

UNIVERSITY OF
RHODE ISLAND

SPRING 2023

MAGAZINE

THE
**SECOND-
TO-LAST
LOBSTERMAN**
ON
**BLOCK
ISLAND**





RHODY WOMEN RULE!

It was another banner year for the URI women's basketball team. The Rams set a program record for most wins in a season, captured a share of the Atlantic 10 regular-season title, and earned their second straight postseason appearance with a WNIT bid. And coach Tammi Reiss was named Atlantic 10 Coach of the Year for the second time in the last three years. Way to go, Rams. What a season. Go Rhody!

From left, Madison Hattix-Covington (#21), Ines Debroise (#30), Anaelle Dutat (#13), Emmi Rinat (#33), and Mayé Touré (#20) celebrate Debroise's full-court shot at the half-time buzzer in the team's February 8 win (64-47) over George Washington.

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16 Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island. This collective effort continues to transform the University. URI kicked off the academic year with a ribbon-cutting at Ranger Hall, featuring renovations driven significantly by support from campaign chair Richard J. Harrington '73, Hon. '02, and Jean Harrington.

11 Renowned illustrator Anthony Russo '74 created this beautiful image to accompany "Swimming Narrow River," by Veronica Berounsky, Ph.D. '90. Russo's illustrations appear throughout *URI Magazine's* department stories.



COVER PHOTO: AISHA MCADAMS
PHOTOS, THIS PAGE: NORA LEWIS
ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY RUSSO



Greetings, URI Alumni and Friends!

I can hardly believe that spring is upon us. Looking around our bustling campuses—faculty and students gathered in conversation, classes on the Quad, flowers emerging from an unseasonably warm winter, and perhaps even a roaming chicken or two—I am reminded how lucky I am to be a part of this vibrant and energizing community. With Commencement around the corner, I can't help but feel pride in all that we have accomplished together and the bright future we have ahead.

Earlier this year, we officially launched the University's strategic plan, which will serve as our road map for the next 10 years as we navigate challenges, seize opportunities, distinguish ourselves from our peers, forge exciting new partnerships, and pursue new programming. This plan gives us a renewed sense of purpose, helping us deepen our commitment to our land- and sea-grant missions and cultivate a sense of place with endless opportunities for our community to thrive. We are Rhode Island's flagship university and, I believe, in the coming years, we will serve as an engine for growth and economic prosperity for the state and all Rhode Islanders. I am inspired daily by the incredible work being done in all areas of the University, work that has broad and life-changing implications not just for those involved but for the greater good—from climate research and community health care to medical discoveries and programs like Talent Development.

The features in this issue give us a glimpse at that important work. In "Making it Hum," a continuation of the blue economy feature in the fall 2022 issue, we learn about alumni who are advancing the blue economy in areas like aquaculture, defense, marine trades, offshore renewable energy, and ocean advocacy. "The Second-to-Last Lobsterman on Block Island" is the story of URI student Ebben Howarth '23, a lobsterman living and working in an industry dealing with many challenges, some of which have been taken on by URI researchers. We also meet former URI women's basketball star, Tracey Hathaway '86, whose non-profit organization, athLEDA, helps athletes make the transition from college to professional life; and Cassidy Need '20, creator of Native Edible Designs, who designs sustainable landscapes that incorporate native and edible plants.

I hope you find the people, places, and ideas in this issue as inspiring as I do—I am certain that we have the right minds and the right resources to help us build a university for the future.

Marc B. Parlange
President, University of Rhode Island



HOME TO ROOST

Honey (large photo) is one of five chickens living in a comfortable coop behind the president's house on Upper College Road. Mary Parlange is training them with the help of Megan Rossilli, an undergraduate student majoring in animal and veterinary science.

The chickens spent much of the fall wandering the grounds near the president's house, sometimes showing up for classes at nearby Swan Hall. Now they're staying closer to home, thanks to a hungry resident hawk. Henrietta (inset, with Mary Parlange) survived an attack, but two of her flock mates weren't so lucky.

Acknowledging URI's agricultural roots, Mary Parlange, who has always wanted to have chickens, is happy to be carrying on the tradition established when the State Agricultural School, now the University of Rhode Island, opened in Kingston in 1890.

Henrietta and Honey have recently been joined by Disney (aka Dizzy), Netflix (aka Flix), and Hulu. You can follow them on Instagram: @uri_chickens.

Feedback

We welcome and encourage letters to the editor. Write to us at urimag@uri.edu
Visit us and comment online at uri.edu/magazine

OUR FORGOTTEN FOREMOTHERS OF SPORT?

Although I enthusiastically celebrate (the reinstatement of) women's lacrosse at URI, the article, "Women's Varsity Lacrosse Coming to URI" (fall 2022), got it plain wrong. It stated, "Jenna Slowey has been named the first head coach in Rhode Island women's lacrosse history." Women competed in URI varsity women's lacrosse, division I, decades ago. Coaches Beth Bricker and Alison Walsh come to mind as head coaches in the late '70s and early '80s.

URI competed within the USWLA (U.S. Women's Lacrosse Association) and AIAW

(Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women) seasons prior to becoming part of the NCAA in the 80s. Even before Title IX, women varsity lacrosse players were lacing up and proudly representing URI while competing in the highest collegiate division. Several URI Women were top players in the country and were named to play on the U.S. Women's Lacrosse Squad. Those women represented the U.S. in national and international competitions under the direction of U.S. Coach Jackie Pitts. It's a real shame that those dedicated student-athletes, who represented URI so dutifully, are not known or recognized by URI.

And I would note that the NCAA way back was when women were "semi-seen," almost begrudgingly... it was male, male, male—all male. It seems to prove again that the only time women athletes (and coaches) are legitimized is when they participate within a deeply rooted male institution (as if they weren't real athletes until the NCAA "let" them in). Just can't seem to shake the patriarchy!

Best wishes to Coach Jenna Slowey and the URI women's varsity lacrosse team. Go Rhody!

—Tracy Andrews-Mellouise '81, '82, former URI varsity student-athlete (lacrosse, volleyball, and field hockey)

MEMORIES OF MUHAMMAD ALI'S 1971 VISIT

The fall 2022 *Famous Footsteps* story, "1971: The Greatest Comes to Kingston," struck a nostalgic note for many readers who fondly recalled Muhammad Ali's visit to URI.

"The Purpose of Life" and being remembered as more than a boxer was Ali's delivery that night. I was 13 years old, there with my big brother. We got an autographed photo at the end that Ali signed with, as he called it, "a real ink pen!" I recall, also, an audience member asking what he would do if a person tried to pick a fight with him in the street. He said, "First of all, he would have to be CRAZY!" He was more than a boxer.

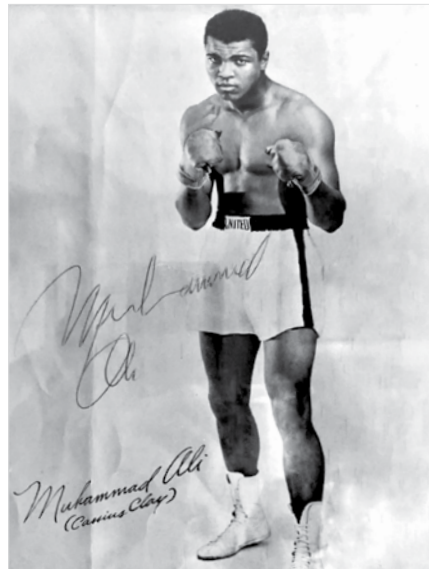
—David Quaglieri

I was there at Keaney that night, but thanks for clearing up my memory as I remembered his visit being prior to the Frazier fight as opposed to after the fight. I saw the fight on closed circuit in Providence.

—Arnie "Tokyo" Rosenthal '73

Ali's tour bus (he hated to fly) stopped in front of the student union the afternoon before his speech at Keaney Gym. He gets out of the bus and chats us up. We are sitting on the wall drinking coffee and skipping class. We were shocked and excited to see him. He was funny and charismatic. Somebody (not me) brought up the Frazier fight and he faked throwing left jabs at the offender. It was a great spontaneous moment. After about 10 minutes he was off to wherever.

—Tom Gunning '74



David Quaglieri received this autographed photo of Muhammad Ali when he attended Ali's press conference in Keaney Gym in April 1971.

I had the opportunity to spend the day with Ali and bring him to the ACI, where he spoke to the inmates. As the Supreme Court reviewed his case, he was concerned about prison life. On the way back to campus, he was driving the bus and stopped to pick up children hitchhiking on I-95. He wanted to take them to their house in Coventry, which would have made him late for the URI talk. We negotiated a safe place to drop them off.

—Kenneth Levy '71

THE "WHY" QUESTIONS ARE IMPORTANT

"The Intention of One Line of Dialogue" (fall 2022) is a solid, affecting student profile. Thank you for sharing this. And to Mr. Robles I say, I hope you continue on, and all your tasks run true. I absolutely agree that the "Why" questions are the most valuable ones, and I'm heartened that you have focused on these questions in your life. After reading your profile, I, too, feel renewed.

—Howard Dooley, project administrator, Rhode Island EPSCoR

RECOVERING ERASED HISTORIES

I attended an online course on the history of the University taught by the professors mentioned in "A Walk Through Time" (fall 2022). It was eye opening, and I am so glad to see a set of courses being introduced into the curriculum. I would love to see how it is received by students and how it progresses and grows. My best wishes to the instructors and a big thank you for starting this.

—Lakshman Srinivasan, M.S. '83



KUDOS

I love the fall 2022 issue.

—John Skaradowski '71

Congrats for the continuing, consistent quality and appearance/format of the magazine. It's a pleasure to anticipate and read ... and share.

—Gene Knott, professor emeritus of human development and family studies

From the Editor

In February, I had the privilege of attending a Graduate School of Oceanography (GSO) presentation, "Oceans Tell Stories Through People," conceived and designed by Professor Kendall Moore (journalism and film media) and Alex DeCiccio '10, from GSO's Inner Space Center (ISC). They, with the ISC's Ryan Campos and Patrick Flanagan, crafted a moving multimedia presentation of four stories with a common thread—being in respectful and reciprocal relationship with the ocean.

Here at URI, we know we are connected to the ocean. But how are we connected? How do we explain our relationship? For some of us, it can be explained by sharing stories—stories the ocean tells through us.

Through Joe-Silem Enlet, the ocean tells a story of sharing and oneness. A marine affairs Ph.D. student and former diplomat, he grew up in Micronesia, where, when they fish, he said, the day's catch is divided among the village. When someone dies, the waterfront adjacent to the family's land is off limits for fishing for a time, to let the land and water rest and restore itself. When it reopens, it teems with life. "The ocean," he said, "is not other. It is us."

The first person of color hired as a full-time, tenure-track faculty member in marine affairs, assistant professor Amelia Moore worries that the ocean is taught and studied from too narrow a perspective, one that obscures the voices and histories of many. Through her, the sea tells a history and shares memories—of the triangle trade and the Middle Passage—and of those who drowned on voyages they did not choose to take.

Melva Treviño Peña, assistant professor of fisheries, animal and veterinary sciences, has done research in communities in Ecuador that rely on mangroves, which have been compromised by shrimp aquaculture. There, people love the mangroves, which provide for them, and, in turn, feel duty-bound to care for the mangroves. Through her, the ocean recounts a story of reciprocity, which is spiritual and emotional in nature, not simply transactional.

And through Wanda Hopkins '20, a URI staff member and graduate student in URI's English department, the sea tells a story of wisdom. She is a Narragansett Indian tribal elder who spoke about the importance of coastal waters to the Narragansett nation. Thousands of years of oral history, data collection, and relationship-based science have been passed down through tribal elders, Hopkins said, adding, "One day, Western science will catch up with our knowledge."

Western science does have to catch up, and so do we. As author Robin Wall Kimmerer reminds us in *Braiding Sweetgrass*, "All flourishing is mutual." The storytellers who spoke in "Oceans Tell Stories Through People" know that to be true.

As we think about our reliance on and relationship with the ocean, there is wisdom in these stories that can help us get it right.

Above: Left to right, Joe-Silem Enlet, Amelia Moore, Melva Treviño Peña, Kendall Moore, Wanda Hopkins, and Alex DeCiccio

—Barbara Caron, Editor-in-Chief

FEEDBACK GUIDELINES

University of Rhode Island Magazine welcomes letters to the editor addressing topics covered in the magazine. We do not publish letters containing obscenities, potentially libelous statements, personal attacks, or known false statements. All letters must be signed. Letters may be edited for style, grammar, typographical errors, content, and length. The submission of a letter to the editor does not guarantee its publication. Views expressed by readers in the Feedback section are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the University of Rhode Island or University of Rhode Island Magazine. Please send letters via email to urimag@uri.edu.

CORRECTION

In the fall 2022 issue of *URI Magazine*, we neglected to include photo credit to Beau Jones for all photos on pages 16–17. Our sincere apologies for this oversight.

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IN BRIEF

WOLFE APPOINTED TO TOP ACADEMIC POST



URI named Barbara Wolfe its new provost and executive vice president for academic affairs; she began her new duties on Jan. 1. An internationally recognized expert on psychiatric and mental health nursing and eating disorders, Wolfe served as dean of URI's College of Nursing for six years. She led the college's undergraduate program to its current top 10 percent ranking of nursing colleges in the country and brought the master's degree program into the nation's top 50.

President Marc Parlange praised Wolfe for her efforts to enhance the student experience, advance student success, increase faculty support, and strengthen the College of Nursing's national profile and reputation.

Wolfe says she was originally drawn to URI for its commitment to accessible public education. "My experience at the University has given me a great appreciation of the formidable strength of URI, its growing international reputation, and the endless exciting possibilities that lie ahead," she says.

As URI's top academic official, Wolfe will oversee nine academic schools and colleges, University College for Academic Success, and 800 full-time faculty, as well as part-time and per-course instructors.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS DEAN NAMED



Sean Edmund Rogers has been named dean of the College of Business and the Alfred J. Verrecchia-Hasbro Inc. Leadership Chair in Business following a competitive national search. Rogers, who currently serves as URI's vice president for community, equity, and diversity, is a higher education leader and an experienced instructor, graduate program director, and labor relations and management scholar who worked in the corporate and military sectors for 20-plus years. His appointment is effective June 4, 2023.

Rogers has served the College of Business in leadership roles including executive director of inclusive excellence, interim director of the Charles T. Schmidt Jr. Labor Research Center, and director of healthcare management graduate programs.



YES ON 1

In November 2022, Rhode Island voters approved a \$100 million bond referendum to support URI's Narragansett Bay Campus. The investment will keep URI and the state of Rhode Island at the forefront of the global blue economy, spur job creation and economic development, drive innovation, and create career opportunities for Rhode Islanders.

The Bay Campus attracts more than \$50 million in research grants each year. Improved facilities will attract top faculty and students, as well as additional research funding.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES DEAN APPOINTED

Danielle Dennis, professor of literacy, teacher education, and policy, and former director of URI's School of Education, has been named dean of the Alan Shawn Feinstein College of Education and Professional Studies. A former elementary science and environmental education specialist in Minnesota, middle school teacher in Colorado, and UNESCO facilitator in Kenya, Dennis has led the URI college as interim dean since July 2021.

Under her leadership as interim dean, the college was one of only 14 in the country selected as a lead institution by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's Consortium for Research-Based and Equitable Assessments to address the national teacher shortage, systematic exclusion of prospective students of color, and policy and practices.



Get more news at uri.edu/news

PHOTOS: NORA LEWIS; COURTESY DANIELLE DENNIS; ISTOCK

NEWS TICKER



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BUSINESS!
The College of Business turns 100 in 2023. A yearlong celebration is underway in recognition of the college's achievements.



EYE ON ALZHEIMER'S
Jessica Alber, assistant professor of biomedical and pharmaceutical sciences, received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to support work using retinal imaging to screen for early changes associated with Alzheimer's disease.



RYAN INSTITUTE LEADERSHIP
Professors William Van Nostrand and John Robinson, highly regarded for their contributions to neurodegenerative disease research, have been named co-executive directors of URI's George & Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience.



HUMAN RIGHTS WATCHERS
URI research team CIRIGHTS launched the world's largest global human rights data set, including interactive maps and visualization tools. It is freely available online. A gift from Shannon Chandley '83 and Tom Silvia '83 supported the project.



CENTER FOR SERVICE
URI's new Center for Military and Veteran Education, providing dedicated space for URI's veteran and military communities, has opened on the Kingston Campus.



INSPIRATION BY BOAT
A miniboat, the *M/B Inspiration*, built and launched by students in the Central Falls, R.I., schools, as part of a joint effort with URI's Graduate School of Oceanography, traveled 9,300 miles from Rhode Island to make landfall in England in November 2022.

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

You Can Quote Me

On the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's decision to allow the sale of hearing aids over the counter and online:

“The intent of the FDA was to broaden access. You can get glasses at an optometrist, or an ophthalmologist, or you can get them at a local drugstore. ... They're looking to make hearing aids the same way.”

—Rachel Smith, URI clinical associate professor and director of the audiology clinic at the URI Speech and Hearing Centers

WPRI, Channel 12



On a call by the top U.S. addiction researcher to deregulate methadone, a medication that can reduce opioid dependency:

“Methadone has saved countless lives in Canada, Australia, several countries in Europe, and around the globe, providing more destigmatized care in more places safely and effectively.”

—Jeffrey Bratberg, URI clinical professor of pharmacy

CBS News

On bringing ticks that have been stored in a research lab fridge back into action with just a puff of her breath:

“It's like being outside. You walk by and take a breath and they say, 'What's that? Smells like a good meal.'”

—Jannelle Couret, URI assistant professor of biological studies

The Providence Journal

Couret is working on a \$2.6-million National Institutes of Health grant to study the evolution of the bacteria that causes Lyme disease in black-legged ticks.



On how the movements of right whales, sightings of which have decreased in the Gulf of Maine over the past decade, aren't totally understood by scientists:

“Right whales are perverse beasts. Every time you think you know what they're doing, they do something different.”

—Robert Kenney, URI emeritus marine research scientist

Mother Jones



GO RHODY

Family Red Sox Connection Ties URI Softball Coaches

URI coaching colleagues Whitney Goldstein and Tori Constantin carry on a family tradition that began with their grandfathers at the Boston Red Sox.



History has a way of repeating itself, even if there are slight twists in the story the second time around.

Such is the case for URI softball coaches Whitney Goldstein and Tori Constantin, who, along with fellow coach Christine Akcer, are rebuilding the program in Kingston.

Goldstein is in her second year running the Rams. She hired Constantin in August 2021. Each is the granddaughter of a Boston Red Sox Hall of Famer. Goldstein's grandfather is the legendary Don Zimmer, who spent 66 years in professional baseball as a player, manager, and coach. Constantin's grandfather, Haywood Sullivan, was part of the front-office team that hired Zimmer as Boston's manager in 1977. Sullivan was Red Sox general manager and a minority owner of the team from 1977 to 1993.

"I've known the connection, but we've learned more since we started working together," Goldstein says. "Sharing memories, having pictures in the office, and seeing how our moms have become friends. When you have a family history and connections through a professional league, as we do, you share a bond. You understand that you've grown up in a bit of a different realm. Red Sox fans can boo you one day and love you the next. We understand the deal."

Constantin first knew Goldstein as a member of the powerhouse UMass softball teams that dominated the Atlantic 10 under head coach Elaine Sortino. From 2006–09, Goldstein led UMass to four-straight conference titles and NCAA Championship appearances. The first player in Atlantic 10 history to be both Player of the Year and Rookie of the Year, Goldstein was an All-American and three-time first-team all-conference selection. Constantin's father was a friend of Sortino's and would often bring Constantin to UMass games.

"Growing up in New England, UMass softball was it," Constantin says. "They were the program that everyone wanted

URI softball coaches Whitney Goldstein (left) and Tori Constantin at 2022 Senior Day.

to be a part of. I'd go to games and, when I was old enough, to camps. That's where I remember first meeting Whitney. I saw her relationship with her coach and with my father; that's where the idea of getting into coaching college really started."

Constantin broke into coaching as an assistant at MIT for Brooke Kalman, who coached against Goldstein in the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference while the latter was at WPI. After two years at MIT, Constantin joined Goldstein at URI.

"Watching the UMass program, you understand the championship mindset that Whitney was going to bring to URI," Constantin says. "It was such a juggernaut of a program that I knew I'd be coming into something special. It takes someone like Whitney with the vision to take a program where it needs to go."

To make that vision a reality, Goldstein needed to hire the right staff.

"Tori is really good at helping develop players. With her background, I knew she could handle the position and understand my philosophy," Goldstein says. "If you are here for just softball, it's not going to work. We care about the student-athletes as people, so I need staff who can nurture players and also gain that respect where she can be tough on the players, but also understand the balance of showing them love."

"It's really about what type of life you want to live. Do you just want to excel on the softball field, or are you going to hold yourself to a high standard with your academics and with your relationships off the field? What are you doing every day to show that you are getting one- to five-percent better as a player, as a teammate, and as a member of your community? I was raised in a strict environment, very straitlaced. Being on time meant being early and ready to go. My grandfather didn't live near us, but I was raised by my mom and dad, who raised me the way they were raised. It was regimented, but it was about accountability."

Life lessons that have been passed down, generation to generation, allowing history a chance to repeat itself. 🔄

—Shane Donaldson '99

QUAD ANGLES

Swimming Narrow River

By Veronica M. Berounsky, Ph.D. '90

Veronica Berounsky is a longtime open-water and cold-water swimmer, often jumping in at the Narragansett Bay Campus beach for an ocean swim, no matter the season. She shares her first experience of swimming from the headwaters to the mouth of Narrow River, watching the marine life change as she goes. Having now done this source-to-sea swim three times, she says swimming slowly enough to observe and experience the river is key.

It's dark when my alarm rings, but I'm immediately awake. Today, I will swim the length of Narrow River—all 6 miles of it, from North Kingstown to Narragansett, R.I. I'll be joined by two swimmer friends, Lori Pugh and Keith Ballard.

My safety kayaker, Jerry Prezioso, M.S. '91, launches into Gilbert Stuart Stream in the dim light, and my swim starts. The stream looks much like it did when Stuart, the renowned American portraitist best known for his unfinished painting of George Washington, was born in 1775 in the house at the stream's dam. I imagine him walking the road beside me as I swim.

The stream flows into Upper Pond. As I cross the 1-mile distance of the pond, which feels wide open after swimming the narrow, tree-lined stream, I glance to the east and see the sun rising over the trees. It takes my breath away.

I've been on Upper Pond hundreds of times to collect water samples for URI and Narrow River Preservation Association, but it's different to be in the water. Too small to be seen by eye, I know there are single-cell plants (phytoplankton) floating in the water with me, using the sunlight for energy to grow. There are single-cell animals (zooplankton) here, too, eating those plants. Near the middle of the pond, there are 13 meters of water below me. That's deep enough to hide most of Point Judith Lighthouse.

I also know that the water from about 4 meters deep to the bottom is naturally without oxygen; the bacteria there get their energy from naturally occurring odiferous sulfur. But here, at the surface, there is no evidence of that.

As I approach the southern end of Upper Pond, the bottom rises to about 1 meter deep, forming Casey Sill. I float over it into Lower Pond.

Along the edges of both ponds, I see oysters, *Crassostrea virginica*. Even here, 5 miles from the ocean, seawater comes in with the tide and mixes with the freshwater, creating an estuary—Pettaquamscutt Estuary. The salinity here is ideal oyster habitat.

At the shallow southern end of Lower Pond, I've been swimming for 2 miles; I glide over the bottom, paved

with oysters. The outgoing tide whisks me under Bridgetown Road Bridge.

At Mettatuxet Beach, the halfway mark, I see soft-shell clams, *Mya arenaria*. They thrive in saltier water than oysters do.

Just before Middlebridge, I spy razor clams, *Ensis leei*. I've been swimming for 4 miles. Passing beneath the bridge, I see eelgrass, *Zostera marina*, which does well where sunlight can reach the bottom. Blue mussels, *Mytilus edulis*, appear—evidence of saltier water.

At the 5-mile mark, swimming under the third and final bridge, Sprague Bridge, I also see quahogs, *Mercenaria mercenaria*.

As I make the final turn to flow out with Narrow River to Rhode Island Sound, I see surf clams, *Spisula solidissima*, under the waves. I turn to Jerry and say, "We made it!" Lori, Keith, and I lock hands in the waves, celebrating our swim. 🔄

Veronica M. Berounsky, Ph.D. '90, is a coastal ecologist and is the alumni relations and communications coordinator for the Graduate School of Oceanography. She also serves as co-president of the Narrow River Preservation Association and chair of the Rhode Island Rivers Council.



SYLLABUS

Jane Austen, Therapist

Jane Austen wasn't writing romance; she was satirizing it, says Professor Sarah Eron.



It is a truth universally acknowledged that few, if any, novels have had greater influence on the romance genre than Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Credited with writing the definitive marriage plot novel of her age, Austen and her work have spawned an enduring industry. Netflix's *Bridgerton* and PBS's *Sanditon* are two recent iterations in a long line of Austen-inspired novels, movies, television shows, and plays. You can buy Austen-inspired dolls, tarot cards, clothing, bobbleheads, teapots, candles—even air fresheners.

But to read Austen's novels as romances is to miss their meaning, says Sarah Eron, English professor and Austen scholar. Austen is a satirist whose books take aim at the marriage plot novels of her day, Eron says. In her undergraduate course, 'Jane Austen, Therapist,' Eron teaches what Austen's work reveals

about the mind, how her novels transform and console readers, and what close reading yields, Eron says. "I want my students to see that literature has the power to change lives."

YOUR THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR OWN

Eron's research is in cognitive studies—the mind and its workings. The author of *Mind Over Matter: Memory Fiction from Daniel Defoe to Jane Austen*, Eron is specifically interested in how our memories aren't really our own. Rather, they are affected and shaped by what is happening around us. "I start the course with *Emma* because students see that Austen renders an ambiguity between whether thoughts belong to one character, another character, or the narrator. And suddenly, this idea that our thoughts are our own,

"I want my students to see that literature has the power to change lives."

—Professor Sarah Eron

that we have ownership of our personal, internal ideas, is completely exploded.

"In everyday life, we go around and wonder what other people are thinking of us. We have this constant desire to have access to other people's thoughts, and that's where all the miscommunications arise in *Emma*, because she's really bad at mind reading. This is the power of reading Jane Austen."

Who can't relate to that?

CLOSE READING REWARDS

Hannah Slater-Grace '25, an elementary education major, was already an Austen fan. Eron's class gave her a deeper appreciation of the author.

"Professor Eron had us dive into every detail of the text. We sometimes spent an entire class on one sentence or a couple of words, and I was like, 'Wow!' I've never had a professor take us so closely into each word, each comma, each phrase. Each punctuation mark signaled something," says Slater-Grace. "I realized—after going from reading Austen to reading other books—that not every author is able to do that. Understanding more of how Austen writes has helped me understand the way other authors write and why."

AUSTEN KNOWS WHAT AILS YOU

The most gratifying moment for Eron as a teacher is when students recognize that their experiences and those of Austen's characters are essentially the same. "Students, too, are people embedded in social systems; their memories change, and they have the power to overcome distress.

"That's the reason for the course title, Jane Austen, Therapist. That is, she might be able to bring the kind of consolation, the kind of answers we seek," Eron says. "The texts have a kind of therapy to them. When I see the students living these books and interacting with these books—and their lives influenced by these books—I know that, in some sense, I've done my job." 📖

—Marybeth Reilly-McGreen

Besotted with Jane?

Professor Eron has recommendations.

READ JANE AUSTEN

For an immersive reading experience, consider *The Jane Austen Annotated Editions* (Harvard University Press). Start with *Emma*. Notice how Austen's free, indirect style creates a question about whose thoughts are being expressed.

GO BACK TO SCHOOL

Attend a virtual lecture, "Slavery, Anti-Slavery, and the Austen Family," by Austen scholar Devoney Looser (about 1.5 hours) on the Austen family's connection to the West Indian slave trade and how that may have informed the writing of *Emma* and *Mansfield Park*.

Watch at: bit.ly/austen-lecture

ON FILM

For a cinematic treatment of Austen's early work, watch Whit Stillman's *Love and Friendship*, based on the epistolary novella, *Lady Susan*. The film is a reminder that Austen is, at heart, a satirist, fluent in caricature, irony, and mockery.

READ MORE

For more about the enduring phenomenon that is Jane Austen:

- *Jane Austen's Letters* by Deirdre Le Faye offers a view into the author's life and family through correspondence and recent scholarship.
- *The Making of Jane Austen* by Devoney Looser centers on Austen's rise to celebrity status.
- *Janeites: Austen's Disciples and Devotees* by Deidre Lynch examines Austen's most devoted readers and fans.
- *Jane Austen and Sciences of the Mind*, ed. Beth Lau, examines Austen through the lens of cognitive science.
- *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* by Claudia Johnson, looks at Austen as social critic, satirist, and feminist.



MOMENTUM

Research at the Forefront

URI researchers are working across disciplines to help find answers and solutions to benefit all of us.



Fastovsky and his students on the Hermit Trail in the Grand Canyon.

66

MILLION YEARS AGO

In 1991, David Fastovsky and his colleagues showed that the extinction of the non-avian dinosaurs 66 million years ago was a sudden event, rather than a gradual decline as previously believed. The sudden extinction is now accepted by most paleontologists.

DINOSAUR RESEARCH FOR THE AGES

URI paleontologist and professor of geosciences David Fastovsky changed our understanding of dinosaur extinction.

In 1991, Fastovsky's research upended what was, at the time, conventional wisdom: that the extinction of non-avian dinosaurs 66 million years ago was gradual. In fact, Fastovsky and his colleagues showed evidence that pointed to a more sudden extinction, startling even him. Most paleontologists eventually embraced Fastovsky's findings.

Fastovsky, who retired in December 2022, earned international attention in 2011 for his first-of-its-kind discovery of a 70-million-year-old nest containing the fossilized remains of 15 baby *Protoceratops andrewsi* dinosaurs in Mongolia.

In addition to editing academic journals and teaching wildly popular courses and field studies, he wrote a textbook, *Dinosaurs: A Concise Natural History*, that is now in its fourth edition. In retirement, he is working on the fifth edition.



POWERING UP RESEARCH WITH MORE GIGS

URI joined the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center, a consortium of research universities sharing a high-performance research computing infrastructure housed in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Researchers can plug in to the center via a 10-gigbits-per-second fiber optic network, 9,400% faster than the average internet speed in the United States.

URI's director of research computing Gaurav Khanna says participation in the consortium will accelerate research and reduce the need for physical space, materials, and personnel. Developing a new material, for example, says Khanna, who is also a physics professor, might require thousands of lab experiments. "But," he says, "with simulation through computing, you haven't spent a single penny on infrastructure or time."

URI joined five Massachusetts research universities in the consortium with a \$1.2 million investment, funded by a grant spearheaded by U.S. Sen. Jack Reed and smaller grants won by Khanna and his colleagues.

"The landscape of computing is changing," Khanna says. "More and more researchers are applying computing to their work, and this investment will give URI a seat at the table."



Gaurav Khanna



THE APPLIED HISTORY LAB: EXAMINING THE PAST TO INFORM PUBLIC POLICY IN THE PRESENT

"We have begun to collect historical data that can help archaeologists craft a white paper to ensure that indigenous stakeholders have a seat at the table when governments and courts decide the fate of historic shipwrecks."

—Bridget Buxton, associate professor of history



AN INTERSECTING LIFE CYCLE FOR PLASTICS AND TEXTILES

An interdisciplinary faculty group is researching how to combine innovation in recycling, textiles, and sustainability to ensure the right plastics get put to the right use.

"We are thinking about how to build a circular economy for textiles. Since textiles shed plastic particles while being washed, we are hoping that we can take waste and put it in a new manufacturing cycle."

—Vinka Oyanedel-Craver, professor of civil and environmental engineering, associate dean of research for the College of Engineering, and director of the URI Plastics: Land to Sea COLAB (co-laboratories) initiative



For more on URI research, check out Momentum: Research & Innovation, the magazine of URI's Division of Research and Economic Development, at uri.edu/research/momentum



Career Day hosted by the College of Business

Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island Advances the University and Surpasses Its Initial Goal

When the campaign launched publicly in fall 2020, its goal was to reach \$250 million in 2024. The University surpassed that target more than a year ahead of schedule and continues on toward its elevated goal of \$300 million. The effects of the campaign, and the purpose of those lofty goals, have made their way across URI's campuses to benefit students, faculty, and programs that span academic disciplines and areas of interest.

As a result of years of strategic work by the URI Foundation & Alumni Engagement, URI has benefitted from a remarkable outpouring of generosity from alumni, parents, friends, corporations, and foundations supporting areas that matter to them. The campaign has brought landmark gifts from some of the University's most successful alumni while also demonstrating the power of collective effort as tens of thousands of alumni gifts work together to make big things happen.

These recent highlights demonstrate the great range of new possibilities taking shape as a result of the campaign, providing unique learning opportunities, inspirational financial aid, advanced research, and meaningful connections for thousands across the URI community.

Lil Breul O'Rourke
President

Alfred J. Verrecchia '67 M.B.A.'72 Hon.'04
Chairman of the Board



Alfred J. Verrecchia Endowed Chair in Artificial Intelligence and Business Analytics

URI welcomed Zhu "Drew" Zhang this spring as the inaugural Alfred J. Verrecchia Endowed Chair in Artificial Intelligence and Business Analytics. As chair, Zhang will lead curriculum development, mentor faculty and graduate students, direct research, and relate his expertise to students in the classroom. His areas of expertise include AI, natural language processing, machine learning, and social network analysis. Zhang holds a Ph.D. in information and computer science and engineering from the University of Michigan, a master's degree in information systems from Fudan University, and a B.E. from Tongji University, both in China.

Alfred J. Verrecchia '67, M.B.A. '72, Hon. '04, chair of the URI Foundation & Alumni Engagement Board, and his wife Geraldine Verrecchia made a multi-part gift to set the tone for a successful comprehensive campaign. The Verrecchia Chair is just the latest facet of that visionary gift to make news at the University.

(l-r) URIFAE Board Chair
Alfred J. Verrecchia '67, M.B.A. '72, Hon. '04,
Campaign Leadership Phase Chair
Michael D. Fascitelli '78, Hon. '08,
URI Trustee, Former URIFAE Board Chair
Thomas M. Ryan '75, Hon. '99,
President Marc Parlange,
President Emeritus David M. Dooley

DONOR VOICES

The campaign has inspired alumni to find new ways to connect with URI, such as supporting students or joining a volunteer committee or council. For many of these alumni, it isn't about the amount of time or money; it's about finding the right way to get involved with what matters to them.



I just thought of how fortunate we have been and wanted to do my small part to hopefully make some student's day, week, or month a bit easier."

—TOM CARROLL '81 P '20

Linda Checchi Kavan '94, P '24

What inspired you to give?

Participation is key—start from the beginning and give what you can. As a member of the URI Parents Council, I have seen firsthand the impact of fundraising. What better way to positively influence the future of our students?

What are your hopes for today's students?

I hope they remain curious and open to learning and embracing new ideas. I believe URI allows students to think outside the box and be resourceful.

Keep growing, and build upon the foundation that your education provided. Lastly, they should have grit, something I consider to be a life must.

Why is it important for alumni to support students?

Supporting students is a full-circle opportunity to give back. We were once in their shoes. There are so many avenues for giving, including RbodyNow, scholarships, food pantry, and more. Choose something about which you feel passion, and follow through with a gift. Every contribution matters.

Tom Carroll '81, P'20

What inspired you to give?

I was inspired to give after learning about students not having the ability to travel home and some who face financial hardships. Initially I thought about larger expenditures, not realizing money for everyday living like gas, food, or tolls was much needed. I just thought of how fortunate we have been and wanted to do my small part to hopefully make some student's day, week, or month a bit easier. Having my youngest at school during part of COVID helped put things in perspective.

What are your hopes for today's students?

I hope that they will be able to enjoy all aspects of college life, not just studies, but participating in activities, campus life, developing friendships that can last a lifetime (as I've been fortunate to have). To take advantage of all the knowledge and resources that our University can offer to help prepare them for not only graduation but life in general. Don't forget to have fun along the way!

Why is it important for alumni to support students?

They are our future. Let's arm them with as much knowledge and experience as we can to make them productive adults who could effect change, knowing that the upcoming decades will be challenging on many levels.



Barcott-Kim Fellowship for Doctorates in Nursing

While the URI College of Nursing is on the rise in rankings, research funding, and enrollments, a nationwide nursing faculty shortage is forcing schools to turn away qualified applicants. The Dr. Donna Schwartz-Barcott and Dr. Hesook Suzie Kim Nursing Fellowship, named for two distinguished former URI professors, aims to change that.

Through collective participation, a new fellowship for the College of Nursing has reached \$1.7 million. The Barcott-Kim Nursing Fellowship will attract Ph.D. and doctor of nursing practice candidates to create a new generation of nursing professors.

\$600,000 in gifts from supporters at all levels triggered a \$500,000 match from an anonymous donor and added to a core fund established by former students of Schwartz-Barcott. The campaign proved to be the ideal time to rally this kind of collective support and position URI to improve the nursing pipeline.

When We Work Together

The comprehensive campaign has inspired alumni and friends to contribute at all levels, giving an amount that worked for them to areas of personal interest. Smaller gifts working together—anywhere from \$1 to \$10,000—have amounted to tens of millions for students and faculty.



TOP PARTICIPATION GIFT AREAS

- RhodyNow: \$10.3M
- Athletics: \$6.9M
- Scholarships: \$5.4M
- Innovative and Distinctive Programs: \$2.8M
- Teaching and Research: \$0.9M
- Other: \$2.7M

Vittimberga Professorship Is a Family Affair

A family legacy will carry on at URI with a new endowed professorship. The College of Health Sciences has awarded the inaugural Dr. Glenda L. Vittimberga '88 Endowed Professorship in Psychology to Ellen Flannery-Schroeder, professor and director of training in clinical psychology.

Professor Flannery-Schroeder has worked on the prevention and treatment of anxiety disorders for children and adolescents for more than 30 years and has written numerous articles and book chapters on the topic.

The late Glenda Vittimberga graduated *summa cum laude* from URI and went on to become a renowned child psychologist. Her siblings, also URI alumni, established the scholarship to honor her memory and deepen multigenerational family ties to the University. Their parents, the late Bruno Vittimberga, Ph.D. and Jacklyn Vittimberga, Ph.D. were both accomplished academics and professors in the field of chemistry at URI.



Our family is delighted at the appointment of Dr. Flannery-Schroeder as the Dr. Glenda L. Vittimberga '88 Endowed Professor. Glenda was an exceptional educator and clinician. Her work with children with disabilities, as well as her work with future psychologists in her role as a professor, will have a positive ripple effect in the lives of those she impacted."

—GAIL VITTIMBERGA GAY '82, P '18



Fascitelli Center for Advanced Engineering Becomes Global Nexus

Just before the fall semester began, the Fascitelli Center for Advanced Engineering became home to the only electron probe microanalyzer in the United States. The installation of the device in the Shimadzu Engineering Research Core Facilities provided a fortuitous opportunity for an International Engineering Program (IEP) student to put his multifaceted skills to use.

Kevin Suggs '23 served as an interpreter to the installation team of Japanese scientists, sharpening his language abilities before embarking on his IEP year in Japan. Suggs came to URI through the Talent Development program and has received the Boren

Scholarship and Demers Foreign Language Fellowship, both highly competitive, prestigious awards.

The Fascitelli Center, dedicated early in the campaign to honor the generosity of Michael D. Fascitelli '78, Hon. '08 and Elizabeth C. Fascitelli, is living up to its promise of providing a home for state-of-the-art advanced research equipment, drawing top engineers from around the world, and giving students one-of-a-kind educational experiences.



Kevin Suggs '23

Thomas M. Ryan Professor of Neuroscience

The George and Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience recently named John K. Robinson as the Thomas M. Ryan Professor of Neuroscience. The support provided by this endowed professorship will allow Robinson to further his crucial research on understanding risk factors for dementia and related conditions.



Since the Ryan Institute drew him to URI, Robinson has contributed his teaching and service to the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Program, the College of Health Sciences, the College of Pharmacy, and the Division of Research and Economic Development.

Attracting accomplished researchers to share their knowledge and talent with students and colleagues across the University was just one of the reasons for Thomas M. Ryan '75, Hon. '99, and Cathy Ryan's foundational gifts to establish the Ryan Institute. Their campaign gift of \$35 million includes \$24 million dedicated specifically to advance and expand the work of the institute to seek breakthroughs in the treatment of neurodegenerative disease.



Harrington School Brings Big Names, Advanced Tech to Campus

The unveiling of renovations to Ranger Hall this past fall brought Richard J. Harrington '73, Hon. '02, former CEO of Thomson Reuters, and CNN chief national correspondent John King '85, Hon. '10, back to the Quad. They joined students, faculty, and alumni, as well as members of the neighboring community to see the upgraded, technologically advanced home of the Harrington School of Communication and Media.

The expansion has been driven significantly by the support of Richard and Jean Harrington, who pledged \$4 million to the Harrington School in 2019, raising their cumulative support to \$12 million. URI named the school in honor of Richard Harrington in 2009, and he currently serves as chair of *Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for URI.*

Renovations added 23,600 square feet of space, including active learning classrooms, a film production lab, video editing suites, and other facilities that give students unique, hands-on experiences and position URI as a leader in the field of communications.

URI President Marc Parlange, College of Arts and Sciences Dean Jeannette E. Riley, Director of the Harrington School Ammina Kothari, Richard J. Harrington '73, Hon. '02, John King '85, Hon. '10, and Jean Harrington (l-r) cut the ribbon with Harrington students and Rhody.



85%

toward new
\$300M goal

Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for URI has made all of these things and more possible, advancing URI and creating new opportunities across five strategic areas:

- Student Access
- The URI Learning Experience
- Transformative Faculty Leadership
- Innovative and Distinctive Programs
- Strategic Opportunities

The Second-to-Last Lobsterman on Block Island

In a decade's time, Ebben Howarth '23 will likely be the last lobsterman living and working on Block Island. What does this say about the future of Rhode Island's lobster industry?

By Marybeth Reilly-McGreen

New Shoreham, R.I., née Manisses (translation: Island of the Little God), better known as Block Island, is 7 miles long and 3 miles wide. The smallest town (by population) in the smallest state in the country, it is home to 1,000 or so year-round residents, and its principal industry is tourism. At the height of the season the island might host 15,000–20,000 visitors in a single day.

For close to half a century, the Howarth family has been supplying island visitors and locals with summer's quintessential gastronomic indulgence, the American lobster. It's a hard job that's only getting harder. Southern New England's lobster population is dwindling. The cause is not entirely clear but some suspect warmer ocean temperatures and a mysterious shell disease are contributing factors, says URI student and fourth-generation Block

Islander Ebben Howarth '23. Though only 24, Howarth, a plant sciences major, speaks from a position of authority. Howarth is the second-to-last lobsterman on Block Island. That is, he is one of only two licensed and active commercial lobster fishers living on Block Island. Howarth's boat, gear, and license were passed down to him by his grandfather, Freddie "Finn" Howarth. The island's other lobsterman, John Grant, turns 70 this year.

Come May, Howarth will become the first college graduate in his family. He plans to use his degree in plant sciences to further the family business—in its latest iteration, that is. Howarth's grandparents owned and operated an island landmark, Finn's Seafood Restaurant, for 40 years before selling the business in 2021.

While his grandmother, Debbie, ran the restaurant (and market), Howarth's grandfather fished for the lobsters served and sold there. In the Howarth family, entrepreneurship seems heritable, something passed down from generation to generation. Howarth's mother, a trained midwife, is also an organic produce farmer, and his older sister runs a successful floral business. Since 2021, Howarth and his partner, Maddy Murphy, have owned and operated Howarth Family Lobsters, a sea-to-table catering business, supplied by lobsters he catches.

"Fishing feels like who I am. It makes me feel connected to my family, connected to the island, connected to the ocean," Howarth says. "It gives me a lot of pride that I operate the same boat that my grandfather's run for the past 40 years."



Riley Anne Secor conducts research on shell disease in the American lobster at the Marine Ecosystems Research Lab at the Graduate School of Oceanography.



The Southern New England lobster population is not in a good place. The environment for them is not getting better, but we like to think there's still room for a sustainable fishery in Southern New England."

—Jeremy Collie, professor of oceanography

But can Howarth count on lobsters sticking around for the next 40?

Oceanography professor Jeremy Collie supervises the Graduate School of Oceanography's Fish Trawl Survey, one of the longest continuous studies of fish and invertebrate abundance in the world. Collie researches the factors affecting marine fish populations' productivity: harvesting, changes in climate, trophic interactions (feeding and predation behaviors), and human disturbance. He is the principal investigator on a study of the early life of lobsters funded by the National Sea Grant College Program, and since 2014, Collie has been monitoring offshore wind energy's impact on lobsters and crabs.

"The Southern New England lobster population is not in a good place," Collie says. "The environment for them is not getting better, but we like to think there's still room for a sustainable fishery in Southern New England."

'I'm going to be about five minutes late. Lobster 22 is not cooperating with me!'

Riley Anne Secor is a Ph.D. student studying epizootic shell disease in lobsters. That entails, in part, monitoring the activity of about 40 captive lobsters at the Graduate School of Oceanography's Marine Ecosystems Research Laboratory in Narragansett. Sometimes they surprise her. "I'm going to be about five minutes late to the interview," she writes in an email. "Lobster 22 is not cooperating with me!"

By way of explanation: Secor is monitoring lobsters' metabolism with a respirometer, which tracks their oxygen consumption. Monitoring entails placing the lobster in a tank with an oxygen sensor and limiting its movement to measure standard metabolic rate. "I put the lobsters in these little baskets. They can move a little, but they can't swim or walk. Lobster 22 somehow figured out how to get out. I opened up the respirometer and found he was swimming all over the place."

Secor's response is a combination of amusement and appreciation.

"For animals that don't have brains—lobsters just have neural clusters—they're smart. The older they get, the bigger and stronger they get, they also get good at

escaping. I'll come in on any given day and at least one or two of them have gotten out of their little baskets and they're just like roaming around the tank.

"I have to keep them in the same tank, but I keep them in the mesh baskets because if they are in contact with each other, they're combative. They'll fight and eat each other."

Secor is interested in a different aspect of the lobsters' fighting spirit. She's looking to quantify the energy lobsters expend in fighting off disease. This is of great interest to fishers like Howarth, too. Shell disease does not always kill a lobster nor does it necessarily render the creature inedible. What it does do is drop the market value of the lobster to a third of its usual price. Put plainly, shell disease is nasty. The disease appears as black spots, which, as the rot worsens, turn into holes, "scabby-looking, pitted, and crusty lesions," Secor says. If the disease progresses far enough, it can cause the outer shell to fuse with the membranes it protects, which can impede the lobster's ability to molt and grow. "Shell-diseased lobsters have a lowered molt increment, which means they're growing less. My project is focusing on where the energy not used for growth is going instead."

Lobster shell disease was first spotted by fishers in Narragansett Bay in the



Any stress that comes from environmental change or climate change makes organisms more susceptible to disease."

—Marta Gomez-Chiarri, professor of fisheries, animal and veterinary sciences

Ebben Howarth checks his catch.

1930s, according to *Oceanus*, a magazine produced by Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Woods Hole, Mass. Fifty years later, lobsters caught in the wild were presenting with the disease, too. The most recent and virulent strain, the one researchers are seeing today, began appearing in the mid-1990s.

"What's really interesting about this disease is that it's not contagious; it's a dysbiosis, meaning it's a bacterial imbalance," Secor says. "And the bacteria that cause these lesions are everywhere in the marine environment."

Though a lobster can shed the diseased shell with molting, it can also become reinfected. Also, large female lobsters molt less frequently, which gives the disease more time to take hold. Lobsters with weakened immune systems from, say, warming water temperatures or contaminants, are more susceptible. Lobsters, which can live to be 100 years old, like water temperatures no higher than 64 degrees Fahrenheit. Narragansett Bay's water temperature is rising. According to climatechange.ri.gov, the state of Rhode Island's climate change website, the bay's surface water temperature increased by 2.5–2.9 degrees Fahrenheit between 1960 and 2010, the last year for which the state's website has data.

'These diseases are here to stay'

Lobsters can travel hundreds of miles. Some posit that lobsters travel north for colder, deeper waters. What is known is that the incidence of lobster shell disease is lower in offshore lobsters than those in the bay, Collie notes. Another fact: Given that it takes seven years for lobsters to reach maturity, there's no farming them as you would oysters, which grow to maturity in three years. "Seven years is a long time to see return on investment," Collie says.

And, as Secor's experience demonstrates, rearing lobsters would be difficult because of their propensity to kill and eat each other, given the opportunity.

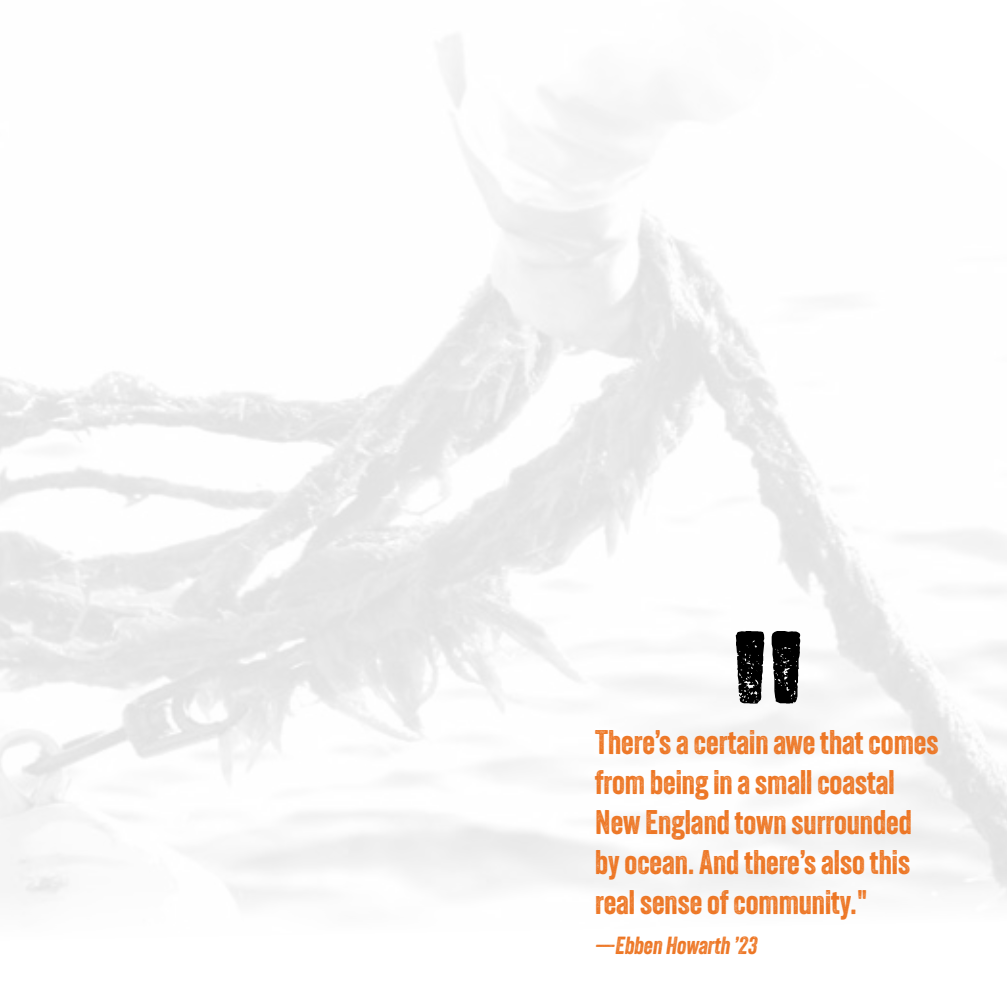
It bears mentioning that lobster shell disease is not the only indicator that Rhode Island's marine life is under stress. When Professor Marta Gomez-Chiarri came to URI in 1997, Rhode Island was seeing a boom in oyster fishing. As part of her appointment, Gomez-Chiarri was tasked with doing a survey of diseases in oyster populations. At that time, there was one disease on record. There are now five diseases afflicting oysters. Also, Gomez-Chiarri is working with researchers at Roger Williams University to develop

diagnostic methods to detect transmissible cancer in clams, and she has studied a wasting disease in sea stars, which causes them to dissolve. "They melt away," she says.

There's also a summer flounder disease afflicting juvenile fish—and algae blooms, invasive species, and, of course, shell disease to consider when talking about the health of marine life in Narragansett Bay, Gomez-Chiarri notes.

The news is not all bad. Gomez-Chiarri and other researchers are using genomic tools and have sequenced the oyster genome. They are looking at genetic markers and particular traits that make some oysters more capable of fending off disease and other environmental stressors.

"With the support of the industry and Senator Jack Reed, we've created the Eastern Oyster Shellfish Breeding Consortium and are working to develop lines of oysters through selective breeding that are resistant to different diseases and also more resilient to climate change, because any stress that comes from environmental change or climate change makes organisms more susceptible to disease," Gomez-Chiarri says. "We still don't know what really triggers all these things. It's always really complicated—and these diseases are here to stay."



There's a certain awe that comes from being in a small coastal New England town surrounded by ocean. And there's also this real sense of community."

—Ebben Howarth '23

“Shell disease is a little harder to manage because we cannot do selective breeding, but maybe we can figure out a way to discourage [the disease] from happening. The truth is, Narragansett Bay is already a little bit too warm for lobsters, but it's not only temperature. Other things come with temperature change. It also changes phytoplankton conditions. The whole food web seems to be altered by changing conditions each year, from storms and things like that,” Gomez-Chiarri adds.

Along with climate change, disease, rising operating costs, and stricter regulations around lobster fishing, fishers like Howarth face another formidable threat to their livelihood. In September 2022, California's Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch issued a report urging consumers not to eat New England lobster (as well as East Coast snow crab, cod, and several species of flounder) due to the threat lobster fishing practices pose to the endangered North Atlantic right whale. If entangled by lobstering gear, North Atlantic right whales, whose entire population numbers fewer than 350, may drown immediately or over an extended period of time due to injuries, infections,

or starvation induced by the lobstering apparatus. Seafood Watch, considered the world leader in seafood rankings, recommended that markets and restaurants stop offering lobster or label it unsustainable.

Howarth feels blaming commercial lobster fishers for the right whale's endangered species status is wrong. “I think that when talking about an endangered species, everyone that interacts with it must be self-critical and accountable, lobstermen included. That said, the weight and burden of the recent decrease of right whales has largely been associated with and placed in the laps of commercial lobstermen relatively unfairly. There has never been a right whale death with correlation to lobstering gear proven.”

Howarth notes that there are new regulations regarding the manufacturing of lobster gear, such as placing weak links in buoy lines that break on contact with a marine mammal.

“Lobstermen are at the forefront of measures to protect and negate any possible impacts on right whales,” Howarth continues. “Measures include the testing and demoing of new ropeless



Ebben Howarth at work on his boat off the coast of Block Island.

fishing gear, which I will likely be testing this coming summer.

“Lobstermen are incredibly conscientious about their impact on the environment and take all possible measures to reduce the impact of any harm to all sea life including North Atlantic right whales.”

Moreover, as the lobster population has declined, local fishers have turned to other marine life, like squid, to supplement their shortfalls. “I'm not sure the local lobster industry has gotten full credit for that,” Collie says. “The industry has already downsized and taken a big hit.”

‘It feels like everything is coming full circle’

Howarth smiles when asked why he isn't studying marine biology or aquaculture and fisheries science. Dividing areas of knowledge into distinct disciplines is necessary in academia, but boundaries blur when a business model calls for equal parts land and sea, Howarth says.

“With my mom being an organic produce farmer on the island, I, at a very young age, got to see the agricultural side of the history of Block Island. When I was

young, I didn't realize how lucky I was to see farming being done on a sustainable, small-scale level where all the produce is going to feed the local community,” Howarth says. “As I get older, I realize how much that's really affected my interest in plants. My interest in starting my business is about looking at sustainable local food systems as a whole.”

Howarth points out that almost all the lobsters sold on Block Island come from Point Judith in Narragansett. “What's important to preserve on Block Island,” he says, “is a sustainable food system within the community.”

At URI, Howarth has studied agroecology with Professor John Taylor and been a teaching assistant in Professor Rebecca Brown's vegetable crops class. He's taken horticulture classes with Professor Brian Maynard. He calls all three awe-inspiring. “I'm feeling so much connection to everything I'm learning” Howarth says. “It feels like everything is coming full circle.”

Howarth is both optimistic and clear-eyed about his future as a lobsterman. “My grandfather says he used to catch tenfold what I catch. And he would haul twice as frequently. That's tied to

overfishing and the environmental reasons that, I think, are causing the lobsters to move north.”

Howarth recognizes that had he not inherited his grandfather's boat and gear, he'd likely not be fishing. The cost to start a new lobster fishing business in Rhode Island, if a commercial license is available, is more than \$250,000 by some estimates, putting it out of reach of most people Howarth's age. State and federal regulations and policies around fishing also complicate things for aspiring and seasoned commercial fishers, Howarth says.

“If you're not fishing the quota you're allotted, you're cut back on the amount of traps that you can actually fish. And there are other issues. There are certain sizes of fish that you can't keep. There are certain zones that are shut down during certain times of the year. So, there are a lot of regulations that make it more difficult,” Howarth says. “But the lobster population has already decreased so much. If you got rid of all those regulations, the population would just further decrease. So there has to be a balance.”

The Howarth family has responded to the many legislative and environmental

pressures on the commercial fishing industry by expanding its business. Howarth sells lobster—as well as sea bass, tuna, and bluefish—at the local farmer's market. He's also invested in supporting other island businesses: His catering business features vegetables from his mother's farm, Southeast Gardens; floral arrangements from his sister's business, Harvest Moon Florals; raw bar offerings from Block Island aquaculturists; and the catch of other island fishers.

For the last few years, Howarth has lived on the mainland in Narragansett during the fall and spring semesters. He looks forward to Commencement and to enhancing and expanding his business fueled by the knowledge of his formal education.

“The trades are dying. It's difficult work, and there's easier money to be made,” Howarth observes. “I think, too, for young people there's been a shift: People are less connected to their heritage and to their traditions. I think that's another driving factor in why the commercial lobstering industry is fading in Rhode Island.

“But there's a certain awe that comes from being in a small, coastal New England town surrounded by ocean. And there's also this real sense of community. It's very rare to live somewhere where you pretty much know everybody.”

This isn't to say that Block Island is Brigadoon. Life on an island dependent on tourism is unsustainable for many. “Most young people leave the island,” Howarth says. “The winters are long and there's a lack of work.”

But for Howarth, such a life is still possible. And he's motivated. Lobstering is more than his work; it's his heritage. “My grandfather's been lobstering since he was 13 years old, and I kind of had an epiphany one day that fishing is a part of my family history and if I don't keep the tradition going and pass it on, it could be gone. So, I feel this duty to do it.

“Living in a small community where you know and respect everybody from the postman to the butcher gives you a sense of security and connection. And it feels like you're not just there living. You're part of something bigger,” Howarth says. “And that's worth preserving.”

ENSURING STUDENT-ATHLETE SUCCESS ON AND BEYOND THE FIELD

URI basketball star Tracey Hathaway '86 has made it her mission to ensure student-athletes make a seamless transition from school to work.

By Marybeth Reilly-McGreen

When Tracey Hathaway '86 and Michele Washington met, the two became more than friends, more than roommates, more than even teammates. They became family.

In 1982, they were the first two Black women in URI history recruited for the Division I women's basketball team. Meeting Washington cemented Hathaway's decision to attend URI.

"At that time, URI was the only school recruiting someone who looked like me, and I didn't want to be the token Black woman on a team. I knew right away Michele and I would stay friends for the rest of our lives."

"For the rest of their lives" was 11 years. At 29, Washington was diagnosed with lupus. She died in 1993.

After Washington's death, Hathaway campaigned to get her friend into URI's Athletic Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame nomination form asks for a nominee's degree, major, and year of graduation. It was then that Hathaway learned Washington hadn't graduated and, therefore, was ineligible. Graduation never came up in conversation over the years. Hathaway, who'd graduated in December 1986, just assumed Washington had graduated the previous May.

"At that time, I was trying to get across the finish line myself. I didn't realize that my best friend—a Kodak All-American for four years, one of the first two Black women to step on the court for the

University in the women's basketball program—you're telling me this woman did not graduate?"

Ten years after her tenure at URI, Washington—still considered the greatest female player in the history of URI's women's basketball program—held nine all-time records for scoring, rebounding, field-goal percentage, and free throws, among others.

"I went on a rampage," Hathaway says. "She held all of those records, and we had had one of the winningest seasons in the history of the program."

Washington was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1996.

As for Hathaway, the incident impelled her to leave a career in business for one in athletics. "I promised myself, then and there, that, under my watch, there'd never be a young lady of color who wouldn't graduate from an institution I was coaching at."

Hathaway spent two decades in college coaching and athletics administration, including a stint as the head women's basketball coach at Roger Williams University (2006–09). Now a Ph.D. student at UMass Boston studying the experiences of Black female student-athletes, Hathaway is the co-founder of the athLEDA Foundation, a nonprofit that works with student-athletes and recent college graduates, assisting them in the transition from athletics to professional life. Now three years old, athLEDA's services are in high demand.



THE DOWNSIDE OF LIFE AS A DIVISION I ATHLETE

Top elite college athletes can be valued in the six figures for the revenue their performance generates for their schools. A winning season can be extraordinarily lucrative for top coaches and their universities. In recent years, calls to compensate college athletes have been taken up by state legislatures and, as of February 2022, 28 states had passed laws allowing compensation of student-athletes for use of their names, images, or likenesses.

“I promised myself, then and there, that, under my watch, there’d never be a young lady of color who wouldn’t graduate from an institution I was coaching at.”

—Tracey Hathaway '86

But there are other compelling issues facing college sports, such as the fact that men’s college basketball and football players are less likely to receive their diplomas than their peers in other sports, according to “The Price of Poverty in Big Time College Sport,” a 2011 joint study conducted by the National College Players Association and Drexel University’s Department of Sport Management. The report notes that the shortfall between a full scholarship and a college athlete’s out-of-pocket expenses was \$3,222 in 2010–11. Scholarships that include room and board keep 85% of college athletes on campus;

86% of those who live off campus live below the federal poverty level. It’s not a leap to infer that gaps between scholarship packages and living expenses might cause stress for financially strapped student-athletes.

Elsewhere in the report, stats imply that isolation might also play a role in a college athlete’s disenfranchisement in large and small ways. Team and classroom commitments can make full participation in campus life difficult.

For all the attention college sports—and athletes—receive, players’ needs—financial, social, psychological, and otherwise—are often overlooked, Hathaway says.

“They are spending an average of 70 hours a week on sports and academics—that doesn’t give much room for them to do much else.”

Now imagine the toll it takes on a college athlete when their athletics career ends.

Hathaway’s research, scholarly and empirical, says that some college athletes sink into bouts of depression lasting for as long as three years.

“It has nothing to do with whether they can grind and get their work done. They have a skill set that’s very transferrable in the real world. They know how to be on time. They know how to be a team player. They know resiliency and grit. They’re leaders,” Hathaway says.

“The question for me was, how do I help them transpose all these attributes to the real world?”

In her coaching days, students sought out Hathaway for social support, career advice, and help with résumé-building. “It was getting challenging to really concentrate on the Xs and Os when I had students coming to my office, saying, ‘Coach, I need help with internships, I need help with the résumé, I gotta write a cover letter.’

“I realized quickly that being a coach—especially being one of the few people of color in the athletic department—involved far more responsibility than just coaching.”

That sense of responsibility stuck. In 2020, Hathaway met Jelanna Olivera, an

information systems management expert who’d made a career in big business and global health care, through Olivera’s mentor. Olivera’s son had sustained a career-ending head injury while playing college football. Olivera was interviewing athletes struggling with anxiety and depression as their careers as elite athletes came to a close. The athlete and scholar in Hathaway recognized the link between these illnesses and identity foreclosure, defined by the American Psychological Association as a premature commitment to a received identity, one bestowed by parents, teachers, or coaches.

Hathaway and Olivera realized their work, skills, and professional experiences were complementary. They decided to partner and focused on identifying industries that would benefit from the unique set of attributes a student-athlete presents. In 2021, they co-founded athLEDA. Though the nonprofit is run by a staff of only five people, Hathaway says it turns no one away.

“What we do is measure what matters. Any student can join us, but we look specifically at student-athletes—with a hyper-focus on student-athletes of color and women—and we focus on getting them into the STEM industries,” Hathaway says.

HOW ATHLEDA WORKS

In September 2021, the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics issued a proposal, “Transforming the NCAA D-1 Model,” urging the NCAA, the College Football Playoff, and Division I conferences to better align their policies and practices around revenue generation with the educational mission of NCAA Division I college athletics programs.

“The Knight Commission report dinged the NCAA for the lack of academic success, specifically what’s happening with their student-athletes of color,” Hathaway says. She and Olivera saw an opportunity to pair with the organization. Hathaway had held several roles with the NCAA during her time in athletics administration. She approached the NCAA.

Several rounds of review later, “The NCAA jumped in with us,” Hathaway says.

NCAA director of leadership development DeeDee Merritt says the NCAA saw in athLEDA an opportunity not only to extend its mission, but also to expand its impact.

“The decision to work with athLEDA arose from a shared passion for student-athlete success, the need to uplift STEM as a viable and fulfilling career path for people of color, and mutual alignment in the desire to provide this experiential opportunity with our historically Black colleges and universities, Merritt says. “These foundational pillars ground us in our work and purpose and make the collaboration one of boundless potential and deep impact.”

Student-athlete interest in the program was immediate, which might have strained the powers of another small nonprofit, but athLEDA was nimble. The nonprofit pairs students with mentors and provides an app, which delivers additional support via a self-paced, online learning program. The app serves 326 students (72% women, at present). Broadly speaking, Hathaway and Olivera estimate they’ve interacted with around 1,000 people since incorporation. Their goal is to have 1,000 student-athletes using the platform by the end of 2023.

Juvia Davis played softball at Indiana University, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in human biology in 2022.

“With the confidence athLEDA instilled in me,” says Davis, “I found my voice as a young woman in the corporate world, and I plan to break down barriers for other women like me in STEM fields. Tracey Hathaway saw something in me before I saw it in myself.”

Asli Strozier played softball for Grambling State University in Louisiana. In 2022, she earned a bachelor’s degree in computer science. This May, she’ll complete a second bachelor’s degree in cybersecurity, also from Grambling.

“Tracey Hathaway and athLEDA helped me explore all of my options on the next steps after graduation,” Strozier says. “They have also provided me with

hands-on experience, as well as networking with mentors and professionals in the tech field.”

The nonprofit works with three historically Black colleges and universities. Corporate partnerships have been forged, and mentors recruited. Of the mentors:

- 77% work in STEM.
- 70% are people of color.
- 60% are women.
- 54% are former student-athletes.

“I really want to understand what’s going on, particularly with Black female student-athletes at the collegiate level.

—Tracey Hathaway '86

“We have CEOs of banks, people who are working in big pharma, people who have advanced degrees and have gone on into major consulting for different types of STEM organizations,” Hathaway says. “We have people who are in the IT and health industries who are mentors.”

The organization is looking to expand its offerings to help student-athletes who want to pursue postsecondary education, as well.

“We’re developing our students from a holistic perspective,” Hathaway says. “And if you look at the research, that’s what’s missing.”

RESILIENCE, GRIT, AND GRIND

Hathaway describes her own experience as a student-athlete of color as “insulated and isolated.”

“Michele and I had both been the tokens on our high school teams—which is why it was extremely important for me to not be the only Black player at URI. Right after I met Michele during our official visit, we were writing each other every week about what a great experience it was going to be, considering we would not be the tokens.

“So, the bond between us was formed prior to coming to campus. When we got to campus, things weren’t always easy, but because we had each other we could figure things out and cope and deal.”

In her first year at URI, Hathaway, a first-generation college student, came close to losing her scholarship.

“Coach told me if I didn’t get over the 1.8 GPA, I wouldn’t be eligible the next year to play. At that time, I was a math major. I did a quick calculation. I needed to get above a 1.8. At the end of my freshman year, I had a GPA of 1.9.”

Hathaway laughs.

“I really did not have any type of social support. My family, the community that I was in, didn’t know the ins and outs of college athletics, and knew even less about academia. In my junior year, my mom got diagnosed with breast cancer. At that point, I realized that I needed to get my act together. I had three younger siblings behind me, athletes as good as I was, who would need support.

“I lifted my GPA, and I graduated in four and a half years. Mom passed away a few years later. At that point in time, I was working in the public sector, just handling my business. I had one child and another on the way. And Michele—I thought I knew everything about her—she ended up getting extremely sick and passed away.”

HONORING A LIFE

URI’s Athletic Hall of Fame calls Washington the greatest female basketball player in URI history, one of only two Rhode Island athletes to score more than 1,000 points and grab at least 1,000 rebounds in their careers. The circumstances that conspired against Washington won’t likely ever surface. Hathaway still wonders.

“Michele and I never talked about the struggles that either of us were having academically. Michele wasn’t a first-gen kid. She was middle-class. Her parents were well educated. No woman athlete who worked as hard as Michele did should leave a college or university without walking across the stage in a cap and gown.

“I really want to understand what’s going on, particularly with Black female student-athletes at the collegiate level. Where is their sense of belonging? How do they figure out what their support is?”

“Michele’s presence is driving us for sure,” Olivera says. “Tracey wants to ensure that no other young woman’s experience becomes a footnote, and it is truly part of the story she’s telling.

“We’re here in honor of Michele; we stand on her shoulders.”

Few friendships rival Hathaway’s and Washington’s for impact. The combined effect of Washington’s example and Hathaway’s tenacity set athletic records and altered the thinking of colleges and universities—and even the NCAA. And Hathaway’s research and athLEDA’s work will almost certainly influence generations to come.

“When I graduated, I thought I would run a marathon. I thought I would be a triathlete. I failed to do that. But, in a way, I failed forward. I was one of the lucky ones.”



PHOTO: NORA LEWIS



Making It Hum

The ocean-based blue economy is the lifeblood of Rhode Island—and powered by URI alumni.

By Michael Blanding

Perry Raso '02, M.S. '06, harvests oysters from Potter Pond at Matunuck Oyster Farm.

ALIGHT RAIN SPITS FROM THE SKY AND THE SMELL OF SALT FILLS THE AIR as Perry Raso '02, M.S. '06, founder and owner of Matunuck Oyster Farm, stands waist-deep in Potter Pond, in South Kingstown, R.I. “This is farming,” he says, “it’s just underwater farming.” Dozens of buoys fill the cove where he stands, lines strung between them marking off 60 rows. Each line carries a half-dozen or so polyurethane plastic bags, which are, together, filled with thousands of oysters. “They are just like rows of corn,” Raso says, grinning.

Raso wears waders over a light green barn jacket. His salt-and-pepper beard and gray beanie protect his head from the rain. He pulls out one of the stiff bags, algae hanging off it like Spanish moss. Removing the clamp at the end, he reaches in and pulls out three fresh oysters, which he lays on his palm. “That teardrop shape is what we go for,” he says approvingly, pointing out the slightly pointed end on one side, and the deep cup filled with oyster meat.

At any given time, some 10 million to 15 million oysters are growing in Raso’s farm. Each year, the operation harvests a million of them. Many will be eaten just a few hundred yards away at Matunuck Oyster Bar, which Raso purchased in 2009 as a run-down seafood shack and transformed into a fine-dining destination that brings locals and tourists by the droves. The transformation of Potter Pond to a working farm and restaurant mirrors the rise of aquaculture in Rhode Island, which has grown into a booming industry with \$7.5 million in annual sales from oysters, scallops, kelp, and other ocean produce.

Aquaculture is only one of Rhode Island’s blue—or ocean-based—economy success stories. With hundreds of miles of coastline and the sprawling expanse of Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island is inextricably tied to its seaside location. From the quahogs and kelp that have been harvested by Rhode Island’s Indigenous peoples for millennia to the offshore wind turbines that symbolize renewable energy, the ocean has long been integral to sustaining Rhode Islanders’ lives and livelihoods. And its importance is reflected in the disproportionate impact of businesses reliant on the ocean. A recent report by URI’s Graduate School of

Oceanography (GSO), Coastal Resources Center (CRC), and Rhode Island Sea Grant calculated that 6%–9% of Rhode Islanders work within the blue economy, more than twice the percentage of states such as Massachusetts, Texas, or California.

According to the report, the direct impact of the ocean-based economy in Rhode Island is \$5 billion, or 10 percent of the state’s gross regional product. The impact spans industry sectors including defense, marine trades, ports and shipping, tourism and recreation, fisheries, aquaculture, and offshore wind. As the state’s preeminent public educational institution, URI plays an outsized role in spurring that economy, from providing research that bolsters industry know-how, to helping launch ocean-based startups, to serving as an honest broker between industries when ocean uses inevitably come into conflict.

The direct impact of the ocean-based economy in Rhode Island is \$5 billion.

Recently, URI partnered with the state and the private sector on a plan to increase the number of workers in the blue economy from 36,500 to more than 85,000, and to increase the economic output by \$15 billion to \$25 billion over the next 10 years.

The coalition, dubbed the Blue Economy Technology Cluster (BETC, or “Betsy”), was a finalist in 2021 for a \$70 million federal Build Back Better Regional Challenge grant. Though it ultimately did not receive the grant, BETC is proceeding with the projects it planned—with URI’s help—seeking alternate funding for a SmartBay monitoring system, a Blue Technology Innovation Center on URI’s Narragansett Bay Campus, and other projects to transform the state’s fisheries, ports, and offshore wind capabilities.

But perhaps URI’s greatest contribution is the people who fuel these industries. URI graduates jump into the blue economy with both feet, leading public, private, and nonprofit organizations, working hard, and innovating.



A lobsterman at work in Rhode Island waters.

“The people here are all heart and soul,” says GSO Dean **Paula Bontempi, Ph.D. ’01**. “They connect ocean exploration with ocean economics and everything in between.”

Food from the Sea

Raso is a good example. He grew up digging for littleneck clams in Point Judith Pond, trapping eels and diving for steamers as he got older. He went to The University of Northern Colorado to study biology. “I realized I loved the ocean,” he says, “when I was away from it for the first time.” He transferred to URI and stayed for his master’s degree in aquaculture.

“Shellfish aquaculture is one of the most sustainable types of agriculture,” Raso says. Requiring no inputs from outside, oysters filter phytoplankton from the water, cleaning it and increasing the oxygen that fish and other species need to survive. While the state once saw its oyster industry dwindle, aquaculture is now booming, with more than 80 operations statewide.

Starting with a 1-acre lease in 2002, Raso now operates some 7 acres on Potter Pond. Five years ago, he applied for a permit

to farm an additional 3 acres of the pond. Despite an initial recommendation for approval from the state’s Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), residents protested the expansion over fears of its impact on recreation, and the CRMC’s four-member aquaculture subcommittee denied the application. Raso contends that the increase he sought would bring the total area of aquaculture in the pond to only 3 percent, less than the 5 percent allowed by the state. The fight, however, demonstrates the sometimes-competing interests within the blue economy.

One area of Raso’s operation where there is no conflict is his oyster hatchery, which provides the tiny seed oysters necessary for Matunuck and other farms in the state. Responding to difficulties sourcing seed in past years, he now sells some 5 million seed oysters annually. BETC plans to partner with Raso, URI, and other farmers to dramatically increase that output with a smart shellfish hatchery that could supply up to 150 million seed oysters at a value of \$1.2 million to the more than 600 farms along the Eastern Seaboard.

Aquaculture isn’t the only seafood industry booming in Rhode Island. Shellfishing—especially for quahogs—is

undergoing a massive resurgence. “Starting in 2010, things were really going down, people were struggling to make a living,” says **Mike McGiveney ’80**, president of the Rhode Island Shellfisherman’s Association. That has changed in the past few years. “We’ve harvested more clams this year than we have in the past 20.”

McGiveney has one explanation for that: water quality improvement. The state has invested \$1.6 billion in new tunnels to divert, store, and treat wastewater overflow before returning it to the bay. As a result, areas of the Providence River that were closed for more than 75 years are newly reopened to quahoggers. “It’s brought a lot of people back,” says McGiveney, who graduated from URI with a political science degree. “I’ve seen faces again I haven’t seen in 20 or 30 years.”

Commercial fishing for finfish has also been on the increase. “People have an impression that commercial fishing is a dying industry,” says **Jason McNamee ’96, Ph.D. ’18**, deputy director for the bureau of natural resources for the state Department of Environmental Management (DEM), “but it’s exactly the opposite—our landings have been picking up year after year.” In total, fisheries bring \$151.5 million to the state economy, employing

Shellfishing—especially for quahogs—is undergoing a massive resurgence.

nearly 3,000 people. Interestingly, the recent uptick is in part due to gradually warming waters along the East Coast, which is shifting species of fish northward—a result of climate change.

“Our fleet transitioned away from a classic New England fishery of cod, pollack, and haddock into more mid-Atlantic species, like black sea bass, summer flounder, and squid,” McNamee says. He studied zoology at URI and biological oceanography at the University of Connecticut before joining the marine fisheries program at DEM, where he participated in managing the state’s fisheries. He came back to URI for his Ph.D. to help him in that role. “I wanted to get better at technical stock assessment and population dynamics,” he says. “I wanted to bolster my understanding of the math behind it.”

In the past, McNamee says, fisheries have been managed with a static sense of how many species will be in a given area and the premise that populations have stationary productivity—not a realistic approach given the dynamic nature of climate change. He has been part of a group effort to develop more complex population models to manage fish quotas that will maintain sustainable populations.

Putting the Green in Blue

“Be careful, the floor could be a little wet,” says GSO Dean Bontempi, leading the way through the Fish Laboratory at URI’s Narragansett Bay Campus. The room is full of tanks, some open and bubbling, others covered, with some critters—lobsters, sea stars, clams—visible beneath the rippling water. “Scientists here are conducting basic research, but also thinking about the applied piece, and feeding it into management and policy to make it economically relevant,” Bontempi says.

A doctoral graduate from GSO’s oceanography program, Bontempi spent 20 years at NASA as deputy director of its Earth Science Division. She came back to URI to head GSO in 2020 and is now overseeing an exciting overhaul of the campus. “That parking lot will be a new ocean robotics laboratory,” she says, pointing as she walks across the Bay Campus in a light rain. “It’s going to put all our oceanography and ocean engineering faculty under one roof. The lab will house a giant test tank, fabrication spaces, and a public viewing platform.”

In November 2022, Rhode Island voters approved a \$100 million bond to improve and upgrade the Bay Campus. In addition to the 27,000-square-foot robotics laboratory, the University has broken ground on a new pier to accommodate a new advanced research vessel, *R/V Narragansett Dawn*. It will also build a new engineering complex and ocean laboratories.

Aside from the bond-funded improvements, the proposed Blue Technology Innovation Center at the Bay Campus will serve as an incubator for ocean-focused startups and an operations center for the proposed SmartBay—a network of sensors distributed throughout Narragansett Bay to provide data for research and commercial ventures. In addition, the Bay Campus master plan includes renovations to the CRC, which supports the state on blue economy initiatives.

The CRC has been particularly active in offshore wind. Rhode Island is home to the first operating commercial wind farm in the United States: the 30-megawatt, five-turbine Block Island Wind Farm, which began operations in 2016. A more ambitious project is now underway in Narragansett Bay: Revolution Wind, a 704-megawatt project with up to 100 turbines, currently led by energy companies Eversource and Ørsted. When complete, the project will supply power to Connecticut and Rhode Island, helping Rhode Island achieve its first-in-the-nation goal of 100 percent renewable energy by 2030.

CRC has been facilitating conversations between the companies, state officials,

and commercial fishers concerned about the wind farm’s impact on their industry. “Our role is breaking down silos by creating forums for discussion,” says **Claire Hodson, M.E.S.M. ’18**, a CRC research associate who graduated URI with a master’s in environmental science and management and then worked on a charter fishing boat and for an environmental nonprofit, giving her a uniquely broad perspective. “We’re brokers of good science and can be a bridge of knowledge and information, making resources available to both sides,” she says. Commercial fishers have expressed concern that noise from the turbines will impact fish populations, as well as fears about snagging and losing gear on the turbines.

Hodson has been working with fishers who feel their input wasn’t included in initial conversations about the siting of the wind farm on Cox Ledge, a historic fishing ground. “They feel like they were not valued, and that has led to a lack of willingness to engage and participate, which furthers conflict and leads to a more inequitable process,” Hodson says. For better or worse, she says, the state is going full steam ahead with the project, so CRC is working as a neutral party to improve the process. “We’ve spent many years trying to understand the conflict, and now we are moving toward solutions,” Hodson says. Adopting new gear for automatic squid-jigging equipment to mitigate safety concerns and employing fishers in activities that could return economic benefits to the industry, such as wind-farm surveying, are among solutions being discussed.

The investment in renewable energy is only the beginning when it comes to sustainability in the bay, says **Sandra Whitehouse, Ph.D. ’94**, a longtime advocate for ocean health and sustainable coastal communities. “In my definition, the blue economy only pertains to ocean uses that are sustainable,” she says. “That means minimizing impacts and having a big overlay on the climate change implications of anything you are doing.”

Whitehouse grew up in Rhode Island and spent her summers on the beach. “I



A rigging team steps a mast at Safe Harbor Marinas.

In addition to military boatbuilding, civilian boatbuilding is thriving in Rhode Island, too.

was the kid with a bucket picking up crabs and shells and looking at them under a little microscope,” says Whitehouse. After earning an undergraduate degree in biology at Yale, she earned her Ph.D. in marine biology at URI’s GSO.

While she was working on her dissertation on benthic ecology, studying creatures that live in the mud, she was contacted by a representative of the governor for help examining the impact of an oil spill in 1989. “It was an ‘aha!’ moment for me that there were not a lot of scientists involved in policymaking,” she says. After earning her degree, she set out to change that, joining the CRMC board and later serving as the chair. Since then, she has consulted for ocean-based nonprofits and companies.

Among her accomplishments is helping create the first comprehensive national ocean policy framework for the Obama administration. “It was the first time an ocean policy for the United States had the force of law,” she says, even though it was codified as an executive order rather than passed as legislation. “It also provided direction to federal agencies that addressing climate needed to be an integral part of ocean planning.” The executive order called on nine U.S. regions around large marine ecosystems to develop ocean plans that balance sustainable development and ocean health. State governments’ interests in constructing wind farms off every coastline was the catalyst for the first two plans, which were completed for the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. “If you talk to wind farm developers, they will probably say that having those regional plans has been really helpful to them in their work.”

A massive new onshore infrastructure will support the construction and maintenance of the new wind farm off the coast of Rhode Island. Much of that will be based at Quonset Business Park in North

Kingstown, R.I., where the main electrical cable will connect to an energy substation. Meanwhile, Quonset’s Port of Davisville will also house a fleet of crew transfer vessels to ferry workers and supplies to the construction site—approximately 19 miles offshore, says **Steven J. King ’88**, managing director of Quonset Development Corp., the quasi-government agency that manages the business park and the port, located on the site of two former naval bases. “Wind farms obviously need human hands to build them, and the humans need to be transported, fed, and watered, and have tools and equipment brought to them,” King says. Quonset is also exploring ways to create a multi-modal hub to transport workers to the wind farm via helicopter.

Ports and shipping bring in \$757 million to Rhode Island, and support 2,000 jobs. Quonset is a major destination for shipping; it’s a top-10 location in North America for automobile imports and the largest exporter of frozen squid and other seafood on the East Coast. Quonset business park, meanwhile, houses 228 companies employing 13,000 people, including General Dynamics Electric Boat, a

leading manufacturer of submarines for the U.S. Navy. The biggest challenge, says King, is fitting in all the sea-facing industries that want frontage. “It’s hard to come by unused space along the waterfront,” he says. The port is currently undergoing a \$243 million redesign that will build out the piers to provide more space to support offshore wind and other maritime uses. “Those investments will be key for both existing businesses and new businesses that come with the wind farm development.”

Boats Under and On the Bay

The submarine building at Electric Boat is just the beginning of Rhode Island’s substantial ties to the defense industry, which date back to the U.S. Naval Torpedo Station, built in Newport just after the Civil War. The facility has gone through various iterations over the decades, and is now known as the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC) Division Newport. NUWC headquarters chief technology officer **Vittorio “Vic” Ricci, M.S. ’96, Ph.D. ’01**, has worked at NUWC since 1984, when he arrived from Syracuse with an aerospace engineering degree to work on the Navy’s Tomahawk Cruise Missile program. He has since earned two advanced degrees from URI and now oversees an array of technologies, all

focused on making America’s submarine fleet stronger and more effective.

“It may take a long time to move an application into industry and into the sailor’s hands,” Ricci says. “There are things we’ve worked on at NUWC that have literally taken 30 years.” His time at URI, he says, helped him realize the depth of research needed to roll out a new technology. “It’s not just maturing the technology, but all the systems and support around that technology.” In that regard, NUWC is often supported by URI ocean engineers, who devote time and expertise to developing breakthrough technologies. In 2019, that relationship was formalized in the Naval Institute for Undersea Vehicle Technology (NIUVT), a partnership between URI, UConn, Electric Boat, and NUWC Newport to jointly develop new technologies; it has since expanded to include 16 government and industry partners, with government grants of nearly \$40 million, so far.

“Working underwater is at least as challenging—probably more challenging—than working in outer space,” Ricci says, citing energy and communication between vehicles as just two difficulties of the undersea environment. “The first hurdle is getting to a common language and understanding what problems need to be solved. NIUVT has taken that to the next level by harnessing the resources of the universities to understand the needs of

users at NUWC and Electric Boat.” The Navy’s presence has further spurred an ecosystem of startups and defense contractors in Rhode Island and throughout the region that contributes some \$3.6 billion and employs more than 16,000 people—by far the largest slice of the blue economy.

In addition to military boatbuilding, civilian boatbuilding is thriving in Rhode Island, too. Marine trades add \$1.45 billion to the economy and employ more than 13,000 people. The industry received a boost during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many businesses suffered, says **Peter Colby ’91**, director of project development for Safe Harbor Marinas. “A lot of people bought boats during the pandemic,” he says. “Driving over the bridges, you saw boats everywhere.” While congregating inside wasn’t safe, being out on the water in a boat was one of the few places people could feel at ease, says Colby, who frequently took his own family out on their 30-foot sailboat.

Colby’s father bought a J/29 racing boat for the family when he was 14—but no one in the family knew how to sail it. Eventually, Colby took up the challenge, getting better and better during his teen years. “I got hooked on being out on the water and the freedom of it,” he says. As a first-year student at URI, he wasn’t sure what he wanted to study and took a year off working for a sailmaker. When he returned to URI the next year, he joined

▼ **Perry Raso ’02, M.S. ’06**, founder and owner, Matunuck Oyster Farm



▲ **Paula Bontempi, Ph.D. ’01**, dean, URI Graduate School of Oceanography

▼ **Mike McGiveney ’80**, president, R.I. Shellfisherman’s Association



▲ **Jason McNamee ’96, Ph.D. ’18**, deputy director, Bureau of Natural Resources, RI DEM

▼ **Claire Hodson, M.E.S.M. ’18**, research associate, URI Coastal Resources Center



▲ **Sandra Whitehouse, Ph.D. ’94**, president, Ocean Works LLC and founding member of Ocean Collectiv

▼ **Steven King ’88**, managing director, Quonset Development Corp.



▲ **Vittorio “Vic” Ricci, M.S. ’96, Ph.D. ’01**, chief technology officer, Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport

▼ **Peter Colby ’91**, director of project development, Safe Harbor Marinas



▲ **Martha Sheridan ’83**, President and CEO, Meet Boston



A sailboat cruises toward Newport with Rose Island Lighthouse and the Claiborne Pell Newport Bridge in the background.

The ocean and beaches are key assets for Rhode Island tourism, a \$4.3 billion industry employing more than 80,000 people.

the sailing team, racing keelboats. “We went to France for a world championship senior year—and won,” he says.

After earning an economics degree, he went to work full time for the sailmaking company, which became North Sails, eventually running manufacturing for all of North America. Now he runs project development for Safe Harbor Marinas, which has 11 marinas around Narragansett Bay, performing custom building jobs for boat owners. “We do everything from building new boats to sanding bottoms to putting in new rigs,” he says. “We’ll take out an entire interior and put a new one in.” He’s expecting the sailing boom to continue post-COVID, as many people discovered the joys of being on the water. “People have them now—and you know,

a boat isn’t cheap,” he says. “They are going to use them.”

The same appeal that draws locals out onto the water also draws tourists. “Since the pandemic, outdoor activities are key when people look for destinations,” says **Martha Sheridan ’83**, who has long been involved in Rhode Island tourism marketing. “I think that bodes well for Rhode Island.” Sheridan, who held top positions at the Providence Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau and South County Tourism Council, is now president and CEO of Meet Boston, the city’s visitors bureau.

Sheridan, originally from South County, says, “I grew up with my family on the water. I’ve always been obsessed with the ocean.” She studied psychology and English at URI, thinking she would become a social worker. Meanwhile, she was working as a tour guide at the Newport mansions and loved interacting with tourists and showing off Rhode Island’s history and culture. “That gave me the bug, and I’ve been in tourism ever since,” she says.

The ocean and beaches are key assets for Rhode Island tourism, a \$4.3 billion industry employing more than 80,000 people. “The ocean is a huge part of how we have always sold the state. People may go to Disney or Vegas, but when it comes to downtime and relaxation, being on the water is never going to get old.” More than ready access to the ocean, she says, it’s Rhode Island’s particular approach to waterfront development that makes it so appealing. “What’s unique about Rhode Island is the authenticity,” Sheridan says. “It doesn’t have theme parks or the huge resorts of Florida and Hawaii, or the overdevelopment of North Carolina.” Even in populous areas such as Newport, thoughtful development policies have prevented overbuilding and kept the waterfront at a people-friendly scale.

Of course, URI feeds the tourism industry as well, through out-of-towners attending URI sports events, prospective students and families visiting the area, or the influx of visitors during Alumni & Family Weekend, reunions, and Commencement. What really makes the Ocean State such a draw for tourists and locals alike, perhaps, is the way all aspects of the blue economy combine to create an experience greater than the sum of its parts. Sheridan singles out Matunuck Oyster Farm, both for its restaurant and for its tours, which show off the aquaculture industry. “It’s a great example of how tourism and the blue economy intersect,” Sheridan says.

Similarly, when the Block Island Wind Farm first went up, the tourism industry worried that the turbines might spoil the view; instead, charter boats began offering wind farm tours and recreational fishers began seeking them out as spots where fish congregate. Such examples highlight just how dynamic Rhode Island’s blue economy is and how all the parts can work to complement each other. Clean water efforts jump-start the shellfishing industry. Fishing boats survey offshore wind farms. The defense industry spurs startups to pursue undersea technology. And, of course, through it all, URI alumni—as well as faculty, staff, and students—are just beneath the surface, making it hum. ☪

Keeping Current

URI grads are working in new segments of the blue economy, too. Current Lab, the brainchild of Kevin Rosa ’13, Ph.D. ’20, provides detailed ocean forecasts, changing the game for ocean-going endeavors from competitive sailing to global shipping.

If

you want to predict the weather, it’s easy to pull up a forecast on your phone for any given location. Until

recently, however, sailors couldn’t do that for ocean conditions—having to rely instead on low-resolution models from government agencies such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the European Union. **Kevin Rosa ’13, Ph.D. ’20**, bridged that gap with his startup, Current Lab, which provides detailed regional models of currents and other ocean conditions. “It’s a weather forecast,” says Rosa, “but we’re doing it for the ocean, specializing in super-fine scale, hyperlocal forecasting.”

Rosa has worked on boats since high school and manned a schooner in college while earning a physics degree at URI. As a doctoral student at the Graduate School of Oceanography, he used supercomputers to calculate complicated fluid dynamics—using publicly available data such as ocean depth, wind, and shoreline topog-

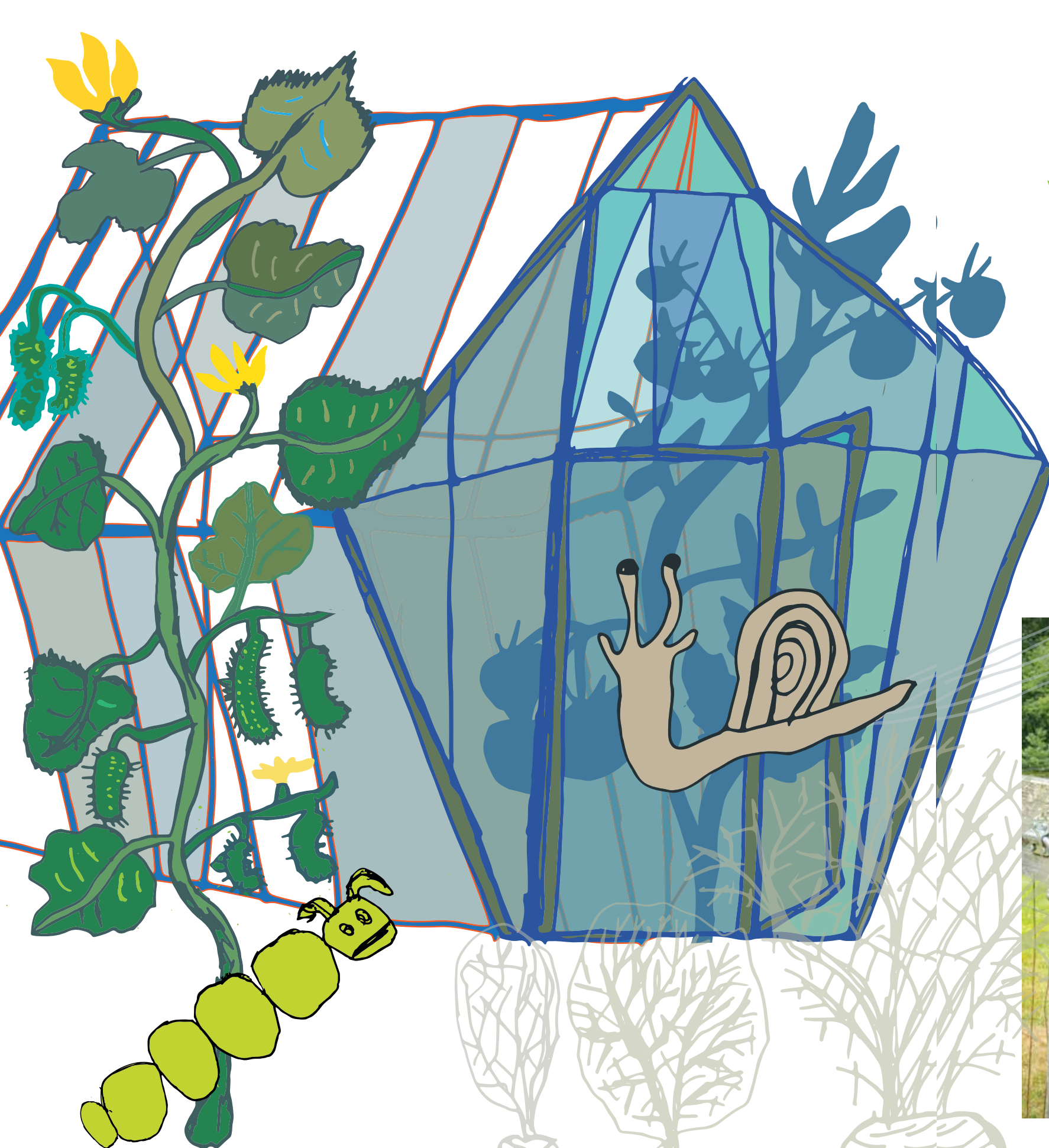
raphy to determine the underwater flow of currents. Originally, he planned to use these techniques to track pollution. But when a member of the America’s Cup sailing team approached him after a presentation, asking if he could help them gain an edge in their next race, Rosa began consulting for sailors. His clients included the U.S. Olympic team, and he helped them shave critical minutes off their times.

Sailors continue to be the main subscribers to Current Lab’s web app, which offers an interactive map that can zoom in on specific locations. “Sailors are hungry for this information,” says Rosa, whose forecasts are 50 times more detailed than those offered by government agencies.

He’s grown the company through the Mass Challenge and Blue Swell incubators, relying on subscriptions for revenue. He aims to draw in a diverse range of clients, including offshore wind and autonomous underwater vehicles, with the detailed forecasts his company produces.

He’s even working with a data science group at Brown University on a model using satellite data that could help reroute global shipping vessels based on changes in currents. “This could save on tons of fuel costs and carbon emissions for the shipping industry,” Rosa says. “It’s not only super-exciting stuff, but it could also be super important from a climate perspective.” ☪

—Michael Blanding



Cassidy Need Won't Kill Hornworms. But She Knows a Wasp That Will.

By incorporating native and edible plants into her landscape designs, Cassidy Need '20 is doing her part to sustain the planet—one garden at a time.
By Marybeth Reilly-McGreen



The summer day is shimmering hot, its stillness unbroken but for the buzzing of dog-day cicadas. Cassidy Need '20, owner of sustainable gardening company Native Edible Designs, is standing in a client's garden and making a case for a method of gardening that produces far more than just a pretty view. This is a garden that gives back, a garden that sustains species essential for the planet's survival.

The garden is in full late-summer glory. Asparagus, now gone to seed, sports delicate bell-shaped blooms of pale yellow. There are tangles of star-like squash blossoms. And the vibrance of the black-eyed Susans approaches Technicolor.

At the moment, though, Need's attention is focused on a monstrously ugly tomato hornworm. It's green—the shade of the Wicked Witch of the West. This is a mature hornworm, 4 inches long, wide as a panatela cigar, with five pairs of fleshy, stubby prolegs. On its back are white "V" markings atop what appear to be tiny black eyes. Supersized, the hornworm could headline a horror movie.



Need is proud of the fact that virtually every plant here performs a service.

Need does not reach for pesticide, nor does she pluck the pest from the plant. The garden is designed to dispatch with such marauders without human or chemical intervention. Some plants' pollen attracts a useful predator of the hornworm, she says.

"One of the cool things I've seen in having pollinators around is that they attract a wasp that will lay its eggs inside of the tomato hornworm, and the larva eats the worm from the inside," Need muses. "It's kind of creepy, but effective."

Sustainable, organic gardens are Need's passion. Though beauty and bounty abound in the acreage of this Exeter, R.I., garden, one of the landscapes she manages, Need is equally proud of the fact that virtually every plant here performs a service. No pesticides are used in



the garden at any phase of its life cycle. No plastic netting or fencing is used, either. Natural fiber baskets protect the lettuce from the rabbits. Grass clippings are repurposed as mulch. The plate-sized white flowers of hibiscus plants attract insects that pollinate the vegetables.

It is a garden that even benefits the wild areas surrounding it, as the pollinators it draws are indiscriminate, depositing pollen on cultivated and native plants alike.

Need was an undergraduate studying business at Northeastern University in Boston, Mass., when she developed an interest in food systems. "I made a big shift and learned how to grow food," she says. She took time off from school to work on several local organic farms. Eventually, she enrolled at URI, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in plant sciences from the College of the Environment and Life Sciences.

In the process of working and studying, Need developed an interest in native plants and perennials, realizing the important role they play in establishing a foundation for a functioning ecosystem.



Need also came to realize that she wanted to start a landscaping business with a teaching component. She didn't want to merely maintain clients' gardens. She wanted them to understand the importance of connecting with the natural world by growing food organically and sustainably and incorporating native plants into their landscape designs. Need established Native Edible Designs in December 2020.

If Need's clients aren't environmentalists initially, they come around. Client Carolyn Lang attests to it.

"I hired Cassidy to plant a pollinator plot for me in the spring. She was patient, explaining and educating me—and wanting to do something with my yard other than grass," Lang says. "The high point was when I had 15 monarchs swarming the plants. It's baby steps for me as I learn more about plants and how to proceed, but with her guidance, it's fun."

"Teaching people how to grow food, the importance of growing food, the importance of adding native plants to



"Outdoor spaces can be part of the world we live in—rather than something that's separate."

—Cassidy Need '20

your landscape, and how our outdoor spaces can be part of the world we live in—rather than something that's separate it's all very important to me," she says.

At URI, Need received the education she needed to channel her various interests—in business, in plant propagation and landscaping, and in sustainable organic farming—into a viable business venture.

Need notes that her URI classes in propagation, vegetable production, and fruit culture—as well as practical skills honed while she worked on the Kingston Campus as a landscape maintenance engineer—all inform her work.

Need's second summer in business was marked by a drought so severe that all five Rhode Island counties earned a U.S. Department of Agriculture disaster designation. *The Boston Globe* would later report that 2022 was Rhode Island's 18th-driest year in the past 128 years.

Climate change and its effects aren't theoretical for Need. She sees firsthand the strain and destruction weather events have on the environment. Still, she says, there is evidence that a shift in perspective can make a difference in the natural world.

As a student at URI, Need was part of the Sunrise Movement, a national youth political action organization working to make climate change a priority, halt the use of fossil fuels, create jobs, and raise awareness about climate issues. The group's overarching message is that the planet's and humanity's fates are intertwined.

There are several monarch butterflies in the garden. Monarchs, also pollinators, benefitted from human intervention a few years back, Need notes.

"There were years when we really didn't see many monarch butterflies at all, and then people got on the milkweed train and now they're coming back. So, there is some hope. If people can hop on board, we can make a difference.

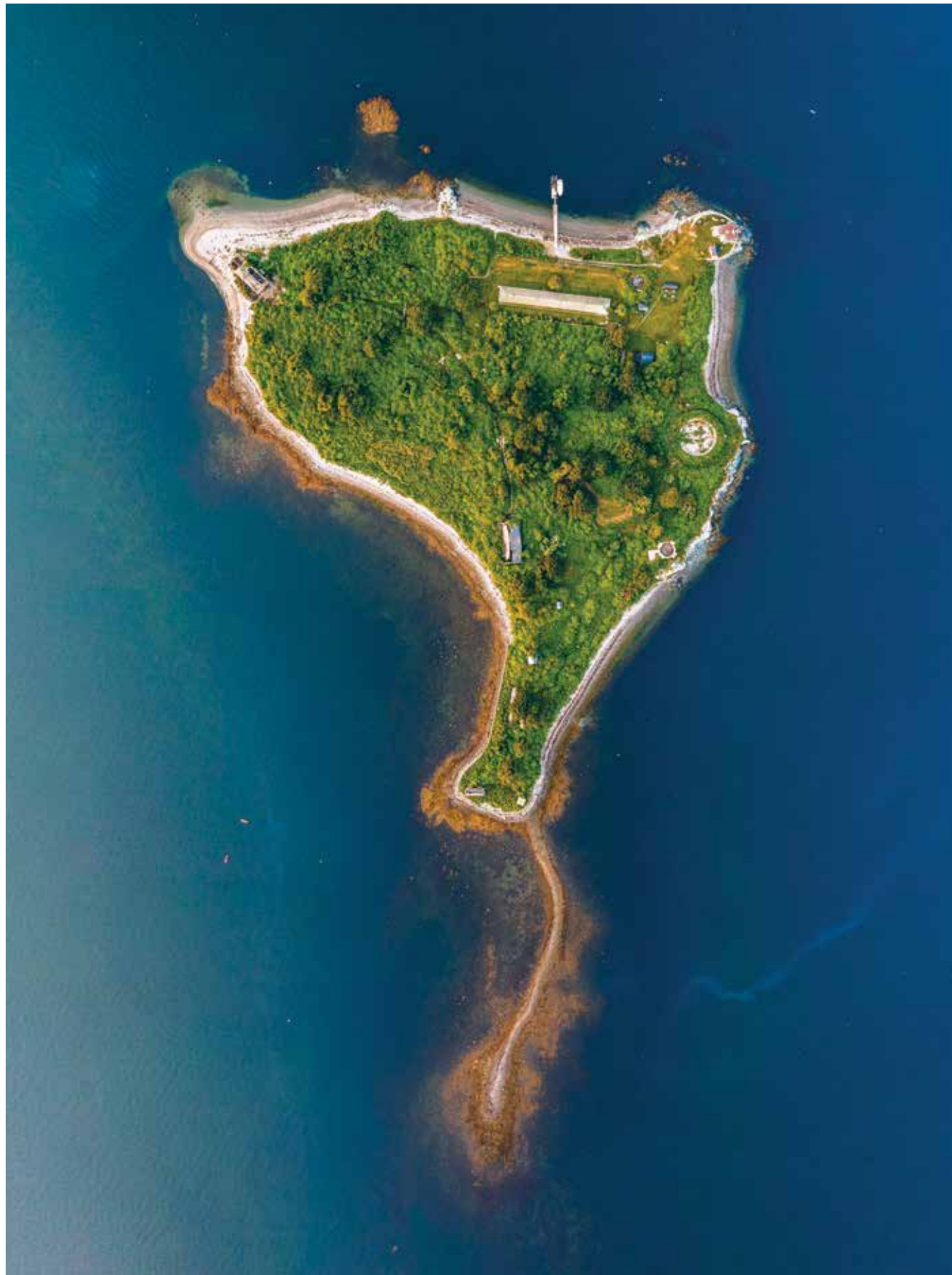
"I've dreamt about this business for 10 years," Need continues. "I work 30 to 35 hours in the field, and I don't know how many more hours at home—like you do in the beginning of any business. I've been

in this industry for 12 years, since I was 19, and I've grown so much in every way possible."

It's an experience she'd like to share. Treating the planet with respect is treating ourselves with respect, Need says.

"My goal is getting people connected with the outside. Much of sustainability is about remembering that we're animals, too; we're part of the environment, and we should be doing our best to keep that connection." 🦋





CLASS NOTES

Let your classmates know what you're up to. Reunions, gatherings, career or academic updates, weddings and birth announcements, retirements, exhibition openings, travel, or your favorite URI memories. **Submit notes and photos by email to urimag@uri.edu or online at alumni.uri.edu.**



LET'S KEEP THE RHODY NETWORK STRONG

Would you take a moment to update your information for URI's alumni database? Thank you!

Visit alumniportal.uri.edu/update-info.

SCENIC ROUTE

DREAM SHOT

Opposite page: **Corey Favino '18** dreamed about getting this photo of historic Rose Island Lighthouse—which sits in the East Passage of Narragansett Bay, between Newport and Jamestown—for years. He paddle boarded to the island from the shore in Newport, leaving at about 5 a.m. to capture the soft morning light. He explains that he made it to the island without getting the drone wet and shot multiple photos, which he stitched together in order to depict the whole island in one frame.

Favino, a freelance photographer and videographer who frequently works for Discover Newport, says the lighthouse is on "the island you see going over the Newport Bridge; everyone notices it, but no one really knows what it is." The lighthouse, built in 1870 and maintained by the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation, welcomes guests for day or overnight visits. Favino adds that this image "was a fun way to bring light to such a picturesque place."

CALLING ALL ALUMNI PHOTOGRAPHERS

Share your photos with your classmates and fellow Rhody alumni in URI Magazine. Send photos, along with background (the story behind the photo), to urimag@uri.edu and we will consider all submissions for publication in future issues of URI Magazine.

1960

Claude Trottier writes, "The Road Scholar Christmas Luncheon featured College of Engineering Dean Anthony Marchese as guest speaker. Our guests included President and Mrs. Parlange and Professor Jimmie Oxley and Dennis Hilliard, co-directors of the Forensic Seminars. We sang 'The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi' under the direction of **Father Richard Cipolla '63, M.S. '66, Ph.D. '71**. **Jerry Fortier '61, M.S. '63**, was the master of ceremonies. Dean Marchese spoke about the many research activities that the College of Engineering is involved with, and Jerry Fortier presented him a URI Road Scholar tee shirt, making him an honorary member. Many thanks to all who made this a most memorable event!"



with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). After I retired, I began writing crime mysteries/thrillers that are available on Amazon and other book outlets. I'm an avid reader and now enjoy writing fictional novels. If you read my novels, please give me your thoughts at spcom29@gmail.com."



1963

Julien Ayotte '63, M.B.A. '69, is pleased to announce the release of his eighth novel in ten years. *Spitting Images: A Harry Esten Mystery* is available in soft cover and as an eBook on all book websites, as well as on his own website, www.julienayotte.com.

1968

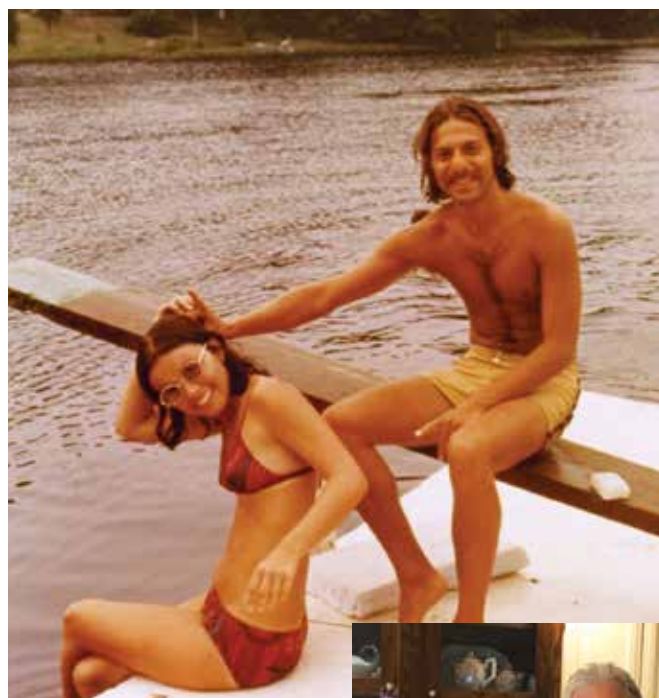
Stan Comforti '68, M.S. '72, writes, "I retired after nearly 30 years in federal law enforcement, first as a federal air marshal, then as a special agent

1970

Marc Seifer writes, "After many years of research, I completed the book, *Tesla: Wizard at War: The Genius, The Particle Beam Weapon and The Pursuit of Power*. I studied business and psychology at URI, got a master's at the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. at Saybrook University. I met my wife, **Lois Pazienza '71**, my senior year. Lois got a master's while she worked in Ballentine as the accounting department secretary for 32 years; her service resulted in



The Road Scholars Christmas Luncheon attendees were, seated: **Judy Lewis '63, Ginger Fortier '62, Diane Denelle '99, Phil Read '63, Jimmie Oxley, Roberta Cook, Frank Cook '63, Lucy Almeida, Juanita McIntosh, Janice Trottier '63, and Viv Quinn '82**. Standing: **Pete Lewis '63, President Marc Parlange, Bonnie Bosworth, Jim George '70, Tom Rockett, Dennis Hilliard, Sarah Rockett, Father Richard Cipolla '63, M.S. '66, Ph.D. '71, Jerry Fortier '61, M.S. '63, Denny Denelle '64, Tom Murphy, Mary Parlange, Tony Almeida '59, Bob Sawyer '61, M.S. '69, Tom McIntosh '59, Mike Trottier '87, M.S. '91, Ph.D. '93, Claude Trottier '60, Dean Anthony Marchese, and Jim Quinn, M.S. '63.**



Above: Marc Seifer '70 and Lois Pazienza '71 in 1970.

Right: A more recent shot of Seifer and Pazienza.



the Lois Pazienza/Marc Seifer Scholarship Fund for business students at URI. Lois and I have been together 52 years. From 1974–90, I taught courses on consciousness at URI Extension in Providence, and courses in consciousness studies, dreams, and psychohistory at Providence College night school. I taught psychology at CCRI and then at Roger Williams University until 2013, when I retired.

"I have also been a hand-writing expert for 50 years. I worked for the URI Crime Lab from 1973–74 and for the Attorney General's Office in the 1990s. In 1996, I published *Wizard: The Life and Times of Nikola Tesla*. In 2007, I traveled to Croatia and Serbia to lecture and sign books. Prometheus Films called me in 2017 to help write and star in the 5-part limited series, *The Tesla Files*, which was on the History Channel and later Amazon Prime. That led to my new book, resulting in a webinar I gave at the Smithsonian Institute in 2022. In January, I gave the keynote speech at the Tesla conference where I received a lifetime achievement award for 46 years of studying the life of Nikola Tesla."

1973

Melissa Gabriel writes, "There was no campus as lovely as URI. However, I did go on to get a master's degree from NYU in counseling and a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in social work. I worked for 35 years as a licensed clinical social worker for various mental health agencies and retired in 2022. I also published a novel titled *Shooting from the Heart*, much of which takes place in Newport, R.I., and can be purchased on Amazon. I am now enjoying my first love, which is creative writing."

1982

Dino Fiscoletti '82, M.S. '87, a senior consultant for GZA GeoEnvironmental, earned cer-



tification as a Diplomat in Port Engineering from the Academy of Coastal, Ocean, Port & Navigation Engineers (ACOPNE). It makes him part of an elite group of nearly 200 Diplomates with extensive training and experience and recognizes his experience and expertise in environmental engineering. Fiscoletti serves as technical practice lead for GZA's Marine and Waterfront Group and has led dozens of major coastal, geotechnical, structural, and civil engineering design and construction projects in New England and nationally. Fiscoletti has served as project manager for several major port projects including the rehabilitation of Piers 1 and 2 at the Port of Davisville in North Kingstown, R.I., the Woods Hole (Mass.) Ferry Terminal, and rehabilitation of the ferry slip and pier at the Maine Department of Transportation's Frenchboro ferry terminal.

1984

Dale (Somerville) Loomis writes: "I recently launched a self-published book on Amazon. It is a children's book entitled, *Perfectly Precious Peggy: A True Story about Challenges, Acceptance, and Friendship*. It is a true story about a small local farm and a three-legged goat named Peggy, who was born on my watch last fall. I was a natural resources ag major at URI. I taught science in the Narragansett (R.I.) school system for the last 30 years and recently retired."

Edward McSweegan, Ph.D., '84 (microbiology) writes, "My debut historical novel about Maria Mitchell and the 1878 total solar eclipse was published by Wild Rose Press on March 1, 2023. More at edwardmcsweegan.com."

1987



John S. Simonian was awarded the Rhode Island Bar Association's Volunteer Lawyer Program 2022

Pro Bono Publico Award, which recognizes attorneys who have provided equal access to justice to those in need through the Bar Association's pro bono programs. Simonian received his law degree from Boston University School of Law and has served within the Rhode Island General Assembly and as a member of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court Attorney Advisory Committee. He is a longtime active member of the National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys and has volunteered since 2017 for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court District of Rhode Island pro bono clinic.

1992

Jason A. Pedersen was named the 2023 School Psychologist of the Year by the National Association of School Psychologists for outstanding commitment to the profession and to improving the lives and learning of children and youth. Pedersen is currently a practitioner at the Hershey Early Childhood Center and Hershey Middle School in Hershey, Penn.

1999

Richard H. Frye, a Dallas-based partner in the private equity practice of the international law firm Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP was included in the 29th edition of *The Best Lawyers in America 2023*. Recognition by *Best Lawyers*® is based entirely on a peer-review survey in which attorneys cast votes on the legal abilities of other lawyers in their practice areas.

Beth Korecky writes, "I graduated from the textiles, fashion merchandising and design program with a minor in business. After graduating, I moved to New York City for a decade and worked with designers Vera Wang, Douglas Hannant, Oleg Cassini, and Everlast. After my design career, I moved back home to Newport, R.I., and focused on business as a mortgage consultant for the next 5 years. It was then that my husband and I decided that we wanted to run our own family business. We bought Bayside Tree Service, which had been in operation since 1987, from a local South County family. We both became R.I. arborists, and we learned a great deal about Rhode Island arboriculture. We've been running the business together out of South Kingstown since 2015. When we aren't catering to our business, we are spending time hiking and traveling with our 4 little ones who will be future graduates of URI!"

2000

Capt. Montafix W. Houghton writes, "Our Rhode Island Army National Guard unit, Attack Company 1-182 Infantry, based out of Camp Fogarty, East Greenwich, R.I., is deployed to the Middle East under Operation Spartan Shield. We will be on mission overseas until the spring of 2023. We currently have five URI alumni and one current URI student among our infantry soldiers deployed to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Our 1-182 Infantry Battalion Commander, **Lt. Col. Tom Clark '92**, also a URI alum, was visiting us from Saudi Arabia when we had the opportunity to take a photo during the third week of November, just before Thanksgiving."

2002

Robert Weygand Jr. writes, "Graduated from the last Sports Medicine class at URI in 2002. Went on to earn a mas-

ter's degree from Springfield College while shifting my focus to athletic administration. Worked at the Big East Conference in Providence, R.I., in the Sport Administration and Championships department from 2005 until 2013. After 2013, worked for the newly formed American Athletic Conference. Presently working for the AAC as the associate commissioner for Sport Administration and Championships and oversee all aspects including the planning and execution of 19 sponsored Division 1 collegiate sports regular season and championship administration. Currently reside just outside of Dallas, Texas, with my wife and three kids."

2003

Rena (Cornell) Zito writes: "I graduated from URI with my B.A. in sociology and psychology in 2003. I am currently an associate professor of sociology at Elon University in North Carolina, and I received my Ph.D. in sociology from North Carolina State University in 2012. My undergraduate criminology



Beth Korecky '99 and her family, which includes four future URI grads!

Under the stars of the U.S. flag, left to right: **Capt. Montafix Houghton IV '00, Sgt. John Bedell '24, Lt. Col. Tom Clark '92, Sgt. Edward Sweeney '19, 1st Lt. Maxx Trabattoni '20, Sgt. Christopher Richard '16, 1st Lt. Christopher Vartarian '20.**



REMEMBERING PROFESSOR PATRICK DEVLIN

Bob Madison '75 shared this remembrance of Professor Emeritus of Communications Studies L. Patrick Devlin, who died on June 22, 2022: "Some years before the faculty strike of 1979, I was an undergraduate in one of Professor Devlin's Interpersonal Communication classes. I didn't particularly care for the touchy-feely approach of our textbook, and when our professor didn't show up for class one day in support of some group of university workers that was out on strike, I was pretty annoyed. I thought that if the professor needed to make a political statement, he should have devoted a class to it, not just absented himself. But no matter what Professor Devlin might have said had he remained to teach our class, the lesson he taught us about solidarity is the one that stands out as the most valuable from that course. Through his action—not a lecture—I learned a lifelong lesson about standing together to better the lives of the less fortunate. Thank you, Professor Devlin. Rest in peace, my teacher."

MARINE AFFAIRS ALUMNI MEET WITH FORMER PROFESSOR IN AUSTRALIA

Joshua Cinner, M.A. '00, is distinguished professor and social science research leader at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University in Australia. He was the lead author on a paper published in *Nature Communications*, which found that tropical regions are expected to suffer losses in fisheries and agriculture as the effects of climate change are increasingly felt. The paper also includes the research of **Amy Diedrich, Ph.D. '06**, an environmental social scientist and associate professor at JCU. Cinner and Diedrich recently met up with URI marine affairs professor emeritus Richard Pollnac, at a research meeting in Australia, where they pooled data examining the impact of climate change on fisheries. Pollnac is still working with URI alumni on research looking at the impacts of environmental and climate change on fishing communities in Puerto Rico, with **Tarsal Seara, Ph.D. '14**, and in South America, with **Nikita Gabor, Ph.D. '16**.



Above: Marine affairs researchers (left to right): **Joshua Cinner, M.A. '00**, **Mahar Gorospe, M.A. '00**, **Professor Emeritus Richard Pollnac**, and **Amy Diedrich, Ph.D. '06** at a recent research meeting in Australia.

NURSING COUPLE CARES FOR VETS

Nicole Millette-Flynn '08 and **Kevin Flynn '11, '16** were married on September 8, 2018, and happily welcomed their first child, Meadow Nova, on June 30, 2019. They are both graduates of the College of Nursing. Kevin also received a B.S. in kinesiology. Both are registered nurses caring for our nation's heroes at the Providence VA Medical Center. Nicole is the care manager for the Interdisciplinary Pain Clinic and Kevin is the assistant nurse manager of the Step-Down Telemetry Unit.



textbook, *Engaged Criminology: An Introduction*, was published by SAGE Publications in November 2022. I first became fascinated by the sociological study of crime while taking classes with Professor Barbara Costello at URI two decades ago. The deep love of learning I developed in Professor Costello's classes set me on a path toward my own present-day career as a sociologist committed to active and engaged learning."

2005



Cendhi Arias Henry began a new position as early childhood director at the Gordon School in East Providence, R.I., where she is responsible for creating an equitable and inclusive learning environment for the school's youngest students. Arias Henry joined the Gordon faculty in 2007 as a second-grade teacher and has since taken on multiple roles and leadership opportunities throughout the school.



Jane Ichord, M.L.I.S. '05, librarian at the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science, was named a recipient of the Super Librarian Award by the Massachusetts School Library Association. The Super Librarian Award honors excellence in school librarianship.

2006



Jennifer Hyde joined BankNewport as vice president, director of marketing communi-

tions. She will be responsible for the development and execution of the overall marketing strategy for the bank across its brand family, including OceanPoint Insurance, OceanPoint Investment Solutions, and OceanPoint Marine Lending. Prior to her new position, Hyde was senior marketing manager at Citizens Bank for nine years, and also served as an account manager at marketing agencies in Providence and Boston.

2016

Matt Cohen writes: "The Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep is emblematic of URI and the state of Colorado, much like my wife, **Victoria Szlashta Cohen '15**, and me. We moved to Colorado after graduation. For me, this meant pursuing a lifelong passion of studying iconic North American wildlife. This early interest of mine naturally led to a hobby in wildlife photography. I simultaneously developed my skills as a photographer and naturalist while studying and working as an environmental scientist. URI is where my natural resource science interests were refined, and the Rockies are where I have applied my skills, passion,

GRADUATION GLEE

Jill Muller shared this photo of her daughter, **Julianne Rose Muller '22**, enjoying graduation week last year.



The Real Rhody? **Matt Cohen '16** shot this photo of a ram overlooking his herd in the Rocky Mountains.

and interests. Every opportunity that is available to me is spent exploring the canyons of the Rocky Mountains with either a fly-fishing rod or a camera in hand, searching for the next bighorn sheep."

2021



David I. Upegui, Ph.D. '21, was named a 2022 PBS Digital Innovator All-Star by Rhode Island PBS. The national program honors classroom change-makers who offer fresh ideas and bold approaches to supporting their students' growth and learning. Upegui has taught for more than 12 years at his alma mater, Central Falls High School in Central Falls, R.I.



MEN OF THE YEAR

Josh Short '08 and **Tony Estrella '93** were recognized as Rhode Island's Men of the Year by media outlet Go Local in January 2023. Go Local recognized their efforts to overcome the challenges to the theater industry caused by the COVID pandemic, and their tireless work "to innovate non-stop to sustain their respective theatre companies." Short is the artistic director/owner of the Wilbury Theatre Group in Providence.

CLASS & NETWORK ANNOUNCEMENTS



50th REUNION Class of 1973

The Class of 1973 50th Reunion committee hopes to see many classmates at our reunion weekend, May 19-20, 2023! We have planned a fun series of events with plenty of time to catch up on the last five decades. Come back and see how campus has changed! Visit alumni.uri.edu/50threunion for details.



ENGAGEMENTS & MARRIAGES

Nicole Swanson '10 married James Savickas, son of **Lisa (Harrison) Savickas '78** and the late **Paul Savickas '78**. Nicole and James were married on October 15, 2022, and they reside in Oxford, Mass.

Nicole Belhumeur '13 and **Stephen Crisafulli '13**, graduates of the landscape architecture program, were married on August 13, 2022, in Naples, Maine. The ceremony was officiated by fellow classmates **Catherine Druken '13** and **Professor Angelo Simeoni '76**.

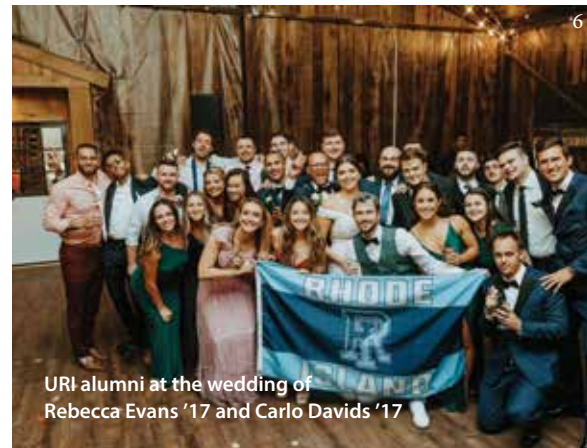
Allyson Grady '14, M.S. '15 and Andrew Gallagher were married on October 22, 2022, in Barrington, R.I. They currently reside in Framingham, Mass. The URI alumni in attendance included: **Lauren Call '15, M.A. '19; Sharon Crausman '95; Chelsea Emerick '15; Zadok Emerick '15; Katy Fuoco '14; Eric Hall '07, M.S. '22; Molly Milot '15; Dan Tamayo '15, M.S. '21; and Kaitly Tamayo '15, M.B.A. '17.**

Jessica Sandoval '16 and **Kevin Mendonca '11**, both of East Providence, R.I., are happy to announce their engagement. They are both graduates of the College of Pharmacy and are pharmacists at Pharmerica in Warwick, R.I., providing medications to nursing homes in the state. They plan to wed on September 30, 2023, in Providence, R.I.

Rebecca Evans '17 and **Carlo Davids '17** married on October 15, 2022 in New York.



1. Nicole Swanson and James Savickas
2. Nicole Belhumeur and Stephen Crisafulli
3. Allyson Grady and Andrew Gallagher
4. URI Alumni at the wedding of Allyson Grady and Andrew Gallagher
5. Jessica Sandoval and Kevin Mendonca
6. Rebecca Evans and Carlo Davids



URI alumni at the wedding of Rebecca Evans '17 and Carlo Davids '17



BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

URI College of Pharmacy alumni **Megan (Wilks) Hamel '20** and **Grant Hamel '17** welcomed their first child, Bennett Shawn Hamel, on January 25, 2022.



Spitting Images: A Harry Esten Mystery
Julien Ayotte '63, M.B.A. '69 (2023)



The Dawning: 31,000 BC
Richard Wise '70 (2022)



Cincinnati's Lost Architects: Joseph and Bernard Steinkamp
Thomas Connor '71, M.S. '76 (2022)



Don Quixote's Hammer
Hattie Bernstein '72 (2022)



Paw Dream Mazes
Karen Petit '85, M.A. '87, Ph.D. '94 (2021)



Portraying Performer Image in Record Album Cover Art
Ken Bielen, M.A. '78 (2022)



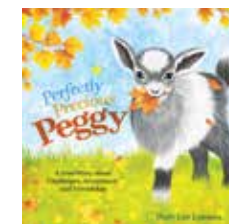
The International Management Reader: Essential Articles on Global Business
Jack Hopkins, M.B.A. '77 (2021)



Tesla, Wizard at War: The Genius, the Particle Beam Weapon, and the Pursuit of Power
Marc Seifer '70 (2022)



Women of Westport
Gail Hartnett Roderiques '82 (2021)



Perfectly Precious Peggy
Dale Lee Loomis '84 (2022)



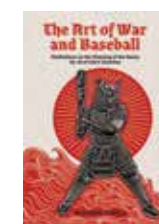
Death in Galway
Christopher Dacey '88, M.B.A. '11 (2021)



Generations of Family Favorites
Michael Caprio '78 (2022)



Preachers: A Peculiar People
Stephen L. Robbins, M.L.I.S. '84, co-author (2021)



The Art of War and Baseball: Meditations on the Meaning of the Game for all of Life's Coaches
Richard Turilli, M.S. '09, M.B.A. '14 (2022)



The Ambassador
Peter Colt '96 (2022)



The Law School Admissions Bible
Karen Buttenbaum '94 (2022)



These Distinguished Corps: British Grenadier and Light Infantry Battalions in the American Revolution
Don Hagist '81 (2021)



Becoming Parvati: A Modern Exploration of the Yamas & Niyamas
Julie Hillman, M.S. '09 (2021)



The Good Banker: A Financial Suspense
Michael Galioto '05 (2021)



Jane Austen Cannot Marry
Nikoo Kafi McGoldrick '84 and James McGoldrick, M.A. '89, Ph.D. '91
Pen name: May McGoldrick (2022)



BOOKSHELF

Check out the latest books by alumni authors—and share your recently published (within the last two years) book at uri.edu/magazine. Or send a cover image, along with author, URI grad year, book title, and year published to urimag@uri.edu.



IN MEMORIAM

Philip Monte '41
 Simon Nemzow '42
 John Matarese '43
 Dora (Pofi) Mignacca '43
 Joseph Paparelli '43
 Mary (Gormley) Sarni '43
 Anna (Bills) Blease '45
 Mary (Benson) Stratico '45
 Arlene (Hornby) Webster '45
 Charles McLeish '46
 Elizabeth (Potter) Wines '46
 Vernon Harvey '47
 Anne (Nixon) Thayer '48, M.A. '74
 Virginia (Reid) Arnold '49
 Roland Jenkins '49, M.S. '61
 Erwin Summer '49
 Lowell Anness '50
 William Baldwin '50
 Diane (Healey) Dexter '50
 Gloria (Darling) Eaton '50
 John Lombardo '50
 Dorothy (Howard) Mather '50
 Clyde Bennett '51, M.S. '59
 Paul DiMatteo '51
 Augustine Colella '52
 George Colwell '52
 Robello Ferrante '52
 Gerald Melamut '52
 John Norton '52
 Vincent Rose '52, M.S. '58
 Louise (Tomellini) Cawley '53
 Evelyn (Wittig) Diorio '53
 Henry Kudish '53
 Francesco Morsilli '53
 Barbara (Henry) Ripa '53
 Mary (Blount) Brown '54
 David Costa '54
 Ann (Beaudreau) Harrison '54
 Lois (Ward) Lagueux '54
 Donald Verrier '54
 Francis Brown '55
 Vincent Como '55

Robert Farrell '55
 Francis Barbato '56
 Colin Boyle '56
 Harold Brown '56
 Norman Burke '56
 Edwin Kenyon '56
 Robert Languedoc '56
 Richard Pailles '56
 Richard Saglio '56
 Andre Boris '57
 Joseph Duchesneau '57
 Shirley (Ansuini) Kerins '57
 Arthur Matteson '57
 Robert Novelli '57
 Sruel Oelbaum '57
 Martha (Rider) Turco '57
 George Bolton '58
 Henry DiPrete '58
 Anthony Izzo '58, M.S. '61
 Patricia Lewis '58
 Nancy (Caswell) Mason '58
 David McCarthy '58
 Anthony Perretta '58
 John Wheeler '58
 Alan Bistrick '59
 Carol (Carondo) Bradley '59
 Nancy (Wood) Carroll '59
 M. Joanne (Atteridge) Chapman '59
 Robert Corvi '59
 Walter Krochmal '59
 Richard Lord '59
 Angela (Tabellario) Mitchell '59
 Janet (Bush) Verna '59
 Paul Waitze '59
 Donald Brown '60
 Stuart Coman '60
 Marie (Robertson) Mawby '60
 Anthony Rocchio '60, M.A. '68
 Richard Smith '60
 Richard York '60
 Marshall Ackerman '61
 Lincoln Almond '61, Hon. '03
 Richard Benedetti '61

Duane Brown, M.S. '61
 Joan (Adamowicz) Cook '61, '82, M.S. '86
 Jeremiah Creedon '61, M.S. '63, Ph.D. '70
 David Grills '61
 Donald Hindle '61
 Peter Kearns '61, M.S. '73
 Frank Salisbury '61
 Charles Sherman '61
 Neil Thorp '61
 Dolores (Ogrodnik) Bower '62
 Diane (Madsen) McPhillips '62
 Nancy Rieser '62
 Sandra (Field) Archambault '63
 Andrew Detora '63, M.S. '67
 George Hartmann, Ph.D. '63
 Robert Holbrook '63, M.B.A. '69
 Robert Miller '63, M.S. '78
 Stephanie (Delfausse) Morse '63
 Howard Phelps '63
 Charles Sabukewicz '63, M.A. '65
 Norman Tierney '63, M.S. '70
 G. Catherine (Davis) Audet '64, M.L.I.S. '86
 Regina (Lowy) Espenshade '64
 Peter Faber '64
 Mary (Cragan) Motherway '64
 Anthony Petronella '64
 Carole (Nymann) Pollack '64
 Judith (Ewing) Senio '64
 Deborah (Geer) Atwill '65
 Edward Coombs '65
 Frederick Dawson, M.S. '65
 Beverly (Collins) Duncan '65

Robert Langevin '65
 Peter Paquin '65, M.B.A. '72
 David Steele '65
 Peter Waddington '65
 Patricia (Duquette) Wallace '65
 William Apici '66
 John Camera '66
 Thomas Dwyer '66
 Dennis Haggerty '66, M.S. '67
 Peter O'Connell '66
 Alan Rapoza '66
 Cynthia Simmons '66
 Marcia (Richardson) Smith '66
 Susan Steiner '66, M.A. '77
 Edward DeGregorio '67, M.S. '75
 Anthony Esser '67
 Edith Johnston, M.A. '67
 Donald Kaull '67
 George Landes '67
 Doris O'Connell, M.L.S. '67
 Robert Buchicchio '68
 Richard Field, Ph.D. '68
 Barry Guy '68
 John Keenan '68
 William Keenan, M.B.A. '68
 Roger Maack '68
 Robert McKenney '68
 Brenda (Alkes) Raymond '68
 Marion Wrye '68, M.A. '81
 Frederick Benson '69, Hon. '90
 Anthony Lisa, M.S. '69
 Francis Reis '69
 Sharon (Dyer) Rozzero '69
 Randall Slade '69, M.B.A. '78
 Frederick Tobin '69
 James Zompa '69
 Maria Aylward, M.L.S. '70
 Charles Beckers, M.S. '70
 Laurel (Mearns) Burcham '70
 Joseph Calise '70

James Campbell '70
 Marc Davis, M.B.A. '70
 Stephen Ellis '70
 Michael Galligan '70
 Noritake Asato, Ph.D. '71
 Paula (Hand) Brady '71
 Henry Camillo, M.L.S. '71
 Donald Galamaga, M.P.A. '71
 Kenneth Hoyt '71
 Karen (Gresio) Johnson '71
 Theodore Kanelos '71
 John McGannon '71
 Katherine (Hoyt) Psaki '71
 Florence Ridley, M.A. '71
 Katharine Sozanski, M.L.S. '71
 Quentin Turtle, Ph.D. '71
 AnnaMae Beyette, M.A. '72
 John Catley '72
 Robert Dorsey '72, M.P.A. '73
 Gayle (Dauscher) Ellsworth '72
 Sarah Marschner '72
 Deborah McKean, M.L.S. '72
 Judy Ouellette '72
 Angel-Anne (Holland) Parr, M.L.S. '72
 Muriel (Gebler) Sweeney, M.A. '72
 Herman Wallock '72
 Karen Ball, M.S. '73
 Gregory Bray '73
 James Clepper '73
 Christopher Cummings '73, M.A. '81
 Betty Goolgasian '73
 James Holtzinger '73
 George Kirk '73
 William Pitt '73
 Roger Proulx, M.L.S. '73
 Allan Spotts '73
 John Szalkowski '73
 Barbara Wandyes '73
 Kevin Carty, M.L.S. '74
 Sean Fagan '74

Anne Masterson, M.L.S. '74
 Ronald Mucci, Ph.D. '74
 Paula Chappell '75
 Therese (Davignon) Chartier '75
 Robert Introini '75
 Glenn Kullberg '75
 John McCarthy, Ph.D. '75
 Charles Roderick '75
 Judith (Pemberton) Swan '75, M.L.S. '81
 Anne Trimble '75
 Annette Bazalak '76
 Eva (Jernigan) Hoffman, Ph.D. '76
 George Marshall '76
 Ronald Routhier '76
 Charles Anderson '77
 Jeffrey Bowden '77
 Ellen Conroy '77
 Janice Gagon '77
 John Gregory, M.A. '77
 Steven Jordan '77
 Raymond Peloquin '77
 David Sidla '77
 Robert Stritzinger '77
 Arthur Stupar '77
 Virginia Farley '78
 Anne (Walker) Hare, M.A. '78
 Gary Hatton '78
 Nancy (Welch) Maynard, M.A. '78
 Toby Rossner, M.L.S. '78
 Deborah Godfrey Brown, M.S. '79
 Patricia (McCartin) Connolly '79
 Elizabeth Decosta, M.S. '79
 John Grimes '79
 Abdel Habib, M.S. '79
 Richard LaBella '79
 Michael Day, M.S. '80
 David Gervasini '80
 Lisa Simm '80
 Stephen Balestra '81
 Robert Bousquet '81
 Arthur Meyer '81
 Maria Phillips '81
 Richard Short '81
 Robert Volk '81
 Craig Wicks '81
 Ronald Barlow '82
 Jane Brown '82
 Bernard Bernatonis '83, M.S. '87
 Bonnie Cimino '83
 Edwin Plath '83
 Lea (Cathers) Schroeder '83
 Catherine Dusel '84

Michael Evan '84
 Kathleen (Harrigan) Connelly '85
 Linda (Hotchkiss) Lindquist, M.A. '85
 Tracy Nelson '85
 Fern Rabinowitz, M.L.I.S. '85
 Vincent Caramadre '86
 Patricia Egan '86
 Joseph Matose '86
 Paul DelCioppio '87
 Loren Kinnaman '87
 Alexander Bobiak, M.B.A. '89
 Maria Da Moura '89
 Ana DeCastro '89
 Stephen Giordano '89
 Claire Lutes '89
 Douglas McEwen '89
 Claudia (DeSanto) Muccino '89
 Linda Jennings '90
 Frederick Perry '90
 Edwin Ryan '90
 Jean Funk '91
 Paul Bucci '92
 Thomas Glancy, Ph.D. '92
 Deborah Robinson, Ph.D. '92
 Marc Markarian '93
 Barbara Bussart, M.L.I.S. '94
 Shannon Giles '94
 Thomas Bellohusen '95
 Dawn Dion '95, M.L.I.S. '02
 Diane Neri '95
 Karen Jutras, M.S. '96
 Michael A. Milano, M.B.A. '96
 Daniel Brenton, M.S. '97
 Larry King '97
 Craig Coppage '98
 Sherry Glidewell '98,
 Patricia Jordan, M.A. '99,
 Ph.D. '01
 Carmelle Morin-Bounds, M.S. '00
 Jonathan Thibault '00
 Natalie Vecchio '02
 Brian Felice '03
 Donald Butts '05
 Neil Devoe '05
 Yvonne Heredia, M.S. '07
 Kate Taylor '08
 Jack Golding '09
 Jennifer Gregson '09
 Casey Wood '10
 Shirley Acevedo '12
 Brian Fogg '13
 Mark Pechak, M.A. '15
 Charlie Vitolo '15

Samantha Stacilauskas '21
 Kathryn Bergmann '22
 James Mello '22

FACULTY AND STAFF

Robert A. Comerford Sr., professor emeritus of business
 Deborah Godfrey-Brown, M.S. '79, associate professor emerita and former director of undergraduate studies, College of Nursing
 Richard E. Hanson Jr., professor emeritus of landscape architecture
 James G. Kowalski, professor emeritus of computer science
 William Leete, professor emeritus of art
 James T. Lewis, professor emeritus of mathematics
 Carolyn (Harris) Livingston, professor emerita of music
 Bernice Lott, Hon. '99 professor emerita of psychology and women's studies and first dean of University College
 Mary Ellen Reilly, professor emerita of women's studies



The official portrait of the Honorable Lincoln C. Almond '61, Hon. '03 by Georgianna Nyman Aronson hangs in the Rhode Island State House.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE HONORABLE LINCOLN C. ALMOND '61, HON. '03

On January 2, 2023, we lost a distinguished member of the University of Rhode Island community, the Honorable **Lincoln C. Almond '61, Hon. '03**, who served Rhode Island as governor from 1995 to 2003. Gov. Almond's love for this state and all Rhode Islanders was evident. He was a proud graduate of URI, an honorary degree recipient, and a great champion for our University.

The first and only URI graduate to serve in the state's highest elected office, he advocated for a new convocation center to address the University's need for a large venue to accommodate Commencement, athletic events, and other ceremonies. His efforts as co-chair of the Blue Ribbon Steering Committee, which included University, government, and business leaders, helped lead to the opening of the Thomas M. Ryan Center and the completion of the Bradford R. Boss Arena. Gov. Almond's consistent support also led to extensive capital improvements in residential, academic, and administrative buildings across our campuses.

Many in our Rhody community will fondly remember seeing the governor and his wife, **Marilyn Almond '58**, cheering on the Rams over the years as faithful basketball season-ticket holders.

We are grateful to Gov. Almond for his commitment to, and love for, our University and our state, and we offer sincere condolences to his wife, Marilyn; his son, Lincoln Almond '85; his daughter, Amy; and the entire Almond family.



THE FOLD

Control Rooms Come to Life

North Kingstown-based Constant Technologies is made up of 20 percent URI grads who bring their innovative thinking to the drawing board.

When you think of a mission control room, you might think of the USS Enterprise's bridge in *Star Trek*. Or a NASA room filled with engineers and scientists huddled around screens as they anticipate a launch.

While these hubs might seem like spaces relegated to movies or aerospace centers, there is a local business, flush with URI graduates, that makes mission-critical ops centers a reality for clients like Meta, Citibank, and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Constant Technologies specializes in audiovisual integration and technology furniture for 24/7 command center environments in the public and private sectors.

Or, as **Heather Conover '00**, Constant Technologies' director of global business development, says, "Picture where NASA launches space shuttles: multiple people focused on a centralized display wall. That's an operations center. Whether it's satellite launches, critical cyber threats, criminal activity, or keeping our country safe, we integrate a multitude of technologies to bring these centers to life for companies and government agencies globally."

The North Kingstown-based company helps clients build out advanced control rooms with audio and visual components to help them monitor critical data. Back in the day, this kind of work was done mainly for highly secure government operations.

But today, control rooms are used across the public and private sectors.

"As the world has gotten more complicated, operations centers have evolved from monitoring physical threats to the complex world of cybersecurity," says company president **Brad Righi '96**. "Additionally, some of the rooms we build cover security issues that can range from social media and brand monitoring, managing large fleets, or even national and international threats."

The company, founded in N.J. by George Morabit, got its start in the late '80s, specializing in building computer monitor enclosures. When Morabit relocated to R.I., he met then-URI student Righi, who became a partner and now leads the company. Like some other well-known, forward-thinking startups you may be familiar with, its first

Above: Constant Technologies' URI alumni staff members at the company's Wickford, R.I. headquarters. Seated in front: **Abigael Peckham '19** and **Gip Sisson '01**. In back, left to right: **Dennis Langley '99**, **Josh Borczynski '21**, **Carolyn Morabit '15**, **Benjamin Watkins '98**, **Heather Conover '00**, **Tom Sheeran '96**, **Brad Righi '96**, **Dan Kment '96**, **Zachary Hanners '11**, and **Jonathan Hammett '98**. Not pictured are: **Robert O'Dell '98**, **Leya Ferrazzoli '05**, and **Joe Zavota '15**.

R.I. headquarters was a garage. Over time, it has become a leader in mission-critical audiovisual integration, and today, the rooms the company builds could be right out of a sci-fi movie.

"We provide touch controls that manipulate sources of information that are viewable on the video wall. Operators need to be able to quickly navigate between large amounts of sensitive data," Righi says. "So, we're not too far off from what you see in the movies, at this point."

And as more and more companies look to securely monitor data, business for Constant Technologies is booming. According to Righi, the biggest problem the company faces is its own popularity. "Our main challenge, which is a good one, is keeping up with rapid growth," he says.

Constant Technologies often looks for URI graduates to fill roles, a practice that has built up a winning team over the years.

"I get to work alongside two of my best friends from college, **Tom Sheeran '96** and **Dan Kment '96**, who have been instrumental to Constant's growth and success," says Righi. "We've had an incredible journey together. I get to enjoy the highs and lows with some of the people I'm closest to. When you have success with team members from URI, it's a natural place to go when you're expanding the team." 🌀

—Grace Kelly

YOUR STORIES

How COVID Helped Me Refocus My Medical Career and Find Purpose

By Dr. Rocío C. Pasió '93

COVID has been hard, but my professional life has changed positively because of it. In August 2020, I had spent my entire professional life (22 years) at the same ophthalmology practice. I was underappreciated and hiding somewhere between thinking about the things I wanted to do and actually doing them. I looked forward to retirement, seeing myself volunteering for an underserved community—specifically using my skills within the Latino/Hispanic population.

My hunch is that fear was holding me back, and I was adept at dressing that fear up in disguises. COVID was an opportunity and an excuse that allowed me to face my fear. COVID was not a hang-up, it was a step to get me closer to my professional finish line. I turned in my resignation and faced the end of my 22-year tenure at the old practice. Within 48 hours I had a Zoom meeting and a job offer.

My new position at Siepser Eyecare refractive laser center refocused my sub-

specialty in glaucoma management, ocular surface disease, refractive surgery, and pre-/post-operative management. And, most importantly, my voice in the new practice mattered.

Under the new practice president/owner's tutelage, I procured funds for ophthalmic equipment for Community Volunteers in Medicine in West Chester, Penn. The local migrant/underserved community can now access—with dignity—eye exams and medical and surgical treatments.

I was encouraged by the new practice when a primary care position at Nemours Children's Hospital was offered to me. I now hold a position at a private practice in Pennsylvania, and I see close to 80 children per week at Nemours Children's Hospital in Wilmington, Del.

At Nemours, I speak Spanish about 30 percent of the time and spend my days educating parents about their children's systemic health, diagnoses, and ocular health. I have also joined the Collaborative Institu-

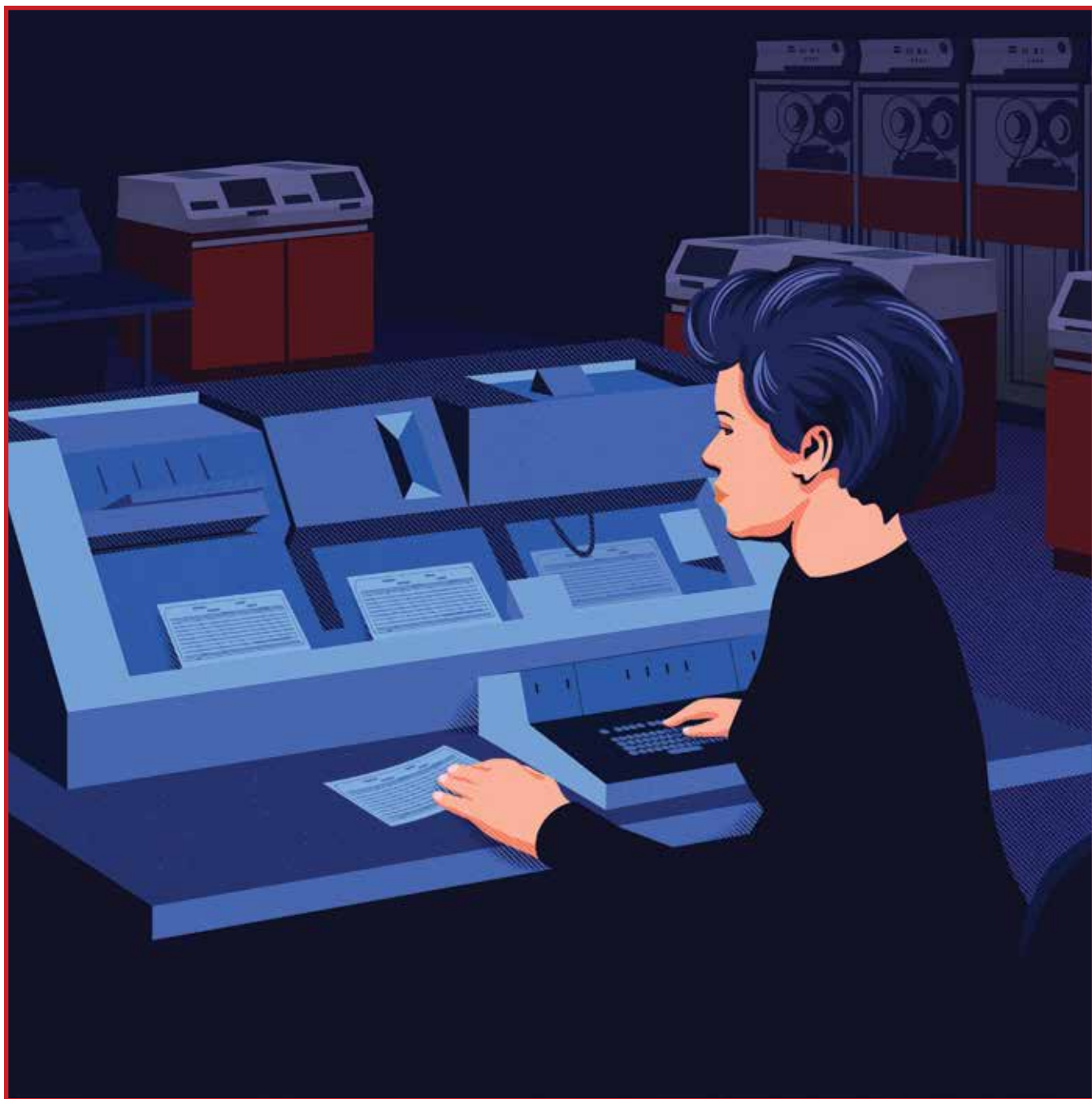
tional Training Initiative to become involved in health equity for minorities (almost all ocular normative data is based on a Caucasian population).



Coming from Central Falls, R.I., I was one of the kids living in an underserved community. I was uplifted as an undergraduate student by my Talent Development family at URI: Sharon and Frank Forleo and Mr. D. (may he rest in peace).

It is the cumulative effort of professors, advisors, and professionals that restructured my life's purpose. COVID is still here, and I am still adapting. I am doing everything differently now and, thankfully, have reallocated my life's purpose. 🌀

Rocío C. Pasió, O.D., is a board-certified optometrist specializing in primary care, amblyopia/myopia retention, and specialty contact lens fitting. She graduated from URI with a B.A. in biology and Spanish, and then attended the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University, where she obtained her B.S. in visual science and her O.D. degree.



CLOSE-UP

Programming Life: A Love Story

Barbara (Block) Duprey '66 was recruited from URI by IBM. Her first project there? The Apollo space program. She helped land the first man on the moon and then helped her husband, Phil Duprey '66, land a job as a programmer, too. More than half a century later, they are still together.

Phil Duprey and Barbara Block met on their first day of classes at URI in 1962—in Professor Nancy Potter's honors English class—dated throughout college, and married in 1966, a week after graduation. The next three years were a wild ride.

Barbara was recruited straight out of college by IBM, and her first project as a computer programmer was on Apollo, including Apollo 11, the mission that landed the first man on the moon.

"As the first project of your professional life, you couldn't beat it," she says. "I was stationed at Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland, where we created the backup system for Apollo."

That backup system was crucial to the safety of the three astronauts, who would soon careen through 238,000 miles of

outer space to land on a hunk of rock that, since the dawn of humanity, had been considered unreachable. Barbara was part of the team that wrote code for an entirely separate computer system that could take over the mission instantly if there were any glitches in Houston.

These were the early days of computer science, and Barbara worked on the "brand-spanking-new" IBM 360, a mainframe computer the size of a refrigerator—and part of a system that filled an entire room. She was able to do this largely because of rare course offerings at URI.

"URI was way ahead of its time in terms of computer science," says Barbara, who majored in mathematics. "The reason IBM came to URI to recruit programmers was that the University offered three courses in computer programming while most other universities offered none."

Her training wasn't the only thing that made Barbara a rarity. As a female math major who gravitated toward computers, she was even more of an anomaly.

So, when she arrived at IBM, she was among a minority of women working on the Apollo project.

Phil chimes in, addressing Barbara, "You were a unicorn." He is clearly still impressed by his wife's achievements.

A WORLD AWAY

While Barbara was writing code in Maryland, Phil was on the other side of the world serving as an Army intelligence officer in the jungles of Vietnam.

He had helped put himself through college by joining ROTC and after graduating with a degree in English, landed a position with the National Security Agency.

"Because I already worked for NSA, when I was activated, I was assigned to Army intelligence rather than becoming a combat platoon leader. I was fortunate," he says, adding somberly, "because many of my classmates never came home."

Although he wasn't in combat, he was far from safe. In one of his letters home to Barbara, he included a piece of shrapnel he pulled out of his desk.

"There were rocket attacks all the time, and we piled sandbags along the sides of our tents to the height of a sleeping man," says Phil.

Adds Barbara: "When we were on R&R in Hawaii, Phil dove under the hotel bed when a siren went off."



A BOLD TRANSITION

When Phil was finally discharged, it was time to find a career. Barbara urged him to apply for a job at IBM, which he thought was absurd, given that he had no computer training and hadn't majored in math like she had.

"I told him that writing code isn't really about math, it's about logic," says Barbara. "Back then, there were three disciplines that correlated well with success as a programmer—math, music, and languages. All involved pattern recognition and required attention to detail!"

Phil agreed to give it a try. He aced IBM's computer aptitude tests and enrolled in the company's programmer training. The rest, as they say, is history. Barbara and Phil enjoyed long and productive careers with IBM.

"That's when my English background was really useful," says Phil. "Programmers usually can't write or give presentations very well. I developed a role for myself helping to write proposals for multibillion-dollar government contracts. The ability to write was crucial to my later career."

The end came suddenly in 1994 when Phil and Barbara were 49 years old. They had worked for IBM for a quarter-century, but when the air traffic control team they worked with was sold to the Loral

Corp., that company soon laid off more than 2,000 workers.

"Phil and I got 'surplussed' on the same day," says Barbara. "We packed our belongings with guards standing by to make sure we didn't steal anything; then the guards escorted us out of the building."

Fortunately, they had both been buying IBM stock through the years and had other resources, so they were not in grave financial danger. The couple used the opportunity to move to Austin, Texas, where Barbara worked for a few more years as a programmer and Phil launched a new phase of his life. He served three terms on the City Council and currently works with the Chamber of Commerce and volunteers for the local library foundation, as well as other local charities. They both worked with the local theater, and Phil has become involved in commercial real estate.

Both Phil and Barbara credit their career success and flexibility to the training they received during their undergraduate years, but while they both consider themselves successful, Phil sees his wife as much more.

"Barbara was a trailblazer," says Phil, "and URI was part of the reason." ☞

—Bill Ibelle



CAPTION THIS



Photo Caption Contest

Do you have a funny idea for a caption for this photo from the URI Archives? Email your caption to urimag@uri.edu or respond at uri.edu/magazine.

Submit entries by June 15, 2023

Greetings URI Magazine readers! As always, you submitted a wealth of creative and clever caption ideas for the photo in the fall 2022 issue, which is from Homecoming 1962. There were puns, a few lamb chop entries, and even a Hugh Hefner reference among the captions you submitted.



FALL 2021 WINNERS

WINNING CAPTION

“Who put the ram in the rama-lama-ding-dong?”
—Betsy (Doyle) Shea-Taylor '67

RUNNERS-UP

- “Welcome to URI. Do you know the secret Ram Handshake?”
—Richard (Rick) McCahey '69
- “Then it’s a deal. You sign on to be the URI mascot and we will stop serving lamb in the dining halls.”
—Ronald J. Rabczak '75
- No donkey or elephant for me. I’m running as an independent.
—Kathleen Boehmer '72, M.A. '73

SHARE YOUR VINTAGE URI PHOTOS!

Would you consider sharing some of those vintage photos from long ago or more recently, for the photo caption contest or just for fun?

If so, we’d love to consider sharing your photos in URI Magazine. Please scan or take a good-quality photo of your snapshot and mail to urimag@uri.edu.



We Can Help Them Get There

Every gift to RhodyNow: Scholarship is an investment in URI students. This fund directly helps students achieve their goal of earning a URI degree and inspires them to explore new possibilities before and after graduation.

Contribute to RhodyNow today at uri.edu/give.



“I’m very grateful for the scholarship I received. I was worried about being able to pay for school and this scholarship has taken away the financial burden.”

ROBIN FIDEL '23



“I transferred from community college and would not be able to attend URI on a full-time basis if not for the scholarships I received. I am beyond grateful.”

DYLAN LAMOTTE '23



HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY, RHODY!

URI's official mascot, Rhody the Ram, turns 100 this year. Rhody stays forever young by keeping busy cheering on our football and men's and women's basketball games and attending all kinds of events year-round.

The ram became URI's official mascot on March 8, 1923, symbolizing URI's history as an agricultural institution. In 1929, a live ram appeared as a mascot at a football game, a tradition that would continue until the 1960s.

Look for more about Rhody in *URI Magazine* later this year, and visit uri.edu/news/rhody-centennial for stories and photos of Rhody through the years.

