ART AS ACTIVISM

The stunning murals of Angela Gonzalez ’16, aka AGonza, focus on community and what connects us.
Bristol Bay, Alaska is home to the most productive wild salmon fishery on the planet. Every year, millions of salmon return to the pristine watersheds of western Alaska to spawn, including this sockeye salmon on the Kanektok River. This photograph connects to a long-term visual research project that investigates the conservation status of Pacific salmon across their range. The photographs are being built into an archive documenting the challenges that salmon populations face, including the effects of dams, climate change, commercial and recreational fisheries, and threats such as mining, logging, and agriculture.

URI’s third annual Research and Scholarship Photo Contest attracted a stunning collection of photos from URI students, staff, and faculty. The contest provides a unique opportunity for our researchers and scholars to convey their ideas and work, as well as their unique perspectives, through the images they capture.

We’re proud to share this year’s top-placing photos, which represent a range of disciplines—from oceanography to journalism. They include work by undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty, and they reinforce that time-tested adage: “A picture is worth a thousand words.”
PENGUIN POLAR PLUNGE
Kelton McMahon, Assistant Professor of Oceanography
This photo was taken during a National Science Foundation-funded research cruise to the Antarctic last spring to study how warming waters and disappearing sea ice are impacting the food webs supporting krill predators in the Southern Ocean. Here, a gentoo penguin leaps off a floating iceberg in the frigid waters of Mikkelsen Harbor in the Antarctic Peninsula in hopes of finding krill to eat, while avoiding being eaten by a hungry leopard seal or killer whale. Penguins are “canaries in the coal mine,” often indicating the health of the ecosystem.

COMING UP FOR AIR
Laird French ’21, Undergraduate Student, Marketing and Photography
This photo was taken during a free dive while exploring a quarry in Westerly, Rhode Island, last summer. French says, “At a certain angle, amazing abstract reflections can be achieved using the surface of the water.” As a photography minor and outdoor enthusiast, French often attempts to capture special moments in nature. This photograph is part of his documentary portfolio of work involving water and nature.

FROM REEF TO MARKET
Elaine Shen, Ph.D ’23, Doctoral Candidate, Biological Sciences
With the sunrise, a fisheries collector prepares a freshly caught triggerfish for sale at the local market in Lombok, Indonesia. As part of her research in biological and environmental sciences, Shen got a firsthand glimpse at how small-scale fisheries in Indonesia operate; she often met fishers at landing sites as they arrived with boats full of colorful coral reef fish designated for personal consumption or sale, depending on the species.

WHERE DOES THE TIMBERDOODLE GO?
Colby Slezak, Graduate Student, Natural Resources Science
A timberdoodle, or American woodcock, is measured before release as part of research on the spatial ecology of this cryptic, forest-dwelling shorebird. In the last decade, tracking birds using radio-telemetry has produced detailed probability-of-use maps and influenced forest management conducted by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. By attaching state-of-the-art GPS transmitters to the birds in the fall prior to migration, detailed location data can be obtained as the birds migrate to their wintering grounds.

NATURE’S UNDERWATER 3D PRINTER: THE PARCHMENT TUBE WORM
Kotachi Liu ’23, Doctoral Candidate, Ocean Engineering
This image is from a transmission electron micrograph showing the housing tube of a marine parchment worm. It shows a cross section of the material, made of highly organized nano-fibrils. These nano-fibrils are able to assemble rapidly underwater, making the material a potential template for novel 3D printing and underwater repair. Liu’s research focuses on developing autonomous underwater vehicles through bioinspiration.

URI’s Research and Scholarship Photo Contest is sponsored by the University of Rhode Island Magazine; the URI Division of Research and Economic Development magazine, Momentum: Research & Innovation; and the Rhode Island Sea Grant/URI Coastal Institute magazine, 41°N: Rhode Island’s Ocean and Coastal Magazine.
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URI alumni are amazing! Catch up with your classmates and get to know the newest and longest-standing members of the Rhody family.

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Susan Burlew Southard ’77 reflects on being part of URI’s crew team and how the experience influenced the rest of her life.

64 Confessions of a Yankees Fauxtographer
Arnie “Tokyo” Rosenthal ’73 documented an era of classic Yankees history. His story of making it into the Yankee Stadium press box, making a habit of it, and coming clean, is delightfully mischievous. Here, Tokyo chats with Reggie Jackson.

32 Lessons from a Team-First Leader
President of Fry’s Food Stores Monica Garnes ’94 leads with heart and by making sure her team succeeds.
Opportunity for Change

In the tumultuous first half of 2020, we’ve all had to make changes. The powerful movement that has grown and gained traction in the wake of George Floyd’s murder is also about change—long overdue, systemic change. It’s time. Let’s not miss this opportunity.

2020 has given us a pandemic resulting in illness and loss of lives and livelihoods. The pandemic forced schools, including URI, to quickly shift to remote education, and resulted in a virtual recognition ceremony for our 2020 grads that was nothing like what they dreamed of, expected, and deserved.

Then, the murder of George Floyd, documented on video, in Minneapolis in May sparked worldwide protests demanding change. The video was shocking to many of us. But what we saw was only one heart-wrenching example of yet another manifestation of the systemic racism that has plagued the United States for over 400 years, as both Black Americans and Native Americans know all too well.

Let us not miss this opportunity to move the United States closer to becoming a country with “liberty and justice for all.” We have seen enough horrific videos that capture violence and injustice. Black lives matter.

Angela Gonzalez, aka AGonzalez ’16, featured on this issue’s cover, is not missing this opportunity. An activist whose tool is a paintbrush, she is moving us closer to liberty and justice for all through her murals. In the wake of recent vandalism in Providence, she saw boarded up storefronts as opportunities for community-focused art that would generate conversation and connection. “I am a protestor,” she says, “a revolutionist’s artist. My passion is changing things.” Gonzalez is an example of how each of us can contribute to positive change.

URL and American higher education more broadly has missed or mishandled too many opportunities to help guide our nation to becoming a just and humane society. Let us not squander this one. Let us agree that URI should exemplify a clear and consistent commitment to anti-racism, to equal justice, and to liberty and safety for Black Americans and other marginalized groups.

Let us not forget that research universities must live in the real world—we must deal in facts, data, and truth, even when these are uncomfortable, inconvenient, or inconsistent with the myths we tell ourselves about who we are, and what our country is. And we must prepare our students to live in the real world, to critically examine their own myths and assumptions, and to be prepared to succeed and lead in the global effort to overcome the challenges of the times in which they live.

Our transformation, in many ways, is just beginning.

Thanks to the Campaign for the University of Rhode Island—which we are proud to officially launch with this issue of URI Magazine, we will continue thinking and dreaming big. The campaign will allow us to expand student access to a URI education, boost innovative scholarship and research, strengthen programs that distinguish us among public research institutions, extend our global reach and influence, and develop the leaders who will solve tomorrow’s complex problems.

We remain committed to researching, thinking, leading, creating, reflecting, and inventing. We do these things to make the world a better place. We do them to make the world a more just and humane place for all. We do them to make the world a safer and healthier place for all. And never has there been a time when what we do here is needed more.

David M. Dooley
President, University of Rhode Island
URI IS MAKING TRANSFORMATIVE INVESTMENTS
in students, faculty, groundbreaking research, and our physical environment. The campaign will build upon our exceptional achievements and advance learning, research, and thought-leading academic activity.

“This campaign offers the opportunity for everyone to contribute something meaningful to making the University of Rhode Island even better, even stronger, and more resilient, and to raising our profile globally and nationally.”

David M. Dooley, URI President

Announcing the $250 Million Campaign for the University of Rhode Island
ADELAIDE LEVENSON ’21 wants to help protect the environment, and she believes research is the key to sustainability.
She participated in three research projects in her first two years as a chemistry major. She worked on the creation of flame-retardant textiles, studied supramolecular compounds’ ability to capture pollutants from water, and assisted in the development of devices that detect nutrients in seawater.
Levenson found the formula at URI to achieve her dreams.

SERAPHINA NEGASH ’21 is an idealist with a strong practical bent. She is studying to be a doctor because she believes that people, regardless of income or status, should have access to health care.
She speaks fondly of URI faculty who have challenged her to think critically and ask tough questions while mentoring her even after the class is over.
Her leadership skills and confidence have grown through her participation in student organizations and as a resident assistant. URI is home and the foundation on which to build a better future.

“I was accepted to seven universities and I chose URI because of the financial aid I received. I want to be a doctor and I have a lot of schooling ahead of me. URI has provided me with unexpected experiences in and out of the classroom that have broadened how I think. I love it here.”
Seraphina Negash ’21
Majors: Health Studies and Cell and Molecular Biology
Home: Providence, R.I.

“URI has provided me with amazing hands-on opportunities early in my academic career. It has offered knowledge and experience I couldn’t gain sitting in a classroom. Because of these experiences, I can confidently say that I can’t imagine myself doing anything else.”
Adelaide Levenson ’21
Major: Chemistry
Home: Woonsocket, R.I.
Big Ideas. Bold Plans.
The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY
Transformative Faculty Leadership

Teaching and research excellence define the University of Rhode Island. Big Ideas. Bold Plans. will build on a decade of strategic growth by generating transformative investments in faculty and state-of-the-art facilities. Attracting and retaining distinguished professors who make significant contributions to research and education will bring URI and our students to new heights.

“I tell students when they walk into my class that they are going to start a company in one semester. Over that time, they create a working prototype of a product they want to bring to market. They leave the course with a better understanding of design thinking and an entrepreneurial mindset. Life is an experiment, and I love sharing that idea with my students.”

Kunal Mankodiya
Associate Professor in Biomedical Engineering
Department of Electrical, Computer, and Biomedical Engineering
College of Engineering

As a child, KUNAL MANKODIYA helped sell textiles at his family-owned shop in India. Now, he and an interdisciplinary team at URI make textiles with sensors, computing, and the internet to improve health.

Professor Mankodiya founded the Wearable Biosensing Lab at URI, which has received national and international accolades. He received a National Science Foundation CAREER Award and was named the “Innovator-of-the-year” by Future Textiles Awards in Germany.

Mankodiya organizes international scientific workshops and hackathons to promote entrepreneurial thinking.

URI students benefit from the synergy between teaching and research.

Mankodiya’s course, Wearable Internet of Things, nurtures their entrepreneurial skills.

Faculty like Professor Mankodiya enable URI to better serve its students and raise its academic profile.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY
Innovative and Distinctive Programs

Collaborative environments that draw on shared expertise generate high-impact research, creative work, and robust partnerships. The Academic Health Collaborative and Innovate@URI provide structure for this growth.

Expansion of URI’s international programs will raise the profile of our students, faculty, and University in the global arena.

SCOTT BREAULT’21 saw a flyer in high school that combined his passions for cars and innovation: an internship at BMW through the URI International Engineering Program (IEP).

The flyer inspired him to apply to URI, and in spring 2020 he was interning at ZF Friedrichshafen AG in Germany, a company that creates systems that enable vehicles to see, think, and act.

Breault’s semester abroad was cut short due to COVID-19, but the IEP helped him transition to an internship at PI (Physik Instrumente), a German company with a facility in Auburn, Massachusetts.

The experience has demonstrated that he can “think globally and act locally.”

“The IEP is second-to-none and allows students to establish connections and take advantage of the many opportunities the program provides.”

Scott Breault’21
Majors: Mechanical Engineering and German
Home: Milford, Connecticut
DONALD H. DEHAYES came to URI in 2008 as provost and vice president for academic affairs to oversee the intellectual enterprise and to encourage growth and innovation. Under his leadership, the 2016–2021 Academic Plan set clear goals to enhance URI’s environment for superteaching learning and discovery.

This “living plan” anticipated dramatic changes in the landscape of higher education and developed strategies to address disruptive technologies, access and affordability issues, student success and degree completion, and globalization.

These challenges and new ones will continue to present URI with opportunities. By building the URI endowment, the University will have access to resources that can be used to implement strategies that enhance URI and benefit students.

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CAMPAIGN PRIORITY

Strategic Opportunities

Key strategic opportunities will provide financial agility for long-term success. This aspirational vision calls for an endowed opportunity fund to support new initiatives like advancing external partnerships and furthering URI’s leadership in artificial intelligence and big data. Investment in athletic programs offers expanded visibility and growth potential. Increased support for the annual fund will provide immediate-use resources. Thoughtful planning and implementation of new ideas can assure a bright future for URI.

“For the University to take the next step, we need to be nimble and take advantage of opportunities that require quick action. Strategic endowed funds, combined with immediate-use resources, give us the agility to ensure URI’s continued success.”

Donald H. DeHayes
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

$250M
Campaign goal by 2024

$175M
Campaign progress to date

“My wife Jean and I are committed to supporting the University of Rhode Island’s vision for the future and are pleased to invest in Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for URI.”

Richard J. Harrington ’73, Hon. ’02
Campaign Chair

CAMPAIGN.URI.EDU
Feedback

Many of you responded to our invitation to share your “Quarantine Class Notes” earlier this spring (see page 60). It was amazing to read about your experiences, so I decided to write my message for this issue in the same spirit.

Back in March when URI shifted to remote learning, many staff members, including me, began working from home. I’m fortunate to have a job I can do from home and a home in which to do it. My partner and son were also working and going to school from home, so finding the space to work—and the Wi-Fi bandwidth—was a challenge. My daughter is in Maine doing an internship, so I claimed her room as my office. But we managed, and actually enjoyed much of our lock-down. We kept healthy, mostly busy with work, and able to spend our free time doing things we enjoy. I read three books, did online yoga classes; logged a lot of miles walking, running, and cycling; read/watch/listen recommendations on Ibram X. Kendi. It’s one of the faculty new book: How to Be an Antiracist...inexpensively. In the meantime, I’m starting a list of changes will have grown exponentially. By the time this issue arrives in your mailbox later this summer, it is my hope the list of changes will have grown exponentially. In the meantime, I’m starting a new book: How to Be an Antiracist by Brahman thái. Kendi. It’s one of the faculty read/watch/listen recommendations on pages 22–23. We all have a lot to learn.

—Barbara Caron, Editor-in-Chief

Love for Laurie

SO PROUD OF YOU, LAURIE! YOUR work is so important. Thank you for inspiring me.

—Donna Goddard ’79

Laurie Lindemans, M.A. ’02 was featured in the spring 2020 story, “The Emotional Power of Tidying Up.”

Watch Those Asterisks

HOW FAR WE HAVE COME! READING the featured article on “Speaking Truth,” I was brought back to 1963 when I served on the editorial board of the URI literary magazine. In those days, the name was Paradigm. We approved the issue and sent it to the printer, with a very well written and meaningful short story—that contained a certain four-letter word. Remember, this was South County, the year was 1963. The printer called someone on the faculty (sorry, bad memories do not last that long) to alert him that the publication was obscene. Needless to say, the entire editorial board was called in to discuss this. The compromise reached was that the story was printed, but the two middle letters were replaced with asterisks. For several months, usually in jest, certain students would comment to one another, “Asterisk you.”

Most of my memories of my days in Kingston were much fonder.

—Nada Chandler ’84

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Editor-in-Chief: Michele A. Noto, M.S., ’06

Vice President, URI Foundation & Alumni Engagement

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Art Director: Kim Robertson

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Illustrations: Anthony Barnes ’74

Digital Design: Lauren McGaughy ’92

Editorial Board: Kelly Mahoney ’83, Executive Director, External Relations and Communications, Linda A. Acolini ’72, Director, Communications and Marketing, Austin Farrell, Chief Marketing Officer, URI Foundation & Alumni Engagement

Freedom of Expression

We heard from readers with a range of reactions to our spring 2020 feature, “Why Are We Talking About the First Amendment!” Here are excerpts from two reader-submitted comments that represent the range of opinions our readers shared:

QUITE AN ARTICLE ABOUT THE FIRST Amendment! But I submit to the publisher that there is an abuse of the First Amendment tantamount to yelling ‘Fire’ in a crowded theater. That is the voice of the press at large. There are too many journalists, their editors and their owners who spew grossly mis-quoted or mis-characterized statements of others—and in fact, pure lies—and the true travesty therein is no one is being held accountable.

—Stephen Benjamin ‘71

Every day is bring-your-dog-to-work day when you work from home. That’s assistant editor Hammy the Wonder Dog.

Kudos

YOUR MAGAZINE KEEPS GETTING better. It’s great to read about the outstanding work that URI grads are doing all over the world. Keep up the good work.

—Bernard LaPorte ’58

MY WIFE (CANDICE MACHATA ’85) IS the URI grad, but we both devour the themed magazines. They draw us in and keep us informed. Fantastic new way of presenting our local flagship university. Keep up the excellent work!

—John Machata

Bibliotherapy?

It’s What Children’s Librarians Do!

IN THE SPRING 2020 ISSUE of University of Rhode Island Magazine, editor-in-chief Barbara Caron referred to a 2015 piece from The New Yorker magazine about bibliotherapy, i.e. reading books as a treatment for life’s troubles and challenges. When I was a children’s librarian in the late 1970s, bibliotherapy was a much discussed topic in the profession. Parents often sought “children’s books to help explain and mitigate…(fill in any kind of children’s life experiences).” Children’s Librarians created book lists and counseled parents and kids. It’s what they do!

—Elise Jenkins, M.L.S. ’75

Elise Jenkins was children’s department head at Willamantic (Conn.) Public Library and at Mary Cheney Library in Manchester, Conn., and served as library director at Otis Library in Norwich, Conn., until she retired 18 years ago.

Social Snaps | Instagram

Moon Over Endeavor

GSO doctoral student Sarah Nickford captured this beautiful shot of a pink supermoon rising at the Narragansett Bay Campus in April.

Team Excellence

Congratulations to the URI Chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers for winning the URI Robert Rainville Team Excellence Award.

She Kills Monsters

Jess Ring ’20 recalls opening night for the Killis Monsters—rainy and almost canceled, but, in the end, spawned to a full house. “It showed me how amazing a crew and cast can be when they work together.”

Tribute to Class of 2020

Thank you to our crew members from Facilities Operations/Lands and Grounds for a special installation on the Quad in the form of a supersized Rhode logo.

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—Stephen Benjamin ‘71

JOURNALISTS … ARE UNSUNG heroes of democracy … to limit them or their free speech is to undermine the fundamentals of our democracy. Hats off to URI for publishing this excellent and heartwarming piece, and hats off to journalists and their real-world reporting all over the world, and especially our own Rhodies, who are scattered all over the world doing good.

—Paul James Hastings ’84
Three Rams Join NFL Teams

For the first time since 1986, a URI player was selected in the NFL Draft. Wide receiver Isaiah Coulter ’21 was selected by the Houston Texans in the fifth round. His Rhody teammate, wide receiver Aaron Parker ’20, signed as an undrafted free agent with the Dallas Cowboys, and another teammate, offensive lineman Kyle Murphy ’20, signed with the New York Giants. The last time a URI player was drafted by an NFL team was 1986, when Bob White went to the New York Jets.

New Governing Body for URI Elects Leadership

URI’s new Board of Trustees held its first official meeting in April 2020. Margo Cook ’86, was elected chair and Michael F. McNally, M.B.A. ’81, was elected vice chair. The new Board will address the University’s challenges and create partnership opportunities, and will oversee employment, property, purchases, procurement, and tuition setting. It will also award the academic degrees and faculty tenure. The University president reports to the Board of Trustees.

$6 Million Gift to College of Business

A gift from S. Kent Fannon ’74 and Diane Chaco Fannon ’74 will help revitalize and expand Ballentine Hall, home of the College of Business, and will support the creation of a student success center. The couple, who met as students at URI and live in Texas, also committed $50,000 for the College of Business annual fund.

President Dooley Will Retire in 2021

President David M. Dooley announced his decision to retire effective June 2021. Dooley, the University’s 11th president now serving in his 11th year, said that “URI cherishes the values of equity, inclusion, and community. Consequently, it will be difficult to leave this special place, but I am confident that the time is right for me to step down and for the University to seek a new president.”

New URI Master Gardener Initiative Will Help URI’s Research Farm Connect Kids to Their Food from an Early Age

Ph.D. in Health Sciences

A new interdisciplinary program will focus on health, wellness, and quality of life, and will support identifying solutions to important societal health problems.

Fulbright Awards

Five URI students were selected for the prestigious national Fulbright program, which awards grants to high-achieving students for research projects abroad.

Top 100

URI’s School of Education broke into the U.S. News and World Report’s top 100 public graduate schools.

Repursposing Sleep Agena

This spring, a group of URI students and faculty helped VentilatorProject.org collect and refurbish CPAP and BiPAP machines to serve as ventilators for patients with COVID-19.

Certified Organic

URI’s research farm has received organic certification. Several acres will be used for researching organic production and studying organic and conventional crop production.

CONNECTING KIDS TO THE CULTURE OF EATING

The Ambient Texture of Days

By Cheryl Foster

When URI switched to remote learning this spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students and faculty adapted. But as anyone will tell you, it wasn’t the same.

Professor of Philosophy Cheryl Foster explains that, besides missing each other, students and faculty were missing the sensory and aesthetic variety—the ambient texture—that they experience living, working, and learning on campus.

Yet how dull, indeed, would be an existence stripped bare of our sense and perception? Many Western philosophers have emphasized mind over matter, soul over body, thinking over feeling, but not all ignore the senses as powerful vectors of human experience. Some focus on what it means to be an embodied creature traversing Earth’s forms and terrain.

And we are, after all, embodied creatures yearning for the forms and terrain of campus. We feel the yearning in our joints, sinews, and muscles—the felt weave of place. Distance learning serves its purpose, but until Oculus headsets approach the chimeric quality of the Star Trek Holodeck or the rain-soaked streets of The Matrix, the disruption of aesthetic complexity in our learning and work lives leaves most of us somewhat deflated.

Joni Mitchell knew this and she put it in a song: “Don’t it always seem to go/That you don’t know what you’ve got/Til it’s gone…”

But our world isn’t gone; we are just on retreat from its textures. As with all good retreats, this one may enhance what we see, think, and feel upon returning—and lead us to value it anew.

Professor Cheryl Foster specializes in theoretical and applied aesthetics and environmental philosophy.
When I took over as editor-in-chief of The Good Five-Cent Cigar in December 2019, I knew exactly what to expect. I had previously acted as web editor and managing editor and saw no excuse to pass up the opportunity to finally be in charge of the paper I had dedicated so much time to already. I knew what I was doing and, while I was nervous, I was confident that, with all of my experience, things would run smoothly. So, when the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the URI campus—and the world—I jumped at the opportunity to continue to make it work.

The extended deadlines, 48 hours to edit, and late-night productions that The Cigar editors knew too well were gone, and we were met with a fast-paced chaotic schedule of writing, editing, and publishing as soon as new information was released.

The last two months of covering the pandemic have proven to me just how important the news is. When I say I’m pursuing a career in the journalism field, I often get comments like, “That’s a dying field.” But it’s in times of chaos, like this, that I’m grateful I have access to so much information as I do—thanks to the news. It proves to me that, even on a university newspaper level, the reporting we are doing is making a difference.

As an editorial board, we have completely changed the way we view The Cigar. We have transitioned to functioning like a real-world newsroom. Instead of having specific responsibilities, we have created a team that does it all—pitching, reporting, recording, editing, publishing, and photography. Our team includes our managing editor, Laura Weick ‘20; news editors Kate LeBlanc ‘22 and Nicole Wagner ‘22; and production manager, Mary Lind ‘22.

Our articles are reaching a larger audience than ever before, our website traffic is up, and our newspaper inbox is filled with questions and comments about what we are reporting. Like many newspapers in recent years, we have recognized the importance of multimedia reporting. The pandemic forced us to transition to an online platform. During the last year, we have prepared for a larger online presence, more active social media accounts, and a fully-functional breaking-news package. The inability to produce a physical paper has allowed us to utilize and thrive through these resources.

While the experience of covering the pandemic has been a whirlwind of emotions, a battle to remain unbiased, and a chaotic process overall, The Cigar editors and I are grateful for the opportunity. URI stresses the importance of experiential learning, what better way to engage in experiential learning than this? We are testing the skills we’ve learned in the classroom even as we report on the same topic being covered by the famous journalists we admire.

Adaptation
By Theresa Brown ‘21

="CIGAR BOX =

From the true value of journalism to why it’s important to cultivate a wide range of skills, Theresa Brown ‘21, editor-in-chief of URI’s student newspaper, The Good Five-Cent Cigar, reflects on lessons learned covering the COVID-19 pandemic.
Phenomenal Grads

COVID-19 changed everything. The Class of 2020—at URI, and everywhere—didn’t get the celebration they deserved. But they sure are worth celebrating. Meet four of our phenomenal 2020 grads. To read more about them and meet other members of the Class of 2020, go to uri.edu/features/meet-uris-newest-alumni.

Mohamed Chamseddine ’20

MOHAMED CHAMSEDDINE DIDN’T PLAN FOR URI to change his life. But he’s sure it did.

Commuting from Middletown, R.I., it wasn’t until Chamseddine’s sophomore year, when he took a supply chain management class with College of Business senior lecturer Joe Estrella, that he declared his major. From that moment on, things fell into place. He joined an academic fraternity and was selected for URI’s Business Student Advisory Council and Alumni Advisory Board. In September 2019, he attended a conference in Las Vegas where he met CEOs and CFOs from major U.S. companies.

Then Chamseddine suffered a tragic loss. His father died, and Chamseddine had to help run the family business. “I had to step up and help my mom—to do the accounting and banking for the business,” he says. “I was balancing everything, and had to deal with school and loss.”

But he remained committed to school. “For him to become the student that he did, especially after going through all of that, shows a lot of fortitude,” Estrella says. Chamseddine graduated with a job already lined up at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center in Newport.

—Ian Wiener ’20

Elise Felker ’20

ELISE FELKER BELIEVES MUSIC CAN HEAL. A music education major, she wants to take her love for teaching music beyond the classroom and into social rehabilitation, where she believes it is needed most.

“You’re not just teaching people rhythms and notes, you have an opportunity to teach people how to become fully formed human beings,” Felker says. “When you experience music through any medium, you feel human emotions and connections.” She says music educators have a unique opportunity and social responsibility to help their students be better humans, not just teach them techniques.

Last summer, Felker interned at a nonprofit music school in South Africa that helps underprivileged teens become entrepreneurs in the music industry. And this year, she joined social justice choir Voices 21C, participating in community outreach with people recently released from prison. “As music teachers, we preach that music is for all,” she says. “We have to uphold that motto.”

—Edhaya Thennarasu ’21

Power Kanga ’20

POWER KANGA WAS AN ATHLETE. RAISED IN Providence after immigrating to the United States from Liberia as a child, he came to URI on an athletic scholarship. The Talent Development scholar and aspiring engineer played football until an injury ended his college athletic career.

So Kanga dove into academics, learning how to pace himself and ask for help. He learned an important lesson from Professor Manbir Sodhi: “He taught me, if grades are your only motivation, you are not going to make it as an engineer,” says Kanga. With Sodhi, he traveled to India to study global sustainability in a J-Term class.

After joining the National Guard his sophomore year, Kanga joined URI’s Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), graduated with a degree in industrial and systems engineering and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army Reserves. His goal is to settle back in the Ocean State and start his own business. “What I really want to do is give back,” he says.

— Dawn Bergantino ’94

Rebecca Stevnick, Ph.D. ’20

WHEN REBECCA STEVICK BEGAN WORKING ON HER Ph.D. in biological oceanography at URI’s Graduate School of Oceanography, she knew it would take at least four years to finish. So she decided to take on another project that she thought might take her equally long—an 18,000-piece 8-by-9-foot jigsaw puzzle.

Her research examined how environmental factors in Narragansett Bay affect oyster health and associated microbial communities. She also tested if probiotics might boost the microbial community in oyster hatcheries and which microbes interact best with the probiotic. She hopes that her research can be applied to efforts to clean estuaries and other waterways.

Stevick completed the puzzle—and the requirements for her Ph.D.—and began a postdoctoral fellowship at the Pasteur Institute in Paris in March. Although the pandemic closed her lab two weeks after she began her fellowship, she plans to spend the next two or three years there studying how microbes in zebrafish help prevent diseases or other pathogens from colonizing the fish.

—Todd McLeish
When University of Rhode Island herpetologist Nancy Karraker lived in Hong Kong, she spent considerable time visiting its wet markets—and those in mainland China—during her studies of the illegal trade in turtles, frogs, and other animals. She visited similar markets in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and elsewhere in East Asia. She quickly came to understand why they are called wet markets.

“Everything is wet—the floors, the tables, the people. You can’t help but get splattered when you’re in there,” says Karraker, an associate professor of natural resources science. “Hundreds of vendors are crowded into tight situations. Often you’ll see freshly slaughtered chickens and ducks, piles of bats and other native mammals, cage after cage of mixed species stacked on top of each other, some of which will be slaughtered in front of you.

“You have huge densities of people in these enclosed spaces coming into very close contact with animals that are potentially infected with viruses that may be transmissible to humans,” she adds. “And then you have people living in very high densities, frequently meeting socially, so there’s a very high chance of passing a virus from person to person. And then the virus takes off.”

Karraker’s studies in China, Indonesia, and Thailand found that illegal turtle harvesting leads to dramatic declines in turtle populations, as well as a skewing of sex and age ratios in the wild, since females and older turtles are often larger and easier to see and collect. “In Indonesia, 80 percent of the turtles there are at risk of extinction because of collection,” she says. “And those turtles are either sold for food or traditional medicine in China or for pets in Europe, Japan, and the U.S.”

The trade in wild animals for use in traditional medicine—rhino horns, bear gall bladders, powdered turtle shell, and much more—is highly lucrative and mostly illegal. And almost none of it has been proven to provide the benefits that buyers seek. “But if Grandpa has cancer and you believe in these things as medicine, then you’ll pay top dollar to save Grandpa,” says Karraker, who taught the University’s first class in wildlife trafficking in spring 2019.

But it’s for local food markets in South America, Africa, and Asia that the vast majority of wild animals are captured and sold. Almost any animal that can be easily trapped or hunted might appear at a market and be sold relatively inexpensively. It’s at these markets, where animals are recently killed and are handled by many people, that zoonotic diseases—those transmitted from animals to people—are most likely to lead to a pandemic.

By Todd McLeish
Illustrations by Traci Daberko
Professor Tom Mather, a public health entomologist, uses a common analogy to explain how zoonotic diseases work. He compares them to a lock and key: “You can’t get into your car without a key, and viruses can’t infect something unless their key lines up exactly with the receptors in the host they’re trying to infect. It’s very precise and very specific,” says Mather, who studies tick-borne diseases and teaches a course about zoonotic disease. “These spillovers from wildlife to people aren’t going to happen willy-nilly. Animals and people are exposed to germs all the time, yet most never result in an infection—much less a pandemic—because germ and possible host don’t contain complimentary keys and locks.”

Most disease-causing agents don’t cross from one species to another because there are too many barriers to entry, but zoonotic disease germs find a way. Most are viruses, because they are more prone to mutation, and it often takes many mutations to allow a disease to make the jump from animal to human and then from human to human. “Animals are probably shedding their germs all the time,” Mather says. “It’s just a matter of whether those germs have the right key to get into something else. Some germs seem to have a master key and can delivered to an immune population, others run into what Mather calls a ‘transmission or infection barrier,’ and still others—like avian flu—cannot be transmitted effectively between people. Unlike those with COVID-19, patients infected with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) during the outbreaks of those coronaviruses did not typically transmit them to others before exhibiting symptoms, which enabled those deadly diseases to be contained more easily.

“Maybe the key didn’t match up well enough,” Mather says. “It can’t bulldoze its way through. A virus might make 100 mutations and only one will make the key work.” According to the Wildlife Conservation Society, about 60 percent of existing human infectious diseases originated in animals. They are typically transmitted in one of three ways: through direct contact with wild or domestic animals; indirectly through consumption of animal products; or by a vector like a mosquito, tick, or flea.

Although one might assume that consuming an infected animal would be the easiest way to transmit disease from animal to human, Mather believes that’s probably the least likely method, and at least if the animal is cooked before eating. “If they’re cooked, that could inactivate the germs, and stomach acids aren’t typically conducive to most germs’ survival,” he says. “But it depends on where in the host the germ cells are first intro-

A virus might make 100 mutations and only one will make the key work.” —Tom Mather

“Zoonotic diseases are the perfect storm situation.” —Marta Gomez-Chiarri

STUDYING ZOONOTIC DISEASES

Juliet Lamb, who recently finished a post-doctoral fellowship in URI’s Department of Natural Resources Science, is now a Marie Curie Fellow at the Center for Functional and Evolutionary Ecology in France. There, she is studying the zoonotic potential of coronaviruses in seabirds. “Seabirds are potential vectors for the spread of novel coronaviruses and other diseases among human societies, since they move long distances and cross oceans. They have been implicated in transporting other viruses—especially avian influenza—between geographically disconnected areas,” she says. “The opposite—human-to-wildlife transmission—is also a concern. Some seabird researchers who work on remote islands are worried about going to their field sites this year and potentially transmitting the disease to birds that otherwise wouldn’t come into contact with humans or other mammals.”

Lamb’s research combines a literature review to learn whether coronavirus transmission between birds and mammals has previously been documented; testing samples to evaluate the prevalence of coronaviruses in birds, and an assessment of the role that migratory and social behavior of birds might play in disease dynamics. Julie McIlmail ’20, who graduated in May with a bachelor’s degree in health studies, was enrolled in Mather’s zoonotic disease class during her final semester. She learned so much quickly, that she became an information source for her friends and family as the pandemic unfolded. “It’s ironic how we were learning about zoonotic disease, and then it was. ”

“Zoonotic diseases are the perfect storm situation.” —Marta Gomez-Chiarri
Whether the pandemic will lead to the curtailment of the wildlife trade and its great risk of future zoonotic diseases and pandemics is what Karraker calls "the bazillion dollar question." Most countries—including China—already have regulations protecting their native wildlife from capture and sale, but little is done to enforce those rules.

“The thing that needs to happen is that countries like the U.S. need to stop playing such a big role in the trade,” she says. “The U.S. is probably the largest legal importer of animals for pets, and I’m sure we’re a big part of the illegal trade, too. China has eaten most of its native turtles, and now they’re getting them from elsewhere. Increasingly, turtles from the eastern United States are being illegally collected, packaged, and shipped to China, and Americans are making loads of money doing it. That has to stop. The one thing Karraker says is not likely to happen in the wake of the pandemic is the shuttering of the wet markets likely to happen in the wake of the pandemic is the shuttering of the wet markets in China and other countries that sell wild animals as food—despite China’s claims to the contrary. Karraker says. "Could they change their health standards to reduce the risk of disease transmission? Yes."

Most importantly, she concludes, the issues related to the wildlife trade and zoonotic disease transmission must be taken seriously by all nations and not allowed to return to their former status.

“We’ve seen a couple episodes—like SARS and MERS—that could really have turned into what COVID-19 has turned into, and thankfully they got battled down pretty quickly,” Karraker says. "We’ve gotten a wake-up call with COVID-19 that things can go south very quickly unless they are addressed, and I hope that all countries will think carefully about what their roles are and what they can do to address them.”

“The pandemic’s long-term effect on the economy will depend on how quickly and effectively the virus can be contained. He points to numerous economic parallels between the current situation and the Great Depression and World War II. The Great Depression took more than a decade to recover from; however, the nation ended up in a strong economic position at the end of the war. "When this pandemic ends, are we going to be in the 1930s, looking forward to seven more years of economic malaise, slow growth, and high unemployment, or in 1945 where people are eager and willing to spend and the economy recovers quickly?” he asks. “That’s an open question.”

One major change he foresees from the pandemic is more support for universal health coverage. Malloy says it doesn’t make sense to link employment and health insurance at a time when so many people have lost their jobs—and have therefore lost their health insurance—due to a health crisis.

“The U.S. is the only rich country without universal health coverage, and that needs to change,” he says. “There are so many reasons to have universal coverage—from humanitarian reasons to civic reasons to economic reasons—and it will be interesting to see whether or not this pandemic leads to that kind of permanent change.”

The pandemic’s long-term effect on the economy will depend on how quickly and effectively the virus can be contained.”

—Liam Malloy

For cultural anthropologist Hilda Loréns, the pandemic provided an opportunity to reflect on anthropological trends and tendencies in human societies.

“Immediately after a disaster, a common community and social response is to cooperate with each other to ameliorate the situation. Disasters bring people together, and there is a period of social reflection and reckoning about how to rebuild or bounce back better,” says Loréns, associate professor of anthropology. “But like other types of catastrophes, pandemics also lay bare social inequalities, exposing deep political rifts in the social body.

“The duration and impact of the pandemic will likely dictate whether changes in well-established and accepted social behavior, such as handshaking and hugging, will take place,” she continues. “It’s too early to tell what the long-term socio-cultural effects of the pandemic will be. But in a capitalist society such as ours, in which the safety net (welfare, health care, and other social programs) has been corroded by neoliberal policies, it is likely that the next few years will be plagued with greater social inequality and suffering.”

From an economic standpoint, the pandemic has been a disaster, with record-breaking unemployment, a dramatic drop in the stock market, a huge decline in consumer spending, and a similar drop in business investment. “There’s not much we can do to prevent a recession,” said Liam Malloy, URI associate professor of economics, in a series of online lectures he presented in April 2020. He believes that the pandemic’s moment. The U.S. is probably the largest legal importer of animals for pets, and I’m sure we’re a big part of the illegal trade, too.”

—Nancy Karraker
Start by making the bed. This is advice Monica Garnes ’94 lives by, and she cites a famous speech by U.S. Navy Admiral and former SEAL William McRaven when she considers the power of this simple act. “Making your bed is the first completed task of the day,” says Garnes. “It sets the day on a positive note and starts the ball rolling.”

For sure, the ball has already been rolling for Garnes. As president of Arizona supermarket chain Fry’s Food Stores, she is the first Black division president in parent company Kroger’s history, and an industry trailblazer whose work has been touted by *Fortune* and *Food & Wine*. She earned a spot in URI record books while captain of the women’s basketball team, ending her four-year career as one of the University’s all-time top scorers. She could begin any morning with a sense of accomplishment before ever making the bed.

But this is about discipline, pride in your work. It’s taking satisfaction in a crisp corner or a squarely folded sheet. In this way, you create the foundation for whatever happens next.

However you were feeling about your local grocery store before the pandemic hit, you likely felt different by the end of March. So much for the quick stop to pick up a bag of frozen veggies or extra paper towels on the way home, or the mundane hub of overstocked shelves and ‘cleanup in aisle four’ In a tense, transformed world, something shifted: For many, the supermarket became a sort of lifeline, and its workforce—or the delivery truck carrying pallets of household staples—heroic.

Garnes might be less surprised to find greater meaning in a grocery store. Throughout a diverse range of roles in her 25 years with Kroger—human resources coordinator, public relations manager, district manager, vice president of merchandising—and in her current position as Fry’s president, Garnes has made a career out of seeing connections that others might miss, whether forging a path to work with local farms or taking a hands-on approach to hunger relief. In short, she sees how her work builds community. “When you can find ways to uplift others or give them a sense of connection, it’s a welcome joy,” she says. It is a career she almost overlooked. In 1994, she was a new URI grad with a degree in business management when she attended a job fair back in her home city of Columbus, Ohio—armed with a stack of resumes and an eye out for something that fit her young vision of professional life. 9 to 5, maybe a skyscraper. She recalls how the representative at the Kroger’s booth needed to flag her down to get her attention. “I was walking around,” she says, “looking at all the other careers that seemed sexier at the time.” Despite her initial indifference, the rep piqued her interest in the company’s management training program. She was hired into the program at the start of the new year—and she found that she felt a connection to the industry, recalling her own family memories of the local Kroger’s as a kid. “I could remember vividly the grocery ads out on the kitchen table, my grandmother with her list, or my parents taking us to a grand opening,” says Garnes. “It was like this natural tie I had almost forgotten.”

Almost immediately, Garnes stood out to higher-ups as a quick-learning talent. Former Kroger president Bruce Lucia, who retired as head of the Atlanta division in 2018 after 44 years with the company, remembers the first time they met. “You could see how people just wanted to work with her,” Lucia says. “She was a confident leader, and she had a great positive energy.”

With Lucia as a mentor, Garnes progressed in her career, leaning into her natural curiosity and her willingness to take on new things. “You have to embrace having the humility to ask questions,” says Garnes. “I always tried to push myself to learn in the hopes people would see I was challenging myself.” Within a few years, her consistent hard work led to a key promotion as assistant produce buyer, but she quickly discovered she was in for a tough road. “I was excited,” she says. “Then one of the store managers said to me, ‘You should have checked with me first.”

She remains one of the top scorers in URI women’s basketball history. But Monica Garnes ’94, president of Fry’s Food Stores, is still earning points for being a team-focused leader who helps others succeed. On the basketball court, in the produce aisle, or as an industry trailblazer, she’s always on top of her game.

By Nicole Maranhas
Once upon a time, Garnes wanted to ride a bike. She still had training wheels, and she remembers watching her older siblings, Brian and Myra, riding their own bicycles around the neighborhood when it struck her that there was only one way to learn. The training wheels had to go. “It took trial and error, falling down and getting back up,” says Garnes. “But later that day, I was riding my bike.”

It’s a simple memory that speaks to her lifelong zest for a good challenge, an inner confidence she attributes to a background in sports and growing up as the youngest of three in a tightly knit family that shares her best memories: picnics, road trips, afternoons in the park playing softball and tennis. Her parents emphasized education, making sacrifices and often giving three kids to parochial school, which she credits for the values that have shaped her life. “I grew up in a culture of ‘do unto others,’” she says. “That combination of a strong education and my amazing parents, the way they showed up for us and for each other, set an example for who I am and what I expect from myself.” Garnes loved music—she played clarinet, first chair, up to the high school marching band—and discovered basketball in the footsteps of her sister, Myra. Garnes played other sports, volleyball and softball and later across-country, but she was a basketball standout. By freshman year of high school, she found herself in an unusual spot, pulled in dual directions by the freshman and varsity teams.

“We were lobbying for her to play on the varsity team,” says Myra. “There were politics about whether a freshman could play varsity, but we needed her.” Despite pushback from some players and their parents—and a freshman coach who wasn’t eager to have her up her star—it was eventually agreed that Garnes could play two quarters for each team. Myra remembers when her little sister took the varsity court for the first time. “I don’t remember how many points and rebounds she got, running around the court, smiling,” Myra says. “Monica sometimes has an enviable personality, but she’s very serious about making sure the people around her are successful.” Within a few games, Garnes was a starter on the varsity team. “She’s so smooth, so graceful,” says former teammate Brian Quantmeyer ’86. “I never saw Monica stumble.”

Garnes became a fixture in the record books as one of the University’s elite 1,000-point club and earned her a spot as one of its top four reboorders of all time, alongside URI Hall of Famer Michele Washington ’86, Naomi Graves ’82, and Ellen Quantmeyer ’86. (This spring, graduating senior Nicole Jorgensen became fifth on that list.) “When I see my name in the record books, it’s the culmination of years of support from my family, my friends, coaches, and teammates since the fourth grade,” says Garnes. “I’m proud to be among so many great women.”

How to lead in a crisis: Live your values. This is a daily credo—“I try to show up as Monica every day”—that guides her work, particularly in cultivating an environment where everyone is heard and counted in the workplace and beyond. “When I think of how grocery stores are at the center of communities, I think about how we can give people a sense of connection to each other,” she says. Among recent initiatives, Fry’s has provided funding through COVID-19 testing and supported hunger-relief efforts through Kroger’s Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation. But Garnes has also made hunger a personal mission, bringing former Fortune 500 executive from Fry’s to pack emergency food boxes for local families in need.

“Her resolve to open doors for others is in her DNA. Her sister Myra tells the story of a childhood family reunion in Alabama where the kids—dressed in their matching yellow reunion outfits—stood at the edge of a sandpit, looking down the steep sides, but afraid to jump. “Mama always says, ‘Come on, you can do it! Let’s go to the high dive!’ I’ve always admired that about her. She is fearless,” Garnes says, recalling how her sister charged down the slope, and the others followed suit. “We’d take swimming lessons together, and I’d stand at the side of the pool, afraid, and she would be shouting, ‘Come on, you can do it! Let’s go to the high dive!’”

The desire to open doors for others is in her DNA. Her sister Myra says, “She has a story of a childhood family reunion in Alabama where the kids—dressed in their matching yellow reunion outfits—stood at the edge of a sandpit, looking down the steep sides, but afraid to jump. ‘Mama always says, ’Come on, you can do it! Let’s go to the high dive!’’”

When Garnes led Kroger, “She was a leader even before she became captain [in her junior year], setting the parameters of expectation—workouts, being on time,” Williams says. “She didn’t try to say ‘we’re going to win tonight’ together.”

Those years on the team proved valuable grounding, not only in balancing the competing demands of classes and basketball, but in embracing challenges, or the small victories, as they came. “We’re so often playing against girls who were bigger and taller, and that takes a certain level of strength and determination,” says Williams. “We lost a lot of games, but it’s a testament to your character if you can keep playing and getting better. Monica helped us to understand that.”

The Rams may have been in rebuilding mode back then, but they finished the team’s first winning season in nine years during Garnes’s senior year. She ended her basketball career with 1,160 points and 877 rebounds, making her a member of the University’s elite 1,000-point club and earning her a spot as one of its top four reboorders of all time, alongside URI Hall of Famer Michele Washington ’86, Naomi Graves ’82, and Ellen Quantmeyer ’86. (This spring, graduating senior Nicole Jorgensen became fifth on that list.)

“Monica understands that right away. ‘That’s the worst job in the community. I’m not going to have an error, falling down and getting back up,’ says Garnes. ‘But later that day, I was riding my bike.’”

That’s the worst job in the community. Garnes named a spot in the record books as one of the University’s all-time top scorers.

As a player and team captain at URI, Garnes named a spot in the record books as one of the University’s all-time top scorers.
When you think about sports at URI, you might think first about varsity sports like basketball, football, or track and field. But look again, and you’ll find a group of dedicated, competitive club athletes. URI’s club sports teams have earned national championships, a world title, and have even spawned Olympians.
It’s a cold, bright, fall morning, and Hunter Ridge Barn in Ashaway, Rhode Island—about 30 minutes from URI’s Kingston Campus—is humming with life. A group of dogs runs around playing as horses peak out of stalls, curious about the rowdy excitement.

“It’s nice having the dogs run up to you when you get here,” says Jessica Peterson ‘20, president of the equestrian club. “It’s like therapy-dog session!” The power is out after a blustery night, but Peterson’s enthusiasm can’t be dampened. She pushes about the equestrian team as a group of riders trot, canter, and post around the indoor ring, kicking up dust that swirls in the early morning sunlight.

“This is Bianca,” she says as she offers her palm to a white horse. “She’s an upper-level horse. She’s funny, even though she definitely has a little sass to her, she loves walk-trotters.” Walk-trotters are beginner riders, which the team happily accepts. “At our shows, she’ll be a little saucy and spunky for our upper-open riders (the highest division), but you put a walk-trotter on her, and she has her little ears forward, head down, nice and relaxed.”

The equestrian team is unlike other teams in that the bond is not only human-to-human, but also human-to-equine. “Horses are responsive to the rider’s energy; if you’re nervous and tense, they feel that and respond to your mood,” says Peterson.

Working closely with the horses fosters a sense of respect and responsibility for the animals’ well-being. “We take a lot of pride in the health of our horses, and Wendy, our coach, has always said that the horses’ health needs to come first,” Peterson says. “That’s something we really ingrain in the new riders, because the horses are the ones doing eight-hour days of lessons for us. They’re working so hard, we should do everything we can to keep them in good shape.”

McClintock’s grin. He’s loving every minute of it. “I don’t remember when I first started sailing,” says McClintock. “We just did it from the second I was born.”

When he started at URI in 1972, he changed majors just so he could be on the water. “I started as a math major, but realized that all my classes and labs were in the afternoon,” he says. “I changed my majors to English and history so everything was done by 11 a.m. After classes, I’d run back to the dorm, eat lunch, then go straight to the boathouse.” His teammates went on to have successful sailing careers. “That team was the basis for the team that won the nationals in 1977,” McClintock says. And that was just the start. The club went on to produce All-Americans Ed Adams ‘78, Gary Knapp ‘79, Lars Guck ‘91, and Skip Whyte ‘71, who spent 17 years coaching Olympic sailing teams—including a 2004 gold medal win in Greece—then came back to URI to coach the sailing club from 2013–2019. In 1981, the team officially became a club sport, and in 1996 the keelboat team became the only U.S. team to win the College Keelboat World Championship, and is still the only URI athletic team to ever win a world title.

And the tradition of excellence hasn’t diminished. For current team captain Chris Pearson ‘20, who grew up with water, sailing at URI was a whole new experience.

“The first day of practice I got my ass kicked. Everyone was really good. It was humbling. When somebody was racing, you were there no social barriers between you and them, you’d just go up to them and ask how they were beating me so hard,” he laughs. “That’s how you learn on teams like this.”
The Professionals
come full circle for us. “Winning the conference last year was a culmination of everything, of all the off-field stuff was so much bigger than I expected. I didn’t know what I was getting into.”

“Some guys can walk away from it, but you’re going to get better. He wants his team to be successful; the biggest challenge is motivating people to do this. But we have to motivate people to get better and we have very, very high expectations at the end of the season and see how they did.”

Volleyball: The Champions
Club volleyball team captain Zach Johnson ‘21 keeps the team energy up.

Men’s Rugby:
The Biggest Fan
Kevin Cronan ‘77 bleeds Keaneey blue. Wearing a URI rugby shirt, he packs through a box filled with mementos: rugby boots, a threadbare rugby shirt with blue stripes, trophies, framed photos of his teammates. Then he opens a scrapbook, turning the pages until a bumper sticker catches his eye.

“It takes leather balls to play rugby,” he says. He blushed and continues flipping through the scrapbook. “I had that bum-pickey sticker on my car for a while, but when I started working at a Catholic school, I decided it was probably best to take it off,” he says.

Cronan is fanatical about URI rugby. “He’s spent almost 50 years collecting pieces of team history and has even writ-ten a book about playing rugby at URI in the 1970’s. Rugby: Tries and Knock Outs (written under pen name Conor Murphy) tells the story of a winning bunch of rugg-ers—from the free beer at practices to the 1979 New York Sevens Rugby Tournament title win.”

Cronan joined the team in 1975, coming to URI in 1989. Of leading the team, Hastings says, “The man at the helm of URI men’s hockey program to be successful; the biggest challenge is motivating people to do this. But we have to motivate people to get better and we have very, very high-intensity practices,” he says. “There is an expectation that we will come back where we left off.”

The senior nursing major was part of the team that drove by the field on Plains Road on Wel-l come Day and saw the URI club lacrosse team playing. “I thought, ‘That’s cool! I’ll have to try out for the team,'” he says. And Hastings threw himself into it. The senior nursing major was part of the program’s revival, and during his tenure the team has grown, garnering an Adidas equipment partnership, more than 1,000 Instagram followers, and most impor-tantly, a conference championship title.

Tom Rigamonti, the URI men’s club rugby coach, keeps the team on their toes in January 2019, during game 1,002 of his URI coaching career. He’s spent almost 50 years collecting pieces of team history and has even writ-ten a book about playing rugby at URI in the 1970’s. Rugby: Tries and Knock Outs (written under pen name Conor Murphy) tells the story of a winning bunch of rugg-ers—from the free beer at practices to the 1979 New York Sevens Rugby Tournament title win.”

Rugby isn’t a sport for the faint of heart: The average speed of the ball during a spike is 82 miles per hour. Not many people would be willing to put themselves in front of a ball going faster than a car on Route 95, but for this team—the first club sport at URI to win a national championship—playing rugby isn’t a sport for the faint of heart.

Kevin Cronan ‘77, second from left in the back row, says, “I had the old zinc oxide sunscreen on my nose that hot May weekend in 1980. It was the New England Rugby Football Tournament at Hope High School in Providence. We lost in the semifinals to the Boston rugby men’s team, the eventual winners that year.”

The Coach
Practice is starting. Players dump dozens of pucks onto the ice in Boss Arena. Coaches and players zip around, taking shots, twisting sticks, and skating backwards. This is URI men’s club hockey, and it’s anything but a game.

Augustine drives an hour-and-a-half round trip from Scituate to Kingston four days a week to run practice. He’s coached more than 1,000 games, run thousands of practices, and led his team to more than 650 wins.

During game 1,002 of his URI coaching career.

“Winning the conference last year was a culmination of everything, of all the on-field and off-field stuff we did that season,” says Rigamonti. “We didn’t have a rink, we didn’t have locker rooms … it was a lot different.”

The thing that hasn’t changed: Augustine.

“He’s strict and demanding, but at the end of the day, he wants to see everyone get better,” says Rigamonti. “He feels that if you work hard and try your best, you’re going to get better. He wants his hockey program to be successful; the reputation of this program means a lot to him. The people in the program mean a lot to him.”

“When you’re playing,” says Augus-tine, “you don’t think about it. But when you’re done, you realize it’s been such a big part of your life … he trills off. “Some guys can walk away from it, but after I finished getting better, he wants his hockey program to be successful; the reputation of this program means a lot to him.”

“Rugby isn’t a sport for the faint of heart: The average speed of the ball during a spike is 82 miles per hour. Not many people would be willing to put themselves in front of a ball going faster than a car on Route 95, but for this team—the first club sport at URI to win a national championship—playing rugby isn’t a sport for the faint of heart.”

So began his love affair not only with this “strange sport,” but with a school, a time, and a team.

“Those that played this very physical game for the Rhody rugby team, espe-cially when we were at our best, winning matches and being discussed throughout the New England rugby circuit, will never forget the team and its players’ camaraderie.”

Volleyball:
The Champions
Zach Johnson ‘21 huddles with his team mate getting pumped for their next match in a tournament the team is hosting this December morning. Aside from shouts of support from parents and friends, the soundtrack of the day is mainly squeaking shoes and the smack of palm against volleyball.

Men’s Lacrosse: The Professionals
The URI men’s club lacrosse team has seen a revival over the last few years, culminating in a 2019 conference championship.

Team president Maxwell Hastings ’20 was pleasantly surprised when he drove by the field on Plains Road on Wel-come Day and saw the URI club lacrosse team playing. “I thought, ‘That’s cool! I’ll have to try out for the team,'” he says. And Hastings threw himself into it. The senior nursing major was part of the program’s revival, and during his tenure the team has grown, garnering an Adidas equipment partnership, more than 1,000 Instagram followers, and most impor-tantly, a conference championship title.

“As today’s practice starts, Coach Joseph Augustine floats onto the ice, sil-ver hair glinting under the bright lights, and unwraps a piece of candy with his teeth and a gloved hand. Augustine drives an hour-and-a-half round trip from Scituate to Kingston four days a week to run practice. He’s coached more than 1,000 games, run thousands of practices, and led his team to more than 650 wins.”

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Men’s Rugby:
The Biggest Fan
Kevin Cronan ‘77 bleeds Keaneey blue. Wearing a URI rugby shirt, he packs through a box filled with mementos: rugby boots, a threadbare rugby shirt with blue stripes, trophies, framed photos of his teammates. Then he opens a scrapbook, turning the pages until a bumper sticker catches his eye.

“It takes leather balls to play rugby,” he says. He blushed and continues flipping through the scrapbook. “I had that bum-pickey sticker on my car for a while, but when I started working at a Catholic school, I decided it was probably best to take it off,” he says.

Cronan is fanatical about URI rugby. “He’s spent almost 50 years collecting pieces of team history and has even writ-ten a book about playing rugby at URI in the 1970’s. Rugby: Tries and Knock Outs (written under pen name Conor Murphy) tells the story of a winning bunch of rugg-ers—from the free beer at practices to the 1979 New York Sevens Rugby Tournament title win.”

Cronan joined the team in 1975, coming to URI in 1989. Of leading the team, Hastings says, “The man at the helm of URI men’s hockey program to be successful; the biggest challenge is motivating people to do this. But we have to motivate people to get better and we have very, very high-intensity practices,” he says. “There is an expectation that we will come back where we left off.”
Gymnastics: The Comeback Kids

“Swim taught me some great lessons about work ethic and respect.”
—Lilly Margolis ’19

To corral recruits, Carbone and Healey handed out flyers in the cafeteria, messaged girls on Facebook, and spread the news that the gymnastics team wasn’t going anywhere. “Our first year as a club team we had about 12 girls; we competed the season and went to Nationals, not knowing what to expect. The next year, we recruited back one of our D1 teammates, Lindsay Diamond ‘11, and that year—2010—we won NAIGC Nationals,” says Carbone. “It was our redemption.”

Since then, the URI gymnastics club team has established itself. “We are a competitive program,” says the club’s non-president Emma Mangione ‘20. “We compete nationally with two teams, and every year at nationals both our teams qualify for finals, two of only six teams in the nation.” But the team hasn’t forgotten its roots. “Our alumni stood in dining halls and handed out flyers, they went into dorms and asked girls, ‘Hey, did you ever do gymnastics? Do you want to do gymnastics?’” says Mangione. “They built this team from the ground up. We’re very lucky with how we started and how we grew.”

Lilly Margolis ‘19 first dipped her toes into pool water when she was 6 years old. “My mom coached at the YMCA, so she became part of my life from a young age,” says Carbone. “She signed me and my sister up for the swim team, and I fell in love.” She swam throughout elementary, middle, and high school and has been coaching for more than eight years. But she didn’t swim at URI until her junior year, because initially, the club team was only men.

She remembers the moment she found out the team was turning coed. The moment she found out she could finally swim for her school. “I was out celebrating my birthday and one of my friends— the captain of the club swim team—told me, ‘We’re turning coed. You can swim now!’ I got so excited that I called my parents at 1 a.m. and was like, ‘I finally get to swim!’” says Carbone.

The team made it to nationals her sophomore year. “This group had a real shot at winning the national title, and we were just starting up losing by one goal in the last 30 seconds of the game,” he says. “This group had a real shot at the national title, and we were just starting to hit the stride of our season.”

But she’s quick to add that the reason we’re here is because we have different rules.”

Swimming and Diving: The Lessons

“Swim taught me some great lessons about work ethic and respect.”
—Lilly Margolis ’19

“A woman’s hockey player can have contact, but you can’t charge and open-ice hit; in women’s, you can have a body-checking in women’s hockey, “ she says. “It’s kind of hard to grasp and come to terms with. But we’re finally starting to see the difference.”

AUTHOR’S NOTE:
When I started this story in September 2019, the world was a different place. Wide-eyed first-year students were trying out for teams, and new coaches were onboarding. Throughout the fall, winter, and early spring, URI’s club sports practiced, fundraised, competed, won, and lost. Seniors looked forward to leaving their club sports on a high note, some even to championship wins. But the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. Schools around the country were shuttered, and URI followed suit. “When the University made the decision to move to online instruction for the remainder of the semester, we had no choice but to cancel all activities,” says Joe Wilbur, coordinator of club sports.

“The seniors were hit hard,” says senior lacrosse player Maxwell Hastings. “We were all texting about how sad it was we would never have our senior night or get another chance to put the jersey on. We didn’t even have a last practice together—or a last game, or an even an end-of-year meeting.” Hastings leaves a team that worked hard to rise in national rankings, coming in 15th in the nation with his, notes, serious aspirations of competing for the national title.

“A lot of our teammates are from different places in the U.S., or even different countries. We try to keep competing,” he says. “So, I think just knowing that our program gave me the opportunity to continue doing what I love for three and a half years. I’m so lucky to have had that.”

—Grace Kelly

Women’s Hockey: The Tenacious

“They were down 5-0 to UMass. “It was a rough game,” says URI women’s club hockey captain Madison Balutowski ’21. “The coaching staff got a little discouraged.” But instead of resigning themselves to a loss and a post-game locker room chastising, the players rallied. “We came together and acted like we were winning the game. We still lost, but it was the best hockey I’ve played,” says Balutowski.

The URI women’s hockey team is used to fighting the odds. While it has a storied 20-year history—reaching the final four in national championship tournaments nine times and earning 10 conference titles—it has struggled to get out of the shadow cast by the men’s team.

“When people think of hockey, they think of the physicality and body-checking—and that’s something women’s hockey doesn’t include,” says Balutowski. “We’re more skill-oriented, whereas men’s hockey can get rowdy.” But she’s quick to add that the reason they play a less physical game is out of their hands. “USA Hockey rules limit body-checking in women’s hockey,” she says. “In men’s hockey, they can body-check and open-ice hit; in women’s, you can have contact, but you can’t charge from across the ice and slam someone into the boards.”

What does Balutowski think about this? “They’re looking out for us, but at the same time,” she says, “you look at men’s and women’s rugby and there are no rules differentiating what they can do; it’s kind of a downer for us, we have the same protective equipment as men’s hockey, but we have different rules.”

In the meantime, they work to spread the word that a more technical game of hockey can be riveting to watch. “The women’s team attends the men’s games, and we see all the students and alumni that come and support them,” she says. “Then we look in the stands at our games and it’s the same four or five families.”

“But we’re finally starting to see some change,” Balutowski says. “We got so excited the other day because we were in the Memorial Union and saw a poster with our home game schedule. As long as club sports keeps pushing for us, that will make a difference.”

Women’s club hockey incoming captain Jill Gonsalves ’21, a nursing major, gives it her all against Penn State in a recent match.
In the summer of 1958, I entered Yankee Stadium for the first time. I was 6 years old. My dad, a “Bronx Boy,” dressed me in a mini-Yankees uniform, which I didn’t take off for days. Seeing the stadium in color for the first time (we had a black-and-white TV) was overwhelming. I’d never seen anything that green before—and haven’t since.

Ten years later, on Memorial Day 1968, I was back at Yankee Stadium for a doubleheader. That day, Mickey Mantle played what many consider his last great game. I was invited by my friend, Jerry LaMonica, to sit in the press box. His uncle was the stadium’s ticket manager. Jerry and I made the long trek by bus and subway from Long Island up to the Bronx. Mantle hit two homers, two doubles, and a single, as he went five-for-five in the first game. Manager Ralph Houk gave Mickey Game 2 off.

As James Earl Jones said in Field Of Dreams, “Baseball has marked the time.” And as the next decade passed, it marked my time, as well. The Mets went to the World Series twice, and the Yankees had been in a playoff drought of biblical proportions.

It was 1977. I had finished college and was getting my master’s degree in visual and communications arts. A new phenomenon—cable TV—was sweeping the nation. Public access television allowed amateur producers and directors to turn pro overnight. I was honing my videography skills at Manhattan Cable and any other video facility that would have me when I was asked to direct a weekly talk and news show called Sports ’77, hosted by a college kid named Bobby Leeds. One day, Bobby called and asked me to join a crew taping interviews on the field at Yankee Stadium. “Meet me at the press gate,” he said.

I thought it would be a one-time opportunity, and I was going to make it the best night of my life! A lifelong memorabilia collector, I intended to bring home anything that wasn’t nailed down. I shoved loose baseballs into my lens case. Paul Blair broke his bat during batting practice and tossed it aside; soon it was under my arm.

After batting practice, we left the field and assembled at the press box—land of unlimited free hot dogs, Carvel, soda, and, arguably, the best seats in the house. We were parked in the auxiliary press box—a euphemism for the least important press. But as I sat down, directly to my left and separated only by a plate glass window was “The Boss,” George Steinbrenner, in his private box. If the view was good enough for him, it certainly was for me, too.

I don’t remember the ride home that night. I’m fairly certain I floated back to Long Beach, New York, where I was living that summer in a rented cottage. I was thinking about how to describe the entire event to my father. And how I would tell my grandchildren about the time I went on the field at Yankee Stadium. After all, when would I ever get to do this again?

PHOTOS: COURTESY ARNIE “TOKYO” ROSENTHAL.

That’s me with Roger Maris (left) and Mickey Mantle on opening day at Yankee Stadium, 1978. I looked down the tunnel next to the dugout and there they were. I was instantly 10 years old again, the age I was in 1961, when they both ran after Babe Ruth’s single-season home run record. With total disregard for the circumstances, I told a newfound photographer friend that I was going to stand between Mickey and Roger and he had to shoot a picture. Mickey gave me a harsh look when I asked if he’d pose with me, and basically looked away. I’m down a step from them so I look like Woody Allen with my idols.

Assigned to cover a Yankees game for a local cable channel in 1977, Tokyo Rosenthal was excited to go to a game for free. He discovered that with his press pass, he’d been handed the keys to the Yankees kingdom. He would return to the stadium again and again for almost a decade, weaving an incredible story and capturing baseball history on film.

By Arnie “Tokyo” Rosenthal ’73
For me, this was like knowing how to part the Red Sea. Could it possibly be this easy?

Ten days later, Bobby Leeds called again and asked if I’d bring the crew. He would be out of town and a substitute host would conduct the interviews. What he told me next would change my daily routine for years to come: how to get free press passes for the crew.

He said to call Anne Mileo, assistant to the head of media relations, tell her I was with Sports ’77, and that I would like to bring a crew to the game for interviews. For me, this was like knowing how to part the Red Sea. Could it possibly be this easy? Would she want to know more about the show? Who we wanted to interview? My blood type?

But it was the shortest phone call in my soon-to-be-long broadcasting career. Before I could finish my request, she cut me off and said there would be four passes at the gate. I imagined getting to the gate, finding no passes, and begging for press passes at the gate. I imagined getting to the press gate. It), we picked up the two passes at the press gate.

My girlfriend—Carrie Klein—was very attractive, and I worried she might create a stir with the players. Meanwhile, her instructions were to get pictures of me talking to the players. I looked professional with

Even more importantly, did Anne Mileo watch it? I began to hatch a plan. What if I only wanted two passes this time? I could say our budget was tight and we were just shooting some stills to go along with the stories. It sounded plausible. What’s the worst that could happen? She could say no. Or call my bluff? Or she could say, “There will be two passes waiting for you at the press gate.”

With my girlfriend in tow as the still photographer (she had a Nikkormat camera and some knowledge of how to shoot it), we picked up the two passes at the press gate.

My girlfriend—and future wife—Carrie Klein, was—and is—very attractive, and I worried she might create a stir with the players. Meanwhile, her instructions were to get pictures of me talking to the players. I looked professional with

I began to ask myself if anyone actually watched it? Would she want to know more? For me, this was like knowing how to part the Red Sea. Could it possibly be this easy?

As a four-time press box attendee, a three-piece suit. Dad was dressed in a three-piece suit.

On the front wall. Then we parked at the parking garage.

With my girlfriend in tow as the still photographer (she had a Nikkormat camera and some knowledge of how to shoot it), we picked up the two passes at the press gate.

Carrie along playing the role of photographer. I was also spot-on about the players making a fuss over her.

“Can I get you some coffee?”

“Would you like some water?”

“You’re my hero!”

“Do you come here often?”

Suddenly I felt threatened, all these well-built guys in skin-tight polyester were hussing on my girlfriend. And what could I do about it? But once batting practice ended, their chance to fuss over her was over, and the rest of the evening went well. By night’s end, I had photos of myself with Yogi Berra, Graig Nettles, and Reggie Jackson—among others. Carrie was flattered and having fun on the field, but she was bored silly in the press box. I don’t think we stayed until the end of the game, but the free Carvel kept her there for a spell.

One thought I had to get my father in on this. He had brought me to my first game, taught me Yankees history, and sat with me through the pennant-less drought of the late 1960s and early 1970s. I had noticed that, except for the fuss Carrie attracted, no one was paying much attention to me. My very distinguished-looking father would be a striking figure on the field. He actually looked a lot like Steinbrenner. What if we got busted? But I calculated the risk and decided we could pull it off.

After explaining to Dad how it worked, when he played stick ball, where he once fell, and the famous building he lived in on the Grand Concourse with the fish in the front walk. Then we parked at the park and proceeded to the press gate.

Our passes were waiting for us. I whispered to Dad to just follow me. We made a sharp right down the old steel steps to the right of the press gate, and walked two flights down to the tunnel below the stands. Another right and 10 yards later we were at the crossroads.

To the right was the clubhouse, or locker room, which was still very terri-tory for me. To the left was the tunnel to the dugout and the entrance to the field. We went left.

My girlfriend and future wife, Carrie Klein, in the dugout. She captured some great shots of me talking with the team on her Nikkormat camera.

Carrie Klein, in the dugout. She captured some great shots of me talking with the team on her Nikkormat camera.

Enjoying Graig Nettles’ pre-game sarcasm.

In the dugout. Photo by Carrie Klein.

Steve Garvey before Game 1 of the 1977 World Series. He was actually asking me about my Nikon F—true story!

I figured I could learn how to shoot this camera on the fly, so I told him I knew how to use it. Fact was I had no clue. The only thing I could do was load the film—barely.

The Yankees made the 1977 playoffs. A quick call to Anne Miles and 48 hours later I was sitting in the press box for the American League playoffs between the Yankees and the Kansas City Royals. Next to me was a Nikon camera just itching for me to learn how to use it. I was practicing a little, but I still didn’t really know what an F-stop was, nor did I know anything about depth of field, film speed, flash, strobe, or wide-angle. But I felt very legitimate with the camera around my neck and a case full of lenses.

The playoff games were televised nationally. Howard Cosell, Mel Allen, and Joe DiMaggio were there. I was beside myself. But I had a job to do: Shoot pictures—and see how they came out.
The five-game series would end with the Yankees winning Game 5 in Kansas City, so the locker room celebration pictures I aspired to shoot would have to wait. But I took pictures of the two games in New York. Some were sharp, in focus, well-lit. Others were blurry, poorly lit, blank, and poorly framed.

The Yankees would be playing Los Angeles in the World Series, so I was determined to get better at this fast. I also knew that eventually I would have to shoot something at my real job, which I desperately needed to hold on to.

To get the World Series press credential, it was the same easy process, except this time I picked up the pass at a mid-town hotel.

On the field before the game, there were lots of celebrities. The easiest pre-game target was Dodgers’ manager Tommy LaSorda. He was so animated, and I managed to get some close-ups of him.

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The Yankees split the first two games in New York, took two out of three in Los Angeles, and came home to close the show. I decided that, should they win, I’d make my locker room debut and get shots of the celebration. But I had no idea that I’d witness one of the greatest performances in World Series history as Reggie Jackson hit three home runs on three swings and the Yankees were world champions.

By the top of the ninth, I made my way to the locker room. I didn’t want to miss the champagne spray, and I was determined to witness and shoot the awarding of the World Series trophy. There was a line outside the clubhouse; the press wasn’t allowed in until the entire team was back.

When the team barreled down the tunnel and into the clubhouse, the champagne began to flow and spray. New York Mayor Abraham Beame awarded the trophy to George Steinbrenner, and the press was all over Reggie. My best shot of the festivities was one of Thurman Munson celebrating with coach Dick Howser, both doused in the bubbly.

I was back in the press box for the Yankees’ dramatic 1978 season, which ended with another Yankees World Series win against the Dodgers. I kept the job at the rehab center, and they even sent me to Nikon School for a crash course. I went back to the press box every year until 1984.

In late 1985, I found myself president of a national sports cable TV network. Now, I could legitimately have a press pass to any sports event in the world. Ironic, huh?

We had a steady stream of guests in our studios for live interviews. One day, boxing promoter Don King came by. Being a major fight fan and former amateur boxer, I visited the green room to introduce myself. After exchanging pleasantries with “DK,” I was introduced to his publicist, Joe Safety. His name was familiar. He said he’d been in Major League Baseball for years and had most recently been the head of media relations for the Yankees.

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He looked at me quizzically and nodded yes. And then I told him the whole story. Anne Mileo, the letters, the passes—everything. It was all very cleansing.

Joe asked for an outside line (if you’re old enough, you might remember those) and called Anne Mileo, who had recently retired. He repeated the story to her. She remembered me, the show—everything. They both found the whole story outrageously funny.

I don’t want my dishonesty, resourcefulness, or exploitative nature to shed any bad light on those I misled. They were all really nice people who I unintentionally took advantage of.

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“In my art, I’ve always focused on what connects us.”

—Angela Gonzalez ’16

A “revolutionist’s artist,” Angela Gonzalez ’16 believes in the power of art—and of artists—to spark conversation, bring people together, and inspire change.

When artist Angela Gonzalez ’16 encounters racism or discrimination, she reaches for her paints and brushes. Why? Because, she says, conversation has greater impact than an argument. “I’ve seen violence. I’ve watched people have bad experiences,” Gonzalez says. “Art helped me in my own mental health. It was therapeutic.”

WHAT CONNECTS US

Gonzalez figures what’s good for the individual is also good for the community. So, when vandalism on Providence’s Westminster Street in early June forced many shop owners to board up their storefront windows, Gonzalez and other muralists offered to cover the plywood sheets in art. The artist, whose nom de guerre is AGonza, painted a portrait of her friend, Miss Rhode Island USA Jonét Nichelle. “I came down to Westminster Street and saw what was going on and wanted to do something about it,” she says. “In my art, I’ve always focused on what connects us. I’m doing what we should be doing: uniting and supporting each other.”

Gonzalez grew up in Providence’s Manton Heights, but spent her teen years in the Dominican Republic. At URI, she found a home in the art department. And she found mentors: Edward Shear, academic advisor in the Talent Development Program, and art professor Bob Dilworth. “Bob would say, ‘Bring your color out. Bring who you are. Go big or go home,’ ” Gonzalez says. NEIGHBORHOOD HEROES

Weekdays, Gonzalez is a social worker who works with children with disabilities; off-hours she’s working on a pair of murals for Providence’s Hartford Park. Her subject: the neighborhood’s residents. “I want kids to look at it and see their grandmother there and know that they can be inspired by the people around them,” Gonzalez says. “You don’t need to look to celebrities. You can look to the people of your community.”

This desire to paint neighborhood heroes is why she chose to put Miss Rhode Island USA Jonét Nichelle’s likeness on Westminster’s Street’s Queen of Hearts boutique. Response to the mural has been overwhelmingly positive. Museums have expressed interest in buying the mural, and Gonzalez is in talks to auction it off with proceeds to be donated to a Black Lives Matter nonprofit. One day she wants to create a nonprofit of her own, an organization of artists dedicated to transforming their communities through the arts. “I am a protestor, a revolutionist’s artist,” Gonzalez says. “My passion is changing things.”

Certainly, Gonzalez’s work commands attention. In the course of creating the mural, construction workers and passersby would strike up conversations with Gonzalez, affirming her belief that activism takes many forms and art inspires.

After stopping and studying the mural, one little girl told Gonzalez she, too, wanted to be an artist, saying, “I’m going to paint mommy on the wall.”

—Marybeth Reilly-McGreen
Network

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:

email: urmag@uri.edu online: alumni.uri.edu

1960 Claude Trotter writes, “I have published another book, How Geigy Became a Major Chemical Company in the U.S. I am also raising a puppy for the Guiding Eyes for the Blind this summer. A URI student will continue to raise the puppy during the school year. I am doing this in memory of my fraternity brother Manuel “Duke” Germano ’60, the first visually impaired student at URI.”

1969 Evelyn (Rocci) Commentucci ’69, M.S. ’72 sends an update: “Following graduation, I joined and was president of P.R.I.D.E. (Promote Real Independence for Disabled and Elderly) and authored two manuals with graphics and images on how to alter garments. The manuals were presented to health team members of many institutions in Connecticut and Rhode Island. It was used extensively in lectures I conducted across the United States as a traveling lecturer and was distributed in Britain, Australia, Canada, and Alaska. I served for six years on the URI Board of Directors as well as on the Textile Advisory Council. I was a member of the Grants Foundation Committee for three years starting in 1980. In 1990, I established Sewtogether in Groton, Connecticut, hiring several URI students as interns and later as full-time staff. I sponsor two URI scholarshipships: one for students of Italian heritage, and the other for Textile, Fashion Merchandising and Design students. I have had four marriages! I am 92 going on 93 in November this year and still active on campus, visiting regularly with staff, and a contributor to the University.”

1970 The spring 2020 URI Magazine story, “Four Years That Changed a Generation,” elicited a lot of nostalgia and heart-warming comments, and prompted some to note the similarities between the way the spring semester of 1970 ended due to the war and the student strikes, and the way the spring semester of 2020 ended due to the coronavirus pandemic. Read those comments at uri.edu/magazine.

Ironically, the Class of 1970 marked their 50th reunion in much the same way they marked their graduation—with changed plans, fear, and uncertainty. But like they did then, and like all of us must do now, they found reasons for hope and joy, and put together a video for the Class of 2020. It’s worth a watch, and you can find it at alumni.uri.edu/2020.

1972 Roy Daniel writes, “I have retired after 35 years with Five Star/Lancaster paint and hardware distributors. I am still in favor of Varsity avocation, officiating high school football in Suffolk County, N.Y. for the past 28 years.”

1973 Arnie “Tokyo” Rosenthal, see page 46

1977 Kevin Cronin, page 41

1978 Neil McNulty writes, “I have been blessed with a good family, great career, and good health since leaving the campus WAY back in May 1978. Seems like yesterday I founded a company that grew from one office to offices nationwide, was CEO of two large nonprofits, and president of a very large nonprofit. Also served 20 years as a Marine Corps officer. (Become a second lieutenant on the Quad at graduation!) Wrote a book, The Quix 30/30 Job Solution, which became an Amazon best-seller. Have given lots of speeches, including at college commencements. I am fairly well-known here in Virginia, not so much in R.I. Love to visit each summer. In summer 2018, I went to my freshman dorm room on the top floor of Browning Hall (432), overlooking the Elephant Walks and clinic. My room was EXACTLY the same as when I left it in 1974! Always a place in my heart for URI!”

1979 Linda Pendergast retired from Private Consulting in Landscape Design. She developed her passion for it while testing products for the URI Master Gardener program. She is celebrating a new grandson and now has five grandchildren. Linda and her husband, Thomas, ’77 have settled in Coventry, R.I., where they will enjoy gardening, golfing, fishing, and traveling.

1980 Robert Barbarizza was named vice president of construction management at Preload LLC. Bob is a leading expert in the water storage industry, having managed some of the largest projects in the U.S. including the $1.8 billion Northeast Water Purification Plant in Houston, TX, the $900 million Vista Ridge Water Supply Project serving San Antonio, Texas, and the $7.4 million Fullerton Reservoir Project in Baltimore County, Md. Preload, established in 1980, has completed more than 4,000 liquid storage projects throughout the world. Recently, Bob managed a substantial upgrade for the city of East Providence Water Utilities Division.

1985 Peter Miniati III has joined FL Putnam Investment Company as a private client advisor in the firm’s Providence, R.I., office. Peter has served the wealth management needs of Rhode Islanders for more than three decades. He most recently served as managing director, wealth planning at Napatee Capital. Prior to Napatee, he held senior client advisory roles at Fleet Boston Financial Group and Washington Trust. Peter currently serves on the board of the Rhode Island Housing Corporation and the Rhode Island Casino Control Board.

1986 Jerry Sweener, page 38

1992 Michael Migia ’92, M.S. ’94 was a lead investigator on a multi-year collaborative effort between engineers, surgeons, and scientists that resulted in a $2.3 million, four-year grant awarded by the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering of the National Institutes of Health to improve laparoscopic surgery and liver cancer ablation therapy. Michael is a professor at the Vanderbilt University School of Engineering.

1994 Thomas Starczewski, page 49

1998 Jeff Sweenor, page 41

2005 Peter Miniati II became president of the URI Alumni Association, past trea- surer of the University of Rhode Island Foundation and the Rhode Island Historical Society. He holds a J.D., cum laude, from Suffolk University Law School and the Certified Financial Plan- ner professional designation.

2006 Holly Zimmerman ’94 is the first international woman to reach the finish line of the 2018 Mount Everest Marathon. The Mount Everest Marathon consists of a journey through the Khumbu Valley of Nepal where altitude changes from around the globe high-altitude air sickness, deplorable sanitary conditions, freezing temperatures...and enjoy every minute of it!”

2009—2020 URI Magazine marks 75 years of celebrating URI’s community. URI has continued to grow, change, and inspire since 1925, and we are celebrating those accomplishments in this issue with a special section honoring URI’s alumni and friends who have made an impact. We are highlighting 75 “Luminaries” in celebration of the college’s 75th anniversary. The nominees should have excelled in contributions to professional practice, education, research and/or advancement of the college. Nominees should demonstrate an interest and commitment to the mission and vision of the college, and have made impactful contributions to the profession and/or the college. To make a nomination, visit uri.edu/nursing/75th or email sophia.mayhew@my.uri.edu.

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Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island

In this issue of the magazine, we are excited to bring all alumni the stories of the Campaign for the University of Rhode Island. This is an effort that all of us can take pride in. By working together, we have the chance to build on URI’s past success and help bring about the future of URI. Stay tuned in the months ahead for good news about our progress and achievements. You can find more about the campaign and URI’s annual report here.

Michael D. Fascitelli ’78, Hon. ’08, Chair
Campus Leadership Phase

Richard J. Harrington ’73, Hon. ’02, Chair
Campaign Public Phase

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Holly Zimmerman ’94 is the first international woman to reach the finish line of the 2018 Mount Everest Marathon. The Mount Everest Marathon consists of a journey through the Khumbu Valley of Nepal where altitude changes from around the globe high-altitude air sickness, deplorable sanitary conditions, freezing temperatures...and enjoy every minute of it!”

2020 URI Magazine marks 75 years of celebrating URI’s community. URI has continued to grow, change, and inspire since 1925, and we are celebrating those accomplishments in this issue with a special section honoring URI’s alumni and friends who have made an impact. We are highlighting 75 “Luminaries” in celebration of the college’s 75th anniversary. The nominees should have excelled in contributions to professional practice, education, research and/or advancement of the college. Nominees should demonstrate an interest and commitment to the mission and vision of the college, and have made impactful contributions to the profession and/or the college. To make a nomination, visit uri.edu/nursing/75th or email sophia.mayhew@my.uri.edu.

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College of Nursing

Do you know a College of Nursing grad, professor, administrator or other individual who has made an impact on health care? Nominate them! The College of Nursing is accepting nominations to honor 75 “Luminaries” in celebration of the college’s 75th anniversary. The nominees should have excelled in contributions to professional practice, education, research and/or advancement of the college. Nominees should demonstrate an interest and commitment to the mission and vision of the college, and have made impactful contributions to the profession and/or the college. To make a nomination, visit uri.edu/nursing/75th or email sophia.mayhew@my.uri.edu.
Greg is a URI College of Business faculty member, and now teaches at CCRI and Roxbury Community College.

Patrick Golden will participate in the 11th annual Run to Home Base, presented by New Balance. The event raises funds for Home Base, a partnership of the Red Sox Foundation and the Massachusetts General Hospital, dedicated to healing the invisible wounds for veterans of all eras, service members, military families and families of the fallen through world-class clinical care, wellness, education, and research. Patrick says: “I am participating in Run to Home Base 2020 to honor my friend Kevin Stein and the profound impact that he had on me and so many others. It is my hope through an ongoing effort, that myself and others are able to continue to raise awareness and support in our communities, which will help to provide more resources for our first responders, military personnel, and their families.” Now in its 11th year, this event has brought together participants from across 41 states. The race starts and ends in historic Fenway with a home plate photo finish.

John Bartlett of Erie, Pa., is a new associate with Knox McLaughlin Gemmill & Sonneford, P.C. Mr. Bartlett will focus his practice on elder law, Medicaid planning, estate and trust planning, and estate administration. He has previous experience as a fiduciary advisor at a large financial institution, administering trusts, reviewing estate plans and monitoring compliance for individuals and families. His private practice experience includes a variety of legal issues including estates and real estate. Mr. Bartlett joins a team of 40 attorneys who have been providing quality legal services to businesses, governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, insurance companies, financial institutions, individuals, and families for over 60 years.

Alicia Piazza ’07
Alicia Piazza is the president/co-founder of The Spark Social, Inc., a Providence-based social media marketing agency. The Spark Social was named a 2020 Inno on Fire honoree by Rhode Island Inno, a local network that brings together innovative startup and tech companies. The Spark Social is known as 50 on Fire, Inno on Fire is an annual celebration of the people, enterprises, and organi-
A FRESHMAN AT URI IN 1973, I WAS recruited by the volunteer crew coach in one of the dining halls—food tray in hand as I slowly worked my way toward the infamous “freshman 15.” Rowing was a club sport in the 1970s and the focus was on the men’s team. We had a male volunteer coach who could only offer minimal coaching time to us pesky, insistent women who just wanted to row and race. We got hand-me-down rowing shells, but we didn’t complain; we wanted to participate. I clearly remember trying to use the weight room in the gym with some of my teammates and being politely told “no girls” so I slowly worked my way toward the infamous “freshman 15.” I had never experienced—it was exhilarating! The fitness and pain tolerance I developed at the starting line of a race was a feeling I could do—and taught me the importance of staying fit. Today, I still participate in swimming and 12K running races. Last year, I helped teach an outdoor field class in the southern Andes in South America, and while hiking to field sites, I felt the old, familiar breathing patterns of rowing kick in.

My sister—whose introduction to rowing was through club crew at the University of California at Davis—ended up a varsity 4-year oarswoman for the University of California at Davis. I treasure my memories of rowing at URI and the impact it had not only on me but on my family. I also treasure the friendships I made, which, almost 50 years later, continue today. I also like to think that our persistence as women rowers back then helped develop the foundation and legacy for the successful Division I women’s rowing team that exists today at URI. •

Practicing on Narrow River. Southard is second from left.


YOUR STORIES =

THE POWER OF PERSISTENCE

SUSAN BURLAGE SOUTHWARD ’77 wrote to share her story of rowing at URI. From hard morning workouts in icy water to that exhilarating feeling at the start of a race—crew would come to influence Southard’s life in countless ways.

SUSAN BURLAGE SOUTHWARD

Network

SUMMER 2020

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PHOTOS: COURTESY SUSAN SOUTHWARD

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Check out the latest books by alumni authors—and share your recently published 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.

**BOOKSHELF**

*Secrets of a Millionaire: A Powerful Step-by-Step Plan to Real Wealth* (2020)
Adam Kessner ’98

*On the Edge: Poems* (2020)
Nancy Mattoon Kline, M.L.S. ’73

*Diamond and Pearls* (2020)
Julien Ayotte ’63

*Raptor Bloom* (2020)
Thomas Belisle ’71

*Sunday at 8:30: Two Decades of Life Planning* (2019)
Darlene Ryan ’79 and Rebecca Thompson

*We Met In Paris: Grace Frick and Her Life with Marguerite Yourcenar* (2020)
Joan Howard, M.A. ’76

*What We Still Don’t Know* (2019)
Ann Hood ’78

Dawn Paul ’79

*Color RI* (2019)
Seth Steinman ’11

**CLOSE UP**

In her first year on the job as a nurse, Julia Santucci ’19 found herself in the trenches fighting the coronavirus pandemic. She’s faced the challenge in stride, as nurses do, with courage, dedication, and lots of heart.

Julia Santucci ’19 spent her childhood at the beach, hanging out with her best friend, Jenna Carey ’19, and, when she got older, teaching kids—and adults alike—to surf. Back then, she couldn’t have known that someday she’d be on the front lines of a pandemic.

“I didn’t grow up knowing I wanted to be a nurse,” she says. “But when I was in high school, my dad was in the hospital a lot. I saw what nurses did. I saw them save my dad’s life. I saw the huge difference they made for my family. The idea that I could do that for someone else was appealing.”

For those who know her, it just makes sense that Santucci would make a career of caring for others. “When we were kids, she would always become friends with people who needed a friend,” says Carey, who adds that in high school, Santucci would often make a point of sitting and talking with the kids who had special needs. “She’s very caring. She thinks of everyone else before herself.”

She’s also the kind of person who likes to learn and practice things until she gets them right. And nursing dovetailed perfectly with that quality.

“She had this quiet confidence about her,” says her pediatric clinical instructor, Kate Saylor, M.S. ’11. “She wanted everything to be perfect and she wanted to make sure she was doing everything correctly.”

The science of nursing fascinated Santucci, but when she started working with patients, she really fell in love. “I enjoyed my science classes, but once we started clinicals and I actually got to be in the hospital, I loved it. I knew that was the environment I wanted to work in,” she says.

She graduated from URI in May 2019, and in September, started as a nurse in the internal medicine unit at Rhode Island Hospital. She was nervous, but soon eased into the rhythms of hospital life.

“The hospital is its own self-sufficient little world,” she says. “When you’re in there, the outside doesn’t really exist.” Six months later, and the outside world breached the hospital walls in the form of the novel coronavirus. Santucci’s floor was the first to see the effects.

“As it got closer to the East Coast, we prepared, but it still seemed so far away,” she says. “Then, when it hit, our unit was the first to accept the positive patients. It’s unprecedented. We’ve never dealt with something like this in our lifetime.”

She’s tending to patients who’ve contracted the highly contagious virus, but, she says “I wasn’t so nervous for my own health in the beginning. I was more afraid of giving it to someone else.”

And Carey says that mentality perfectly defines Santucci. “She puts other people before herself, realizes the importance of what she’s doing, and doesn’t take it lightly,” says Carey. “She does everything with her whole heart, she’s not scared of much, and she wants to help others in any way she can.”

— Grace Kelly
Thank you, Rhody alumni, for sharing your experiences in this special edition of Class Notes. Many of you recounted the challenges of isolation, uncertainty, illness, and loss. But your notes also revealed an incredible capacity to adapt and an instinct to find and focus on the positive. As the world continues to change quickly, presenting us with even greater challenges, we need those qualities more than ever. Thank you for the inspiration, encouragement, and, most of all, for giving us all another reason to be proud of our URI alumni community.

Here are a selection of excerpts from the many notes and photos you shared. While we can’t fit them all in print, they’re all included, in full, at uri.edu/magazine

= CLASS NOTES FROM QUARANTINE =

[Image of a dog barking]

“Fortunately, I stocked up on wine before the N.Y. lockdown. We count our blessings.”
—Joseph Marriott

1952
Mary Cozzolino Gray ’52, Hon. ’96

We moved to Kingston in 1960 and have had occasion to visit campus almost daily. I love to walk the Quad. What saddens me now is the silence. No hustle and bustle of traffic and students rushing to class. Lately, a few 2020 grads have met on the Quad to take pictures in their caps and gowns. I look forward to the day when they all return and bring the energy, crowded sidewalks—and traffic. I won’t even complain about the traffic.

1956
Arthur Cappon

My wife and I are hunkered down. I am 91 now and taking no chances. At night, we watch old CBS news shows, and are delighted to discover that they now seem new! We have no idea what will come next. We hope businesses will recover soon to avoid a major depression. I felt more secure growing up during the first one, than I do now.

1959
Joseph Marriott

My wife, Mary Ann, and I are ‘old-farts’ who planned to celebrate our 60th anniversary with a three-week Road Scholar cruise on the Adriatic Sea. Our cruise was cancelled. Our son’s Christmas gift to us was tickets to a now-cancelled Johnny Mathis concert (his version of “Misty” is OUR song). Fortunately, I stocked up on wine before the N.Y. lockdown. We count our blessings. We are fortunate to be vertical, active, and involved, and not concerned with food and shelter.

1968
Richard Goldsmith

We had a Zoom party for our grandson’s 11th birthday with all the grandparents, parents, uncles, and aunts!

1969
Frank Feraco

I am a hard charging businessman. For me, anything that stops me from fulfilling that capacity is NOT GOOD! I have become more aware of folks who need help and are not self-sufficient. It is TIME to get back to our normal lives and remain cautious about spacing ourselves properly. Be well and safe. God bless America.

1970
Virginia Hickey

When I was at URI as an art student, our drawing and sculpture professor, the wonderful Robert Rohm, told us that eventually we would have to learn, as artists, to be alone, to create on our own. He urged us to find the discipline to walk into the silence of an empty studio, go to work, and make a life built from that. What a gift that advice was. In these strange times when life seems to have stopped, I enter the studio daily and try to find meaning in it all.

1971
Allen Hale

My life hasn’t changed all that much other than the inability to travel. I live in Thailand, Travel—local and international—is a big part of our lifestyle. The COVID-19 crisis has robbed me of some of my sense of control over my life and restricted many of my freedoms. I have confidence that better days will come—someday. I am making plans, travel plans, for those days.

1973
David Jordan

It has taken one virus to bring our planet to its knees and we must learn the lessons this calamity offers, or future generations—our children and their children—will suffer the consequences. We are all part of One World, and if there is anything good to take away from COVID-19 it is perhaps that awareness.

1975
Jeffrey Ross

As a podiatric surgeon in the Save the Extremity Program (STEP) at the Baylor College of Medicine, I am at the hospital daily. We are blessed with sufficient PPE, and I am honored to contribute to the health and well-being of my patients. Since patients’ family members are not permitted to visit their loved ones, health care providers now serve as support systems for our patients. I could think of nothing I would rather be doing than this work.

Visit uri.edu/magazine to read these notes, and more, in full.

1976
Shirley Jensen Hanley

The pandemic shutdown started right around my birthday in mid-March. The last few weeks of March I sewed masks. The next week I pulled out that unopened 1,000-piece Charles Wysocki puzzle. My son, who is in grad school in New York City came home on March 12. Within a week, all of New York state was shut down. We were safe. Then my sister-in-law, who manages a motel, got the virus.

1977
Michael Morrow

The biggest plus during this time period? We got a puppy!! Since we are with her all the time, that dog is getting a lot of attention!

1982
Beth McManus Cullen

Since mid-April, several URI Delta Zeta sisters have enjoyed each other's company via Zoom. We are URI friends for life. Nancy Lee Scerry ’82 captured our essence: "The bottom line is that our friendship, bond, and genuine caring about each other, our loved ones, and our families transcends all time, illness, politics, and conspiracies."

1988
Robert Alvine

My company has maintained full employment so that our employees can continue to support their families. In addition, we gave more than $45,000 to Camp Rising Sun, a camp for kids with cancer that is now providing PPE to children at cancer hospitals. URI is always close to my heart, so I also donated to the URI Students First Fund. We need to keep those in need in our minds during this time.

1989
Sheila Gray

My daughter, Shannon Brassi ’15 began working as a nurse in the ICU at South County Hospital in 2018. She has stepped up to the challenge of this pandemic. While caring for the sickest patients, she has also become their friend/family member/comforter due to restrictions on visitors. She never fails to have a smile and a word of encouragement for others. She is my hero.

1992
Roberta Mudge Humble

I’d be adapting better if we could gather a great crowd, meet on the Quad to take pictures in their caps and gowns. I look forward to the day when they all return and bring the energy, crowded sidewalks—and traffic. I won’t even complain about the traffic.

1998
Mary Cozzolino Gray

Thank you for sharing your experiences in this special edition of Class Notes. Many of you recounted the challenges of isolation, uncertainty, illness, and loss. But your notes also revealed an incredible capacity to adapt and an instinct to find and focus on the positive. As the world continues to change quickly, presenting us with even greater challenges, we need those qualities more than ever.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2020

PHOTOS AND COVER, COURTESY OF SUBJECTS

60 UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND MAGAZINE 61
One of the most challenging and hurtful aspects of this was the inability to visit my dad.
—Marc Bernarducci '91

Kim Germain Daly ’97 volunteers at Boston Hope.

1991
Marc Bernarducci ’91, Pharm. D. ’95
My dad changed when I received a call around 1:30 a.m. on March 26. My 75-year-old father, who had not been feeling well the week prior, had been transferred to the ICU after being delivered to the emergency room the previous afternoon. Fortunately, my father miraculously beat the COVID-19 virus, after spending his 76th birthday alone in the ICU, battling for his life. One of the most challenging and hurtful aspects of this was the inability to visit my dad.

The Rev. Elizabeth L. (Myers) Nelson
I am an Episcopal priest, and had planned to retire just before the pandemic hit, when I found myself needed by a little church close to my home. It was about a month before the pandemic hit. With no Sunday worship scheduled, I began sending uplifting messages to my parishioners and we began drive through services on Palm Sunday. 

1992
Suzanne Rancourt
I own a race management company called Rhode Races (I was on the track team at URI) and we produce half and full marathons. Our April and May events were canceled due to COVID-19, with the rest of our 2020 season in jeopardy, as well. We’ve been transitioning to virtual events and continuing to build our running community. With so much negativity in the world today, one of the few things left for us to do is get outside for a run or walk.

1993
Francisco Bechara
Hopefully, through this, we can learn that the world is one and that what separates us needs to be put aside.

1994
Ed Hannan
I love being around my wife and children all the time. I see how they learn. I see how they behave. I haven’t been this close to their day-to-day life since they were in preschool.

2000
Pieter deHart
I am privileged with good health, a job I love, and a supportive family. I have all the tools I need to weather this storm.
—Joanna Ravello ’97, M.S. ’99

2007
Allison Lacsace
My new French bulldog puppy, Copley, has given me light on the darker days. I am thankful for technology and the ability to connect with loved ones. I feel for URI’s Class of 2020, as my graduation day on the Quad is one of my happiest life memories. I believe that we will come out of this pandemic with more compassion, empathy, and gratefulness for the little things in life.

2012
Taylor Booth
Life under quarantine? Honestly, I love it. Aside from the new precautions I have to take and missing the liberty of doing and going wherever I want, whenever I want, I love working from home, feeling like I can get more done. It was an easy transition! My dog gets regular exercise and I have set goals for my physical and mental well-being.

2015
John Del Padre
I’ve been able to work from home, but my wife, Hayley, is a nurse at Rhode Island Hospital. Shout out to her and all the health-care workers who are helping protect the rest of us! (photo)

2018
Lismary Perez
We are all part of One World, and if there is anything good to take away from COVID it is perhaps that awareness.
—David Jordan ’97

2019
Kevin Gemmell
My friend and I are both engineers in San Diego, California. We created the 5,000 Mask Challenge. We have family and friends that are on the front lines, and we’ve seen PPE shortages across America. Our mission is to donate 5,000 masks to health-care workers.
5000maskchallenge.webnode.com

2020
Laura Shulder
I am a laboratory animal scientist. I have never been more proud to work in this field. We are working tirelessly to develop a drug or a vaccine to help with this pandemic, and also to deliver life-saving medicines to patients. It is truly inspiring to be a part of the effort.

2020
Taylor Booth
I rode my roller coaster of emotions, and I now see this time as an opportunity to expand my contribution as a leader. The globe is going through a paradigm shift, and we are all capable of creating the future. I have set goals for my physical and mental well-being.

2012
Lismary Perez
I work for a medical device company and our biggest client has asked us to make antibody testing kits for the entire U.S. population. I am an analyst in the manufacturing division. Silver linings? I’ve noticed random acts of kindness more than ever. Last week, I saw a man buy an elderly woman her groceries when her credit card was declined. We can connect and lift each other’s spirits during the hard times.

2014
Allison Lacasse
When quarantine restrictions are lifted, I think the biggest changes will be how cautiously people will continue to act with physical interactions (hugging, hand shaking, etc.). I think this will take time to go back to normal.

2015
John Del Padre
I’ve been able to work from home, but my wife, Hayley, is a nurse at Rhode Island Hospital. Shout out to her and all the health-care workers who are helping protect the rest of us! (photo)

2016
Luke Hayden
I am using my art to boost our optimism and overall morale during these times of such negativity. We can find optimism in organic/geometric shapes and lines, and having no restraints can be a positive aspect in our lives.

2017
Lismary Perez
I am an artist and I am inspired by all the selfless health-care workers who are stepping back in to lend their expertise and support.

2018
Matt Warner
Since I graduated from URI, I’ve been working as an ED Nurse at a Level 1 academic trauma center. I fear that I may get sick, that I may unknowingly spread the virus. But the virus has brought many of our staff together, fighting a common enemy. I don’t know what post-pandemic life will be like, but I hope that it retains an element of stronger community.
SPRING WINNERS: BALLET CLASS WITH HERCI MARDSEN

Winning Caption
Peter Pan auditions.
—Norm Campbell ’57

Runner-Up
“There’s only a “few good men” at any barre.”
—Linda O’Neil Bednarek ’66

Honorable Mention
Barre Flies
—Jill Mason ’82

THIS 1966 PHOTO, “BALLET CLASS WITH HERCI MARDSEN,” sure generated a lot of creative and fun ideas for captions. It also generated a pretty wonderful email from Herci Marsden’s daughter. Marsden’s daughter, Ana Marsden Fox, said her mom was “so surprised to see herself in the spring issue of URI Magazine.” She went on to explain that her mom “was expecting her second child at that time, and continued to teach right up until delivery. The photo at that moment was when she would ask the students to jump. ‘Jump with all you’ve got! Be free and jump!’”

According to Ana, her mom is doing well at 82 years old and still teaching in Lincoln, Rhode Island! She sent this more recent photo of her mom, and says her mom “really got a ‘kick’ out of seeing her photo in the magazine.”

Thank you, Ana. And thank you, Herci. We really got a ‘kick’ out of hearing from you!

And thank you, readers, as always, for your caption ideas! Keep ‘em coming!

= 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 September 15, 2020

THE CAMPAIGN FOR URI will celebrate the stellar achievements of our community and create new opportunities for students and faculty. There are many ways to be a part of it: tune in for online events, follow URI in the news and on social media, mentor students and young alumni, or give to an area that is important to you.

The Campaign is an occasion for all alumni to make new connections and move the University forward together.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES:

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

“Look to art and see what genius emerges in turbulent times.”
— Emmett Goods, trombonist and URI music lecturer

ESSENTIAL EXPRESSION

Emmett Goods teaches jazz, trombone, and music history courses in URI’s music department, including Music as a Form of Social Protest and the History of Hip-Hop and Black American Culture. He comes from a rich musical background and has shared stage and studio with world-renowned jazz, Latin, and Motown artists.

“You can say something in a song that you wouldn’t necessarily say with your regular voice in a crowd,” Goods says. “If you put your deepest, most heartfelt feelings to some chords and apply a melody to it, now you’ve provided this palette by which you can express what it is that you really feel.”

What’s Emmett Goods listening to this summer? See page 23.