



Dear Parents and Students,

We welcome you as readers of the first electronic version of Student Life@Roger Williams University. While our previous two issues have been distributed in print format, the transition to an e-newsletter is a more efficient and sustainable method of publicizing what is happening on campus. In this issue, many programs and events that occurred last semester are highlighted, demonstrating the rich array of co-curricular offerings available to students on campus.

As President Nirschel recently wrote to you, the safety of our campus community is one of our top priorities, and we are very cognizant that recent events on campuses across the nation have elevated anxiety and concerns. We have a crisis management team that meets regularly and an emergency response plan in place, which we are continuously updating and fine tuning. The Public Safety and Student Affairs staffs undergo ongoing training to respond to emergencies of all kinds, and they continuously assess situations and risks with the intent of preventing such tragic issues from occurring on our campus. We encourage students to make sure that their contact information and their parents' contact information is updated through myRWU, enabling our Connect ED alert system to be as effective as possible.

Additionally, I personally would like to take this opportunity to congratulate students, faculty and staff who have adapted so smoothly to the latest addition to our smoking cessation program which requires smokers to utilize smoking gazebos around campus. The gazebos provide sheltered areas for smokers while protecting non-smokers from the dangerous effects of second-hand smoke. The initiative is supported by a series of smoking cessation programs for the entire campus community.

As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions for future articles via e-mail at: [studentlife@rwu.edu](mailto:studentlife@rwu.edu).

Sincerely,

Dr. John J. King  
Vice President – Student Affairs

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## RWU RESPONDS TO LOU DOBBS

Six panelists including two Roger Williams University students and four professors gathered at the RWU Law School following the much anticipated Lou Dobbs presentation in late January.

Expressing their evaluations on Mr. Dobbs' views, students and faculty discussed their opinions before an audience of approximately 25 RWU community members. Exercising civil discourse—the purpose behind the presentation—the panel engaged in a challenging discussion of political positions, media responsibility and contemporary issues.

“He talks about media distorting the truth; he is the media distorting the truth,” said Danya Martin, an RWU theater major. Ms. Martin began the discussion by summarizing Mr. Dobbs' argument and major talking points. Several individuals on the panel challenged Mr. Dobbs' inconsistencies in his messaging and his disdain for the two-party system.

Also of interest to the panel was Mr. Dobbs' position on China, that the U.S. media and citizens should recognize it as a communist country.

Moderated by Kate Mele, professor and editor of Reason and Respect, a journal of civil discourse, the panel engaged in an intelligent discussion of Lou Dobbs' statements, passionately conveying their positions on issues.

“What really interested me about the panel was how willing students were to deconstruct the argument, critique it, and make it real for themselves,” Ms. Mele said. “I hope this will be an ongoing trend for the future of civil discourse events at RWU.”



## THE INTERCULTURAL CENTER (IC)

The Intercultural Center's mission is to build community by supporting personal identity development, academic excellence and exemplary global citizenship. The department's experienced staff members guide many initiatives and efforts to bring this mission to life at Roger Williams University.

Ande Diaz, an associate dean of students and director of the IC, has been building a team with the new staff at the Intercultural Center. From community engagement to artistic expression, everyone on staff at the IC is a role model for our students and shares their unique talents and gifts. Dean Diaz issued a general invitation to students and colleagues to attend listening sessions to help her learn how best to strengthen the intercultural community and serve students. For example, she enjoyed gathering students of Latin American descent for a dinner this winter to hear their interests and help them make Roger Williams a home away from home. Dean Diaz also collaborated with a faculty colleague to experiment with a first facilitated Continuing Community Conversations; a forum to help students hear and learn from each other on issues of racial justice. Also, she has been approached by several faculty members to partner on some faculty development initiatives to strengthen intercultural learning, and she looks forward to more collaborations in the future.

Maria Adkins, assistant director of the IC, works closely with international students and students of all spiritual faiths. "The Intercultural Center was active with many programs this fall, such as Global Fest, which featured students, music, presentations and cuisine from around the globe," Ms. Adkins said. "The international students have had many great programs such as the annual Thanksgiving Dinner featuring a Native American speaker from the Wampanoag Tribe. Our "An Hour With..." series continues to be a great success. It gives students the chance to share their culture and geography

*International students gather on a trip to New York City.*



*Kitty Hendricks and ELS international students at the Intercultural Center.*

with the campus community. We look forward to continuing this program in the spring. In January, we welcomed 18 new international students from 10 different countries! Upcoming events that will help them acclimate to our community include exciting events such as a ski trip, a trip to New York City and trips to see Spamalot and Riverdance performances!"

The Intercultural Center also has been promoting spiritual life on campus. They conducted a Thanksgiving service and dinner with members of the Jewish, Muslim, Catholic and Protestant faiths. Many religious clubs on campus have been very active—the Newman Club and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship have hosted various retreats this year which have focused on big questions such as "Maintaining Spirituality in a Secular Environment," and "Where is God When it Hurts?" In February, the Interfaith Breakfast was held. It was a time for prayer, praise and reflection and open to all faiths. Ingrid Mattson, professor at Hartford Seminary, spoke on "A Common Word" which is a historic call for dialogue between Muslims and Christians.

Don Mays, assistant director of the Intercultural Center, reports that fall 2007 was "an extremely busy and eventful semester for the Center's affiliated clubs and organizations!" The clubs include the Multicultural Student Union (MSU), SAFE (a gay-straight alliance), and STAND (a student-led anti-genocide club). Programming for MSU this fall included Salsa Dance Night and the Thanksgiving Turkey Basket Contest, in which they competed with other clubs on campus to create themed food baskets for needy area families. They also held a Pre-Kwanzaa celebration and participated in Light the Night (a leukemia walk fundraiser held in Newport, R.I. each fall). SAFE sponsored a Halloween screening of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" with discussion facilitated by Professor Charles Trimbach. SAFE also hosted a National Coming Out Day event and an awareness raising event for



*40,000 flags blanketed the campus quad in recognition of Darfur's genocide. Each flag represents 10 victims who've died in the conflict in Darfur.*



World AIDS Day. STAND installed a thought provoking exhibit which turned the University's D'Angelo Quad into an orange blanket of 40,000 waving flags—each one representing 10 of the estimated 400,000 victims who've died in the conflict in Darfur—causing the entire campus community to become aware of the tragic genocide happening in that country.

It was also a very busy semester for Bridge To Success (BTS), our mentoring program where RWU students go into area schools to tutor and mentor middle and high school students. Our undergraduate mentors conduct one-on-one tutoring and homework help on site in area high schools. Our ratio supports student success—there is never more than a four-to-one ratio of mentees to mentors in any of our schools. Twice a month, mentees are brought to campus for programming, which includes activities to illustrate college life, games to develop life skills and discussions on a variety of issues. Building on the strengths of 20 undergraduate mentors and two office assistants, the program retained all its existing partner schools and added an additional high school located in Providence, R.I. BTS now serves almost 60 high school students at Rogers, Mt. Pleasant, MET Newport, MET Providence, Times2 Academy, PAIS (Providence Academy of International Studies) and middle and high school students in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center. The BTS program offers Roger Williams University students a chance to develop their leadership skills while simultaneously giving back to our local communities to increase the pipeline of college bound youth. RWU is deeply committed to this initiative and is partnering with colleagues to explore ways to strengthen its relationships with community partners to bring more students from the underserved and underrepresented populations to the University. Anyone who has a passion for this kind of reciprocal campus community learning and who may have ideas for sources of support is invited to contact Dean Diaz.

Adrianne Henderson, administrative assistant, manages the facility and special projects. Ms. Henderson chaired the Homecoming Ball committee and helped coordinate several IC events such as the Open House and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day programming.

She also spearheads a Books for Africa book drive initiative that sends text books to libraries in nearly 30 African countries. "This past spring semester, the RWU community collected the most books of all the other Rhode Island colleges and universities, shipping almost 100 boxes!" Ms. Henderson said.

Ms. Henderson is also happy to report the IC has a new exterior sign with text that reads: "Welcoming everyone of all nationalities, faiths and personal identities." The Intercultural Center strives to live that motto everyday and invites you to come see for yourself the vibrant community at the Intercultural Center at Roger Williams.

#### **Located in Maple Hall (North End)**

**Main Phone:** (401) 254-3121 **Fax:** (401) 254-3688

**Hours:** 5 a.m. – 10 p.m. Monday – Friday  
11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Saturday  
11 a.m. – 10 p.m. Sunday

#### **Intercultural Center Staff**

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#### **Our Mission**

The Intercultural Center (IC) provides the Roger Williams University community with opportunities and an environment that encourage relationship and community building. It provides forums that enhance the personal exploration and development of its community members regarding personal identity, academic excellence and exemplary citizenship. The IC challenges community members to be life-long learners and active members of our global society.

## COUNSELING

Contrary to popular belief, depression and anxiety do not “peak” around the holidays; they actually occur more frequently in the spring when you least expect it. The common belief is that we experience cabin fever in the winter and a lifting of the spirit in the spring when flowers bloom and love is in the air. However, with students who struggle with depression, they may actually sink further when they are surrounded by friends who are feeling energized, enthusiastic and happy. They may feel lonelier when they contrast their mood with others. The spring is also associated with increased anxiety for some students since it is a challenging time academically and socially (i.e., choosing roommates for next year). Needless to say, it can be a particularly trying time for seniors as they say goodbye to friends and interview for jobs.

Students may also feel that there is a “stigma” attached to counseling. As a result, the Counseling Center seeks as well as creates opportunities to provide education around a variety of issues. For example, we submit a weekly mental health tip to the University’s webpage. The Counseling Center offers a yoga and meditation class on Fridays at noon to increase their repertoire to successfully deal with stress. Recently, as part of the University’s Wellness Initiative, we targeted smoking cessation during a noon-time program outside of the Student Commons. The spring will also include an expansion of our mental health screenings to include problems with alcohol abuse and body image.

The services are confidential, which means the counselors cannot share information about the fact or nature of students’ visits to the Center without their permission. However, as a parent, you are welcome to call the Counseling Center to share your concerns or to consult with one of the counselors. All full-time and residential undergraduate students are eligible for all of the Center’s services, free of charge. CCSD is located on the second floor of the Center for Student Development, and can be reached at (401) 254-3124.



## DINING SERVICES



On Feb. 24, Bon Appetit participated in Great Expectations, a major audit conducted in the department. In preparation for the audit, management and staff put in countless hours to assure that every miniscule detail was up to par. Great Expectations has a checklist of around 440 points, accounting for aspects including, but not limited to, food standards, sanitation and safety, marketing, displays, uniforms and appearance, catering, financials, and every food station and café on campus. At the end of the day, everyone involved was extremely proud to hear that Bon Appetit was highly rated and received a certification plaque. Bon Appetit at Roger Williams is very lucky to have such a great team who works and performs exceedingly well.

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## FROM THE DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE



Greetings Parents and Students,

Thirteen months ago, the RWU Alcohol and Drug (AOD) Task Force, made up of students and staff, convened to assess and make recommendations on alcohol and drug policy at RWU. Meeting biweekly, the group has worked to evaluate best practices in the prevention of high-risk behavior, and I am pleased to report after attending a national conference on AOD prevention in January, that our efforts and strategies are consistent with national best practices.

The conference, entitled NASPA Strategies Conference 2008: Alcohol Abuse Prevention & Intervention in Tampa, Fla, reiterated the prevalence of alcohol abuse among college students throughout the nation. I was able to attend numerous sessions that outlined best practices and recent research for college administrators to develop effective strategies for prevention. A common theme surfaced in sessions on systems, policies and procedures—prevention efforts must be consistent and prevalent throughout the institution and within the external community.

My confidence in the AOD's work was confirmed as I learned that the environmental strategy approach that the Task Force uses to approach alcohol prevention and education at RWU is a recommended national best practice. This environmental approach involves changing the environment through education, policy and enforcement. Some of the comprehensive environmental strategies to reduce high-risk drinking at RWU are: providing consistent messages about alcohol and RWU policy, reducing high risk traditions, eliminating high risk promotions, limiting access and availability to alcohol, educating about policies and consequences, providing consistent enforcement of laws and policy and clearly integrating them into community standards.

In terms of education on campus, we held a session with new parents and freshmen at orientation where the goal was to introduce new community members to our philosophy and expectations on AOD issues. The University invested in a nationally respected online program called Alcohol Edu and mandated that all first-year students take the primary prevention class prior to move-in last fall. We began the year

by educating students on our new quantity policy and student conduct sanctions at the first floor meetings of the semester. RA's and their supervisors set expectations and discussed specific community standards to each living area. We also hosted nationally respected speaker Jim Mathews who gave a dynamic presentation entitled "Beer, Booze and Books."

Our Health and Wellness Educators (HAWE's) are a group of students who gave alcohol education presentations in the First-Year Experience classes and in all residence halls. They also engaged the University in social norming campaigns, blanketing the campus with information and hosting activities such as a mock drunk driving arrest. The HAWE's also sent every student turning 21-years-old a birthday card reminding them to celebrate it responsibly. During the Student Activities Fair in September, students were exposed to alternative options to drinking and expanded late night programming options—late night recreation center hours, extended library hours, a "10 Spot" alternative program and all the clubs and organizations that plan the campus events. Lastly we offer one-on-one motivational interviewing for students who have been involved in the student conduct process due to alcohol related incidents. We are the site for the Brown University research grant called Project Assist that is studying the use of a stepped care approach in reducing alcohol use among college students.

Our task force has expanded its reach to developing relationships and partnerships with the Bristol, Portsmouth, and greater R.I. community. Members of the task force have attended town meetings to discuss town laws, regulations and enforcement and joined town committees to discuss proactive measures to enhance both the town and RWU efforts.

The AOD task force is always open to feedback on our education and prevention efforts. This spring we will continue the ongoing assessment, conducting the Core Alcohol Survey in April and using the results for future strategic planning, research and evaluation. Our annual report to Vice President John King and President Roy Nirschel will be available on our website for your review this spring.

Roger Williams University is committed to the safety and well-being of all students. It is with the help of parents, families and our local community that we will continue to make strides in our alcohol-prevention efforts. Together, we can curb high-risk behavior and ensure positive experiences for the entire RWU community.

Best regards,

Dr. Kathleen McMahon

*Dean of Students and Co-chair of Alcohol and Drug Task Force*



## LIVING AND LEARNING AT RWU

*By: Rachel Newman, Coordinator of Residence Education, Maple and Nike Halls and Bryan “Burns” Beirola, RA Law and Order LLC, class of 2008*

For more than a decade, Living Learning Communities (LLCs)—specific living areas within the residence halls where students reside with others with common academic or personal interests—have existed at Roger Williams University. Over time, these programs have grown and changed with the interests of the residential students. In particular, the Learning Communities have undergone significant changes over the past year. Staff in the Department of Residence Life and Housing, including 10 student resident assistants, have been working hard to revitalize the program dedicated to fostering a residential environment of learning outside the classroom.

There are currently seven LLCs. Maple Hall is the home to the Healthy “U” (an environment for students interested in all aspects of health and wellness), Aquaculture (for students interested in the study of marine biology and environmental science), Law and Order (for students interested in criminal justice and forensic psychology) and P.E.A.C.E (People Enthusiastic About Cultural Experiences for students interested in diversity and global issues and who also live with international students in the English Language Specialist (ELS) program). Stonewall Terrace houses the Honors LLC (for students in the honors program or who maintain a required G.P.A. and are dedicated to their studies). In fall 2008, Stonewall Terrace will be the new home for the Building & Design LLC (for students interested in architecture), which is currently located in Nike Hall. Willow Hall has the Reaching New Heights LLC (a community for first-year students interested in leadership development and opportunities).

Each LLC has student resident assistants and a staff or faculty advisor that work collaboratively to organize and promote programs. This year, some of the programs offered through the LLCs have included: a private healthy cooking session with University Chef Bob Lavoie, a hike at Purgatory Chasm in northern R.I., a trip to a New England Revolution Soccer

game, a walking architectural tour of Boston, a tour of the R.I. Adult Correctional facilities and a celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr, breaking the fast after Ramadan in the Muslim tradition. Other programs are constantly taking place within the LLCs such as organized study groups, tutoring, ongoing forensic lab sessions in the Law and Order Unit, and a Sea Creature of the Week program organized by the residents in the aquaculture unit. Students within the Reaching New Heights LLC are encouraged to take part in the various leadership programs offered by the University such as SOAR and Leadership University.

Each LLC has a unique identity, including a logo that is posted in the living area. Upon arrival to campus every student living in these special areas receives a welcome letter from the department, a t-shirt and a keepsake (such as a latte mug in the Law and Order LLC) related to their community. Participation in the LLCs is selective, with a separate application process for both returning students and incoming freshmen. For more information on the Living/Learning Communities, contact the Department of Residence Life and Housing at (401) 254-3161.



## STUDENT ATHLETES LEARN VALUABLE LESSONS ON HAZING AND THE INTERNET

On Feb. 4, Janet Judge, Attorney at Law, spoke to more than 300 Roger Williams University student-athletes on the hazards involving team hazing, alcohol, and its place within the Internet.

The presentation, titled "Hazing, Harassment, Alcohol and the Internet," centered on real-life incidents surrounding social networking websites, drug and alcohol use, and student conduct. Ms. Judge brought up examples of student-athletes' unruly actions on other college campuses whose conduct brought about sanctions ranging from dismissal from the team to legal action.

Ms. Judge also demonstrated the ease in which she was able to find examples of poor student-athlete conduct through internet searches within Google, Facebook, and MySpace. She explained the effect that those types of photos could have not only on a student-athlete's NCAA eligibility, but also the loss of potential employment opportunities, as more companies are pre-screening job candidates through their social networking online accounts.

"I thought it was really powerful," said George Kolb, director of athletics. "She showed a really visual presentation with photos of different parties and incidents. Then she got to Facebook, and her point was that she spent about 15 minutes researching Roger Williams in general and was able to just come upon so many photos and videos from Webshots, from YouTube."



Those in attendance gained a greater understanding of the impact that inappropriate content on the Internet can have not only on their eligibility, but also how it can adversely affect their lives after college.

Roger Williams University's Student Affairs Office and the athletics department practice a zero-tolerance policy toward incidents of hazing among student-athletes.

## SPRING WEEKEND - KEEP IT FUN AND SAFE

Spring Weekend is a Roger Williams University tradition brought to you by the Campus Entertainment Network (CEN). The CEN Theme Weekend co-chairs, Raschel Harer and Jordan Viola, along with the help of the entire CEN board, plan Spring Weekend. The unique weekend, involving most clubs and organizations on campus is well-known for its Block Party and has a specific theme that will be unveiled the weekend prior to the event.

The kick-off for Spring Weekend starts on Wednesday, April 23, with a Daytime Programs event. That week, there will be a special events concert, Quad Fest and Chameleon Club. Spring Weekend wraps up on Saturday, April 26, with the Block Party, fireworks and a film. If anyone is interested in joining the CEN Theme Weekend committee to help plan Spring Weekend or wants to sign up an organization or club for the Block Party, please notify Raschel or Jordan via the CEN office at (401) 254-3088.

### Spring Break Anyone?

We are all looking forward to a break from classes. Whether you are staying local or traveling, please take care and be safe.

For some great health tips, click on:

**[www.vanderbilt.edu/alcohol/springbreak.html](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/alcohol/springbreak.html)**

For those traveling abroad, please refer to the U.S. Department of State for specific travel recommendations: **[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)**



## THE CAREER CENTER

Graduating students may be thinking about finding a job that begins after commencement. The Career Center offers graduating students the opportunity to interview with organizations that come to campus during the year that have professional positions available, some local and some nationwide. To participate, a student must complete an On-Campus Recruiting Orientation, which is a one-hour session designed to prepare a student for this important process. To find an orientation and to register, students need to login to Hawks Hunt at <http://careercenter.rwu.edu>. The Career Center's annual Career Fair will be held on Wednesday, April 9, from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Field House with more than 120 employers and graduate schools expected to attend.

If a student is majoring in accounting, international business, financial services, computer information systems, psychology or communications, they are required to have a cooperative education/internship experience in order to graduate. To participate, students must complete a series of preparatory workshops prior to beginning the co-op/internship. Detailed information is available at: <http://careercenter.rwu.edu>.

Undeclared or undecided students who need help choosing a major would benefit from career counseling and possibly an assessment, available at the Career Center. Even students who are declared should consider confirming their majors or looking at possible second majors via career counseling.

Many students are considering continuing their education at graduate or professional schools. The Career Center is equipped to assist students to determine if continued education is right for them and if so, when and where. The center can guide students through the myriad of information available to them, help them determine what entrance examinations are required and tutor them on writing personal statements for applications.

The Career Center is located in the Center for Student Development on the first floor. It is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. During the school year, there are evening hours on Tuesday and Wednesday until 7 p.m. Appointments are always required except during our walk-in hours on Tuesday and Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., which are set aside for quick, 15-minute meetings.



The Career Center is here to provide as much assistance and guidance to students as possible to ensure positive career placement and strives to provide the best service possible. The job search process can be overwhelming, but with the experience and support of the Career Center, it doesn't have to be!

If you know others who would be interested in receiving this newsletter, or care to change your email address, please send current email addresses to [advancement@rwu.edu](mailto:advancement@rwu.edu)