

## FIRST YEAR STUDENT LEADERS TURN THEIR LEADERSHIP DREAMS INTO REALITY



*W. Alton Jones*, the site for the 2006 First Year Leadership Institute, was transformed into the "Field of Dreams" for incoming student leaders from around the country. The Leadership Institute has become a leadership tradition at URI for incoming first year students who want to get a head start on leadership at URI.

This year's theme was "Dream Big...Lead Large". During the Leadership Institute, students begin to think about how they can transfer their past leadership involvement into a meaningful experience at URI. Students begin to develop leadership skills by participating in an outdoor adventure program and by engaging in self-discovery exercises.

Students begin to develop trust, interpersonal relationships and personal risk taking as they participate in a series of games and problem solving activities. Students also work together as they examine issues such as multiculturalism, inclusion, civic and community participation through various interactive workshops facilitated by upper class peer leaders.

Co-coordinators Andrew Lonardo and Tina Wiese led this year's team of peer leaders. "The most impactful thing about this year's Institute was watching the new students jump in and create meaning. I learned a lot about myself as I watched the peer leaders engage these students, that's the best part for me," stated Andrew Lonardo. Wiese added, "every time I think back on the Institute I realize how important it was for me and how great a job our peer leaders do."

This year's team of Peer Leaders included Brian Maiorino, Sulina Mohanty, Richard Song, Kristen Motel, Allie Pirolli, Ian Harney, Angie LeFave, John Lee, Alina Swonger, Brian Reider, Yajaira Pons, and Jeff Borden.



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# Inspire

First year student leaders were able to begin to understand the difference between leading in high school and leading at URI. Students were encouraged to bring leadership goals with them to the Institute and created a strategy to help each other commit to that goal. Each group created a 'dream catcher' as a mascot to signify their talents and dreams toward leading at URI. They also examined what it takes to turn their dreams into reality by examining their inter connectiveness. This year the peer leaders themed their activities on The Four Agreements based on the writings of Don Miguel Ruiz. The Four Agreements is a practical guide to personal freedom and wisdom based on Toltec spiritual principles.



Another highlight of this year's Institute was reinforced through the alumni connection at the Institute's annual BBQ. "Networking and making connections with a lot of student leaders makes the journey much easier at URI," stated Neil Cavanaugh, President of the URI Student Senate and alumni of the Leadership Institute.

This year, the Center for Student Leadership Development awarded 20 scholarships for students to participate in the Institute. According to Robert Vincent, who oversees this program, "Everyone has a chance to be involved in our leadership programs."

The students who attended the Institute have spent part of the fall semester attending leadership workshops and joining several organizations on campus.

***For each of them the doing what  
leaders do best - dream big...  
and lead large!***



*This* year the Center for Student Leadership Development trained an additional seven members of the University community to be facilitators for the North Woods Challenge Course. We would like to welcome them to the fold and introduce them to you.

*Sunmi Han:*

Hey Everyone! My name is Sunmi Han and I am a graduate student in the College Student Personnel program. I am from Idaho and graduated from Idaho State University with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature. I am a graduate assistant for the Department of Housing and Residential Life and currently supervise Weldin Hall. I started facilitating challenge courses this summer and think it is a great opportunity to meet people, bond, and have fun! I look forward to meeting you!

*Tina Neil:*

Tina was born and raised in Rhode Island. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Rhode Island in 2001. She spent a year after graduation with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Bridgeport, CT working with high school leadership programs. Recently, she has started her masters in URI's College Student Personnel program. At URI, she is a Graduate Assistant for the Center for Student Leadership Development.

She loves working with people and being in the outdoors. As a challenge course facilitator those two passions are combined so well that being on the course is more a day of play and fun for her. She is a member of the Appalachian Mountain Club and trained in wilderness first aid and to lead youth on summer hiking and winter snowshoeing trips.

*Dan Taylor:*

Greetings! My name is Dan Taylor and I am a graduate student in the Mathematics program here at the University of Rhode Island. Born and raised in New York, I came to URI in 1999 to pursue a degree in Secondary Education/Mathematics, which I completed in spring 2004. For the last 7 years, I have been working for the Department of Housing and Residential Life in numerous positions: Resident Assistant, Residence Hall Coordinator, Summer Conference Assistant, Summer Conference Housing Coordinator, and, currently, Graduate Assistant Hall Director of Ellery Residence Hall. I spent many years in the Boy Scouts of America program, and attained the rank of Eagle in 1999. I still volunteer as an Assistant Scoutmaster, I credit the BSA with developing my love and respect of the outdoors. I find life most peaceful when surrounded by wooded wilderness. I am excited to be a facilitator for the North Woods Challenge Course. I admire the goals of this program, and firmly believe in the success it has the potential to bring, for individuals and groups alike. I hope to meet you out on the course!

*Jen Rowan:*

Graduate Student, Human Development and Family Studies with a concentration in College Student Personnel. She is a Graduate Assistant for Greek Affairs. She is a graduate from URI in 2000 in History and is originally from Warwick, RI. In her spare time, she loves going to comedy clubs and watching baseball.

*Stacey Bush:*

I am a second semester graduate student in the College Student Personnel Program, and my assistantship is working with the Office of Greek Affairs and the Common Ground Coalition helping them implement environmental measures to reduce dangerous alcohol behavior among Greek Students. I am also an advisor to the Rhody Rides program. In my spare time I like to read, shop, cook, and spend time with my family.



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D*Josh Perlman:*

I am a senior economics major with a minor in leadership. I ran track at the university for two years and then decided to become more involved with other school activities the spring of my sophomore year. At this time, I joined the Student Alumni Association. A year later, I became involved with the leadership department and picked up a minor in leadership. This past summer I was trained to become a ropes course facilitator to accompany my SOLC class, which I am currently taking this fall.

*Andrew Lonardo:*

He is a senior Finance major and Leadership minor. He originally comes from Cranston, RI and is very involved in campus life between his affiliations with Greek Life, Business Student Advisory Council, President for SOLC, URI Orientation and coordinating the 2006 Leadership Institute this summer. In his spare time, when he's not running around campus, he is a member of a band for which he plays guitar and is the lead singer. You may see Andrew this semester at the Meet the University days because he is the student keynote speaker.

*Meet Melissa Boyd*

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, Melissa Boyd joined the Memorial Union staff as our new Assistant Director for the Center for Student Leadership Development. Melissa worked for several years as a mental health counselor before earning her Master's in URI's College Student Personnel program. She then went on to Texas Christian University where she was first the Assistant, and then the Associate Director of TCU's Leadership Center. As the Assistant Director of URI's Center for Student Leadership Programs she will be responsible for coordinating all the Leadership activities and programs, including administering the Minor in Leadership Studies, the outdoor challenge course and all the other facets of the Center.

She has a passion for helping students and comes with a strong background in experiential learning, leadership philosophies and program assessment. She is halfway through her Doctoral program in Higher Education and in addition to moving from Texas, is planning a wedding in November as well. She enjoys the outdoors and has several pets. We are excited that she has become a part of the team and look forward to her insight and the direction she will take our Leadership Center.



## Welcome Back!

Hello, I am the new graduate assistant for The Center for Student Leadership Development. As the fight song states, I am Rhode Island born and bred. Of course, I am an atypical Rhode Islander because I am an adventurer at heart from driving across the country, hiking 4000-foot mountains to white water rafting. Now, I am ready for the new adventure of a College Student Personnel masters and working with URI students.

As an Alumni of URI, I have heard great things about the leadership programs on our campus and now I have the chance to experience some of these programs first hand. In this issue of Leadership Link you will be able to read of some of the awesome events that have already happened this year and what our students still have in store for the remainder of the semester.

My first few hours on the job started at the Freshman Institute on the W. Alton Jones campus. Over 70 freshmen came early to URI to get a head start on leadership development and community building. As an observer, I saw quality leaders all around from the peer leaders for the Institute to the rising freshmen leaders. "Dream big and Lead large" was the theme for the event and there were handmade dream catchers for every group. Yet, these dream catchers were not big enough to catch all the passion and dreams that were coming out of that weekend. Watch out URI, these freshmen and peer leaders are ready to "Dream big and Lead Large"!

Since that weekend, I have been leading groups on the challenge course, assisting with classes in the Leadership Minor, and aiding in the facilitation of retreats. The month of September has flown by and there is still more to come. If I haven't met you through one of these activities, I would love if you could stop by my office and say hello. Ask me questions, tell me what you like about the Leadership program and what you want more of in the future.

***Good Luck with your semester!***

### Upcoming Dates – Mark your calendars!

**December 4th: SOARC President's Meeting, 7:00pm**

**January 22nd: Classes Begin**

**January 23rd: FLITE Reception**

**February 3rd: 2nd Annual Junior Day**

**February 10th: FLITE Retreat and Modern Leadership Class Retreat**

**March 19th-23rd: Spring Break**

**March 28, 2007: Rose Butler Browne – Women of Color Conference**

**April 10th: Rainville Awards**

**April 15th-20th: Spring Fest**

**April 22nd: Senior Induction & Portfolio Review**

**April 27th-29th: Senior Expedition**

**April 30th: Classes end**

### Reminders to our students!!!

Senior Portfolio students the follow days are mandatory for graduation:

1. Senior Day Portfolio Review– Sunday, April 22, 2007
2. Senior Expedition – Friday, April 27 to Sunday April 29, 2007

All Leadership Students, even if you think you are on track from graduating in the minor, please come see a staff member to verify your status.

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