

URI Informed

THE URI EMPLOYEES' NEWSLETTER

Vol. 32 Issue 4

SPRING 2025

University of Rhode Island Honorary Degree Recipient Steven Feinberg

Writer, director, producer Feinberg will be honored during May 16 commencement ceremonies

Steven Feinberg, who, as executive director of the Rhode Island Film and Television Office, has spent more than 20 years standing at the intersection of the arts and commerce in the Ocean State, will be honored next month for his personal and professional achievements as part of the University of Rhode Island's annual commencement ceremonies.

Feinberg will be awarded a Doctor of Letters, Honoris causa, on Friday, May 16, at 2 p.m. at the Thomas M. Ryan Center on the

by Dawn Bergantino

Kingston Campus during commencement ceremonies for URI's College of Arts and Sciences.

The University will honor more than 3,300 undergraduate and graduate degree candidates from Friday, May 16, through Sunday, May 18, in eight college-based ceremonies at the Ryan Center.

"At URI, honorary degrees are one of the highest honors we can bestow. Steven Feinberg is joining a distinguished group of individuals who have made a profound

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Steven Feinberg, executive director of the Rhode Island Film and Television Office, will be honored during the University of Rhode Island's commencement ceremonies on May 16.

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND

THINK BIG  WE DOSM



URInformed

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If you have a suggestion for an article about a co-worker or colleague, or perhaps information about an event, or simply have an interest in being involved with the newsletter, you may send your request to:

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The editorial board reserves the right to select the material printed and to edit it to conform to space restrictions.

Please get involved! This is your newsletter and we need your support to make it work.

URI is an equal opportunity employer committed to the principles of affirmative action and values diversity.

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impact in their fields and in the world,” said URI President Marc Parlange. “As a filmmaker, a champion of the arts, and an advocate for Rhode Island, Steven has helped shape the creative landscape of our state and beyond. We’re so proud to recognize his achievements and his deep commitment to storytelling, education, and community.”

A graduate of Cranston High School West, Feinberg spent 22 years in Los Angeles, where he studied cinematography at the University of California, Los Angeles and film and television production at the prestigious University of Southern California Cinema School. As a writer, director and producer he has worked with every major Hollywood studio.

Since 2004, in his capacity at the Rhode Island Film and Television Office, Feinberg has shepherded more than \$900 million in film and

television productions into the state, creating thousands of jobs for local talent, crew, and small businesses, along with providing opportunities for students. His collaborations include working with notable talents such as Academy and Emmy award-winning writer/director James L. Brooks, Lord Julian Fellowes, Wes Anderson, Mark Ruffalo, Bette Midler, Richard Gere and Zoe Saldana. Productions have included HBO’s Emmy Award-winning series “The Gilded Age,” Disney’s record-breaking “Hocus Pocus 2,” Oscar nominated “Moonrise Kingdom,” and three seasons of the Peabody Award-winning Showtime series “Brotherhood.”

In 2016, Feinberg wrote, directed and produced the award-winning documentary, “PELL,” which explores the challenges U.S. Sen. Claiborne Pell, of Rhode Island, faced in creating the Pell Grant program and its impact on education and society today. Sponsored by the Lumina Foundation and the Rhode Island Council on the Humanities, “PELL” premiered at the Rhode Island International Film Festival and won the distinguished Providence Film Festival Award for “a New England director whose work brings cinematic excellence to an international audience.” The film also won Best Documentary awards from the Los Angeles Film Festival and Williamsburg Independent Film Festival. The documentary had a special screening before Congress and, in February 2022, was viewed by various dignitaries in celebration of the 50-year anniversary of the Pell Grant.

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Rhody Outpost Challenge

URI Team “Jells” Together for Rhody Outpost

Rhody Outpost serves approximately 80 students each week. Basic needs insecurity is a real challenge on college campuses today; the Outpost food pantry was created to help address this issue at URI. The pantry provides food and other items at no charge to students and is managed by the Dean of Students Office with staffing by student and community volunteers. The pantry serves all URI students who are food and/or housing insecure and need help making ends meet.

The Outpost remains open all summer long, our need for donations never takes a break!

The Outpost is currently in need of more for its shelves.

See their current needs at:

uri.edu/rhody-outpost/

Or reach out with any questions to:

barbara_sweeney@uri.edu

Gift cards to local grocery/drugstores are also welcome for Rhody Outpost which even has an online Amazon wish list for easy ordering and shipping. Donations can be dropped off at the Dining Services Warehouse (Tootell Road) between 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. or left in the shed outside St. Augustine's Church (Lower College Road) anytime.

See their current needs at uri.edu/rhody-outpost/ or reach out to barbara_sweeney@uri.edu with any questions.

If you decide to take the challenge, please let me (ngillespie@uri.edu) know how many pounds of needed items your group donated; take a photo if you can and it will be in the next issue of URInformed.



Congratulations to the staff of **Human Resources**. They took the Rhody Challenge and did a fantastic collection of **346 pounds!**

Feinberg...continued from page 2

For ten seasons, Feinberg has been a producer and co-host of the Rhode Island PBS weekly series “doubleFEATURE,” which explores the art of cinema by showcasing the art of the short film and the artists who make them.

A member of the Writers Guild of America since 1987, his internationally successful Village Roadshow Studios feature film “Fortress” was nominated for a Saturn Award for best science fiction movie in 1994.

In 2022, the Rhode Island International Film Festival honored Feinberg with the legendary Sam Spiegel Producer Award. In 2023,

he was recognized by the Preservation Society of Newport County with the Laurel Artisan-ship Award for distinguished and artistic service. He has been honored by New England’s Imagine Magazine, Discover Newport Tourism, the Providence Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau, and received the George M. Cohan Ambassador Award from the Rhode Island International Film Festival. Since 2009, Feinberg has served as honorary chair for Rhode Island’s official Oscar Night “Red Carpet Experience.” He is also vice president of the Greenwich Odeum Board of Directors.

To learn more or to view a full schedule of ceremonies over **URI’s Spring 2025 Commencement Weekend**, visit:

uri.edu/commencement/



Photo by Nora Lewis



URI SPRING COMMENCEMENT 2025



S	L	A	O	G	S	E	I	R	O	M	E	M
A	D	V	A	N	C	E	D	X	S	T	A	O
T	Y	I	F	U	T	U	R	E	A	T	N	M
I	T	R	R	I	R	U	E	U	R	R	E	E
S	I	U	I	Z	N	R	D	I	P	A	T	N
F	S	A	E	V	G	A	C	A	P	V	A	T
A	R	I	N	E	R	U	L	E	K	E	R	U
C	E	L	D	G	L	R	D	S	C	L	B	M
T	V	A	S	A	B	I	D	E	A	L	E	S
I	I	G	T	S	R	O	N	O	H	W	L	N
O	N	E	X	P	E	R	I	E	N	C	E	A
N	U	R	Q	K	S	R	E	E	R	A	C	L
W	I	N	S	R	O	S	S	E	F	O	R	P

1. ADVANCED
2. CAP
3. CAREERS
4. CELEBRATE
5. EXPERIENCE
6. FRIENDS
7. FUTURE
8. FINALS
9. DEGREES

10. GOALS
11. GRADUATE
12. HONORS
13. IDEAL
14. MATRICULATE
15. MEMORIES
16. MOMENTUM
17. PLANS
18. PRIDE

19. PROFESSORS
20. REGALIA
21. SATISFACTION
22. TRAVEL
23. UNIVERSITY
24. URI (3x)
25. WINS

DIRECTIONS: The object is to find the 25 hidden words within the grid. Words can be found horizontally, vertically, diagonally, backwards or forwards. Return the completed wordsearch to Nancy Gillespie, Communications and Marketing, Alumni Ctr, 73 Upper Coll Rd. Please include your name, address and e-mail with your entry. A drawing of all correct entries will determine the winner. A URI prize will be given to the winning entry.

The winner will be announced in the next issue of URInformed. Good Luck!

Name _____ Dept. _____

Campus Address _____

Phone Ext. _____ E-mail _____

URI Launches Botanical Collections Geo-database

Putting URI's Botanical Collections on the Map

URI's College of Pharmacy, in collaboration with the Department of Spatial Services and College of the Environment and Life Sciences, has launched a collaborative, public, and comprehensive database of the plant collections across URI's Kingston Campus. Known as the URI Botanical Collections Database, this application stores a wealth of information about many of the plants that adorn the University's campus. This new database is particularly exciting because of its many benefits to both the University and the larger public, a myriad of potential applications and the multi-pronged approach that the project encompasses.

The URI Botanical Collections Database was developed in large part by Maegan Shanaghan, URI GIS and spatial services specialist. The driving force behind the database's design, Shanaghan helped the team implement the database, creating the feature classes, setting up the accession points across the map, joining the team's data from its original spreadsheet into the database, troubleshooting issues, and even creating tutorials for the rest of the team to learn how to use the GIS software.

Of the 1,200 unique species and cultivars in URI's Youngken Medicinal Garden, Horridge Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, more than 700 have already been added to the new public database. Shanaghan says that the database "is a way to store and analyze your spatial data: anything you'd want to attach a set of geographic coordinates to, display on a map, and track the location of. In this case, it's the plants in our botanical collections. Every point on the map is a real plant that's been catalogued by the team."

The application is both a database and a map, meaning that it serves as a data storage and management tool for each of the botanical collections on campus. The Botanical Gardens are a 'living museum,' providing a visual, interactive experience for visitors who want to learn more and take a tour of the plants housed at URI. In addition, there is information about each plant's scientific name, native origin, conserva-

tion status, and a description about medicinal uses. Users are able to click on the map to see exactly where the plant is housed on campus, an image of the plant, and information about it.

According to Elizabeth Leibovitz, the garden coordinator for the Youngken Medicinal Garden, the database serves three overarching purposes: internal inventory management, public engagement, and fostering community pride.

Allegra Halverson, assistant manager of University farms, which serve as URI's agricultural experiment stations, says that by managing the collections, they are able to share this information with the public on the web, through Cooperative Extension and other outreach programs on campus. "More than just a beautiful open space to enjoy, the plants here have a history, they have stories to tell," she says. "Publishing the database gave us a way to share these plants and their stories."

"This database is a great tool that will make it really consistent and seamless for us to manage botanical inventory, especially if people retire or move to different positions," Leibovitz adds. "The database is a robust, long-term investment in the integrity of our collections. It's a place where we can drop some of the institutional knowledge about the plants on our campus. This kind of knowledge can be fragile if it doesn't have a place to live; now it does."

The database was also created to support efforts for URI to apply for recognition as an accredited arboretum, which Leibovitz sees as going hand-in-hand with the University's newly appointed R1 status. "If we're an R1 university, we should have an accredited garden," she says. "When you take the collections together, it's an interesting and unique collection. There are some rare plants and trees. Together, once we get our database organized, we could conceive of our collections as a whole and seek accreditation for them."

Halverson notes that the team is also working on tours: "Esri, the GIS software used to create the database, has a great tool for making map-based tours, pulling directly from our live data

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Personnel Script

Job Opportunities

The classified and non-classified application process is now automated so that you can apply on-line for positions here at the University. You will also be able to review the status of your application during the recruitment process, update your on-line application, and apply for positions that become available in the future. For the job opportunities visit:

<https://jobs.uri.edu>

We Welcome the Following People to our Community...

Kimberly Arruda (Custodial Services), Ethan Brown (CELS Academic Unit 2), Michelle Caetano (Pharmacy Practice), Kimberly Costanza (Dining Board Operations), Alison D'Angeli (Education), Amelo Dela Torre (Dining Board Operations), Rebecca Feroldi (Enrollment Services), Devin Fields (Univ Coll for Academic Success), John Fils-Aime (Men's Football), Conner Golley (Women's Soccer), Clayton Graham (CELS Academic Unit 2), Joel Hurley (Custodial Services), Susan Jamison (Publications), Ashley Katusa (Research Office), Robert Kiely (Human Resource Administration), Sarah Leeming (Custodial Services), Chelsea Lenhart (Center Career Experiential Edu), Rachel Leveillee (Provost for Academic Affairs), John McCann (CELS Academic Unit 2), Beatrice Price (Human Resource Administration), Tasnuva Tasfia Puspita (Advancement Teaching & Learning), Charlotte Roberts (Chemical Engineering), Ashton Robertson (Communications & Marketing), Mark Santilli (Custodial Services), Paula Santos Jordan (HRL Facilities), Keith Shinaberry (Univ Coll for Academic Success), Karin Trudo (CELS Academic Unit 2), Rowan Urbec (Dining Retail Operations), Ariel Wang (CELS Academic Unit 2)

... and Say Goodbye to ...

Matthew Anderson (Women's Soccer), Rachel Cahoon (HRL Facilities), Susan Campbell (Enrollment Services), Stephen Conca (Dining Board Operations), Zachary Cooper (Maintenance & Repair), Mary Corr (Custo-

dial Services), Ronald Drake Jr. (Maintenance & Repair), John Landergan (Financial Strategy & Planning), Nicole Maranhas (Ryan Institute Neuroscience), Caitlin Massey (Undergraduate Admissions), Mariam Mostafa (Student Academic Services), Patrick Murphy (Men's Football), Heather Nayman (Human Resource Administration), Keri Newman (Biomedical & Pharmaceutical Sc), Benny Nguyen (Library Public Services), Claudia Prior (Chemical Engineering), Glenn Ricci (GSO Coastal Resources Center), Gleyribel Rodriguez (Univ Coll for Academic Success), Lisa Shen (Psychology), Tina Verria (Payroll Office)

... and Best Wishes To Those Who Retired

Jeanne Browning (Property Control), Zena Fernandes (Dean Education), Marc Hardge (Special Pgm for Talent Developmt), Karen Kent (GSO Coastal Resources Center), John Kirby (Dean Environment & Life Science), Lee-Ann Lambert (Dining Board Operations), Nora Lewis (Publications), Cheryl Wilga (Dean Environment & Life Science)

In Memoriam

- ❖ Robert ("Bob") McClellan Beagle
Vice President of Advancement, retired
- ❖ Michael Lapointe, Housing and Residential Life, Residential Education



URInformed Word Search Winner

Congratulations to **Nancy Paquette**,
Enrollment Services, Green Hall.

Please contact Nancy Gillespie, Communications and Marketing (4-4508) to claim your prize.

Check out the Word Search on page 5!

Botanical Garden...*continued from page 6*

and displaying it in a nice storymap setting,” she says.

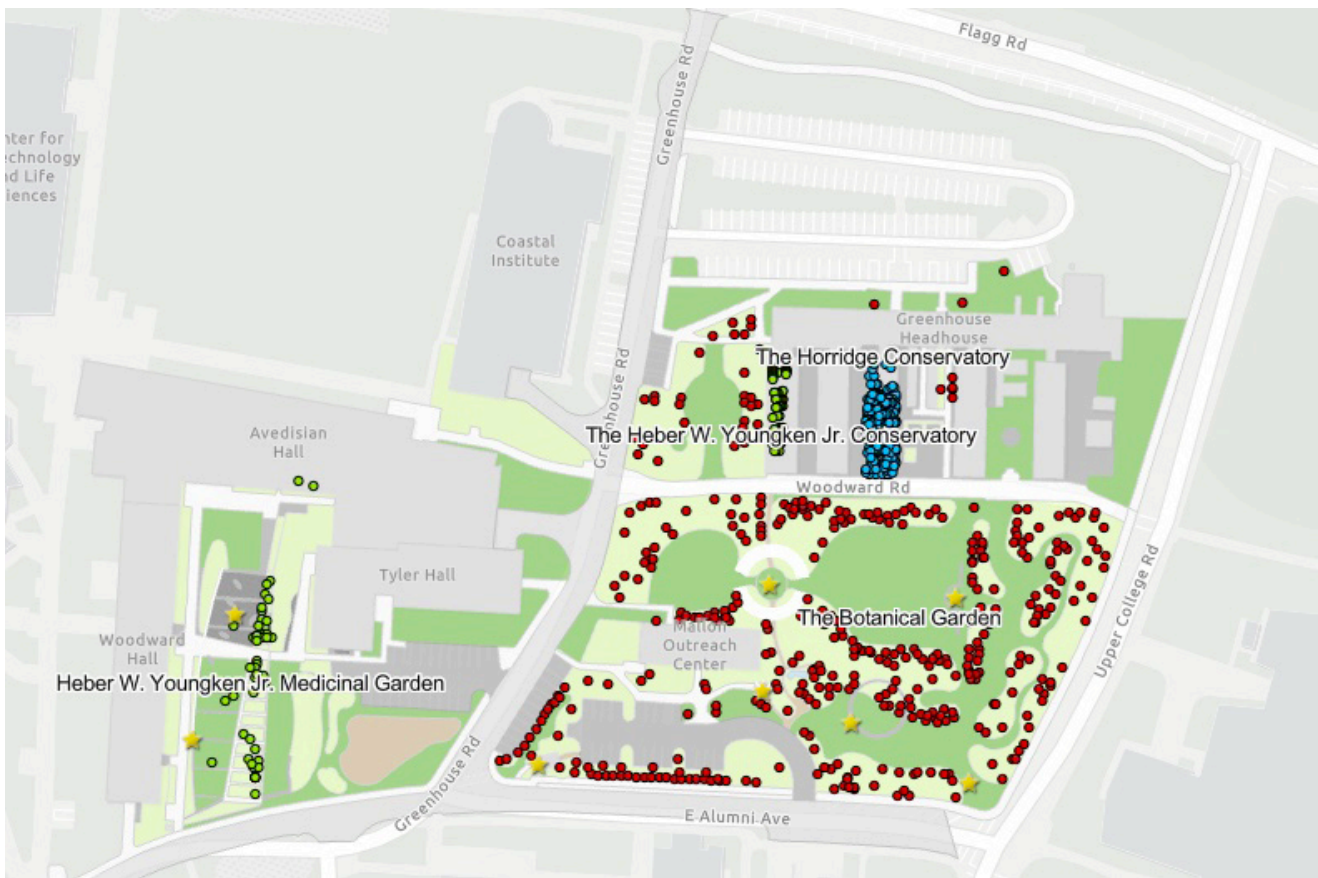
URI Master Gardener volunteer Philip Fong says the database opens many opportunities. “We want to make ourselves more available to the community,” he says. “We’d love to have kids from schools doing field trips here and see more departments use the garden as a teaching space for classes. There are multiple functions that open up the space. There’s also the communication side, using the database as a medium to reach out to the public allows people to use apps like Facebook, TikTok, etc., to further publicize what’s happening.”

Garden staff are still discussing additional improvements and potential uses of the database, including adding accessibility features, tours in multiple languages, information for visitors and

including other botanical resources at URI. Paul Neri, manager of URI Lands and Grounds, also sees potential in using the program to manage the thousands of trees on campus. Many of these trees are part of the Everett P. Christopher Memorial Arboretum, another treasured Botanical Collection that could be added to the public database in the future.

To visit in person, URI’s outdoor botanical collections (6 Greenhouse Road, Kingston) are open sunrise to sunset. The conservatories are open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and by appointment (Benjamin.robbins@uri.edu). Visitor parking is available.

This story was written by Yvonne Wingard, Communications Fellow in the College of the Environment and Life Sciences.



A new internal botanical inventory management tool preserves records of URI’s plant collections and can help the public learn about plants at the University.

The Pets Corner

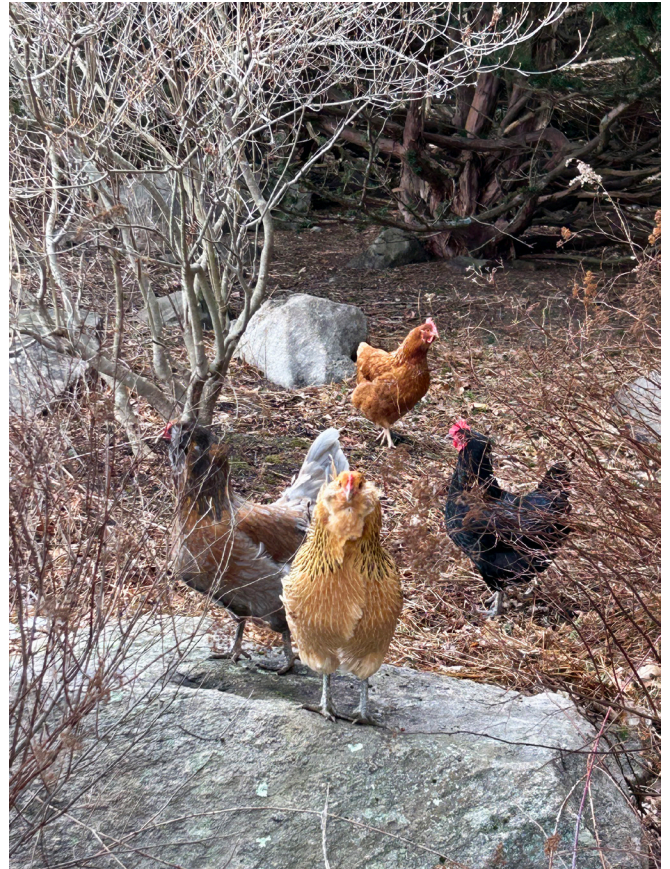


Send us your favorite photo of you and your pet.
We need a high resolution jpg.
Your name and department
Your pet's name, breed
One or two sentences about your pet.
Maybe the photo will tell us all we need to know.
Contact:
Nancy Gillespie
ngillespie@uri.edu



Cats Ruckus (L) and Achilles (R) enjoying a view of the campus and a happy life with **Mary Parlange**.

Photos submitted by Mary Parlange.



The **Parlange Family chickens** -- the two easter eggers, **Poptart** and **Twinkie**, and the black one is **Netflix** and the red one is **Noel**. They are enjoying life on campus.





The Pets Corner Too!



Miss Mollie is an 8 year old toy Aussie and was recently adopted into her forever home with the provost. She loves her lamb chop!
-- **Barbra Wolfe, Provost**

Cook's Corner

Share your favorite recipes in the Cook's Corner

Bright Spring Salad

This spring salad recipe is a perfect light meal or side dish. Filled with fresh veggies, herbs, and a zippy vinaigrette, it's simple, bright, and delicious.

Ingredients:

- 1 bunch asparagus, tender parts, chopped into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup frozen peas, thawed
- A few handfuls salad greens
- 2 radishes, thinly sliced
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ½ avocado, pitted and diced
- ¼ cup chopped toasted pistachios
- ½ cup roasted chickpeas
- Fresh herbs, for garnish (basil, mint and/or chives)

Dressing:

- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, or a mix of basil and mint leaves
- 1 small garlic clove
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as desired
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and set a bowl of ice water nearby. Blanch the asparagus for about 1 minute, or until tender but still bright green. Transfer to the ice water for 1 minute, then drain. Allow the asparagus to dry and transfer it back to the bowl and add the peas.

2. Make the dressing: In a food processor, pulse together the basil, garlic, lemon juice and zest, vinegar, olive oil, and salt. Season to taste, adding more oil as desired.

3. Add half of the dressing to the bowl with the asparagus and toss to coat. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



4. Assemble the salad. Arrange the salad greens on a platter, then layer the asparagus/pea mixture, the radishes, feta, avocado, pistachios, chickpeas, and herbs on top. Drizzle with the remaining dressing, season to taste with more salt and pepper, and serve.

Prep Time: 20minutes, Cook Time: 5minutes

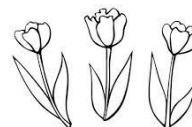
Total Time: 25minutes, Serves 4

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at

<http://web.uri.edu/urinformed/>

Browse the current issue of
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Congratulations!

