

the reorganization as well as assurances that members whose job descriptions are affected will have an opportunity to sit with President Nazarian or his representative (and me as president of PSA@RIC) to get

From the President...

With the adjournment of this year's Rhode Island legislative session, it looks like state employees have dodged the bullet for now. The latest version of the state budget contains none of the onerous measures the Governor had proposed in Article 4 of his budget bill. But neither did the Legislature address the \$36.5 million shortfall those measures were intended to remedy. So it looks like the Legislature has left it to the Governor to manage his way out of the personnel budget shortfall. We hope he will look closely at cutting consultant fees rather than state employee positions, but time will tell whether and what kind of impact there will be on higher education in general and Rhode Island College in particular.

So far, so good. President Nazarian continues to fill—at least selectively—positions as they become vacant. He has said to me more than once in recent weeks that he is doing everything he can to avoid retrenchment. He has been through that before and it's not a happy time.

But with the recent notification of reorganization, I believe we are seeing both the attempt to manage our way through a difficult time of budget constraints and the first stages of what may turn out to be significant institutional changes at the College. Reporting lines to the VPs are apparently being reassessed, and key positions at the next level below VP are being filled and/or restructured.

While consultation with the PSA@RIC regarding such reorganization and institutional planning has not happened as outlined in Article 2.1 of our Agreement, the new language negotiated last year *was* followed and I was alerted at least twenty working days before implementation, as required by the contract. We are working to remedy the failure to follow the Agreement, and three PSA representatives (V.P. Kathy Sasso, Grievance Chair Mark Paolucci, and myself) met with President Nazarian on June 9. We received clarification of

more information and have input.

Change can be uncomfortable but can also create opportunities to improve how we work and relate to one another. I have always felt strongly that the role of labor unions is at the heart of what's good about democracy—we stand for equality and equal opportunity, for justice and freedom from tyranny, for being free to speak out without fear of reprisal. There are a few simple things that can make life—whether in the work place or elsewhere—so much more enjoyable. These include free and open communication, respect for one another's views—even when they conflict, prompt response to inquiries, and doing our best to solve problems fairly and even hand-edly.

I am puzzled by the fact that in my experience the academy (colleges and universities in general—not just Rhode Island College) invariably seems to fall short of these simple precepts. In places that are all about academic freedom and free exchange of ideas we far too often constrain ourselves through power struggles and turf issues. We see ego, greed, and personal ambition hindering this place of higher learning from reaching its greatest potential.

We owe to each other—and more importantly to the students we serve—a pledge to do better.

Rob Bower
President

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A Union of Professionals

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

PSA Insider: A look inside the new Residence Hall construction with Deborah Dunphy

By Michael Gorman

If you have driven through campus at all this summer you have seen that construction is well under way on the new residence hall in the formerly wooded area across from Browne Hall. Since the ground breaking a few weeks ago, the framework of the soon to be largest building on campus has quickly taken shape. This \$30 million project is expected to open for its 367 residents in the Fall of 2007. I sat down with Deborah Dunphy of Facilities & Operations and a fellow PSA member to get the latest inside information on the progress.

Question: How is the progress coming with the construction of the new residence hall?

Answer: The construction of the new residence hall is right on schedule and the construction company is meeting and exceeding expectations.

Q: What impact does such a big project have on the campus' day to day operations from your perspective?

A: Probably the biggest impact on day-to-day operations is the disruption of campus life, for short spurts of time, as we all know it. The closure of College Road and 6th avenue are perfect examples. The rerouting of traffic required a lot of thought and attention prior to closure to insure that members of the campus community could get to where they needed to be. Additional consideration was needed to address issues such as the summer housing program students. How will they unload their personal belong-



Artist's rendering of the new residence hall facility from www.ric.edu

ings. How will the campus protect their safety as they walk from the residence hall complex to the main campus area to utilize the dining center facilities and attend classes, etc. Consideration also needed to be given to the fact that College road is a "State" road and therefore the College needed to insure that those drivers "just passing through" could actually find their way out!!

Q: Anything interesting or unique about this project that you feel might be interesting to the members of PSA?

A: I think that the very size and scope of this project is of interest. Upon completion this will be the biggest building on campus and we anticipate occupancy in the spring/summer of 2006. The time line, (schedule) of construction is extremely important and I think that members of PSA would be very surprised at the amount of interaction and cooperation necessary between so many constituencies to insure that deadlines are met. No one likes to be inconvenienced, yet someone always is and will be.

Q: What is your favorite part of being involved with this type of project? Your least favorite?

A: My favorite part of being involved with this type of project is seeing it all take shape. I have been lucky enough

to be involved since conception, participating in the development of the actual plans. It is already difficult to look at the site and remember what it looked like just a few short months ago. I truly enjoy the excitement that is involved in watching these plans take shape and to have the opportunity to work with so many very talented people who show, in each and every discussion that they truly care about this project. I'm not sure that I have a "least favorite" at this point in time. If you check in with me next spring/summer I might have a completely different answer!!

Q: Are there any collateral benefits for the rest of the campus as a result of this project that you feel it is important to highlight?

A: I think that the collateral benefits are in the area of student retention. This project will allow Residential Life and Housing an opportunity to support 367 more students and reduce the number of students who now go onto a waiting list. Additionally, the design of the space, in my opinion, will keep more and more upper classmen and women on campus through the duration of their education.

Q: Anything else you would like to share?

A: If I had anything else to offer it would be a request for people to be patient with the impending inconveniences. We, as a community this summer, are seeing and hearing more "blasts" and big trucks than we have in the past. Traffic has been disrupted, we need to be more careful when driving and walking through the general vicinity of the new residence hall. However, if the plans are anything to go by, the end result will be well worth it. This project, upon completion will be one that every member of this campus will be proud of!



Aerial view of restructured residence hall area from www.ric.edu

Thanks Debbie!



**American
Red Cross**

Tips For Summer Safety

Compiled from <http://www.redcross.org/services/hss/tips/>

Preventing Heat-Related Illness

- Dress for the heat. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy. It is also a good idea to wear hats or to use an umbrella.
- Drink water. Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which dehydrate the body.
- Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat.
- Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- Stay indoors when possible.
- Take regular breaks when engaged in physical activity on warm days. Take time out to find a cool place. If you recognize that you, or someone else, is showing the signals of a heat-related illness, stop activity and find a cool place. Remember, have fun, but stay cool!

Basic Water Safety at the Beach

- Learn to swim. The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim--this includes adults and children. Local American Red Cross chapters have swimming courses for people of all ages and swimming abilities.
- Never swim alone.
- Check surf and weather conditions before entering the water. Check to see if a warning flag is up or check with a lifeguard for water conditions, beach conditions, or any potential hazards.
- Venturing into moving water and surf conditions can be more challenging than the flat water pool. As a result, swimmers should approach the water with caution in the beginning to become familiar with the environment and know abilities and limits.
- Stay within the designated swimming area, ideally within the visibility of a lifeguard.
- Stay away from piers, pilings, and diving platforms when in the water.
- Make sure to always have enough energy to swim back to shore.

- Don't try to swim against a current if caught in one. Swim gradually out of the current, by swimming across it.
- Pack a "safety" bag for a day at the beach or lake. Water-proof sunscreen, SPF 15 or higher, water shoes to keep feet safe from the heat and objects on land and in the water and plenty of water are must haves. All containers should be plastic to prevent injuries from breaking glass.

Grill Safety

- Make sure the grill, barbecue or propane tank is in an open area with no overhanging trees or branches. Rake leaves, twigs and other nearby flammable vegetation to create a 10-foot clear area around the barbecue.
- Place a screen over the grill -- use non-flammable material with mesh no coarser than one-quarter inch.
- Keep children away from the grill, and make sure any backyard games are conducted at a safe distance from the grill.

PSA Sponsored Blood Drive



9am to 1pm

Student Union Ballroom

Thursday, July 27th

A few facts to keep in mind:

- Donating blood is safe, simple, and quick.
- One pint of blood helps three people.
- Blood cannot be manufactured; the only source is people.
- You cannot get AIDS from donating blood.

You can donate blood if you weigh at least 110 pounds, are 17 years old or older, and are in good health.

Please note there also are individuals who cannot donate blood. For example, men who have had sex with other men (and their recent partners) will be deferred. The Rhode Island Blood Center advised us that eligibility rules for blood banks are specified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA confirmed its deferral policy, noting the policy is being reconsidered. Individuals wishing additional information and/or to voice concerns should call the FDA hotline at (800) 835-4709.

The Buzz Strikes Back!

Just when you thought you had all the news you needed for the Summer, the Buzz is back! Many of you have expressed that you like the idea of the Buzz but have yet to submit any info for inclusion. Why is that? You might be concerned that your tip is not "Buzz-worthy" but believe us, it is. We want this column to become a place where PSA members can help each other out when they make new discoveries in their daily travels. Topic areas that could be appropriate for tips include: Recreation, Cultural events, Dining, Helpful Discounts, and Entertainment. If your idea is outside of those areas, submit it anyway! We look forward to hearing from you at mgorman@ric.edu. On to this issue's tips:

- From Kathy Sasso, all State Employees who are Verizon Wireless customers are eligible for a 15% discount. All you need to do is show your college ID at your Verizon store.
- From Mike Gorman, if you are a wine lover check out the great deal at Pane e Vino on Federal Hill on Monday night's. All wine is 50% off by the glass or bottle. They have an excellent selection and top notch food. If you are wondering about meal prices, check out their four course fixed-price meal, it is just over \$20 and you get an appetizer, pasta course, entrée and dessert.
- From Andrea Wiggins, if you are headed to the beach this summer be sure to check out any of the local media websites (like Projo.com or Turnto10.com) to make sure that the water is not closed due to any chemical/bacterial issues. It will definitely save you some driving around.
- From Kathy Sasso, if you are a crafter and would like to display your wares at this year's Homecoming festivities contact Kathy at ksasso@ric.edu.



Announcements from Rob Bower, President of PSA:

- ◆ Copies of our financial statements for 2003-04 and 2004-05 have been distributed to the Executive Board and membership via email. If you have any questions or would like more info, contact Tom Bradley, tbradley@ric.edu.
- ◆ You may have noticed that your biweekly net pay on June 30 was slightly larger than the previous pay period. According to Tom Bradley, there was no pre-tax deduction for health care in that paycheck. The State deducted the last of the FY2006 required cost from the paycheck on June 16, 2006. The deduction resumes with the paycheck on July 14th. And that paycheck should be substantially larger, reflecting the negotiated 3.5 percent across-the-board increase to base salaries.

PSA@RIC News

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