

# President's Update



NEWS FROM PRESIDENT NIRSCHEL

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IN OTHER NEWS...

## Looking Back at 2006, Looking Forward to 2020



As 2006 comes to a close, it's a good time to remember how much Roger Williams has to celebrate. Building on the fantastic growth I've witnessed since I arrived in 2001, the University has reached some pretty great milestones in the past year: We have become known as a "hot" school, U.S. News & World Report calls us a "Top Ten" school in the region, First Lady Laura Bush was our commencement speaker in May 2006, and word is out within the higher education community about the impressive gains we've made at Roger Williams. A pretty good record of achievement for one year.

But, not one to rest on past successes too long, I have asked our faculty, staff and administration to turn their attention to the future. And I'm not just speaking of 2007—more like 2020. In recent weeks, many of us on campus have been thinking and talking about where we'd like to see Roger Williams be in the year 2020. And to get some of those ideas on paper and translated into a solid plan, we've launched a campus-wide strategic planning process that is likely to take up most of 2007.

In the coming months you'll be hearing more about this process and some of the ideas emerging. Strategic planning for any organization is a big, necessary and ultimately exhilarating endeavor. We're luckier than many schools as we embark on this project: With all the great momentum we've built in past years, Roger Williams really can begin to stretch to new levels—most importantly, we have the talent and vision to do it. With that, I wish you a happy, healthy 2007.

*Roy J. Nirschel, Ph.D.*

## Students Take Top Spot in Construction Contest Fourth Year in a Row

In mid-November, three teams of six students (architecture, construction management and engineering majors) traveled to Fairfield, N.J., for the three-day Associated Schools of Construction Region I Construction Management Student Competition. By the end of the contest, the University's design build team emerged victorious for the fourth year in a row.

The three teams—design build, commercial build and heavy highway—squared off in their separate categories against 15 other Northeast universities. After months of preparation, the competition allowed students just 16 hours to tackle a real-world construction project. Each team had to estimate, schedule and plan a complete bid package for the category's assigned project. And the design build division had to actually design the building before it could plan its construction.

Each team appeared before a panel of judges to present their bids as if they were actually trying to secure the contract. The design build team's win earned the six students \$2,000 overall and secured them a berth in the national competition in March in San Antonio, Texas, where they will compete against schools from the six other regions.



## Commentator David Gergen Analyzes Elections with Students

Just two days after the Democrats seized control of Congress on Election Day, David Gergen—respected political commentator and director of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government—addressed Roger Williams students as part of the Civil Discourse Distinguished Lecture Series.

Mr. Gergen, who has served on presidential administrations on both sides of the aisle (Nixon, Ford, Reagan and Clinton), called the election a protest by voters: "It was more a rejection of the Republicans than an affirmative vote for the Democrats," he said.

As he spoke to a crowd of nearly 400 students, faculty and local community members, the in-demand political analyst described the cyclical nature of politics in the U.S. and said that the 2006 election indicated the end of an era of conservative dominance. He mourned the loss of Rhode Island Sen. Lincoln Chafee, however, and blamed dissatisfaction with the Republican party as a whole for Sen. Chafee's ouster.

Gergen's appearance marked the second time he's visited Roger Williams to speak to students.

## UNIVERSITY CALENDAR

### JANUARY 2

Winter Intersession Classes Begin

### JANUARY 23

Career Center Program: Reality 101

### JANUARY 24

Spring Semester Classes Begin



The Roger Williams community has clocked nearly 29,000 community service hours this past year.

### President Bush Highlights Community Service Program at Roger Williams

The Roger Williams community has clocked nearly 29,000 community service hours this past year. And now, these many volunteer hours spent aiding the hungry, sick, illiterate and elderly have received national attention.

President Bush's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, which recognizes colleges for exemplary civic service, has named Roger Williams to the category "With Distinction for General Community Service." The University is the only Rhode Island school honored in this category, and one of only 99 schools recognized nationwide.

The University's commitment to service, one of its core values, is achieved through the efforts of K.C. Ferrara and dedicated students, staff and faculty. Ms. Ferrara coordinates the Feinstein Service Learning Program, which encourages the community to actively participate in service. The program, created in 1998, has grown from only 15 volunteers to more than 1,780 University members each year.



### Crowning Achievement: Queen Elizabeth Exhibit a Royal Triumph

Were you on campus in November? Then you couldn't have missed the "Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend" exhibit in the Mary Tefft White Cultural Center. Roger Williams was the only site in southern New England selected to host the traveling exposition, which Chicago's Newberry Library launched in 2003 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's death.

The exhibition featured a series of digitally reproduced Elizabethan portraits, paintings, maps and artifacts. Christine Fagan, collection development and acquisitions librarian, coordinated the project for the University and made its display a campus-wide initiative. The month of programs included a film festival, a medieval dinner at the Dining Commons, faculty and guest lectures, a Queen Elizabeth impersonator, a special edition of Socrates Café and even a Shakespeare performance by the Theatre Department during the opening celebration.

The response from the campus and local community exceeded expectations. "Roger Williams became one of the most successful and extensive program sites among the 40 nationwide locations in the exhibit's tour," said Peter Deekle, dean of University libraries.



## Architecture Students Unveil Designs for New Massachusetts Transit Hubs

On Nov. 15, southeastern Massachusetts residents got a glimpse of transit stops designed by Roger Williams students as part of the potential for transit-oriented development in the region. The fourth- and fifth-year architecture students presented proposals for two mixed-use developments in Taunton, Mass., at the Southeastern Massachusetts Commuter Rail Task Force meeting in Raynham, Mass.

The presentations included designs for a transit village behind the former station at the intersection of Arlington and Dean streets—a proposed stop on the anticipated commuter rail extension to Fall River and New Bedford, Mass. Additionally, students made recommendations for a second mixed-use transit-oriented development in Taunton at the current GATRA Bloom Bus Terminal on Oak Street.

The student proposals were part of an advanced architectural design studio course led by Edgar Adams, associate professor of architecture. Professor Adams, who has researched transit-based villages in Portland, Ore., and a number of major cities in California, hopes to help other communities explore the potential for similar developments.

Members of the task force appreciated the students' input. While it's not likely that any single plan will be adopted outright, the proposed developments offered a forecast for what might come should the commuter rail be extended.

"The nature of these reports is to serve as an academic exercise in what could be done to help the city improve through smart growth," Professor Adams said.

## Roger Williams Students Combine Art and Science to Capture Charity Photo Competition

Cavitation sticks, exploding glass, Tesla coils... not what typically comes to mind when discussing fine art. A group of Roger Williams engineering and computer science students recently proved, however, that even the most complex scientific research subjects can double as great photographic content.

At the Oct. 27 "Science & Technology in the Arts" benefit photo competition, senior engineering major Mike Soroka captured the top prize. The contest, sponsored by Foresight Science & Technology of Providence, R.I., raised funds for the TSETSE Gallery, which offers affordable arts classes for children.

Dr. Linda Riley, associate dean and professor of engineering, encourages her students to integrate art and science. The competition required that entries capture in-progress scientific experiments and research in a visually appealing way. The result? Some amazing, beautiful abstract photographs. Eight of the 10 semifinal spots went to Roger Williams students; in the end, Mr. Soroka earned the top spot with his photo of a Tesla coil experiment.



Glennon Stratton, GTS Photos



## Sailing, Soccer Teams Conclude Successful Fall Campaigns

The fall 2006 semester proved a successful season for the Roger Williams athletics teams, with the sailing and soccer teams providing highlights.

The sailing team burst onto the college scene this year under first-year head coach Dave Siegal, earning a national ranking as high as No. 5, its highest ever. Freshman sailor Cy Thompson placed seventh in the nation at the ICSA/Vanguard Singlehanded National Championship, hosted by Roger Williams in early November. And a team of four men's sailors achieved a berth in the Sloop National Championship in Charleston, S.C.

The men's soccer team continued its dominance of the Commonwealth Coast Conference, earning its third consecutive conference championship with a thrilling 3-2 double-overtime victory over rival Salve Regina. The Hawks advanced to the NCAA National Tournament where they battled a strong NYU squad to a 1-1 tie before succumbing to the Violets 4-3 in penalty kicks. Junior forward Antoine Bell earned CCC Player of the Year, and a number of Hawks captured All-CCC and All-New England honors.

The women's soccer team also made noise in the CCC, advancing to the championship game before falling to top-seeded Endicott College 2-1. Overall, the team posted a 13-7-1 record.



### Roger Williams in the Holiday Spirit: Winter Illumination 2006

On Wednesday, Dec. 6, the University community gathered on the quad for the fourth annual Winter Illumination. The celebration featured festive ice carvings by Bon Appetit's James Gubata, hot chocolate and cider to keep warm, and a cappella singers and the Roger Williams Chorus to lead carols. President Nirschel performed the ceremonial countdown to illumination at 5:15. And in spirit of the season, the University raised money via a raffle and presented a donation to the Women's Resources Center of Rhode Island.



### Dr. Bruce Thompson to Mentor Health Care Professionals in End-of-Life Care

The American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Care (AAHPM) recently named Dr. Bruce Thompson, professor of social and health services, a senior mentor for the 2006-2007 academic year. The AAHPM's yearlong mentoring program provides junior and midcareer physicians, nurses, social workers and faculty an opportunity to benefit from regular one-on-one consultation with a senior professional in end-of-life care.

Mentors and mentees are matched based upon mutual interests and expectations. For this academic year, the AAHPM matched Dr. Thompson with John Cagle, a social work doctoral student at the University of Virginia.

Dr. Thompson has been a faculty member at Roger Williams since 1977 and teaches in the social and health services and public administration programs. He has completed postdoctoral programs in end-of-life/palliative care at Smith College and Harvard Medical School.



### Mr. RWU Contest Benefits Charity

In an effort to raise money for charity, 10 male Roger Williams students faced off to be crowned "Mr. RWU" in late November. Sophomore Kevin Clark came out on top, and the contest collected roughly \$9,000 to benefit the Children's Miracle Network.

