

URI Informed

THE URI EMPLOYEES' NEWSLETTER

Vol. 32 Issue 1

SPRING 2024

Commencement 2024-URI Honorary Degrees

Renowned Actress Viola Davis,

Author Deborah Goodrich Royce, Business Executive Charles Royce

Viola Davis, one of only 19 people to have ever won all four of the major American performing art awards; and Charles M. Royce and Deborah Goodrich Royce, noted for their literary and investment success and preservation work across Rhode Island, will be awarded honorary degrees by the University of Rhode Island next month.

The University will award the degrees in recognition of their professional and personal achievement, on Saturday, May 18, at 10 a.m. at the Thomas M. Ryan Center on the Kingston Campus. Davis will be awarded an honorary Doctorate of Letters, and the Royces will be awarded honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters.

The University will honor more than 3,000 undergraduate and graduate degree candidates from Friday, May 17, through Sunday, May 19, in eight college-based ceremonies at the Ryan Center.

"I could not be more pleased with this year's honorary degree recipients, whose lives and work serve as an inspiration to our university and exemplify impressive achievements and contributions to the arts, philanthropy, business, and public service," URI President Marc Parlange said.

continued on page 2

by Dave Lavallee



Viola Davis

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND

THINK BIG  WE DOSM



URInformed

Nancy Gillespie, Editor
Charlene Dunn, Assistant Editor

Editorial Board

Laura Kenerson
Kathie McKinstry
Laura Shea
Shawn Simmons

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:

URInformed, 73 Upper College Road,
Kingston Campus
or contact us by e-mail at:
NGillespie@uri.edu

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.



Table of Contents

<i>URI Commencement</i>	<i>p. 1</i>
<i>Honorary Degrees</i>	<i>p. 3</i>
<i>Word Search</i>	<i>p. 5</i>
<i>VP Benson</i>	<i>p. 6</i>
<i>Staff Recognition</i>	<i>p. 7</i>
<i>Comings and Goings</i>	<i>p. 8</i>
<i>Ram of the Game</i>	<i>p.10</i>
<i>Canine Officer</i>	<i>p.11</i>
<i>Pets Corner</i>	<i>p.12</i>
<i>Word Search Winner</i>	<i>p.13</i>
<i>Hazard Mitigation Plan</i>	<i>p.14</i>
<i>Recipe</i>	<i>p.15</i>
<i>Staff Photography</i>	<i>Back cover</i>

Commencement...*continued from page 1*

"Each of our recipients has had a meaningful impact on their field, our state, and the world, and they embody the values we work to instill in all our students. We warmly welcome them into the URI community, and I look forward to honoring them during our commencement activities next month."

Barbara Wolfe, provost and executive vice president for academic affairs, said, "As a public research university with students pursuing so many exciting careers, it is inspiring to welcome honorary degree recipients who exemplify commitment to craft, to one's values, and to giving back. We are grateful for their leadership and look forward to the opportunity to honor their incredible achievements at this year's URI commencement."

continued on page 3



Viola Davis

Davis is one of just 19 individuals to ever achieve EGOT status—a designation given to those who have won each of the Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony awards. A revered artist, activist, producer, philanthropist, and New York Times best-selling author, Davis has won Tony Awards for her performances in *King Hedley II* (2001) and a revival of August Wilson's *Fences* (2010). In 2015, she became the first African American woman to win an Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series for her television role in *How to Get Away with Murder*. She reprised her role playing Rose Maxson in the 2016 film adaptation of *Fences*, for which she received an Oscar for Best Actress in a Supporting Role in 2017. She was honored in 2017 by Time magazine as one of the world's 100 most influential people, and in 2022, received the Public Counsel's William O. Douglas Award for her commitment to social justice causes. And in 2023, she received a Grammy Award for Best Audio Book, Narration and Storytelling Recording, for her critically acclaimed and New York Times best-selling memoir *Finding Me*.

In 2012, Davis and her husband, Julius Tennon, founded their production company, JuVee Productions, with its focus on giving a voice to the voiceless. JuVee creates scripted and non-scripted television, film, documentary, theater, and digital immersive content for global audiences. A graduate of The Juilliard School, Davis received an honorary doctorate during its 109th commencement ceremony. She also holds an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from her alma mater, Rhode Island College, and is also a graduate of Central Falls High School in Rhode



Deborah Goodrich Royce



A best-selling author, Royce is renowned for her thrillers that examine puzzles of identity. *Reef Road*, a national bestseller, was named one of the best books of 2023 by Kirkus Reviews and an Indie Next pick by the American Booksellers Association. *Ruby Falls* won the Zibby Award for Best Plot Twist, and *Finding Mrs. Ford* was hailed by Forbes, Book Riot, and Good Morning America.

The Ocean House Author Series—a salon-style conversation that Royce hosts in partnership with Bank Square Books—brings world-class authors to Watch Hill, Rhode Island. It has featured a wide range of fiction and non-fiction writers, including Chris Bohjalian, Katie Couric, Zibby Owens, and Emma Straub.

Royce writes a quarterly column for Hey Rhody Magazine, sharing her book recommendations and news with the Ocean State. She began as an actress on *All My Children* and in multiple films, before transitioning to the role of story editor at Miramax Films, developing *Emma* and early versions of *Chicago* and *A Wrinkle in Time*.

She and her husband have worked together to restore the Avon Theatre in Stamford, Connecticut; the 100-year-old Deer Mountain Inn

continued on page 4

Commencement...continued from page 3

in Tannersville, New York; Martin House Books in Westerly, Rhode Island; and other main street revitalization projects in Rhode Island and the Catskills. They have also led preservation projects such as the Mountain Top Library and Fromer's Farm in Tannersville, New York; the restoration of Westerly's Ocean House, a Victorian-era wooden seaside resort hotel built in the 1860s that reopened in 2010. Also in Westerly, they led the restoration of the United Theatre, which was completed in 2022. It has become a cultural center bringing together various forms of art, music, and dance.

She holds a bachelor's degree in modern foreign languages and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Lake Erie College.

Charles M. "Chuck" Royce



Royce is chair and portfolio manager of Royce and Associates, LLP, retiring in 2015 as president and chief executive officer of the firm that he founded in 1972. The firm specializes in investments in domestic and international small capitalization stocks. He received a bachelor's degree in economics from Brown University in 1961 and a master's degree in business administration from Columbia University in 1963.

Royce is a fellow emeritus of the Brown Corporation. He previously served three terms as trustee of Brown University, established the Royce Fellowship in 1996, which supports undergraduate research and enrichment projects, and established the Royce Family Professorship for Teaching Excellence in 2004 to foster, promote and reward undergraduate teaching.

Royce serves as a trustee for The Frick Collection, along with the Berkeley School of Divinity at Yale University, the Bruce Museum, and the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach, Florida.

Royce and his Royce Family Fund were instrumental in building the Westerly Education Center and are working on Westerly's Tower Street Center, a multi-purpose community space being repurposed from an abandoned school.

He served on the Vestry of Trinity Wall Street and Christ Church in Greenwich, Connecticut, where he was instrumental in founding "Courage and Faith," a series that presents leading writers and artists to the community.





URI Commencement



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

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1. Academic | 10. Honors | 19. Start |
| 2. Awards | 11. Interactions | 20. Success |
| 3. Chosen | 12. Internship | 21. Travels |
| 4. Colleague | 13. Introduction | 22. URI |
| 5. Excellence | 14. Scholarship | 23. Vision |
| 6. Experiences | 15. Semester | 24. Watch |
| 7. Fly | 16. Shares | 25. Win |
| 8. Free | 17. Speech | |
| 9. Grand | 18. Stars | |

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 Shawn Marie Simmons, Provost Office, Green Hall, Room 109. 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 _____

University of Rhode Island Appoints Abby Benson Vice President for Administration and Finance

by Dawn Bergantino

The University of Rhode Island has named Abby Benson vice president for administration and finance. A Rhode Island native, Benson is an accomplished education leader with a proven commitment to public universities.

Benson has served on the University's senior leadership team since December 2021, when she joined URI as chief of staff and strategic advisor to the president. She was named interim vice president for administration and finance in May. Her appointment follows a national search.

"Abby is an experienced higher education leader with a proven career as a strategic thought partner and steward of public resources," said URI President Marc Parlange. "During her time as interim vice president, and before that as chief of staff and strategic advisor, she has been instrumental in enhancing administrative effectiveness and increasing community engagement across the University."

As vice president, Benson will serve as chief financial officer of the university and lead a team of more than 480 staff members across a range of administrative areas, including enterprise risk management; facilities operations and capital projects; financial operations; human resources; public safety; and strategic procurement. She also will share management with the provost of the financial strategy and planning and information technology services departments.

"It has been such an honor over the past year to work with many of the dedicated staff who are so critical to supporting URI's teaching, research, and service missions," Benson said. "I look forward to what we can accomplish together as we work to power the university of the future."

As chief of staff, Benson simultaneously managed several administrative, budget, communications, and government relations functions. She also helped lead the development of the University's current 10-year strategic plan, Focus URI.

A native Rhode Islander, Benson says she returned to the state, in part, because of her belief in URI's land- and sea-grant missions and service to the state of Rhode Island.



Abby Benson

She has deep experience in public higher education, having served in roles of increasing responsibility at the University of Colorado for nearly a decade. As part of the CU system, including at its flagship campus in Boulder, Benson served as associate vice president for government relations, assistant vice chancellor for research and innovation, and associate vice chancellor for strategic resources and support. In the latter role, she helped oversee CU Boulder's budget of more than \$1.8 billion and supported strategy planning and execution for key business, facilities, IT, communications, equity and compliance, and government and community relations functions.

Prior to her time in Colorado, Benson served in the Washington, D.C., office of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, helping to lead a team that advocated for MIT's federal priorities. In that role, she also served as president of the Science Coalition, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of more than 50 research universities dedicated to sustaining federal investment in scientific research.

Benson is a military veteran, having served for nearly a decade in the United States Coast

continued on page 7

Benson...*continued from page 6*

Guard, rising to the rank of lieutenant commander. Her service included time at Marine Safety Office Boston, as well as in the Office of the Assistant Commandant for Operations and the Office of Budget and Programs.

Benson began her career as an earth scientist, supporting environmental assessment and remediation efforts at U.S. Navy and U.S. Army facilities, including several Superfund sites. She earned a bachelor's degree in geology and geophysics from Yale University and master's degrees in transportation and logistics from MIT.



URI recognized current employees for their service to the University in a program this April in the Memorial Union. This year's inaugural event honored and recognized faculty and staff members for their dedication to the University community, celebrating milestone years of service attained last year, from 5 to 50. And Rhody, who holds the record for service to the University, stopped by to join the celebration! Shown with Facilities Operations' (l-r) Martin Koski (30 years), Mark Ravenell, Carl Pierson (10) and Jae Yoon (25). With 325 employees celebrated this year, this year's inaugural class of milestone employees represented a total of 6,580 years of service to the University. *Photo by Mike Salerno*

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...

Ronald Abate (NBC Maintenance), John Al-
lenson (Public Safety: Commun & Techn), Adel
Aly (School of Education), Matthew Anderson
(Women's Soccer), Allyson Antin (Business
Instruction), Haley Appaneal (Pharmacy Prac-
tice), Alyssa Avila (Psychology), Zachary Baker
(Univ Coll for Academic Success), Leslie Barnes
(Gerontology), Jaime Barrett (CELS Academic
Unit 1), Michael Bensink (Office of Equal
Opportunity), Alondra Berrios (Counseling
Center), Heather Breau (Health Services),
Seneca Brown (Custodial Services), Lyn Budaj
(Enrollment Services), Coline Caillon (CELS Aca-
demic Unit 3), Toni Carreiro Fogleman (Dean
Environment & Life Science), Rebecca Carroll
(President's Office), Yu-Ton Chen (CELS Aca-
demic Unit 3), Jacqueline Christophe-Hayot
(Business Instruction), Anna Collis (Dean
Pharmacy), Chloe Combs (Health Services),
Clayton Cook (Harrington School), Heidi Co-
oper (Facilities Services Admin.), Emily Cribas
(CELS Academic Unit 2), Morgan D'Ovidio
(Dining Board Operations), Kai Deng (Din-
ing Catering Operations), Jeremiah Dennis
(HRL M&R Facilities), Christine Dias (Dean
Environment & Life Science), Jesse Duroha
(Dean Engineering), Kathryn Embrey (Dining
Board Operations), Gabriele Fariello (Info
Tech Services), Scott Field (Physics), Patrick
Flanagan (GSO Research), Mackenzie Flynn
(General Counsel), Keegan Foster (CELS
Academic Unit 2), Rosemary Galiani (Dining
Board Operations), Michael Garafola (Police),
Ryan Gardiner (Dean Engineering), Robert
Gauger (Dining Board Operations), Emily

Gauthier (Dean Environment & Life Science),
Nicole Gildersleeve (Payroll Office), Chloe
Gilligan (CELS Academic Unit 3), Ralph
Gonzalez McElroy (Theatre), Jill Granville
(Conference Services), David Greenway
(Business Instruction), Thomas Harkness
(Dean Engineering), Jennifer Hill (Info Tech
Services), Liesl Hotaling (GSO Research),
Jeanne Hruska (Provost for Academic Affairs),
Ishrat Jahan (Chemical Engineering), Charles
Johnston (Dining Board Operations), Justin
Jussila (Custodial Services), Joakim
Karlsen (Recreational Services), John
LaRose (Undergraduate Admissions), Sally
Lambert (Enrollment Services), Lynnea Lau
(Research Office), Yu-Hsin Lee (Languages),
Luis Leonardo Polanco (Dean Pharmacy),
Damian Letellier (Dining ID Office), Tyler
Loftus (Men's Football), Connor Love (GSO
Research), Katie Marie Magnone (Chemis-
try), Joseph Manetta (CELS Academic Unit
2), Emily Markey (Dean Environment & Life
Science), Robert McConnell Jr. (Janitorial
Services), Jerrica Men (Human Resource
Administration), Markeisha Miner (Communi-
ty Equity & Diversity), Maha Mitrelis (Busi-
ness Instruction), Mariam Mostafa (Student
Academic Services), Krysta Murray (Dean
Engineering), Bryan Natividad (Business
Instruction), Stephanie Nelson (Business
Instruction), Yoshitaka Ota (CELS Academic
Unit 2), Vrunda Patel (Biomedical & Pharma-
ceutical Sc), Holly Pettus (GSO Research),
Olivia Phillips (Computer Science), Nicholas
Pizzo (GSO Faculty), Thomas Reed (Asst.
VP Facilities), Giovanni Riello (Men's Soccer),
Ahmed Salem (Chemistry), Amanda Schae-
fer Dawson (Dining Board Operations), Tara
Scungio (Health Services), Caleb Seekell
(Info Tech Services), Kathlynn Sell-Benguaich
(Music), Lori Sharbuno (Dining Board Oper-
ations), Kyera Shea (Info Tech Services), Laura
Shea (Human Resource Administration),
Dominique Sheldon (Psychology), Trevyn
Sinclair (Dining Board Operations), Zachery
Sutton (Dining Board Operations), Monique
Sylva-Bounthisanh (Enrollment Services),
Rob Thibeault (Dean Environment & Life Sci-
ence), Kyle Thompson (Dining Board Oper-
ations), Martha Torres-Reina (Undergraduate

continued on page 9

Comings and Goings...continued from page 8

Admissions), Timothy Trainor (Dining Board Operations), Christian Tulungen (CELS Academic Unit 2), Jean Van Couyghen (Dean Pharmacy), Ariel Vega (Police), Madalaine Vericker (Undergraduate Admissions), Carol Vetter (Dean Arts & Sciences), Patrick Vivier (Dean Health Sciences), Meredith Whaley (HRL Residential Education), Jennifer Whitfield (Enrollment Services), Danny Willis (Dean Nursing), Henry Yianakopolos (Men's Football), Leah Zaborski

... and Say Goodbye to ...

Raymond Ciarleglio Jr (Health Services), Michael Marzilli (Payroll Office), Carlos Lopez Estrada (President's Office), Amy Danielian (Dining Board Operations), Erin Hagoopian (Dining Board Operations), John Fox (Maintenance & Repair), Debra Cohen (Univ Coll for Academic Success), Renee McDonald (HRL Business Operations), Christiana Rydeski (Dean of Students Office), Katharine Iacobbo (Univ Coll for Academic Success), Alfred Speredelozzi Jr (Engineering Computer Center), Rachel Littlefield (New Student Transitions), Joanna Raymond (Nutrition & Food Sciences), Sara Hanson (Dean Pharmacy), Suzy Winchester (Nursing Instruction), Christopher Verleger (Enrollment Services), Massiel Almond Frias (Pharmacy Practice), Ivory Jefferies (Enrollment Services), Rockwell Richards (DataSpark), Kenneth Brown (HRL Security), Barbara Muhitch (CELS Academic Unit 3), Steven Robertson Jr (Police), Alexandra LeDoux (Health Services), Tao Wei (Elec Computer & Bio Engr), Taunica Cerullo (Dean Environment & Life Science), Andrew Single (CELS Academic Unit 2), Ray Flores (Custodial Services), Qing Cai (Elec Computer & Bio Engr), Alan Verskin (History), Louise Boisse (Dining Catering Operations), Clara Cooper-Mullin (CELS Academic Unit 2), Margaret Hayden (CELS Academic Unit 2), Joseph Reyes (Elec Computer & Bio Engr), John Kenyon (Dining Board Operations), Wilsage Sagesse (Police), Kayla Albin (Nursing Instruction), Pawan Pandey (Graduate School), Elizabeth Fehr (Business Instruction), Matthew Bertin (Biomedical & Pharmaceutical

Sc), Kelsey Lynch (Health Services), Hannah Petit (CELS Academic Unit 1), Tyler Schuelke (Waste removal & recycling), Philip Topper (Philosophy), David Grenier (DataSpark), Steven Berenback (Enrollment Services), Rachel Gomes (Emergency Management), Mikayla St. Jean (Undergraduate Admissions), Kathleen Shannon (Research Office), Jeanne Deus (Dean Health Sciences), Mary Katherine Hutchinson (Nursing Instruction), Dana Brandt (DataSpark), Jennifer Fox-Smith (Custodial Services), Raleigh Gosselin (Custodial Services), Katlyn LaBella (Women's Soccer), Megan Totten (Research Office), Connor Crook (Dining Board Operations), Ronald Catchings (GSO Marine Office), Alden Gustafson (CELS Academic Unit 3), Marshall Kormanec (GSO Marine Technicians), Hogan Vivier (Women's Soccer), Rachel Zuercher (GSO Coastal Resources Center), Kevin Stacey (Dean Arts & Sciences), Kerri Smith (GSO Research), Matthew Peter (Recreational Services), Ryan McAleer (Dining Board Operations), Kyle Aaron (GSO Research), Christopher Bergeski (Men's Football), Miriam Thorburn (Office of Equal Opportunity), Grace Guccione-Patane (Risk Control and Insurance), Edward Morrissey (Men's Football), Shihan Xu (DataSpark), Brandon Napoleon (Men's Football), Chrissy Medeiros (Dining Board Operations), Fred Jones (GSO Marine Office), Samantha Coles (GSO Marine Office), Francesca Tavares (Dining Board Operations), Xaalyn Barr (Dining Board Operations), Arata Takeda (Languages), David Williams (GSO Marine Office), Peter Moshier Jr (Dining Board Operations), Christopher Follett (Dining Board Operations), Walter Kusmirek (Men's Football).

... and Best Wishes To Those Who Retired

Jane Miner (GSO Business Office), Donna Whitford (Info Tech Services), Jane Vieira (Dean Environment & Life Science), Colleen Travis (Dean Environment & Life Science), Jayne Pelletier (Asst. VP Facilities), Erica Vieira (Police), Franca Cirelli (Research Office), Richard Anderson (HRL M&R Facilities), Cheryl Glennon (Payroll Office), Michael McGregor (Chemistry), Nelson Nunez (Dining Board Operations),

continued on page 10

Comings and Goings...continued from page 9

Gail Skidmore (Campus Copy & Design), Heather Faubert (CELS Academic Unit 1), Susan Boatright-Horowitz (Psychology), Stephen Alves (Dining Board Operations), Katharine Mcduffie (CELS Academic Unit 2), Barbara Turbitt (Dining Board Operations), Veronica Walsh (Institutional Research Office), Catherine Hanrahan (Alumni Relations), John Maher (Police), Edward Tomlinson (Custodial Services), Robert Pickard (Publications), Shawn Richards (Police), W E Douglas Creed (Business Instruction), Laura Furlong (Health Services), Vandana Jain (Economics), Carol Ward (Research Office), Thomas Lamb (HRL M&R Facilities), Elizabeth Howlett (Provost for Academic Affairs).

In Memoriam

- ❖ Leo Carroll, Professor Emeritus, Chair, Sociology and Anthropology
- ❖ Lois Mary Paziienza, Administrative Assistant, College of Business
- ❖ Mary Anne Sumner, Librarian, University Library
- ❖ Clifton Woodmansee, Maintenance, Narragansett Bay Campus



The Alumni Center's own **Mary Ann Mazzone** was selected "Ram of the Game" during the women's basketball game against UMass. Mazzone was nominated by members of URI ROTC. From left: Athletic Director Thorr Bjorn, Mazzone, President Marc Parlange and Rhody the Ram. -- URI Photo by Nora Lewis

URI Police Retiree, K-9 Officer Featured in Calendar Highlighting Importance of Protective Vests for Police Dogs

by Samantha Melia

When Erica Vieira and her partner, Officer Figaro, celebrated their retirement from the University of Rhode Island Police Department earlier this year, they also became celebrities.

As the sergeant and Figaro, the first canine officer and explosives-detection dog on campus, began new chapters in their lives, their photo and a short summary of their work at URI were featured in the August spread for the 2024 edition of the Vested Interest in K9, Inc.'s calendar.

"Vested Interest in K9 is a nonprofit organization, benefiting officers and their K-9 partners, from law enforcement agencies across the country," Vieira said. "It's a great organization."

All proceeds from the 2024 edition of VIK9's calendar sales will be used to provide equipment and services for law enforcement K-9s nationwide. The cost is \$20. For additional information or mail orders contact 508-824-6978.

Vieira and Figaro were selected for the calen-

dar as a result of Figaro's ballistic vest donation from the nonprofit and through Vieira's involvement with the North American Police Work Dog Association, where she met Vested Interest's founder and president, Sandy Marcal.

Having been employed by the URI Police Department since 1989, Vieira was not quite ready to forgo training the K-9 officers she had become so accustomed to working with as the department's K-9 coordinator. In her retirement, she will continue to assist with the training. She also holds the new position of trainer with the police work dog association.

"I have deeply enjoyed being a member of the URI Police Department, and I will miss working with my fellow officers on a daily basis," she said. "It has also been very fulfilling to see Figaro become a beloved member of the University community. I can't walk across campus without students wanting to pet him or say hello.

continued on page 15



Retired Sgt. Erica Vieira poses with the newest edition of the Vested Interest calendar, while **Officer Figaro** relaxes. *URI photo by Dave Lavallee.*

The Pets Corner

Pets Corner Invitation

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



Oliver and Grover -- Kayla Lombardi, Human Resource Administration

The Pets Corner 2



Tootie Mae Hinkson -- Christopher Hinkson, URI IT Services



URInformed is now on the Web
at
<http://web.uri.edu/urinformed/>
Browse the current issue of
URInformed



URInformed Word Search Winner

Congratulations to Taylor Flynn, Enrollment Services!

Please contact Shawn Simmons in the Provost's Office (4-4410) to claim your prize.

Check out the Word Search on page 5!

University's First Hazard Mitigation Plan Approved By Fema, State

by Dave Lavallee

The University of Rhode Island now has a comprehensive plan to deal with natural disasters like floods, winter storms, hurricanes, extreme temperatures and other natural threats.

URI is the first higher education institution in the state to have a plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the State of Rhode Island. A \$35,000 grant from the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency/FEMA funded the project and the hiring of Carrissa Mills of VHB, a consulting firm consisting of engineers, scientists, planners and designers.

"The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency takes great pride and satisfaction in celebrating URI as the leader, standing tall as the first higher educational institution in Rhode Island with a comprehensive hazard mitigation plan," said Melinda Hopkins, planning chief at RIEMA." In fostering resilience and preparedness, URI exemplifies a commitment to safeguarding its community, setting a commendable standard for educational institutions to follow."

"The plan does two important things for the University," said Sam Adams, URI's director of emergency management. "It will enhance URI's resilience when disasters strike, and it elevates our eligibility for hazard mitigation aid from the federal government. Many major colleges and universities have not completed such a plan. FEMA is very excited about our plan being completed because the agency can use it as a model for other higher education institutions across the country."

To get a comprehensive view of the hazards facing URI and the actions needed to address them, Adams reached out across the campus to assemble the University Hazard Mitigation Committee. It was made up of representatives from Facilities Operations, the Department of Public Safety, the Office of Emergency Management, the Narragansett Bay Campus, Communications, Planning and Real Estate Development, Risk Management, Information Technology Services, and Housing and Residential Life.

"In setting up the committee, we wanted all of the key university stakeholders who would have among them knowledge of potential hazards



Sam Adams, director of Emergency Management with URI's new Hazard Mitigation Plan.
URI photo by Dave Lavallee

and who could better and fully assess our vulnerabilities," Adams said.

Throughout the process, the committee met regularly with Mills, who earned her Master of Arts in Marine Affairs degree at URI in 2005, to ensure that the plan focused on threats more likely to affect the University. For instance, the URI plan prioritizes threats from storms, including floods, damaging winds and storm surge, while placing threats from tornadoes and earthquakes at a lower priority.

The mitigation plan process was a planning exercise itself, which included results from a campus survey, public hearings and discussions with officials in surrounding towns.

He said the team also used decision-making tools from the Rhode Island Coastal Hazards Analysis, Modeling and Prediction system (RI-CHAMP), developed by URI's Department of Marine Affairs and Graduate School of Oceanography with funding from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and its Coastal Resilience Center.

"But the beauty of the plan is its ability to be adapted to any natural threat," Adams said.

"I think we are putting ourselves ahead of the pack, especially as the changing climate makes storms and environmental hazards increasingly risky," Adams said.

Cook's Corner

Share your favorite recipes in the Cook's Corner

Sheet-Pan Chicken Cutlets with Brussels Sprouts & Sweet Potatoes

Active Time: 15 mins

Total Time: 40 mins

Servings: 4



Ingredients:

- 1 pound sweet potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 1/2-inch wedges
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 3/4 teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 4 cups Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved or quartered if large
- 1 1/4 pounds chicken cutlets
- 1 teaspoon ground fennel
- 3 tablespoons crumbled cooked bacon

Directions:

1. Position rack in bottom third of oven; pre-heat to 425°F.

2. Toss sweet potatoes with 1 tablespoon oil and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper in a large bowl. Spread evenly on a large rimmed baking sheet. Roast for 15 minutes.

3. Toss Brussels sprouts with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper in the bowl. Stir into the sweet potatoes on the baking sheet.

4. Sprinkle chicken with fennel and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Place on top of the vegetables. Roast until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender, 15 to 20 minutes more.

5. Transfer the chicken to a serving platter. Stir bacon into the vegetables and serve with the chicken.

--Recipe Courtesy of Eating Well

The Officer Figaro story was written by Samantha Melia, a senior journalism and political science major at the University of Rhode Island and an intern in the Department of Marketing and Communications.

Officer Figaro...continued from page 11

she said. "It has also been very fulfilling to see Figaro become a beloved member of the University community. I can't walk across campus without students wanting to pet him or say hello. Working with Figaro has helped me connect with students on a personal level."

After graduating from the Connecticut State Police K-9 Academy in 2015, Vieira and Officer Figaro were certified in explosives detection after completing the National Odor Recognition Test, which is administered by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Since then, they have completed other training programs.

More recently, Figaro and Vieira have been making the rounds at several airports, where Vieira sets out training guidelines and provides learning aids to assist dog teams employed by the Transportation Security Administration.

Officer Figaro was re-certified as an explosives-detection officer in February, says Vieira. Since then, she has been preparing URI Officer Paul Wells and K-9 Officer Riot to pass the national odor exam, a requirement set by ATF for all bomb-detection dogs.

"There are 19,000 things you can make a bomb out of," says Vieira. "And guns, too. It is for this reason that it is so important that K-9 Officers and their partners go through rigorous training, and must have their certification reinstated through testing every few years."

Vieira explains how Figaro works on a food-based reward system, both on the job and during training, which is an everyday responsibility of the duo. "Everyday, explosive training aids are hidden, and Figaro needs to find them in order to eat," she says.

"We have a very strong bond," says Vieira. "Figaro loves to work."

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing bullet and stab protection vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. All vests are provided free of charge. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has donated over 5,435 bullet and stab protective vests to law enforcement K9s in all 50 states at a value of over \$6.9 million dollars. The calendar also includes a memorial page for K-9's who have died.

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND

THINK BIG  WE DO™

URInformed

The URI Employees' Newsletter
73 Upper College Road, Kingston Campus



Davis Hall at Dawn. *Photo by Keith Zwolinski, Housekeeper, Custodial Services, Facilities Operations*