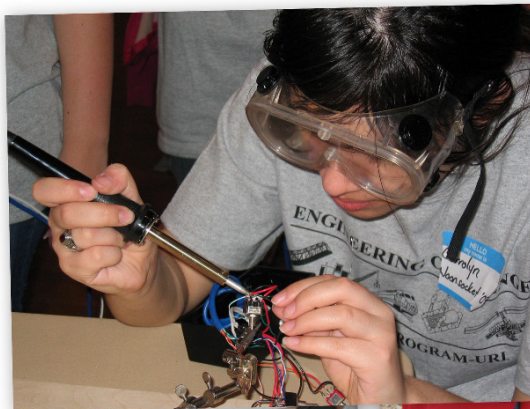


# The University of Rhode Island MILE Program

Science and Math Investigative Learning Experiences



## *Annual Report 2008-2009*

### Contents

2008-2009 at a Glance ..	2
Program Demographics ..	3
Annual Events ..	5
Program Outcomes ..	6



## 2008-2009 At a Glance

### The Mission of SMILE

To increase the numbers of underrepresented and other educationally underserved students who graduate high school well prepared to enter higher education and pursue careers in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology.

The SMILE Program seeks to improve the educational outcomes of underrepresented and underserved students by giving them confidence in their academics and life skills in order to pursue higher education and career opportunities of their choice. Our work supports the University of Rhode Island's initiatives to achieve the enrollment of a talented and diverse community of students, as well as increase first-year retention of freshmen by focusing on college preparedness of underserved pre-college students who are in grades 4 – 12. With a dedicated team of SMILE staff members, club teachers/leaders, school administrators, college faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and community members, The SMILE Program experienced another successful year.

During the 2008-2009 reporting period, The SMILE Program:

- Supported 228 students and 27 teachers in 14 SMILE Clubs in five school districts around RI;
- Graduated 100% of SMILE seniors, all planning to attend college;
- Recruited and facilitated the participation of 95 URI faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, as well as professionals from local RI corporations and businesses in the annual college connection events;
- Received three new one-year grants;
- Continued implementation of the NOAA Learning Ocean Science three-year grant;
- Expanded our community and campus collaborations and leadership by:
  - o Becoming a designated educational outreach program funded by local corporations;
  - o Partnering with six URI faculty in their research grant proposals;
  - o Increasing the collaboration with The URI Center for Student Leadership Development to bring more life skills to students;
  - o Responding to teachers' inquiries about the possibility of starting SMILE clubs in their districts;
  - o Accepting "Woman of the Year" Award by the RI Commission on Women. SMILE Director, Carol Englander, was recognized for founding and leading SMILE.

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

For this reporting period, SMILE data showed high levels of participation by underrepresented students, as well as female students. A snapshot of SMILE club membership (4 – 12 grade) reveals the following:

- 228 students participated in 14 SMILE clubs;
- 65% were females; 35% were males;
- 50% of all SMILE students would be their family's first generation to go to college;
- 46% were returning SMILE club participants;
- 41% of students identified as Caucasian; 30% as Hispanic American; 9% as Asian American; 8% as African American; 6% as Native American; 4% as other; 2% as Azores/Cape Verde.




---

I want to be in SMILE because:

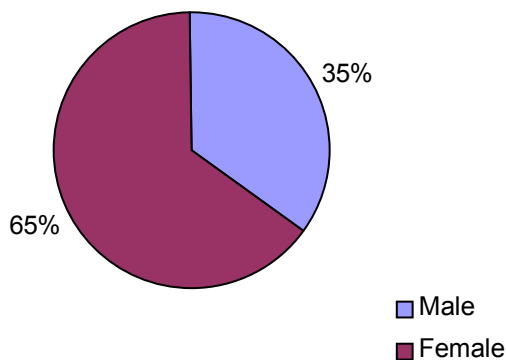
*‘From my previous experiences I’ve had a lot of fun. I met new people and I’ve learned a lot of interesting things about science. I can’t wait for what lies in the future for me.*

Josimar Torres, Central Falls High School

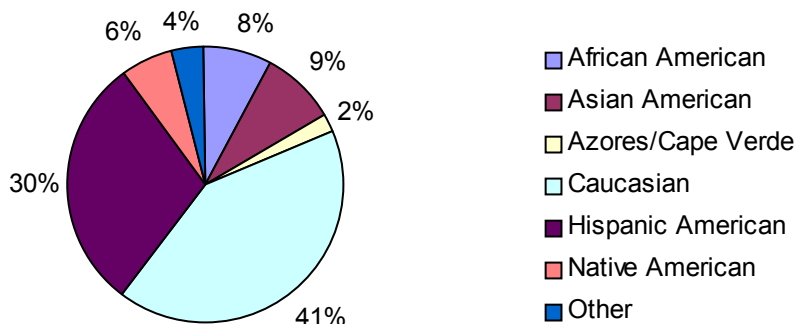
---

## Program Participants

**SMILE Student Gender**



**SMILE Student Ethnicity**





## CONTINUATION RATES

SMILE is a pipeline to college, starting in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and continuing on to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Students are encouraged to continue their involvement in the program for as long as possible, because it best supports their academic achievement. SMILE provides students with an academically challenging and socially supportive community of learning where they can picture themselves and their futures in new and exciting ways, improve their self-confidence, and prepare themselves academically for college.

### Returning Students

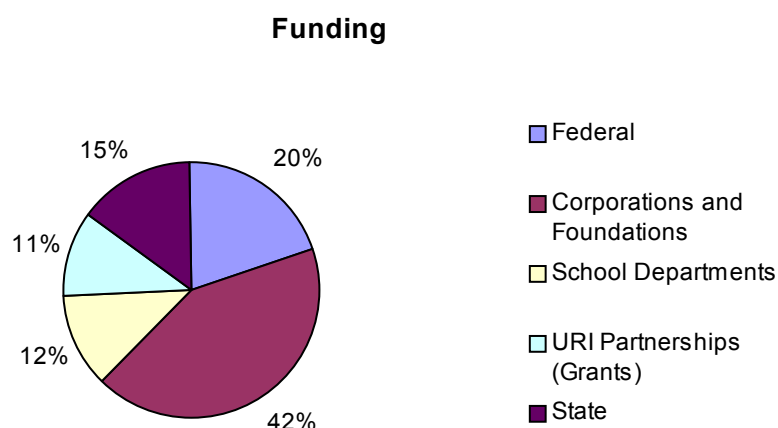
Program Level	Total # of Students per Level	Students Continuing 2008-2009	Percent Continuing 2008-2009
Elementary (5 <sup>th</sup> graders only)	36	14	39%
Middle School	102	35	34%
High School	51	20	39%
Total	189	69	37%

- **Overall program 236 students**

*I want my daughter to be in SMILE because it can help her with her math and academics, which she is struggling with. She is a hard worker and really wants the help.*

Parent/Guardian of 2009 Elementary SMILE Student

## FUNDING



PARTICIPATION IN ANNUAL EVENTS

An integral part of the program is to help demystify the college pathway for students. SMILE does this by bringing students to college campuses and engaging them in personally meaningful and academically challenging experiences and allowing them to achieve success. In addition, college student mentors help to run each event, giving SMILE students a more personal connection to college.

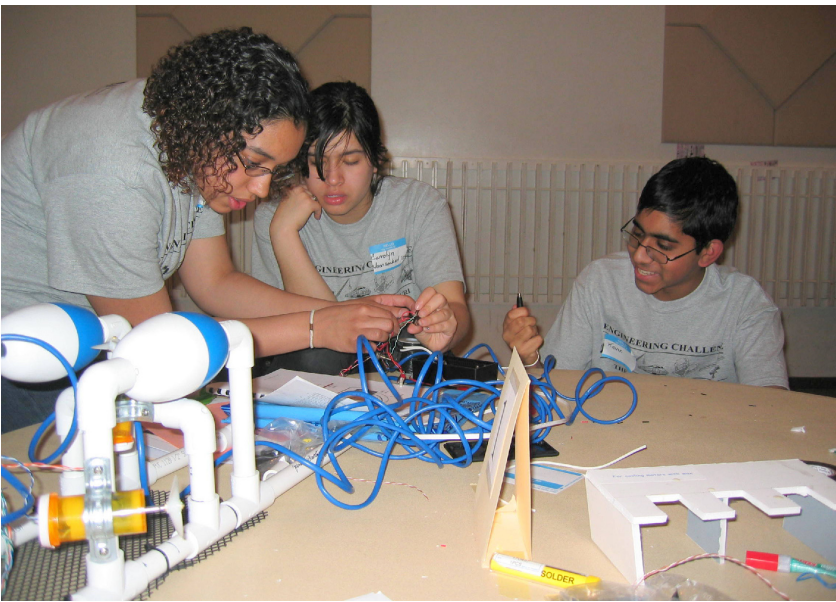


ANNUAL EVENTS PARTICIPATION

Program Level	Students Participating	Percent Participating
Elementary	64	77%
Middle School	95	93%
High School	47	92%

New Skills

*“The actual building of the ROV was the most beneficial part of the weekend, because it helped with our problem solving skills and teamwork skills.”*  
-SMILE High School Student



Hands-on Science

*“The best part of the EOSA was the vernal pool field study, because it ‘s fun and you get to look at frogs and stuff”*  
-SMILE Elementary Student

Teamwork

*“I learned that other SMILE students are just like me: they come here to have fun and learn about new things. We have a lot in common.”*  
-SMILE Middle School Student



## SMILE HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE PARTICIPANTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL, TOWARD THEIR OWN ABILITIES, AND TOWARD THEIR LIKELIHOOD OF PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

- Increased college admissions knowledge
- Developed relationships with caring adults.

**III. SMILE motivates students to do well in school and continue their education.** High school SMILE students must take four years of science and math. All SMILE seniors graduated from high school and will go on to college.

## IV. SMILE facilitated the engagement of university faculty and students in SMILE activities.

- URI faculty made presentations at the teacher workshops, introducing science concepts and career opportunities to bring back to students;
- Two URI engineering professors hosted SMILE students in their engineering labs and implemented hands-on activities;
- 95 college students, faculty, and community members were mentors and educators at the annual events;
- Engaged three former SMILE students, now attending URI, as mentors at the middle and high school events;
- Delivered a spring-term course (PLS 492) for URI students facilitating the EOSA.

## V. SMILE continued to expand its role as a campus partner in pre-college STEM outreach activities.

- Collaborated in grants with Chemistry Department, URI College of Engineering, and URI Transportation Center;
- Partnered with six URI faculties in grant proposals.

## I. SMILE provided high quality program activities:

- Fourteen After-school clubs.
- Five Family Science Night in SMILE communities.
- Three Professional Development workshops for SMILE teachers
- Three Annual Events for SMILE students:  
Elementary Outdoor Science Adventure (EOSA),  
Middle School Engineering Challenge Weekend,  
High School Engineering Challenge Weekend

## II. SMILE students have:

- Increased social/academic connections.
- Increased self confidence and self esteem
- Increased confidence in their science and math ability
- Increased college aspirations and expectations.
- Improved academic achievement.
- Increased college awareness opportunities



## Board of Advisors

Maurice Bissonnette,  
Financial Planner, retired

Marilyn Cohen,  
North Kingstown  
Town Planner, retired

William Horan,  
CPA: Horan and Golden, Inc.  
Wakefield RI

Fred Frostic,  
USAF, retired

Domenic Valentino,  
URI Psychology Professor, retired

Malcolm Spaulding,  
URI Ocean Engineering Professor  
and ASA Inc. CEO

John Peterson,  
URI New media  
Communications and Marketing

Glenda Kirby,  
Home Fabrics, Inc NC and RI

Larry Bernard,  
Human Resources AMGEN

## SMILE STAFF

Carol Englander  
Director

Augusto Gomes  
Assistant Director  
EOSA Coordinator

María-Gabriela Lizano  
Development and  
Publications  
Coordinator

Lacey Schlachter  
Program & Evaluations  
Coordinator

Catherine Valentino  
Curriculum Advisor

Stephanie Gildea  
Database

## URI RESOURCE FACULTY

**Thomas Dougan,**  
Vice President for Student Affairs

### ENGINEERING

Faye Boudreaux-Bartels

Christopher Hunter

Mercedes  
Rivero-Hudec

Manbir Sodhi

Malcom Spaulding

### COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT & LIFESCIENCES

Jose Amador  
CELS-NRS

**Larry Englander**  
CELS-Plant Science

### MATHEMATICS

Orlando Merino

### PHARMACY

Clinton Chichester

### EDUCATION

Betty Young

THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND

305 Memorial Union  
Kingston, RI 02881-0800

THINK BIG  WE DO™