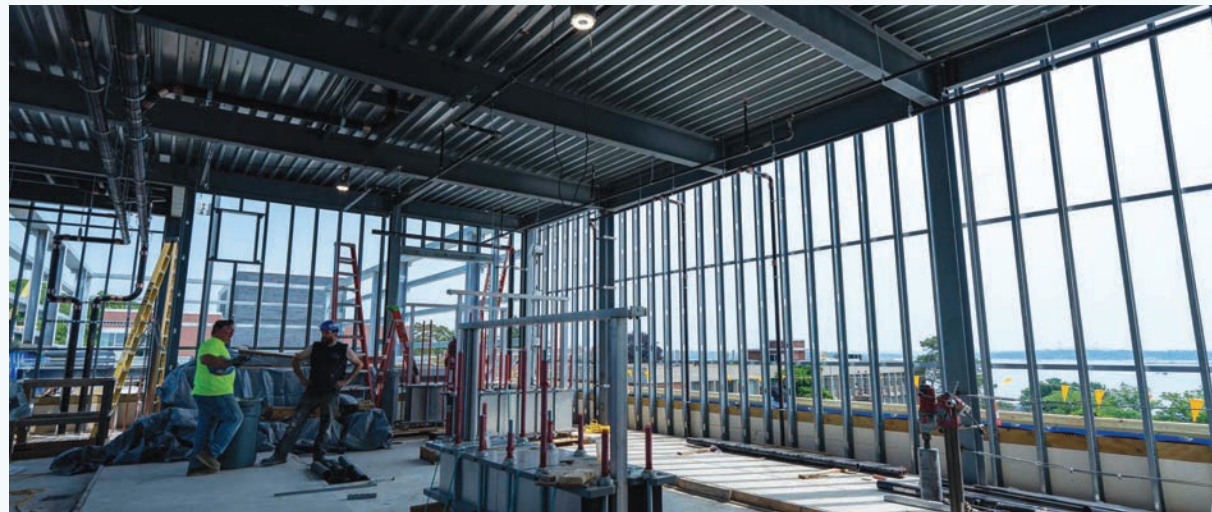


# Revitalizing Rhode Island’s blue economy epicenter

URI’s Narragansett Bay Campus—an epicenter in the state’s blue economy sector—is undergoing a \$300 million multiphase transformation.

The multiyear revitalization of the campus, home to the Graduate School of Oceanography, the Department of Ocean Engineering, and other programs, includes the addition of critical infrastructure, from a modern pier, which will house a new state-of-the-art research vessel, the *Narragansett Dawn*, to a new Ocean Robotics Lab.

“The Bay Campus is the hub of Rhode Island’s blue economy,” said President Marc Parlange. “It’s really the nexus for oceanography, ocean engineering, environment and life sciences.”



# Advancing neuroscience and molecular research

A \$7 million gift from the estate of Joseph DeChristofaro ’56 and Cherubina “Ruby” DeChristofaro will bolster neuroscience and molecular research at the University. In recognition of the significant gift, URI named its life sciences building the Joseph and Ruby DeChristofaro Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences.

The gift creates the Joseph ’56 and Ruby DeChristofaro Award for Scholarly Excellence in Neuroscience, which will benefit two third-year students in the interdisciplinary neuroscience program. The program incorporates a wide range of disciplines and provides opportunities for undergraduates to be directly involved in brain-related research on campus.

The gift also establishes a distinguished endowed faculty fund to support faculty at the forefront of molecular life and neuroscience research.



# Charting a course for the future

The University has initiated a comprehensive campus planning process to create a decades-long plan that will shape the future of the University’s campuses, informing how space is designed and used to support a growing and changing community.

With the support of Boston-based Sasaki Associates, the Comprehensive Campus Plan will focus on the Kingston, Narragansett Bay, and W. Alton Jones campuses, along with URI facilities in Providence. Led by URI’s Offices of Planning and Real Estate Development and

Campus Design, the effort is guided by an advisory panel representing a cross section of URI departments and academic disciplines.

The planning process is intended to provide a strategic framework to address URI’s space needs in the following areas: academics, research, housing and student life, landscape and open space, recreation and athletics, circulation and wayfinding (including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, service, and vehicular traffic), parking, utilities, and other infrastructure. Ongoing engagement with the URI community will occur at key milestones of the planning process.





# Financials

The University’s financial position remains strong and continues to strengthen, reflecting our deep commitment to operational excellence and long-term financial sustainability.

In fiscal year 2025, the University’s total assets grew by \$56.6 million, or 4.6%, driven by solid operational performance, investment in long-term assets, and the continued generosity of our donors. These outcomes reflect the priorities outlined in our strategic plan, *Focus URI*, particularly our commitment to building a high-performing, fiscally responsible, and agile institution.

Total revenues increased by \$53.8 million, or 7.5%, extending a positive trend over several years. The FY25 increase was driven largely by a nearly 146.1% increase, or \$50.2 million, in capital contributions, signaling the state’s continued investment in URI’s mission and impact. Funding from federal, state, and local grants and contracts increased by \$14.2 million, or 11.5%, demonstrating our renewed focus on expanding the University’s research enterprise.

Meanwhile, total liabilities decreased by \$8.4 million, or 1.6%, underscoring improved financial health and operational efficiency.

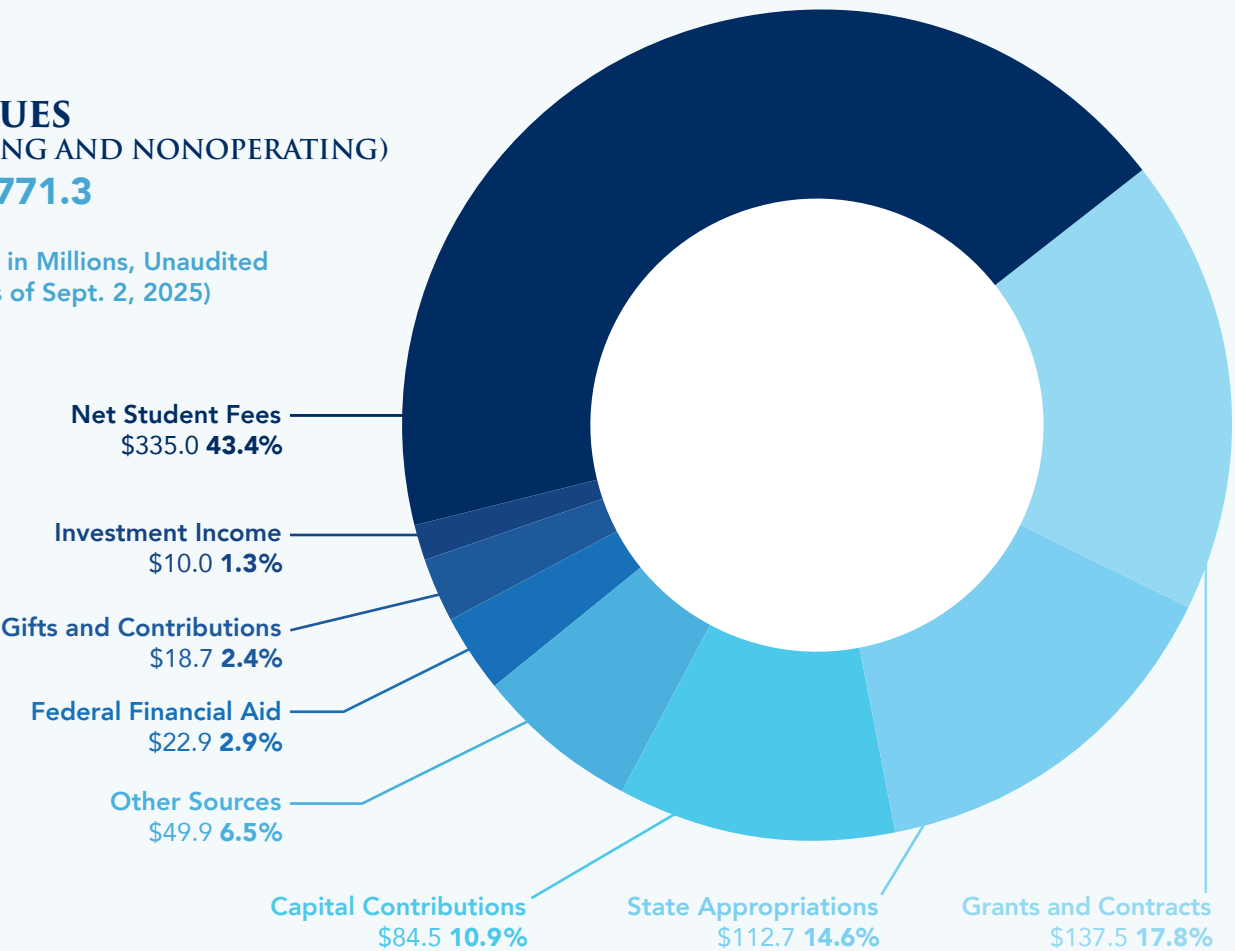
These gains collectively provide a strong foundation to advance the University’s strategic vision, including the key priorities of broadening our impact, enhancing student achievement, fostering an inclusive culture, and powering the university of the future.

The combined impact of asset growth, increased revenue, and reduced liabilities enhances URI’s ability to pursue long-term goals and accelerates the University’s forward progress.

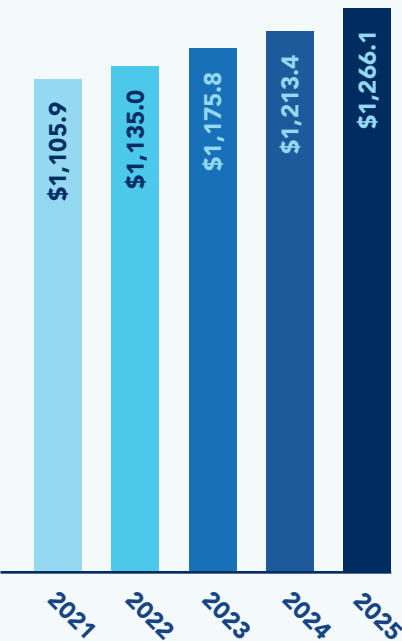
PHOTO: NORA LEWIS

## REVENUES (OPERATING AND NONOPERATING) Total: \$771.3

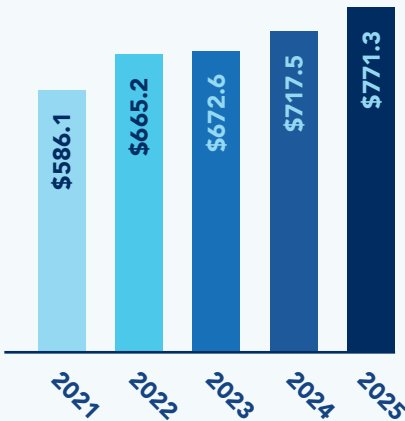
(All Figures in Millions, Unaudited  
Estimate as of Sept. 2, 2025)



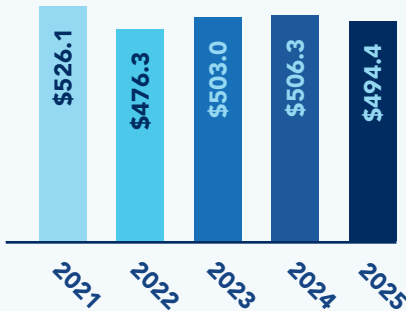
## TOTAL ASSETS (All Figures in Millions)



### TOTAL REVENUES



### TOTAL LIABILITIES





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