

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND

FOCUS FORWARD

President's
Report 2026



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This past year was one of momentum and incredible growth at the University of Rhode Island, and it is clear that URI is playing a greater role in shaping the future of our state than at perhaps any other time in our history.

Across healthcare, economic development, workforce preparation, research, technology, and the blue economy, the URI community is bringing its expertise to some of Rhode Island's most pressing challenges and exciting opportunities. And that growing impact is being recognized well beyond our campuses. For the second consecutive year, *The Wall Street Journal* named URI the top public university in New England and ranked us ninth among the nation's public flagship universities.

The effort to establish Rhode Island's first public medical school reflects the kind of work URI is increasingly being called upon to undertake. An independent feasibility study found a URI medical school both viable and necessary to help meet the state's pressing healthcare needs. This year, Rhode Island's elected officials made an initial \$5 million investment to advance that work, and our Board of Trustees authorized the University to move into the next phase of development. But I believe the opportunity is bigger than establishing a medical school—it is about building on URI's strengths in pharmacy, nursing, and the health sciences to help address one of Rhode Island's most urgent challenges.

URI's impact can also be felt across the state and across our campuses. A new economic impact study found that the University generates \$2 billion in economic activity each year, supports 17,799 jobs, and produces \$135.2 million in annual tax revenue across Rhode Island. At our Narragansett Bay Campus, we celebrated the opening of the Ocean Robotics Laboratory, another major milestone in the \$300 million transformation of the campus and in our work

to strengthen Rhode Island's leadership in ocean science and technology.

In Kingston, that progress is taking shape in very visible ways. New undergraduate and graduate housing will add more than 1,100 beds, while a new comprehensive campus plan gives us a roadmap for growth over the next two decades. Our research enterprise is growing, too. The launch of the Institute for AI and Computational Research and URI's first-ever NIH T32 training grant are expanding the ways our faculty, researchers, and students can tackle complex problems and make meaningful discoveries.

Through all of this, our students remain at the heart of our work. This year, we committed a record \$158 million to financial aid—the largest investment in URI's history—while creating more opportunities for students to learn through research and real-world experiences. Their success is why we grow, why we invest, and why we continue to ask what more we can do.

The highlights in this report reflect a University with greater reach than ever before. We have an opportunity to use this momentum to build a stronger URI and a stronger Rhode Island—and to show what a great public research university can contribute to the people and communities it serves.

There is much to be proud of in the pages that follow, and even more to look forward to. Thank you for being part of the URI community and for all you do to move our University forward.

Marc Parlange

Marc B. Parlange
President, University of Rhode Island



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Broaden 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.

\$2B

IN ANNUAL ECONOMIC
ACTIVITY ACROSS THE STATE

URI GENERATES \$2 BILLION ANNUALLY FOR RHODE ISLAND ECONOMY

A comprehensive new economic impact study by consulting firm Tripp Umbach found that the University of Rhode Island generates \$2 billion in annual economic activity across the state, supports 17,799 jobs, and produces \$135.2 million in annual tax revenue.

The findings underscore URI's role as one of Rhode Island's most significant economic engines, fueled by its research enterprise, workforce development, student and visitor spending, and extensive local partnerships.

The study found that for every \$1 invested by the State of Rhode Island in URI, \$17.39 is returned to the state's economy, while \$1.17 is generated in statewide tax revenue. It also found that one in every 33 jobs in Rhode Island is connected to URI—including faculty, researchers, and staff employed by the University, as well as thousands of additional jobs supported through research activity, supply chains, student spending, and visitor spending associated with University events and programs.

"Universities play a critical role in the economic vitality of their states, and the University of Rhode Island is proud to serve as a powerful engine of growth and opportunity for Rhode Island," said URI President Marc Parlange. "Through education, research, and partnerships with industry and communities, URI is helping to build a stronger, more innovative, and more resilient economy for the state."

\$135.2M

IN ANNUAL TAX REVENUE

\$1 → \$17.39

INVESTED
BY THE
STATE IN URI

RETURNED
TO THE STATE
ECONOMY

17,799

JOBS SUPPORTED

BUILDING RHODE ISLAND'S FIRST PUBLIC MEDICAL SCHOOL

Rhode Island took a major step toward addressing its growing primary care workforce shortage by approving an initial \$5 million investment to establish a public medical school at the University of Rhode Island. Signed into law by Gov. Dan McKee as part of the FY 2027 state budget, the legislation also expresses the General Assembly's intent to provide an additional \$7 million in FY 2028 and \$8 million in FY 2029 to support development of what would become the state's only public medical school.

The investment builds on URI's longstanding leadership in advancing health and wellness across Rhode Island. The University's College of Nursing, College of Health Sciences, and College of Pharmacy educate thousands of students each year; many of whom go on to serve in hospitals, clinics, public health organizations, and community care settings throughout the state and beyond. Together, URI colleges and programs form a critical pipeline of health professionals and help address Rhode Island's evolving healthcare workforce needs.

The state's investment followed an independent feasibility study, commissioned by a Rhode Island Senate special legislative commission examining the state's healthcare workforce and primary care crisis, that concluded that establishing a medical school at URI is "both viable and necessary to meet the state's pressing healthcare needs."

And in June, the University's Board of Trustees formally authorized the next phase of developing a public medical school at the University. "This is a historic moment for the University of Rhode Island and for the people of our state," said Margo Cook, chair of the URI board. "We are deeply grateful for the leadership and partnership of Gov. McKee, Speaker Blazewski, Senate President Lawson, and members of the General Assembly. Their support makes it possible for URI to take this next step toward establishing Rhode Island's first public medical school and advancing a vision that will benefit generations of Rhode Islanders."



CELEBRATING STATEWIDE IMPACT

The Rhode Island State House was awash in Keaney Blue as hundreds of URI faculty, staff, and students joined state leaders for URI Day at the State House. Interactive exhibits highlighted student achievement, cutting-edge research, and innovative programs from across the University, demonstrating URI's academic excellence and its far-reaching impact on the health, economic well-being, and quality of life of Rhode Islanders.



RESTORING A RHODE ISLAND TREASURE

A collaborative effort between the University of Rhode Island and the Department of Environmental Management will reestablish URI's W. Alton Jones Campus as a premier natural resource center and environmental education hub while significantly expanding public access and recreational opportunities for Rhode Islanders.

5 YEARS
TACKLING FOOD WASTE

Food Recovery for Rhode Island, a six-week course through URI Cooperative Extension, recently celebrated its fifth anniversary.



URI SURF THERAPY PROGRAM EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Each summer at Narragansett Town Beach, the URI Surf Therapy Program helps children with disabilities build confidence, develop new skills, and experience the therapeutic benefits of the ocean. First organized in 2010 by Emily Clapham, associate professor of health and physical education, the program serves children ages 3 to 21 with a range of physical and developmental disabilities.

Research on adaptive surfing—including Clapham’s own studies—has shown improvements in physical fitness, self-confidence, social development, behavior, sleep, and anxiety.

Clapham’s work also highlights the positive effects the sound and movement of the ocean can have on the central nervous system, supporting participants’ mental health and well-being. The program serves 30 to 50 children and their families each year, with interest continuing to grow and many participants returning. This fall, the team will launch a pilot surf therapy program for children with visual impairments.

URI RESEARCH ADVANCES PROMISING NEW APPROACH TO FIGHTING CANCER

URI College of Pharmacy Assistant Professor Kaitlin Dailey is advancing a promising new cancer treatment designed to reach tumors that are difficult—or impossible—to access, including those associated with pancreatic cancer, one of the deadliest forms of the disease.

Building on successful clinical trials involving cancer-killing bacteria, Dailey’s lab is reengineering the nontoxic bacterium *Clostridium novyi-NonToxic* using a novel synthetic biology platform. The approach is designed to allow the bacteria to be injected into the bloodstream, enabling them to safely reach hard-to-access tumors, and even metastatic cancers, throughout the body.

“By using bacteria as our therapeutic mechanism, we can re-prime the immune system so that not only are we able to directly target the tumor, but we’ve effectively vaccinated against reoccurrence,” said Dailey, who is also an affiliate with the Legorreta Cancer Center at Brown University. “And if we can target and dose a tumor through intravenous inoculation, the opportunity is then on the table to target not only a primary tumor, but also metastasis.”

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RESEARCH SHEDS LIGHT ON HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS

Millions of Americans experiencing housing instability are not counted in official homelessness statistics, leaving many without access to programs and services. Current federal efforts primarily count those people staying in warming centers, shelters, and outdoor encampments, while overlooking those living in overcrowded housing or temporarily staying with family or friends.

Molly Richard, assistant professor of public health in URI’s College of Health Sciences, has developed a new way to measure this “hidden homeless” using data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. Through their work, Richard and her partners are providing a more complete picture of housing insecurity in America, helping policymakers better understand the scope of the challenge and informing more effective responses.



NEW URI STUDIES WILL GUIDE BLOCK ISLAND’S COASTAL FUTURE

Two new URI studies will provide the most detailed picture yet of how Block Island’s shoreline and salt marshes have changed over the past century—giving local leaders new scientific tools to strengthen climate resilience and guide future planning.

Partnering directly with the Town of New Shoreham’s Coastal Resilience Committee, URI researchers will identify how the island’s coastline is changing, what is driving those changes, and how that information can inform community decision-making.

The studies are the latest addition to the URI Coastal Institute’s Block Island Climate Response Demonstration Site, an ongoing collaboration that brings together University researchers, regional academic partners, local nonprofits, and community members to monitor coastal change and develop practical planning tools.

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH SUPPORTS FUTURE MISSIONS TO MARS

URI College of Health Sciences Assistant Professor Marie Mortreux is part of an international research team studying how Mars’ gravity could affect the human musculoskeletal system—work that could help prepare astronauts for future missions to the Red Planet.

Because skeletal muscle makes up more than 40% of the human body and is highly sensitive to reduced gravity, prolonged exposure to Mars’

gravity—which is about 38% of Earth’s—could lead to substantial losses in muscle strength, size, and performance. The team’s research is examining how these changes occur and how they might be prevented.

As NASA works toward sending astronauts to Mars as soon as the 2030s, the findings could play an important role in safeguarding crew health during space missions.

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URI HELPS SHAPE RHODE ISLAND’S AI FUTURE

URI is helping chart Rhode Island’s strategy for artificial intelligence through the leadership of professors Gaurav Khanna and Zhu (Drew) Zhang, who serve on the state’s Artificial Intelligence Task Force. The group developed a blueprint designed to position Rhode Island as a national leader in AI while ensuring businesses and communities across the state can benefit from the technology.

Khanna, URI’s assistant vice president for research computing, and Zhang, the University’s Alfred J. Verrecchia Endowed Chair in Artificial Intelligence and Business Analytics, were among

approximately 70 task force members who helped develop the statewide strategy. A central focus of the report—building a skilled AI workforce—aligns with URI’s growing leadership in artificial intelligence education and research.

That leadership includes the launch of the Institute for AI and Computational Research, directed by Khanna. The institute provides AI research infrastructure to other Rhode Island-based higher education institutions while advancing interdisciplinary research, education, and regional collaboration, and expanding educational and workforce training programs.



URI COMMUNITY NEWS LAB STRENGTHENS LOCAL JOURNALISM

In Rhode Island, more than 68,000 people live in communities with limited or no media coverage. The University and its Harrington School of Communication and Media took steps to change that last fall with the launch of URI’s Community News Lab. The lab consists of nine advanced journalism students partnering with local publications to help fill Rhode Island’s community news gap.

“Community news labs provide students with experience in professional reporting, which will help them prepare for careers in journalism,”

said Daniel S. Hunt, journalism and public relations department chair and Community News Lab creator. “But they also serve to close the information gap for residents who live in so-called news deserts.”

Students cover Charlestown, Richmond, Hopkinton, Exeter, and West Greenwich, with four reporters covering regional education, the environment, agriculture, and the fishing industry.

40+ YEARS

GROWING SMALL BUSINESSES

For more than 40 years, the Rhode Island Small Business Development Center at the University of Rhode Island has been helping to grow the state's small and independently owned businesses by providing one-on-one confidential advising for business owners, resources for startups, and training sessions and forums where entrepreneurs can connect.



URI HELPS BRING AWARD-WINNING PBS KIDS WEATHER SERIES TO YOUNG LEARNERS

With help from URI, “Weather Hunters,” a PBS KIDS animated series produced by Al Roker Entertainment, is introducing children ages 5–8 to the science and wonder of weather through STEM-focused adventures.

Sara Sweetman, URI associate professor of environmental and elementary education, serves as the show’s curriculum developer and expert reviewer. Sweetman uses her expertise to help

ensure the series produces engaging stories about Earth science and meteorology that spark curiosity about how weather affects people, communities, and the world.

The show recently received the Excellence in Early Learning Digital Media Award from the American Library Association, honoring the producer of the most distinguished digital media created for an early learning audience.

ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES THROUGH GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

URI is helping strengthen sustainable fisheries management around the world. Last fall, experts from URI and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management shared their expertise in managing migratory fish at an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Indonesia—organized by the Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries in collaboration with Haluoleo University—helping representatives from Southeast Asian nations improve fisheries policy, data management and regional collaboration.

In June, the URI Coastal Resources Center received \$24 million from the U.S. Department of State to continue its fisheries work in the Philippines. The center is partnering with coastal communities, government agencies, and the private sector to address illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and to expand efforts in maritime domain awareness, sustainable fisheries management, and international collaboration. These efforts also continue to create research opportunities for U.S. and Filipino faculty and students.

URI TECH SHOWCASE HIGHLIGHTS RESEARCH WITH REAL-WORLD IMPACT

URI’s first Tech Showcase, held at The Fascitelli Center for Advanced Engineering, marked a milestone in the University’s ongoing commitment to research-driven innovation. The event brought together more than 120 researchers, entrepreneurs, investors, and industry partners, highlighting the growing strength of URI’s startup ecosystem.

“As long-time investors in and supporters of the URI ecosystem, we continue to be impressed with the research and entrepreneurial energy on campus,” said Thorne Sparksman of Slater Technology Fund.

The evening featured 10 startup teams—each rooted in URI research or alumni leadership—connecting them with investors, sparking conversations, and accelerating the path from the laboratory to real-world impact.



Enhance 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.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

#1

PUBLIC
UNIVERSITY IN
NEW ENGLAND

—THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

#9

AMONG THE NATION'S
PUBLIC FLAGSHIP
UNIVERSITIES

#34

AMONG ALL PUBLIC
UNIVERSITIES

#76

AMONG ALL
UNIVERSITIES

URI AGAIN NAMED NEW ENGLAND'S TOP PUBLIC UNIVERSITY BY *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

For the second consecutive year, the University of Rhode Island was named the best public university in New England by *The Wall Street Journal*, which also ranked URI No. 9 among the nation's public flagship universities. In the publication's 2026 Best Colleges rankings, URI placed No. 34 among public universities nationwide and No. 76 among universities overall, climbing eight spots from last year and finishing 12 places ahead of the next highest-ranked New England public university.

"What this ranking truly celebrates is the meaningful impact the University of Rhode Island

has on individuals' lives," said President Marc Parlange. "We are committed to delivering an exceptional education that is accessible, while ensuring students receive the guidance and resources essential for their success"

Based on a survey of 120,000 students and recent alumni, the WSJ/College Pulse ranking emphasizes how well colleges and universities prepare students for career and financial success. The ranking also evaluated teaching quality, career preparation, learning facilities, and how likely students were to recommend their school to a friend.



URI STUDENTS EXCEL IN OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES

In April, URI students Makenzie Denzler, Kaitlyn Muller, and Nate Riello were selected for the highly competitive National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship. The program, which selects only 120 students nationally, aims to increase undergraduate training in oceanic and atmospheric sciences, promote public support for environmental stewardship, and prepare students for careers in public service.

The 2026 awards mark the 18th consecutive year that URI students have earned Hollings Scholarships. Since its inception in 2005, more than 50 URI students have been selected for the prestigious program, named for the late U.S. Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings of South Carolina, who was a champion for ocean policy and conservation.

URI STUDENTS EARN PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS FOR GLOBAL LEARNING

For 25 years, the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship has expanded access to study abroad programs for students of limited financial means. Since 2001, the University of Rhode Island has produced 177 Gilman Scholars, gaining recognition as one of the program's most prolific institutions and underscoring URI's success in preparing students to compete for nationally prestigious scholarships.

In 2025, 15 URI students received Gilman Scholarships to study around the world, while three earned the prestigious David L. Boren Scholarship and two received Critical Language Scholarships. Together, these highly competitive awards support language study, cultural

immersion, and international experiences that prepare students for careers in diplomacy, public service, and national security.

In May, 30 URI students were named Beatrice S. Demers Foreign Language Fellows by the Rhode Island Foundation, while five additional students received awards from the Michael P. Metcalf Memorial Fund. The scholarships support language immersion in locations including France, Italy, Spain, Taiwan, Japan, and Brazil. About 300 URI community members have received Demers Fellowships since the program's inception—receiving approximately \$3.1 million in combined grants.



SUPPORTING GRADUATE EDUCATION AND THE BLUE ECONOMY

In May, the University launched a Blue Fellows initiative to help cultivate a next-generation workforce to support Rhode Island’s blue economy. Supported by a three-year, \$954,000 National Science Foundation grant, the program will recruit and support six doctoral fellows while strengthening the state’s future ocean workforce.

Fellows will pursue doctoral studies in ocean-related fields, including ocean, civil, environmental, and chemical engineering; marine affairs; and oceanography. Their use-inspired research will address topics related to the blue economy, such as coastal resilience, sustainable fisheries, microplastics pollution, and ocean exploration.

MAKING COLLEGE DREAMS A REALITY

In fall 2024, the Donald P. and Elaine M. Hayden Foundation established a \$750,000 scholarship to help URI students experiencing financial hardship. The scholarship program, which provides \$250,000 annually for three years, is matched by the University to help students experiencing financial obstacles.

the majority of whom are first-generation college students—to achieve their academic goals at URI.

“Today, families are facing tremendous financial challenges that can easily derail a student’s education, which is why we are committed to providing pathways to URI through collaborations with partners like the Hayden Foundation,” said President Marc Parlange.

EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH INCREASED FINANCIAL AID

URI trustees approved a record financial aid package this year, increasing the University’s financial aid budget to more than \$158 million—the largest in URI’s history. More than 90% of URI students receive financial assistance, supporting both undergraduate and graduate learners.

Scholarship, expanding access to engineering education for Rhode Island students transferring from the Community College of Rhode Island. The endowment will support students who have demonstrated perseverance through the transfer pathway and who may lack the financial resources needed to complete an engineering degree without assistance.

The University also received notable philanthropic support from alumni. In February, Mark S. Cruise, a URI Athletic Hall of Famer, and his wife, Sue, established the Mark ’81 ’84 and Sue ’84 Cruise Endowed Scholarship program with a \$2 million gift. The fund will provide annual scholarships to student-athletes and represents the largest single gift in URI football program history.

In April, URI Board of Trustees Chair Margo Cook ’86 and her spouse, Renee Cohen, committed \$2.145 million to create the Cook-Cohen Scholars Program and to support additional academic and athletic initiatives at URI. The program will attract exceptional students from across the country and the world, providing full four-year scholarships covering tuition and fees, housing and dining, and a global travel experience during URI’s Winter J-Term.

In March, Joseph F. Matthews ’80, a member of the URI Board of Trustees, gave \$1.6 million to establish the Matthews Family Engineering



RHODY ATHLETICS CELEBRATES HISTORIC YEAR OF EXCELLENCE

Rhody pride continued to build this year as URI teams achieved historic milestones both on the field and in the classroom.

FOOTBALL

URI football made history with the program's first outright Coastal Athletic Association (CAA) championship. The Rams completed an undefeated conference season, earning a second consecutive NCAA Division I FCS Playoff appearance as the No. 9 seed.

Head Coach Jim Fleming earned CAA Coach of the Year, while linebacker A.J. Pena was named

Defensive Player of the Year and five Rams were selected to the conference's First Team. The Rams set a program record as 13 players secured all-conference spots and three additional players earned Honorable Mention recognition.

Additionally, 58 team members earned spots on the CAA Football Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll for the 2025 fall semester.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Rhody women's basketball enjoyed a historic season, winning a program-record 28 games, capturing its second regular-season conference title and first Atlantic 10 conference title. The top-seeded Rams defeated second-seeded George Mason, 53-51, in the championship game to secure the tournament title and earn their first NCAA Championship appearance in 30 years.



WOMEN'S ROWING

In May, Rhode Island women's rowing won its third consecutive Atlantic 10 championship and the 12th in program history. The Rams also earned five individual honors, including Atlantic 10 Coach of the Year for head coach Shelagh Donohoe, who has received the honor 11 times during her career.

Individual award winners included First Team All-Atlantic 10 selections Emma Barnhart, Nora Lake, and Bethany Nordstrom. Liz Mayer earned Second Team All-Atlantic 10, and team members Sierra Munroe and Bethany Nordstrom were named to the Atlantic 10 All-Academic team.



MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

Rhode Island men's track and field continued its tradition of excellence, winning its sixth straight Atlantic 10 indoor championship in February. The Rams claimed seven individual titles and four major honors—Most Outstanding Track Performer: Nick Martin, Most Outstanding Field Performer: Matt Santy, Most Outstanding Rookie Performer: Lucas Andrade, and Coach of the Year: Trent Baltzell.

In May, the team won its 17th Atlantic 10 outdoor title and fifth in six years, finishing more than 100 points ahead of the competition. Santy again earned Most Outstanding Field Performer after setting a new conference record in the long jump, while Baltzell was named Coach of the Year.



URI PHARMACY STUDENTS EARN NATIONAL HONORS IN HEALTHCARE DECISION-MAKING



Four University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy students earned top national honors in the 2026 Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy Foundation’s National Student Pharmacist Pharmacy and Therapeutics Competition. URI’s team was composed entirely of third-year students in the college’s Pharm.D. program: Willy Njeru, Vanessa Oseghale, Matthew Pari, and Ramez Rizk. Together they placed first among 68 colleges of pharmacy nationwide. The competition emphasizes evidence-based evaluation of medications, including review of clinical evidence, value, and formulary decision-making.

MEETING STUDENTS’ EVOLVING NEEDS

The University’s new Kent and Diane Fannon Institute for Student Success, a revitalized and modernized version of University College, reflects URI’s commitment to student achievement, career readiness, and holistic support. Named in honor of alumni and longtime supporters Diane ’74 and Kent ’74 Fannon, the new institute brings together five key areas under one umbrella: Career and Experiential Education, Academic Enhancement, Retention and Academic Success, Exploratory Studies Advising, and Student-Athlete Support Services. It also introduces URI C.A.R.E.S., a framework for

coordinated student support. URI C.A.R.E.S. reflects national trends in higher education by emphasizing career pathways, academic persistence, and student belonging, while offering personalized guidance—from orientation through graduation—designed to meet the evolving needs of today’s students. “At URI, every student’s journey and success matter,” said President Marc Parlange. “I’m so grateful to the Fannons for their vision and generosity, and to our faculty, staff, and students who bring this mission to life every single day.”



URI GRADUATES MORE THAN 4,000 STUDENTS AND LOOKS AHEAD WITH HOPE

The University of Rhode Island celebrated more than 4,000 graduates during December 2025 and May 2026 ceremonies, as thousands of friends, family, faculty, staff, and students joined together during ceremonies at the Ryan Center. As part of his commencement address, President Parlange said URI’s graduates offered reasons for “hope”—Rhode Island’s state motto. What he saw in this class, he said, was not disengagement or cynicism, but rather resilience,

compassion, humor, ambition, and caring for one another. “Hope is not blind optimism. It is built through those friendships you made, through navigating challenges, through responsibility, curiosity, and service to something greater than yourself,” Parlange said. “And it will carry you through times where there is nothing to believe in but hope. After these past four years, I can think of no better reason to remain hopeful than all of you.”



Foster 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.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE

Most University of Rhode Island students, faculty, and staff report a strong sense of community, according to the University's fall 2025 Snap Climate Survey. Of the more than 3,000 respondents, 77% agreed with the statement, "I have found a community at URI where I feel like I belong," up four percentage points from the previous year.

The survey also found that 85% of respondents agreed they are treated fairly at URI without regard to any element of their personal identity, an increase of seven percentage points from 2024. While the University continues to build on this progress, the results reflect positive year-over-year trends.

HONORING INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE



The University recognized individuals and programs that have made outstanding contributions to building an inclusive campus culture during its annual Inclusive Excellence Awards ceremony in April.

Civil rights legend Bernard "Doc" LaFayette Jr., who joined URI as a distinguished scholar in 1998 and served as the inaugural director of the University's Center for Nonviolence and Peace

Studies from 1999 to 2009, was posthumously honored with the Inclusive Excellence Lifetime Achievement Award. A founding member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, LaFayette helped lead desegregation and voting rights efforts throughout the South during the Civil Rights Movement.

"These awards celebrate the best and brightest among us who prioritize inclusivity and equity in everything they do," said President Marc Parlange. "The honorees have been committed to demonstrating and promoting inclusion at URI in the areas of community leadership, academic excellence, and service."

Additional honorees included Paige Ramsdell for staff/administrative excellence; Samantha Meenach for faculty excellence; Daniela Lopes Paim Pinto for faculty excellence in teaching; Sharday Johnson for undergraduate student excellence; Victor Olaoye for graduate student excellence; and URI's Talent Development program for team excellence.



RAISING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

The University's 17th annual Be 5K Walk/Run for Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention drew thousands of participants and supporters to the Kingston Campus in October. According to Mental Health First Aid, a program of the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, more than 45% of college students across the country experience mental health challenges. Funds raised through the Be 5K benefit the Heather Fund, which supports services and outreach programs focused on the prevention and treatment of depression and suicide within the URI community.

In April, the University also hosted its third annual Out of the Darkness 5K Walk in support of mental health awareness and suicide prevention.

CELEBRATING DEDICATION AND YEARS OF SERVICE

URI honored 370 faculty and staff members for their dedication and service during the third annual 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 recognized employees celebrating milestone anniversaries ranging from five to 45 years of service.

"What makes URI so special is its people, and there's no better example of how incredible our people are than this celebration," said Parlange.

Five individuals were recognized for 45 years of service: pharmacy professor Robert Dufresne,

physics professor Leonard Kahn, Eileen Orabone in URI's Office of Community, Equity and Diversity, Timothy Wasco in the Department of Chemistry, and Terry Wild in Information Technology Services.

Hill added, "The milestones we recognize today represent more than years of service. They represent commitment, stewardship, and belief in this institution and its mission. They reflect moments of challenge navigated, students supported, colleagues mentored, systems improved, and community built."

URI TEAM HONORED WITH AWARD FOR LEADERSHIP IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



Earlier this year, URI's Office of Community, Equity and Diversity received the Organizational Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion Award from the Rhode Island nonprofit Diversity and Inclusion Professionals, recognizing its commitment to advancing equity, belonging, and inclusion.

"In times like these, it is deeply meaningful that Rhode Island's public university has been recognized for working to advance its founding land-grant mission to serve and support all," said Markeisha Miner, URI's vice president for community, equity and diversity.

The award recognizes organizations that demonstrate a commitment to equity, belonging, and inclusion; measurable impact on institutional culture and practices; leadership that centers community, accountability, and courage; and contributions that extend beyond their own organization.

URI assistant vice president for community, equity and diversity Michelle Fontes said, "For our team, it is a reminder that people-centered work matters and when we lead with intention, collaboration, and accountability, the impact extends far beyond any single program or event we host."



CELEBRATING EDUCATIONAL MILESTONES

URI's Talent Development program celebrated its graduating class of 2026. Established in 1968 in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the University's Talent Development program is a nationally recognized student success initiative that recruits and supports Rhode Island students with college potential, providing advising, mentoring, and academic support. From an initial class of 13 students to celebrating its 5,000th graduate in May 2025, the program continues to honor and celebrate the success of its scholars on their academic journeys.

ADVANCING NEURODIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Last August, URI's College of Engineering hosted the Northeast Regional Higher Education Neurodiversity Coalition Conference, bringing together educators, researchers, and advocates to explore how colleges and universities can better support neurodivergent students. Temple Grandin, the renowned animal behavioral scientist, author, and autism advocate, was among the conference's distinguished speakers.

"While innovative thinkers have always had an outsized impact on society, our educational system often rewards conformity of thought," said Anthony Marchese, URI College of Engineering dean. "As educators, it's our responsibility to make sure that nobody in the neurodiverse

community gets left behind. Our future as a society will depend on organizations that embrace the diverse perspectives that are required to solve difficult problems."

A collaborative initiative involving URI and its partnering institutions, the University of Connecticut, Northeastern University, and the University of New Hampshire, the two-day conference featured panels exploring the influence of intersecting identities, the lived experience of neurodivergent students in academic settings, and the entrepreneurial journeys of neurodivergent individuals, as well as a series of breakout sessions.

WELCOMING MILITARY VETERANS

URI was ranked No. 17 nationally—out of 357 higher education institutions—in *Military Times'* 2025 Best for Vets: Colleges rankings, placing the University among the nation's top institutions for serving military veterans and military-connected students.

The annual rankings evaluate colleges on factors including student success and the resources available to veterans. URI was lauded by *Military Times* for its various initiatives supporting military veterans, including direct financial aid to military students through the University's Center for Military and Veteran

Education. The center assists URI's veterans, current military and military-connected students, as well as prospective students, in understanding veterans' and military benefits, GI Bill certification, financial aid, scholarships, and other educational resources.

URI has also been named a Top 10 Military Friendly School for two consecutive years. The Military Friendly mark URI earned in 2025–26 also includes recognition for its support of military spouses.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Power 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.



BREAKING NEW GROUND

Elected officials and guests joined faculty, staff, and students in January to officially break ground on three new campus residence halls on the Kingston Campus. The result of a first-of-its-kind public-private partnership with Gilbane Development Co., the University is building two new residence halls with apartment-style suites and reconstructing the Graduate Village Apartments complex for graduate students—adding more than 1,100 on-campus beds by the fall of 2028.

“Our living and learning spaces are critical to our students’ success, both inside the classroom and out. The campus is where our

students follow their passions and make friendships that will last a lifetime,” said President Marc Parlange. “It is where the next generation of Rhode Islanders will study, work, and grow into future leaders and neighbors.”

The new residence halls will meet students’ needs and continue to advance URI’s strategic goal of providing high-quality, accessible housing, according to Ellen Reynolds, URI vice president for student affairs.

“This is a major step forward for URI and the beginning of a new era in on-campus living,” Reynolds said.

MAKING BIG STRIDES, BUILDING RHODY PRIDE

TRACK AND FIELD COMPLEX

The University’s new track and field complex is nearing completion following an October 2025 groundbreaking attended by more than 250 guests. The state-of-the-art facility will feature nine lanes, multiple jump runways, a separate throwing area, a digital scoreboard, and a 200-seat grandstand with an accessible lift. The complex is expected to be one of the best outdoor track and field facilities in the Northeast and one that is reflective of the championship-level student-athletes who represent URI in the sport.

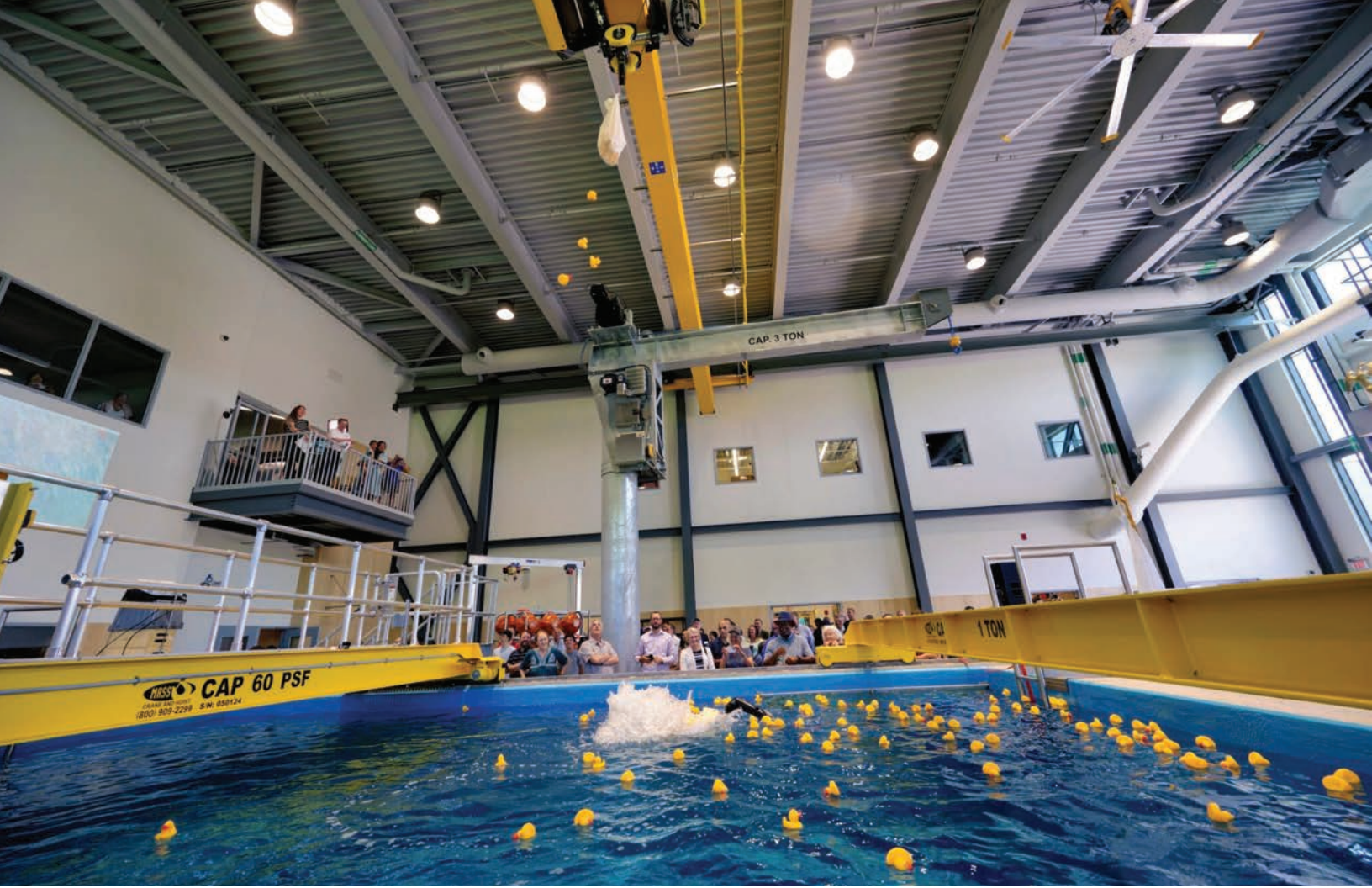
MEADE STADIUM

The athletics facility renewal work also includes a transformative investment in Meade Stadium. Home to URI’s football and women’s lacrosse programs, Meade has already received recent upgrades, including a \$4.1 million FieldTurf and lighting project and a \$1 million video board, both funded through private donations. These investments set the stage for a planned \$42 million renovation that will replace the stadium’s east stands.



The facility is part of a broader \$65.8 million Rhode Island Capital Plan investment in championship-caliber facilities at the state’s flagship university. Supported by state elected leaders, the RICAP funding also includes upgrades for Meade Stadium, Tootell Aquatic Center, Beck Field, the URI Softball Complex, and the URI Soccer Complex. The University is raising an additional \$20 million to support enhancements that elevate the student-athlete experience and expand community access.

The approximately 18-month project began following the Rams’ CAA championship season and will introduce 5,000 new seats, including 800 chair-back seats, along with an ADA-compliant press box with elevator access, and upgraded concessions and restrooms. The renovation is expected to be complete for the fall 2027 season.



USHERING IN A NEW AGE FOR RHODE ISLAND’S BLUE ECONOMY

URI celebrated another major milestone in the \$300 million, multi-phase revitalization of the Narragansett Bay Campus in June with a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Ocean Robotics Laboratory.

The 32,000-square-foot facility features a two-story, high-bay staging area with a 4,500-cubic-foot freshwater test tank and 10-ton bridge crane. The facility will advance the design and development of technology-driven solutions, while fostering collaboration and innovation at the University, with other academic institutions, and through public-private partnerships.

Underscoring the importance of the Bay Campus to the state economy, President Parlange noted, “This campus is truly a hub for the blue economy in Rhode Island, with education, with research, with training, with extension, and partnerships with industry, as well as state and federal agencies.”

The revitalization of the campus was supported by Rhode Island voters, who approved two bond referenda totaling \$145 million.

TAPPING INTO RENEWABLE ENERGY

As part of its commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions, URI is implementing a new geothermal system on the Narragansett Bay Campus to heat and cool the new Ocean Frontiers Building. The project is part of the University’s broader strategy to expand renewable energy use and advance sustainable campus operations.

The state-of-the-art system will use geothermal resources—underground reservoirs of heat—to provide efficient heating and cooling. It is expected to reduce energy use by 30–60% for heating and up to 50% for cooling, while lower-

ing long-term utility costs and requiring minimal maintenance. The design of the system is part of the overall Bay Campus revitalization project and could also support the Ocean Science and Exploration Center, Watkins Laboratory, and Ocean Robotics Laboratory in the future.

When completed, the Ocean Frontiers Building will become a hub for URI Graduate School of Oceanography researchers, replacing the 55-year-old Horn Laboratory with modern office and classroom spaces, along with environmentally controlled labs to support advanced scientific research.

GROWING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND COLLABORATION

The University’s new Institute for AI and Computational Research, launched in September, positions URI to advance leadership in artificial intelligence, data science, high-performance computing, and quantum computing.

Envisioned by an interdisciplinary team of faculty members from across the University and building on the foundation of the University’s Center for Computational Research, the institute represents an expanded vision for interdisciplinary research, education, and regional collaboration.

The institute will support advanced research computing infrastructure, foster collaborative research that bridges disciplines and connects URI to a national network of partners, and expand educational and training programs that prepare future leaders in computational science. By bringing these efforts together, URI is strengthening its role as a hub for AI and computational research throughout Rhode Island and the Northeast.



CHARTING A BOLD CAMPUS VISION

The University's Board of Trustees approved a new comprehensive campus plan, which will serve as a strategic roadmap for improving the University's campuses over the next 20 years.

Providing a formal blueprint to enhance facilities and the overall campus experience, the plan spans every aspect of University life—including classrooms, laboratories, housing, arts and culture, athletics and recreation—across URI's

campuses and facilities in Kingston, Providence, and Narragansett, as well as the W. Alton Jones Campus.

The plan, formulated through a broad community input and engagement process which began in fall 2024, will shape the campuses' physical spaces to support the University's growing community and evolving needs.

ENSURING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

URI's Department of Public Safety and Office of Emergency Management expanded the University's emergency communication capabilities this year with the introduction of Alertus, a mass notification system designed to quickly reach community members and visitors during campus emergencies. The system complements URI Alert, which delivers emergency notifications through text messages, emails, and phone calls.

Alertus integrates with existing campus infrastructure, including desktop alerts on

University-owned computers and digital signage, creating additional channels to share critical information during life-threatening emergencies.

Following a historic blizzard, the University received StormReady status from the National Weather Service, highlighting the University's strong weather emergency preparedness.

The designation reflects months of collaboration and work between the University and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency.

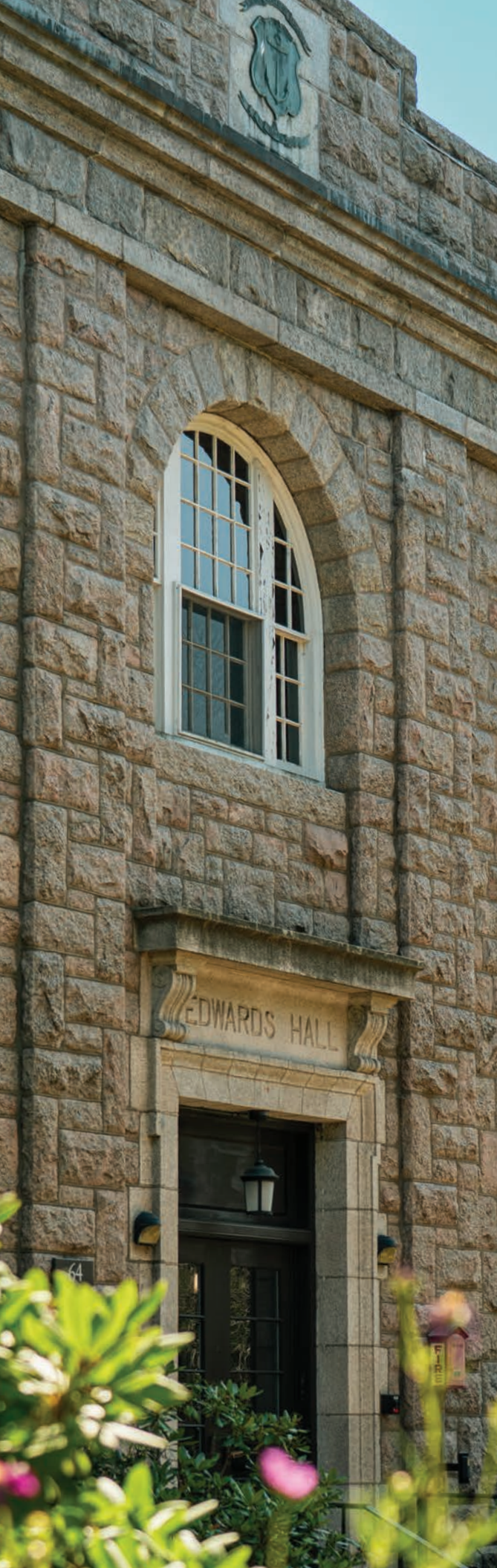
CREATING TRANSDISCIPLINARY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Funded in part by the University's first-ever T32 grant from the National Institutes of Health, the University has launched a new Transdisciplinary Training Program in Biomedical Science and Bioengineering.

The grant marks a major milestone in URI's growth as a global research institution. The program reflects a growing recognition that today's most complex challenges in health and medicine—from neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, to addiction, mental health disorders, wearable health

monitoring and wellness—cannot be solved within a single discipline. Addressing them requires researchers who collaborate across fields, including biology, psychology, neuroscience, and engineering.

The program will create a shared training ecosystem where students learn to bridge disciplinary boundaries, collaborate across labs, and develop the skills needed to address complex health challenges in biomedical research careers while strengthening the pipeline of future graduate students.



FINANCIALS

The University made meaningful financial progress in fiscal year 2026, with growth in assets and revenues alongside a reduction in liabilities. Together, these results reflect the continued strength of the University's operations and its focus on maintaining financial sustainability while supporting its academic and strategic priorities.

In FY26, the University's total assets grew by \$63.1 million, or 4.9%. The increase was driven by continued investment in long-term assets and the generosity of our donors. These results support the priorities outlined in *Focus URI*, the University's strategic plan, including the goal of building a high-performing, fiscally responsible, and agile institution.

Total revenues increased by \$39.3 million, or 5.1%, continuing a positive trend over several years. Growth occurred across a range of operating and nonoperating revenues, including gifts and contributions, which increased by 34.6%; investment income, which increased by 21.4%; and capital contributions, which increased by 11.5%. State appropriations also increased by \$4.3 million, or 3.8%.

At the same time, total liabilities decreased by \$25.0 million, or 4.8%, further strengthening the University's financial position and supporting greater operational flexibility.

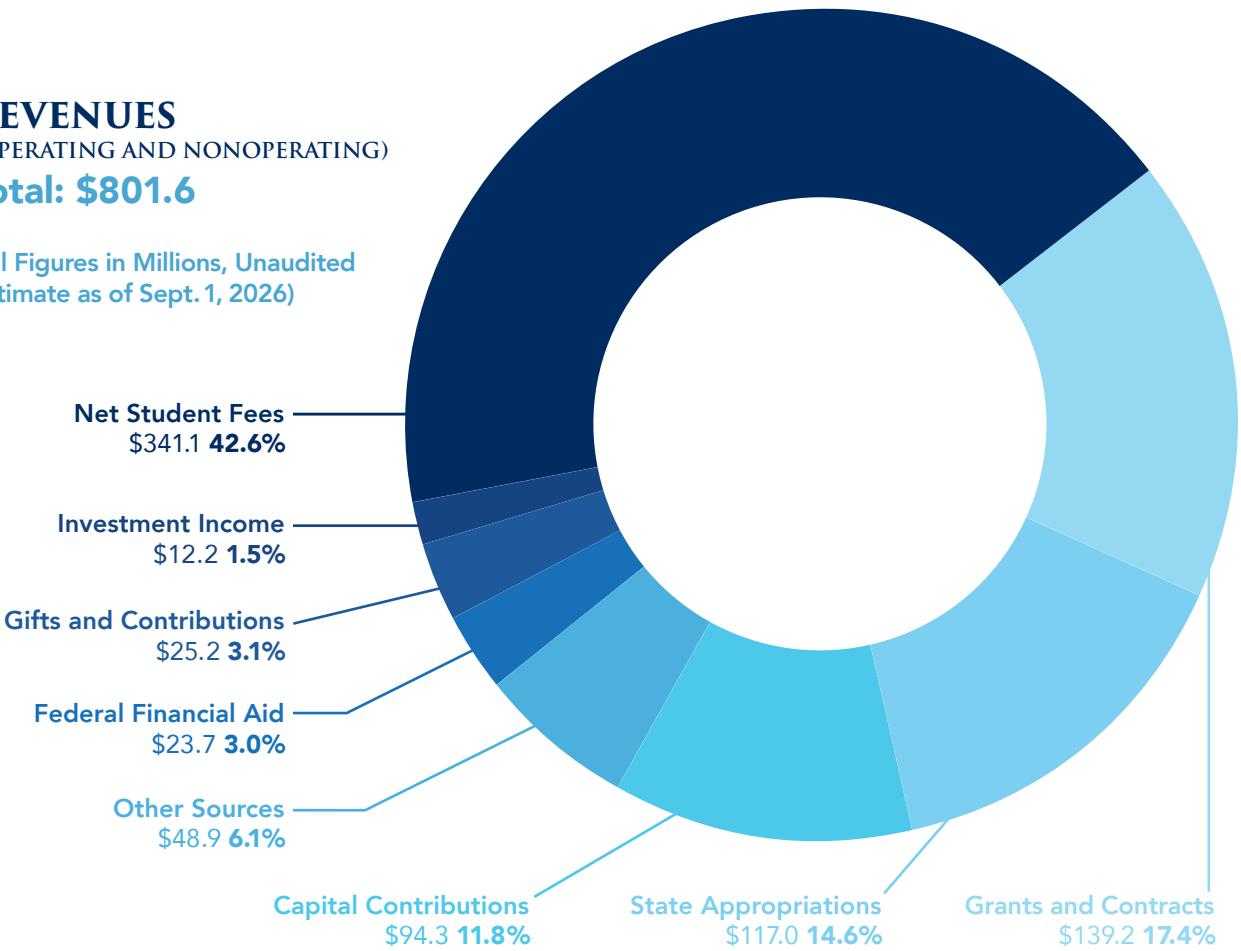
Together, these results provide the University with greater capacity to invest in its priorities and respond to the opportunities ahead. They also position URI to continue advancing its strategic vision, including broadening our impact, enhancing student achievement, fostering an inclusive culture, and powering the university of the future.

The FY26 results show the value of sustained progress across the University's financial operations. While URI faces broader economic headwinds also being experienced by other U.S. universities, the University is well positioned to build on this momentum and support its mission and priorities in the years ahead.

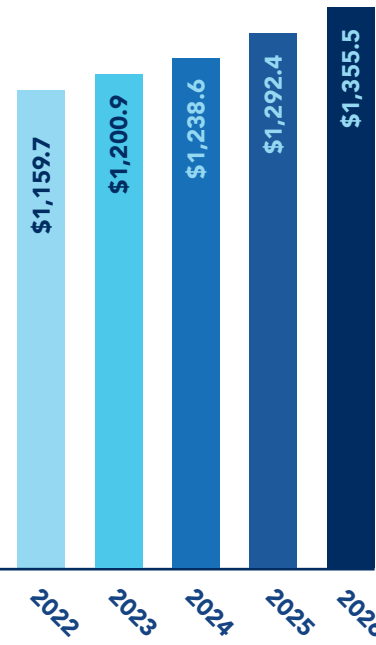
PHOTO: CATHERINE SCOTT

REVENUES (OPERATING AND NONOPERATING) Total: \$801.6

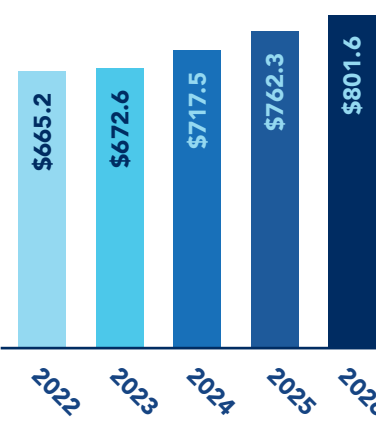
(All Figures in Millions, Unaudited Estimate as of Sept. 1, 2026)



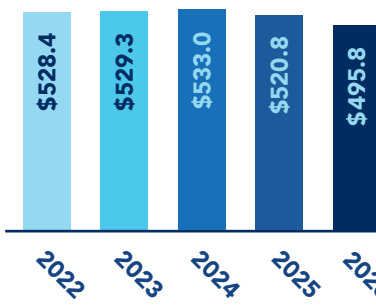
TOTAL ASSETS (All Figures in Millions)



TOTAL REVENUES



TOTAL LIABILITIES



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