

# STUDENT LIFE@

Roger Williams  
University  
Learning to Bridge the World

A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

VOLUME 1 NO. 2



Dear Parents & Students,

On behalf of the University and the Student Affairs Division, I hope the New Year finds everyone enjoying some well-deserved time with family and friends. Fall 2007 was a very busy semester at the University, and it is hard to believe that classes for the Spring semester begin on January 23, 2008! This academic year our Division has decided to launch *Student Life @ Roger Williams University*. We previewed our first issue for new parents and students at Orientation this past summer. This second issue, edited by our Dean of Students, Kathleen McMahon, summarizes some opportunities and resources available to students, reviews new initiatives and offers important dates for both students and parents. We hope it facilitates informal conversations at home, provides parents with some important updates and helps with organizing the family calendar! In future issues, we hope to add insight and advice from both students and parents, address timely issues of importance to today's college students and highlight some of the outstanding accomplishments of our students in University Life. If you have comments, questions, or suggestions please drop Dr. McMahon a line at [kcmcmahon@rwu.edu](mailto:kcmcmahon@rwu.edu)

Sincerely,

Dr. John J. King  
Vice President – Student Affairs

## HOMECOMING & FAMILY WEEKEND 2007

Homecoming & Family Weekend 2007 took place on October 19-21. More than 2,000 students, family members and alumni visited campus. Activities included Midnight Madness, Casino Night, Special Guest Speaker Kellen Winslow, the Homecoming Ball, athletic events and much more!



## CONTENTS

Career Center.....	2
Health Services.....	3
Dining Services.....	3
SOAR Program.....	4
Counseling Center.....	4
Residence Life .....	5
Coming Home Again.....	6
Intercultural Center.....	7

## THE CAREER CENTER

The end of the first semester is often a time when undergraduates begin to think about doing a co-op/internship in the spring or summer. The Career Center manages the cooperative education program and provides guidance in personal appointments and workshops to help our students secure an experiential education opportunity. How can you help? Consider offering a co-op/internship opportunity to a Roger Williams University student. Paid or unpaid, the only requirement is that the student participate in an academically rigorous experience where they can apply their classroom learning in a real-world environment. They need to receive supervision from a knowledgeable professional during a 135-hour time period over the course of a semester, summer or intersession break. Co-ops/internships can be anywhere geographically. To advertise an opportunity to our students, please go to HAWKS HUNT at [www.myinterfase.com/rwu/employer](http://www.myinterfase.com/rwu/employer).

If you would enjoy offering career advice to our current students and/or alumni, please consider registering as a career mentor. You can offer as little or as much time as you wish. You can communicate via email, phone, face-to-face or however you choose. You may offer to do on-campus presentations or participate in workshops. If this appeals to you, please consider registering at HAWKS HUNT at [www.myinterfase.com/rwu/mentor](http://www.myinterfase.com/rwu/mentor).

### HERE'S A LIST OF JUST A FEW OF THE MANY SERVICES WE OFFER:

- ✓ One-on-one career counseling
- ✓ Resume and cover-letter critique
- ✓ Job search assistance
- ✓ Career-path assessment
- ✓ Aid in securing internships
- ✓ Interview-preparation advice
- ✓ Help with graduate school applications
- ✓ Advice on academic majors and minors



## A MESSAGE FROM HEALTH SERVICES:

### *University Committed to Eliminating Secondhand Smoke Across Campus*

As you may already know, Roger Williams University is committed to promoting wellness on campus. All campus buildings are currently **smoke free** and effective January 20, 2008, the core of campus will be **smoke free both indoors and outside**. For those who wish to smoke, the University has designated eleven smoking areas across campus; campus signs will indicate the locations of these areas, most of which will be covered gazebos. In addition, smoking is permitted in four University parking lots. In support of this endeavor, Health Services offers smoking cessation resources to all students. If you are currently smoking, please consider the following information:

- Research has shown that quitting becomes more difficult with every added year you smoke.
- The cost of smoking one pack/day of cigarettes translates to:  
**\$ 40 per week... \$ 172 per month... or \$ 2080 per year!!!**
- Your health consequences become more significant the longer you smoke.  
(lung disease, high blood pressure, cancer, etc.)
- The cost of the nicotine patch available through Health Services is currently \$10/week.

If you are thinking about quitting, please call Health Services to schedule an appointment to discuss smoking cessation options. We can provide personal counseling, outside referrals and general guidance or information. In addition, **the University has provided funds to allow Health Services to offer the nicotine patch to students free of charge this spring semester!** This may be a great time to kick your habit, improve your health and save some money.

Also:

**Disease prevention through vaccination** is easy and available at Health Services.

All students are encouraged to contact Health Services to obtain any of the following vaccines:

**Meningitis, HPV, Flu, Hepatitis B, MMR and Tetanus**

Call (401) 254-3156 for information and appointment.



## DINING SERVICES



Bon Appétit Management Company strives to prepare flavorful, healthful meals for the Roger Williams community and also provides plentiful resources about health, wellness and the environmental impacts of food choices.

Bon Appétit's comprehensive website, [www.CircleofResponsibility.com](http://www.CircleofResponsibility.com), is an incredible source for wellness information and a great tool for Roger Williams students, faculty and staff. Curious about your body mass index (BMI) and what it means? Can't quite visualize proper portions of certain foods (such as one cup of lettuce)? Interested in a consultation with a Registered Dietitian or fitness specialist? Find all this and much more on Bon Appétit's [www.CircleofResponsibility.com](http://www.CircleofResponsibility.com).

In addition to nutrition and health, Bon Appétit's website also provides information about the environmental implications of our food choices. What do "cage-free eggs" and "shade-grown coffee" really mean? How do food choices affect climate change? As the pioneering leader of sustainable food service, Bon Appétit has the knowledge and experience to thoroughly address these issues.

Visit [www.CircleofResponsibility.com](http://www.CircleofResponsibility.com) today and take advantage of this valuable resource!







## THE SOAR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

For most college students, developing effective interpersonal skills is just as crucial as obtaining a solid academic education. At Roger Williams, the Department of Student Programs and Leadership offers the chance to develop valuable leadership skills through its SOAR Leadership Program.

SOAR is a series of training sessions, workshops and social events designed to refine leadership abilities and encourage students to make positive contributions to society. All incoming students are welcome to apply to the program. Applications are available from Student Programs and Leadership, located in the Campus Recreation Center.

The program features three levels: the first, *Emerge*, helps students focus on self exploration and define what leadership actually means. Subsequent levels are designed for upperclassmen and help develop distinct leadership styles for use in future careers.

In the *Emerge* track, students complete an 8- to 10-week training course, kicked off by a leadership retreat and culminating in graduation. Then students may decide to either conclude their time with SOAR or continue to the next level.

If you have any questions, contact Department of Student Programs and Leadership at (401) 254-3054.

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## COUNSELING CENTER

The Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD) participated in National Depression Screening Day on October 11th. It was a great opportunity to educate the community about depression and the services that are available on campus. The screenings took place at both the CCSD and at the Recreation Center. They can be accessed online through our website.

Consulting with parents, staff and faculty has been part of our mission since the inception of the Counseling Center. However, since the Virginia Tech tragedy we significantly increased our efforts to help the University community identify students who may be experiencing emotional distress and find ways to help them receive the support that they may need. Our efforts appear to have been fruitful, judging by the increased number of students utilizing our services this semester.

The Center provides short-term, solution-focused counseling to help students deal with personal and interpersonal problems. It also conducts workshops and groups in such areas as yoga/meditation, freshman adjustment and

dealing with the loss of loved ones. Our P.E.E.R. Program (Peer Educators with Expertise in Referrals) is also coordinated by the Center and consists of students who are specially trained to provide workshops and help their fellow residents find the assistance that they need in order to succeed and enjoy their college experience.

Our services are confidential, which means we cannot share information about student visits to the Center without their permission. However, as a parent you are welcome to call us to share your concerns or to consult with one of the counselors. All full-time and residential undergraduate students are eligible for all of our services, free of charge. CCSD is located on the 2nd floor of the Center for Student Development Building, and we may be reached at (401) 254-3124.



## RESIDENCE LIFE & HOUSING

*"We're Breaking New Ground."*

The Residence Life and Housing office is growing once again! We are excited to announce that plans are underway for a new on-campus residence hall, projected to be completed for fall 2009. The University retained the talented architectural services of Perkins & Will to design the complex, and the construction experience of Bond Brothers to build it. The new residence hall will be located just north of the baseball and softball fields. The building will offer impressive vistas of the Mount Hope Bay and front-row views of the athletic fields. The four-story building will house approximately 375 upperclassmen in apartment and suite-style arrangements.

The apartment design will be similar to our current apartment area, Bayside, in housing four students in two bedrooms. There will also be some apartments for six students in three bedrooms as well as one-person apartments. The suite design will be similar to our current suite area, Stonewall Terrace, housing ten students in four double rooms and two single rooms. There will also be a suite arrangement for six students in three double rooms. The complex will not only offer spacious common areas to its residents but the university community as a whole. The first floor will include a lounge area with pool tables and the second floor will feature a great room with wonderful views of the Bay – both rooms will be accessible to all students.

Students will be welcomed into a coffee lounge and convenience store as they pass through the portals from the north parking area. A new commuter lounge area equipped with comfortable seating and lockers will also be located on the first floor. Two seminar rooms will provide additional space for classes and presentations during the day and will be available to residents for group study in the evening.

Because of the proximity of the construction to Nike Hall, a new home has been designated in Stonewall Terrace for the Building and Design Living/Learning Community for the fall of 2008. Official ground-breaking for the new complex will likely happen in late April 2008.





## COMING HOME AGAIN

Donna Lynn Darmody  
Wellness Coordinator

Moving on from high school to college represents a significant step toward adulthood. For the most part, the end of high school marks the end of childhood. During the four years your son or daughter is at RWU, they will be faced with several important developmental challenges separate from those posed by their academic coursework. These might include: fitting in, learning to live with others, redefining who they are and what they believe in, emotional separation from parents, balancing socializing and working and struggling with what they are going to do with the rest of their lives.

The cornerstone of college life for residential students is independence from parental rules and restrictions. They decide when to study, when to sleep, when to go out and when to stay in. However, they soon return home for that extended period of time known as winter break. This can be awkward and challenging for parents who are trying to balance some parental control while still allowing their son or daughter their new-found freedom.

Having worked with students for close to 20 years as well as having a son finishing his senior year in college, I have some insights into how to make the adjustment from college to living back at home less stressful. Although it gets easier each time my son comes home, it is always a major adjustment for everyone involved. But, I must admit that first winter break when he was a freshman was the hardest. No sooner did he come home and deposit approximately five loads of laundry, he was on the phone with his high school friends making plans for that very evening. And then the two questions I had asked so many times before: “Where are you going tonight?” and, “What time will you be home?” had a different response. The answer; “Mom, why are you asking me this? When I am at school I don’t have to answer to anyone. I’m an adult now and I don’t have to tell you where I’m going. Why can’t you let me grow up?”

In asking students themselves what they wish their parents had known before their first return home, the same theme comes up over and over again. Parents think that the child they dropped off at college is the same one who is going to come home, but in reality it’s a completely different person. Alicia Merschen-Perez, a junior from California explains: “Parents should understand that their child has had complete freedom for at least a few months, and isn’t going to want it all to be taken back. You can’t treat a student home from college

like one who is still in high school – they just aren’t the same person. Parents still see the child they dropped off at college, and don’t realize that when their student comes home, they are now a young adult.”

So, my first suggestion is simple – regardless of the form it takes, EXPECT CHANGE. It may be reflected in how they dress, a tattoo, desire to change their academic major, new positions taken on religious, political and social issues and the assumption that they can come and go as they choose. Also, expect changes from one visit home to the next. However, it is that first extended visit home when catching up with friends may take away and interfere with parent’s plans for “family time”. Don’t take this personally and try to keep a sense of humor about their process of becoming their own person. Ask them ahead of time when you can get together and hear all about college life and the changes taking place in their lives. Ask them what is most difficult about being a college student and the challenges they face in making their own decisions. Ask them to talk about their most positive influences at school and what are the most negative. You might be surprised that they begin talking about the things that all parents of college students worry about, including choices around alcohol and drugs and how much they are studying.

To avoid conflict, talk with them about their views of how it will be for them living at home compared to when they were in high school before they even arrive, see what their view is first and if it is not what you had in mind give them your expectations and the reasons behind them. Be willing to change boundaries that were set when they were in high school. Alex Perry, a junior on the baseball team says: “Going home was difficult at first and it took a long time for my parents to hear my view and for me to listen to their concerns especially around curfew issues and coming home.” He thinks the answer is simple: “Everyone just has to COMPROMISE.” Junior business major Mark Wilchynski found it easy: “As long as I let my parents know what I was doing and where I was going we didn’t have problems.” Renee Bilotti, a junior, said that she and her parents have struggled with these issues since she was a freshman and continue to every time she goes home. She can’t understand how: “My mother can’t sleep when I’m not home past a certain time when I am living at home but has no problem when I’m at school.”

Second, BE PATIENT and LISTEN instead of reacting to everything they say and offering suggestions. If they talk about difficult situations, non-judgmental listening is one of the most important factors in helping them discover their own solutions. Once you truly understand their situation ask them what solutions they have considered. If they say to you “You just don’t understand,” it usually means that you have somehow imposed solutions that they are resisting. Trust them to find their own solutions knowing and expecting them to make mistakes. You’ll be surprised that these are similar to the mistakes made by most other college students and most will not be irrevocable or disastrous.

This all may sound easy but I recognize it is not. Just in writing this article I realize how often I have failed at following my own advice. So in closing I encourage you to do what I do. Just DO THE BEST YOU CAN and above all keep a SENSE OF HUMOR about this entire process. ENJOY your son or daughter when

they are home. It will make the time you DO have with them so much more positive and memorable. Any issues that are talked about and resolved during winter break will make their return next summer easier for everyone involved.

## THE INTERCULTURAL CENTER

This fall brought lots of excitement to the the Intercultural Center. While our mission remained the same – to build community by supporting personal identity development, academic excellence and exemplary global citizenship – our staff was largely new.

Directing the Center is Associate Dean of Students, Ande Diaz. Ande has 17 years of experience in higher education and comes to Roger Williams with experience at Tufts, Princeton, Harvard and Yale Universities. Her passion is developing world citizens who think critically, display compassion and have a deep respect for difference. Joining Dean Diaz this year are two new assistant directors, Don Mays and Maria Adkins. Don comes to us from the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center in Newport, R.I., where he coordinated the Teen Center. He draws on many talents including filmmaking, writing and directing theatre. Don works closely with multicultural students and LGBT students and their allies, as well as directing the Bridge to Success program, an opportunity for college students to mentor local high-school students. Maria comes to us from Suffolk University, where she advised international students on immigration information, a task she has continued at the Intercultural Center. Maria also supports students and brings awareness to the campus community on international students and coordinates the Spiritual Life program. Our new staff talent is complemented by the steady hand of our administrative assistant, Adrienne Henderson. With several years experience on staff, Adrienne is a constant presence whom students rely upon to make the Intercultural Center a home away from home. Currently she is pursuing a Master's Degree in college student personnel, which will enable her to model principles of life-long learning to our students as well!

Our programs this fall included “An Hour With France” and “An Hour With Afghanistan,” as well as regular campus visits from local high-school youth as part of the Bridge to Success program. To support students observing Ramadan, the Intercultural Center coordinated student requests for early morning Sehri foods before fasting, as well as an end of Ramadan Eid celebration feast with songs!

The IC also collaborated on several events this fall. For example, Dr. Eugenie Scott gave a public lecture on creationism and evolution as part of the President's Civil Discourse Series in October. Immediately following the lecture, the IC facilitated a discussion in which 24 students, a faculty member and a dean discussed the provocative lecture and exchanged points of view.

Of special note, activist and scholar Tim Wise came to RWU for a two-day campus visit in late October. He met with leaders from the Multicultural Student Union and the Student Senate. He also gave a public lecture to an audience of 144 on the topic of white privilege, a class lecture to 100 students in Justice Studies, Psychology and Sociology, as well as a professional development session with 50 staff members. Everywhere Tim went, people were ready to hear his message, pose their questions and allow ideas to collide.

Exciting things are happening on campus this year and intercultural learning is indeed thriving at Roger Williams!



THE IC STAFF



THE IC STUDENTS

## DATES TO REMEMBER

Housing for Winter Intersession, January 1  
First Day of Intersession, January 2  
Last Day of Intersession, January 18  
Martin Luther King Holiday, Observed January 21  
Residence Halls Open, January 22, 8 am  
Classes Resume, January 23  
Civil Discourse Speaker: Lou Dobbs, 5:30, January 31  
Campus Rec. Center  
No Classes President's Day, February 18  
Residence Halls Close, March 14, 7 pm  
Spring Break, March 16-23

Residence Halls Open, March 23, 12 pm  
Classes Resume, March 24  
Career Fair, April 9  
Commencement Ball for Seniors, May 2  
Last Day of Classes, May 6  
Reading Days, May 7 & 8  
Final Exams, May 9-14  
Senior Day Rehearsal and Barbeque, May 15  
Family Dinner Dance for Graduates and Families, May 16  
Residence Halls Close for Students, Except Seniors, May 15, 12 pm  
Commencement/Graduation, May 17, 10 am

**\* PLEASE NOTE** – This is the **only** *Student Life @ RWU* newsletter that will be mailed to your home.

Going forward we plan to send an electronic newsletter.

*To receive future Student Affairs newsletters, please email us with your email address at [advancement@rwu.edu](mailto:advancement@rwu.edu) and receive updates and Student Affairs news in a timely manner.*

You can also tell us what you think of our newsletter and offer ideas of what would be helpful for you.

We look forward to keeping you and your family current with exciting RWU news!



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