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## InSpire Newsletter for 2014

URI College of Human Science and Services

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SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- Facts and Figures
- Distinguished International Visiting Scholar
- Faculty Research
- Student Profiles

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## FALL 2013 HONORS COLLOQUIUM

“To prepare young people for a competitive economy, our schools must have less competition.”

This quotation, which seems contrary to the policies affecting public education in the United States, can be found on the website of Pasi Sahlberg, a leader of education reform in Finland and the guest of the URI’s Distinguished Visiting Scholars Program.

Sahlberg, a world-renowned education scholar who helped turn Finland’s public school system into one of the best in the world, spoke on December 10, 2013 at Edwards Hall as part of the URI Honors Colloquium, “Great Public Schools: Everyone’s Right? Everyone’s Responsibility?”

Sahlberg’s colloquium lecture, *Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?*, was based on his

best-selling book, *Finnish Lessons*, a firsthand, comprehensive account of how Finland built a world-class education system during the past three decades. Sahlberg traced the evolution of education policies in Finland and highlights how they differ from the US and other industrialized countries.

“Dr. Sahlberg’s comparison of U.S. and Finland’s public education policies reveals stark contrasts in philosophy: competition versus collaboration; standardization versus personalization; test-based accountability versus trust-based responsibility; school choice versus equity; and education as industry versus education as human right,” said Diane Kern, Associate Professor of Education and colloquium co-coordinator.

“I believe we need to better understand the educational successes of countries like Finland to make much-

needed changes in the way we teach our public school children and prepare their teachers.” Kern and colloquium co-coordinator David Byrd, professor and director of URI’s School of Education, hoped to engage the entire community in an in-depth discussion of public education policy and practice during Sahlberg’s visit to Rhode Island.

Sahlberg met with school superintendents, leaders of the Rhode Island Department of Education, the Board of Education, teacher union leaders, students and teacher leaders as well as teacher educators.

Sahlberg is the director general of Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation at the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. His expertise includes international education policies, educational change, the future of schooling, and classroom teaching and learning. (continued on page 4)

## HONORS COLLOQUIUM (CONTINUED)



Pasi Sahlberg, director general of Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation

Education shapes the nation's future and the life path of every individual in powerful ways. This weekly series explored how education still matters and debate key issues central to understanding the future of public schools and higher education.

Additional lectures included: *Grading Education: Getting Accountability Right* by Richard Rothstein;

*The State of Education in Rhode Island*, a panel discussion with Rhode Island public education

leaders Deborah Gist and Evar Marie Mancuso; David M. Dooley, President, University of Rhode Island; Nancy Carri-

uolo, President, Rhode Island College; and NPR's Scott McKay;

*The Search for Knowledge* by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Geraldine Brooks;

*Creating the Opportunity to Learn* by Pedro Noguera;

*Creating a New Culture for Teaching and Learning* by Alan November;

*The Reign of Error* by Diane Ravitch with special guests from the Providence Student Union;

*The Future of Public Higher Education* by David Bergeron;

*What are the Common Core State Standards Expectations?* with CCSS writers Susan Pimentel and Doug Sovde;

*The State of Our Rhode Island*

*Students*, a panel discussion with leaders from the Economic Progress Institute, Rhode Island Kids Count, Council for Exceptional Children, and the URI Veterans Affairs Program;

*Elevating All Students* by Freeman Hrabowski;

*Pathway to Freedom: The University of Rhode Island Talent Development Experience*, a panel moderated by Edward Givens, assistant director of Talent Development and Earl N. Smith III, adjunct professor of Africana Studies and assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Many of these lectures can be viewed at [URI Live!](#)

Based on URI press release by Caitlin Musselman, a URI Marketing and Communications intern and a public relations and political science major, December 2, 2013.

One-fourth of the 40 Ignite talks were conducted by HSS faculty

## ACADEMIC SUMMIT *IGNITES*

Faculty from the College of Human Science and Services were well represented at URI's 6th annual academic summit, *Transformative Scholarship in the 21st Century*.

One-fourth of the 40 *Ignite* talks were conducted by HSS faculty members at the January 17, 2014 event.

Sue K. Adams, Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, *Sleep in the "Net Generation" College Students' Sleep Revealed*.

Karl Aspelund, Assistant Professor, Textiles, Fashion Merchandising & Design, *Outfitting for Long-Term Space Exploration: What to Wear and Why Should We Care?*

Theresa Deeney, Associate Professor, School of Education, *Preparing Teachers and Students to Meet Key Shifts in the Common Core Standards*.

Jay Fogleman, Associate Professor, School of Education *How Do You Manage the Information You Collect for Your Teaching and Research?*

Susan Hannel, Associate Professor, Textiles, Fashion Merchandising & Design *Erupting Volcano Image Pahoehoe Kikepa Transformed into Remarkable Gown*.

Tiffani S. Kisler, Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, *Sexting and Texting and Posting Oh My! Technology Use in the Net Generation*.

Sheng Lu, Assistant Professor, Textiles, Fashion Merchandising & Design, *Textile and Apparel Industry in the 21st Century World Economy: a Paradigm Shift*.

Margaret T. Ordonez, Professor, Textiles, Fashion Merchandising & Design, *Investigating Early Maya Life through Textiles*.

Anne M. Seitsinger, Professor, School of Education, *What Matters To Students: Family Engagement in Education*.

Annemarie Vaccaro, Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, *Belong: Exploring How Students Weave the Fabric of Connections that Supports Them in the Transition to College*.

# LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



Exercise Science Intern

The faculty in HSS understand the importance of a college education and the need for our students to be critical thinkers, fluent in technology, and democratic-minded citizens.

Faculty provide research opportunities (see <https://hssresearch.wikispaces.com/home>) and internships that help our students

become employable upon graduation.

They help our students learn to solve universal problems in health, education, and human science.

Here are examples of where students learn beyond the classroom.

### Centers, Clinics, and Labs

- Child Development Centers
- Couple and Family Therapy Clinic
- Human Performance Lab
- Speech-Hearing Center
- Physical Therapy Clinic
- Reading Clinic (see article on page 5)
- Textile Conservation Lab
- Textile Testing Lab

### Internship and Broadening Opportunities

- Physical therapy clinics in the US, South America, and Europe
- Hospital-based fitness and wellness and cardiac rehabilitation centers
- Urban, rural, and suburban public schools
- Department of Children, Youth, and Families and Early Intervention
- Donna Karan, NYC, Christian Louboutin, NYC, and American Textile History Museum
- Clinical observations and training in speech and hearing centers

## FACT AND FIGURES

629 DEGREES AWARDED	2,400 UNDER- GRADUATES	121 FACULTY AND STAFF	10 UNDER- GRADUATE PROGRAMS
\$2.5M IN NEW GRANT FUNDING	400 GRADUATE STUDENTS	20,000+ ALUMNI	10 GRADUATE PROGRAMS

# HSS SPEAKER SERIES CONTINUES: DISTINGUISHED VISITING INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR



**Emma Stokes, vice president of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy**

Emma Stokes, a renowned physical therapist who travels the world inspiring patients and providers to rethink healthcare in the 21st century, brought her ideas to URI during a weeklong visit. A specialist in neurological disorders, Stokes delivered her keynote speech on April 9, 2014. In this talk, she encouraged audience members to consider how they can shape the swiftly changing healthcare field.

A senior lecturer at Trinity College in Dublin and vice president of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy, Stokes speaks throughout the world about health and wellness and international healthcare issues. She has worked as a physical therapist for the last 20 years.

Her keynote, *A Cabinet of Curiosities: How Opportunity and Innovation Can Shape Healthcare*, included personal and professional examples about the impact of ideas and opportunities on the profession.

"We are honored to have Emma Stokes as a guest," said Samantha Brown, clinical assistant professor in URI's Department of Physical Therapy. "Her message brings a global perspective on the physical therapy profession and on issues unique to health and rehabilitation in the 21st century."

The keynote speech is part of URI's College of Human Science and Services Speaker Series. It can be viewed at [URI Live!](#)

"We are delighted that Emma Stokes was the keynote speaker for our speaker series," said Lori E. Ciccomascolo, dean of HSS.

"We wanted this series to focus on healthcare, both the practices and challenges, at the national and international level."

Stokes also participated in a panel discussion about healthcare at the Statehouse on April 11. The talk focused on patient empowerment and healthcare outcomes. The other panelists were: Albert Charbonneau, executive director of the Rhode Island Business Group on Health; Christine Ferguson, director of HealthSource RI; Dr. Michael Fine, director of the Rhode Island Department of Health; and Lt. Gov. Elizabeth Roberts.

The moderator was Phillip Clarke, director of the Rhode Island Geriatric Education Center and URI Program in Gerontology. Clarke is also a professor in Human Development and Family Studies.

Stokes' visit was also part of URI's Distinguished Visiting International Scholars Program, which provides funding to invite scholars outside the United States to visit URI to meet with students, faculty and administrators and present a public lecture.

Based on URI press release by Elizabeth Rau, March 12, 2014.

## MANAGE YOUR MONEY!

Students interested in learning about how to manage their credit cards, student loans, spending, and savings attended a discussion with family finance experts at the University of Rhode Island on November 18, 2013. Three finance experts: Jing Jian Xiao, a professor of family finance in Human Development and Family Studies; Joan Anderson, URI professor emerita of family finance; and URI alumna Gail Hopkins '97, supervisor of support services at Money Management International, conducted a panel discussion

"We decided to focus our fall semester's HSS speaker series on realistic financial guidance for students, from first year through

senior year," says Lori Ciccomascolo, interim dean of the College of Human Science and Services. "Through an interactive presentation, our professors in Human Development and Family Studies taught students to better manage their finances, incur less debt, and understand that the financial decisions they make now may determine their future."

"From a financial development perspective, college students are at a special stage in their lives, transitioning from financial dependence on their parents to financial independence," says Xiao. "This event provided valuable information for these young adults to take control of their money and life now and in the

future."

The speaker series, in its second year, showcases the range of the College's academic diversity while connecting alumni with students, faculty, staff and the outside URI community. Speakers talk about issues involving health, education and human science.

The event was sponsored by the College of Human Science and Services and The Heditsian Family Endowment. Manoog Heditsian is a 1947 graduate of URI, a past member of the URI Foundation Board, and a supporter of the University.

Based on URI press release by Elizabeth Rau, Nov. 8, 2013.

### Students



**Manage your Money! Take Control of Your Money and Your Life**

# AFTER SCHOOL LITERACY PROGRAM



**Theresa Deeney, Associate Professor of Education and director of After School Literacy Program**

to become reading specialists – teach the children from neighboring communities.

“It is a community outreach program for Rhode Island students who struggle with grade level reading and writing; the clinical practicum for URI graduate students enrolled in the master of the arts in education/reading specialization program; and a service opportunity for URI education undergraduates,” says Theresa Deeney, professor in the School of Education and director of the After School Literacy Program.

Since 2002, the program has helped more than 90 students with language and learning disabilities, including dyslexia. Formerly held in Chariho, Providence, and South Kingstown schools, the program moved to URI’s Curriculum Materials Library in 2009 so teachers could take advantage of its state-of-the-art technology and resources. In 2010, URI received a Champlin

grant to create a technology network for students with disabilities to help all students gain equal access to education. URI students with disabilities use the network for their classes. Education faculty also use it to teach education students how to use technology to help youngsters learn. In the case of reading, there are tools that convert speech to print, print to speech and help students with comprehension, fluency, vocabulary and basic skills.

Another grant provided laptops, desktops, smart boards and iPads. These not only help students who struggle, but ensure that URI education students keep up with changes in education in the 21st century.

The program runs alternate years; the next program will begin in fall 2015. Parents can call or email Theresa Deeney for an application at 401-874-2682 or [tdeeney@uri.edu](mailto:tdeeney@uri.edu).

Based on URI press release by Elizabeth Rau, May 6, 2014.

***The After School Literacy Program has helped more than 90 RI students with language and learning disabilities.***

It’s no secret that many children in Rhode Island struggle to gain basic reading skills. A unique literacy program offered by URI hopes to get kids turning the page, and in a studious setting – the library.

URI’s After School Literacy Program provides one-on-one literacy testing and instruction to children in kindergarten through high school who are challenged by reading. URI graduate students – working teachers studying

## GLOBAL TEXTILE INDUSTRY AWARD WINNER

In 2013, 1,130 garment workers were buried alive when a factory built on swampy ground collapsed outside Dhaka, Bangladesh. The tragedy was one of the worst industrial accidents in history.

But did you know that most of the victims were women living in poor rural areas? Did you know that foreign companies looking for cheap labor have flooded Bangladesh in recent years, making it one of the largest clothing exporters in the world?

These topics and more are covered in cutting-edge classes taught by assistant professor Sheng Lu, who recently won a prestigious international award for his scholarly work and teaching about the global textile and clothing industry and international trade relations.

Lu, who teaches in the Department of Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design (TMD), will receive the 2014 Rising Star Award from the Interna-

tional Textile and Apparel Association at its annual conference in Charlotte, N.C., in November. The award recognizes junior faculty members for research and teaching excellence.

“Sheng has been successful at teaching, publishing and proposal writing, and he is becoming a nationally recognized spokesperson for the textile and apparel industry,” says TMD co-chair Linda Welters, who nominated him for the award.

“I am deeply humbled and honored to receive this award,” says Lu. “I could not have achieved it without the great help and support from my colleagues at URI. The TMD department is one of the top of its kind in the United States.”

Lu is hosting a conference Sept. 22 on URI’s Kingston campus about the importance of the textile and clothing industry. Julia Hughes, president of the U.S. Fashion Indus-

try Association in Washington DD, is one of the keynote speakers.

To register for the “URI Cotton Summit: The 21st Century Global Apparel Value Chain and Implication for U.S. Cotton in the World Marketplace” visit [URI Cotton Summit](http://URI Cotton Summit). The one-day conference is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Lu at [shenglu@mail.uri.edu](mailto:shenglu@mail.uri.edu).

Based on URI press release by Elizabeth Rau, June 24, 2014.



**Sheng Lu, Assistant Professor, TMD, with Julia Hughes, president of US Fashion Industry Association**

# THE LOUD CROWD



Leslie Mahler, Associate Professor of Communicative Disorders

Every week, about 20 people living with Parkinson's disease spend an hour with Leslie Mahler, Associate Professor of Communicative Disorders, and her graduate students in a clinical support group aimed at

helping the patients overcome the speech disorders that typically result from the disease.

Dubbed the Loud Crowd, they work on strategies to correct their slurred or monotone speech, breathy or hoarse

voice, and reduced vocal volume, all of which result from underlying neural mechanisms.

The program is just one of several that Mahler leads to address communication issues that arise from neurological disorders. "I study treatments that help people speak more clearly," she said. "Our behavioral treatments incorporate principles of motor learning to drive changes in neuroplasticity. We want to change not only speech behaviors, but also how the brain controls those behaviors."

Every week, Mahler leverages her clinical experience with her expertise in treatment efficacy research to provide unique experiential learning opportunities

for her students and effective treatment to members of the community that would not otherwise be available. A key principle of effective treatment, she says, is intensity of practice. "Once or twice a week isn't enough. My treatments are four days a week for six weeks. That's a big commitment, but it works."

Going forward, Professor Mahler's research will contribute to the work of URI's new George & Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience, which will bring even more funding and focus to the important area of neurodegenerative disorders, and hopefully lead to a breakthrough that will transform the lives of the millions affected by neurological diseases every day.

## TRANSFORMING PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Today's physical education

class bears no resemblance to the nightmare of dodge ball and rope climbing that you or your parents may remember. Determined to stop the epidemic

of childhood obesity, Kinesiology Assistant Professor Emily Clapham is leading a fitness transformation and taking the "new" physical education to the next generation of PE teachers.



Emily Clapham, Assistant Professor of Kinesiology

"We want to present physical education in the most fun and engaging way possible," she said. "Children need to find a physical activity they love and want to do outside of school. We need students to say that they love their physical education class throughout their K-12 experience."

Physical education is evolving. Present day PE classes include more technology—fitness apps on tablets and interdisciplinary lessons that reinforce what students are learning in math, science, world languages, and writing. Clapham's URI students have created electives, such as health, dance, and weight training that can be taken during the school day. They've offered yoga in elementary schools, adventure education in high schools, and jogging and walking clubs before and after school.

In her classes, Clapham inspires her students to be the kind of physical education teachers that transform the "gym class" experience. For example, they use body mass index calculations to determine specific fitness goals for each K-12 child and teach their elementary students to use heart rate monitors and pedometers so that each student's improvement is calculated and individual.

In the Adapted Physical Education Program that Clapham coordinates, URI students can engage in experiential learning—teaching community members with disabilities adapted aquatics, fitness, and even surfing. In fact, her latest research exploring the benefits of ocean therapy with a summer surf program for children with disabilities is showing such significant results that she (and her students) are repeating the study again this year.

# HSS RESEARCHERS HONORED

The URI Foundation awarded Martin Bide, Professor and Co-Chair of the Department of Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design Department. With the Scholarly Excellence Award in May 2014. A textile scientist and dedicated instructor with a full course load, Bide was praised by colleagues for his thoroughness, and recognized by the department's graduates for giving them tools to succeed in their careers. He is a productive scholar, writing numerous peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, and presenting at conferences worldwide. His research is recognized internationally.

His research interests include dyeing, printing, dyestuff analysis, color science, sustainability and the effects of textile processing, and biomedical textiles. An Environmental Protection Agency-funded project on pollution prevention in the U.S. dyeing industry led to similar projects in Tunisia, Ecuador, and India, and more recent research into textile sustainability. He has provided the FBI with a data-

base of dyed materials as a basis for advanced fiber analysis. Together with commercial collaborators he developed infection resistant medical materials, and among several joint patents is one for a wound dressing that combines infection resistance with enhanced blood-clotting properties.

Adam Moore, Assistant Professor of Education, won the 2014 URI Graduate School Excellence in Doctoral Research Award. Moore recently completed the URI/RIC Ph.D. in Education program. His dissertation was titled *The Development and Validation of the Family Experiences with Autism Spectrum Disorders (FEASD) Scale*. Joanne Eichinger, Professor of Education, served as his major professor.

The Champlin Foundations, one of the oldest philanthropic organizations in Rhode Island, awarded four grants to URI for technology to support teaching and research. Samantha Brown, Clinical Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy, Darren Beck,

Assistant Professor of Kinesiology, and Deb Riebe, Professor and Chair of Kinesiology, are working with colleagues from pharmacy and nursing to create a state-of-the-art Cardiovascular Diagnostic Learning Collaborative which supports student-centered hands-on learning using cardiovascular diagnostic technologies, including a holter monitor, ambulatory blood pressure devices, ventriculoscopes, ultrasound equipment and associated software. Students will learn to administer and interpret cardiovascular and pulmonary tests and measures and gain an understanding of the implications of these tests in patient evaluation and treatment.

HSS students have been also been engaged in research. They shared their research projects at the 2nd Annual HSS Research Night on May 1, 2014. A sample of poster presentations may be viewed at [web.uri.edu/hss/faculty-research-profiles/](http://web.uri.edu/hss/faculty-research-profiles/)



**Martin Bide, Professor,  
Textiles, Fashion  
Merchandising and Design**



**Adam Moore, Assistant  
Professor of Education**

## IMPROVING SCIENCE TEACHING

URI educators and scientists are working to train teachers how to teach science in a way that emphasizes critical analysis and hands-on learning.

The initiative by URI's Guiding Education in Math and Science Network, or GEMS-Net, takes on greater importance following Rhode Island's decision last year to adopt Next Generation Science Standards, new national guidelines for science teaching.

GEMS-Net was busy this summer creating a new science curriculum that Rhode Island's public schools can use if they want.

The group also held a leadership training workshop in August for about 50 science teachers.

Currently, GEMS-Net is working with nine school districts in pre-kindergarten through 8th grade, at 43 schools. More than 630 teachers are expected to participate in the group's professional development programs in the coming year.

Director Sara Sweetman is especially qualified to lead the group. She is a former science teacher in Jamestown's public schools, an assistant professor of education at URI and a sci-

ence consultant for children's programs at PBS, including Sesame Street.

URI educators and scientists partner with local school districts to build a support program that ensures all children have access to high quality STEM education. They provide districts with research-based, student-centered curriculum and materials and support all district educators with professional development.

Based on URI press release by Elizabeth Rau, June 11, 2014.



**Sara Sweetman, Assistant  
Professor of Education and  
director, GEMS-Net**



# URI STUDENTS



Destiny Chearino, '12

Destiny Chearino, '12 a doctoral student in physical therapy, but it's in the boxing ring where she really gets physical.

Considered the best female boxer in her 141-pound weight class in New England, Destiny is among the best in the nation. And she could be on her way to the Olympics, which first recognized women's boxing as an official sport in London in 2010. In January

2014, she competed in the U.S. Boxing Championships in Spokane, Wash. for a chance at a spot on Team USA.

"That match is a really big deal," said Destiny, who won the New England Open Championships in 2012 and 2013, and the New England Golden

Gloves in 2013. "It would be awesome to win because I'd get my name out there."

Destiny has been invited to train and compete this fall with the Elite Female athletes in Colorado and South Korea.

Destiny loved karate as a child, earned her black belt at age 11, and traveled as far as Italy to compete. But her desire for longer-lasting challenges with full physical contact motivated her to walk into a gym near her home and pick up a pair of boxing gloves. In no time she was beating opponents at regional competitions, winning the 2009 New England Golden Gloves.

"I liked the culture of boxing," she said. "It gave me a

lot of confidence, in and out of the gym."

Brian Pennacchia, a former boxer and Destiny's trainer, said, "She works harder than most of the guys I've trained. She has that fighting spirit... A lot of people get intimidated by the moment and don't do their best in the ring because they're almost afraid. She goes after what she wants. She's a natural fighter."

"Boxing is a great sport," Destiny said. "It's not about standing in a square punching each other. There's so much more to it."

Back at URI, her professors are rooting for her and providing support so she can box and keep up with her studies.



Cassie Catlow, '15

For Cassie Catlow '15, ice hockey is more than a sport – it's a way of life. "I started skating when I was 9 years old. I basically grew up at URI's Boss Arena," she said. And when she couldn't find opportunities to be on a girls' team, she improvised. "I played on boys' hockey teams for a while," she said. "That was intense."

As the women's ice hockey team captain at her high school in Pomfret, Conn., the North Kingstown resident had her pick of varsity college teams come decision time. Instead, she chose URI for our nationally ranked club team.

Cassie has recently been named the 2013 American Collegiate Hockey Association Zoe Harris Player of the Year, which is the top individual award among 48 women's teams. "That's definitely the most prestigious award I've ever won," she said. "Without a doubt."

She's also a 2013 All-American player, URI most valuable player, URI leading scorer, and a member of the 2013 Eastern Collegiate Women's Hockey League All League Team. Her team has also named her assistant captain. And most recently, Cassie and one of her teammates were invited to play on Team USA at the 2013 Winter World University Games in Trentino, Italy.

But she's not just great at hockey. The kinesiology major has maintained a 3.85 grade point average at URI, and recently completed an internship at South County Orthopedics in South Kingstown.

Cassie plans to attend graduate school for physical therapy after her graduation in 2015, and would like to work as a travelling physical therapist for a pro-team. But right now, she's enjoying her time at URI as a student and athlete, which she says has been great.

"Both my parents are alumni, and the team has been awesome," she said. "URI is like home to me."

# THINKING BIG

Although Thupten Tendhar, MA in Adult Education '14, has been far away from his Tibetan home for most of his life, he considers himself to be one of the most fortunate Tibetans on this planet today.

"I am blessed to have had opportunities to have met His Holiness the Dalai Lama personally, served him during a visit to the United States, and received many of his teachings on how to be a good, loving, compassionate and universally responsible person," said the URI graduate student, who is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Education at URI and Rhode Island College.

Thupten says that the Dalai Lama's advice for combining compassion with wisdom is the principal guidance for his studies and teachings here as a graduate assistant in URI's Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies. His graduate thesis focused on the link between inner peace and physical health among the elderly.

Those same principles also guided his recently published poetry book, *PEACE Rhythm of My Heart*, which he describes as a small reflection on his personal struggle for peace, harmony, freedom and a meaningful life. For most Tibetans, meeting with the Dalai Lama is more precious

than their own lives, for they could be arrested and sentenced to years of rigorous imprisonment simply for singing a prayer for the Dalai Lama or possessing a small portrait of the beloved spiritual master.

In fact, if Thupten were to return to Tibet, he and his family could be in danger as a result of his personal experiences. But, "I believe in living in freedom, not in fear and intimidation," he said.



Thupten Tendhar with the Dalai Lama

While middle school can be challenging for any pre-teen, try getting through 7th grade in a bulky, inflexible plastic brace wrapped so tightly around your torso that breathing is tricky and bending to pick up a pencil is nearly impossible.

For Rachel Mulvaney, a health studies major '17, who wore a brace every waking hour, and many sleeping hours too, from age 11 to 14, memories of being teased are fresh. In the locker room, classmates would take her brace and refuse to give it back. Students called her names. At lunch, she sat alone.

"The girl who was once outgoing and happy was quickly disappearing," Rachel writes

in *Straight Talk with the Curvy Girls: Scoliosis – Brace Yourself for What You Need to Know*, a publication she co-wrote with eight other young women about what it's like to grow up with scoliosis. She wanted to turn her suffering into an opportunity to help others. And it's working. Response to the book has been positive and thousands of copies have been sold. It is especially popular with patients, orthopedists, physical therapists, and orthotists, the people who make the braces.

"We hope this book helps parents and kids on their journey," Rachel said. "I want to give back the unconditional support that I received during my time of need, and participating in this book is one way of doing that."

Some of that unconditional sup-

port came from a nonprofit support group, Curvy Girls, which started as a chapter in New York with only Rachel and three other girls. She says her life changed for the better when she met Leah Stoltz, who started Curvy Girls. "I felt so incredible to be in a room with other girls who had the same feelings I had. I realized I wasn't alone."

Curvy Girls has since expanded to 55 chapters in 35 states and four countries, and Rachel is now working with a local girl to start a chapter in Rhode Island.



Rachel Mulvaney '17

# PHYSICAL THERAPY GRADUATE GRATEFUL TO CLINICAL INSTRUCTOR

Timothy Haitz was 30 years old when he discovered that one of his legs was an inch shorter than the other. Kids teased him during high school, calling him "swivel," and now he finally knew why he couldn't walk like the others.



Michael Noonan, a clinical instructor for physical therapy program, and Timothy Haitz, DPT '14

The man who gave Haitz the shocking news was Michael Noonan, a clinical instructor for the URI's physical therapy program and owner of a private practice in South County.

Noonan made Haitz whole again, and Haitz returned the favor in a big way.

The now 48-year-old South Kings-town resident gave up his career as a commercial fisherman and became a physical therapist, graduating this spring with a doctorate from URI's physical therapy program.

Haitz was 14 years old when he was riding his bike home after baseball practice and a car hit him. He was thrown 20 feet and landed head first on the road. He broke his right leg and dislocated his pelvis and jaw. His injuries were so serious doctors recommended amputating his right leg above the knee. No way, his mother said.

"Physically, I was a mess," says Haitz. "I didn't walk for a year." No more baseball, no more cross country running, no more hanging out with friends. The accident came at a terrible time in his life. He was a

growing teenager, but because of his injuries only half of his lower body developed normally. He made up for his shorter leg by "contorting my upper body to even myself out," he says.

He developed something called functional scoliosis. "Still, even then, I was totally unaware of what was happening to me physically," he says. "I was never re-evaluated after I got out of the hospital. I just grew into my injury."

The years passed. He graduated from high school and joined his family's commercial fishing business.

His back ached constantly, sometimes so bad he couldn't stand up straight. Eventually, he couldn't take it any more and decided to seek a physical therapist. A friend recommended Noonan.

The diagnosis was swift. Not only was his right leg shorter, but he also had a left "iliac upslip," which meant his pelvis had slipped upward over time. Also, the ligaments in his right knee and his hamstring muscles were shot, torn during the boyhood accident and never repaired.

The two got to work. Noonan used muscle energy techniques and "manual manipulation" to align Haitz's pelvis. He put a one-inch heel lift in his shoe. Sometimes, Haitz would pay him with fish and lobsters.

After months of therapy, Haitz started to feel like a new man. "I lived in pain, continuous pain, for years," he says. "Michael gave me the inspiration and motivation to bring challenges back into my life."

Haitz found a sport his body could handle – cycling. At first, he cycled for fun, then began to compete in races and discovered that he had enormous lung capacity. He went on to become a nationally ranked cyclist, winning titles at the state

and regional levels, including the New England Single Speed Mountain Bike Championship three years in a row. He also competed internationally three times at the World Cyclocross Championships in Belgium, finishing 15th one year.

A decade ago, Haitz decided to switch careers. At the urging of his wife, Mia, a former URI math lecturer, and his mother-in-law, he enrolled at URI, earning his bachelor's degree in exercise science in three years. Then he studied three more years to get his doctorate in physical therapy, or DPT.

"The faculty and professors were there for me and did everything they could to teach me how to be an exceptional physical therapist," says Haitz.

Looking back, he is certain he chose the right path. "My life was changed forever by a physical therapist," says Haitz, who is healthy and largely pain-free now.

Noonan says he is just as grateful to Haitz. "Wow, what a compliment that you could help someone change their lives to that degree," he says. "In school, he didn't just memorize facts; he understood everything. He'll be a great physical therapist."

And he won't work far from Noonan. After he passes his national boards, Haitz will join Noonan's practice, Physical Therapy Services of Rhode Island, in Wakefield and Wickford.

The instructor and student will heal others together. "As physical therapists we can change people's lives on a daily basis," says Haitz. "And that is powerful. Take my life."

Based on URI press release by Elizabeth Rau, June 19, 2014.

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Timothy Haitz (Photo by Jonathan S. McElvery)

# DESIGNING HER OWN FASHION CAREER

Twakelee Gborkorquelli's passion for fashion took root when she was a little girl in Liberia watching her mother and aunt sew duvets. Before long she was crocheting dresses for her Barbies.

Today the Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design (TMD) major can whip up a dress in two hours and has more than nine outfits and three collections in her portfolio. She's never seen herself doing anything but fashion design.

"I've been cutting fabric for myself for so long I don't need to measure. I do everything by eye," Twakelee says.

Her designs, which include wedding gowns, casual evening wear, and dresses, were a high-

light in URI's 11th annual April fashion gala.

Her candy-inspired "Starburst," an explosion of green, pink, and red, helped her earn a \$1,000 undergraduate research grant to create fashions for submission to an International Textiles and Apparel Association event.

When she graduates in 2015, Twakelee hopes to work for Balmain, a high-end Parisian fashion house. If that doesn't happen, she'll knock on the doors of New York apparel companies.

You might think someone with such big fashion aspirations would have attended a design school, but Twakelee chose URI's TMD program for its mix of design, marketing, and business coursework, which pre-

pares grads for all aspects of the highly competitive fashion industry.

"Young people tend to think that in fashion, you're either a designer or a buyer. But there is a wide range of fashion careers that our program prepares you for," said Professor Linda Welters, TMD co-chair.

We're quite sure that Twakelee's big ideas for her fashion career are not the least bit too big for her—or for any of our talented TMD graduates.



**Twakelee Gborkorquelli '15**

*"There is a wide range of fashion careers that our program prepares you for," said Linda Welters, TMD co-chair.*

# NOYCE TEACHER SCHOLARS

Janelle Haire '15, who is studying to become a teacher, spent last summer as a camp counselor in Olneyville, one of the poorest neighborhoods in Providence, RI. She wants to teach in an urban school district after graduation. "I want to work with these kids; I want to encourage them; I want them to realize their full potential," says Haire. "These children need teachers who believe in them, and that's me."

Haire and six other URI students are recipients of the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship, funded by a \$1.2 million grant to URI from the prestigious National Science Foundation. "The

grant is intended to recruit science, technology, engineering, and mathematics majors into teacher education," says Anne Seitsinger, lead Principal Investigator.

After they graduate, the recipients will teach elementary, middle and high school students in poor school districts in Rhode Island and other communities in the country and receive mentoring from URI professors. Other Noyce Scholars, also juniors, are Justin Ossa, Ian Pilitizer, Haley Smith, and Sarah Zawatsky. Each student received \$10,000 this year and will get another \$10,000 next year. The students are majoring in

education and biology or mathematics.

Two graduate students also won scholarships: Andrea Drzewianowski and Rachel Naylor. Each student received a \$40,000 stipend and is pursuing a master's degree in education with teacher certification.

Noyce Scholars commit to teach for two years in a high-need school district for each year of support.

More information about this program is available at <http://web.uri.edu/noyce/>



**Janelle Haire '15**



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**College of Human Science and Services**  
*Improving Lives Across the Lifespan*



With nearly 2,400 undergraduate students, 400 graduate students, six academic departments, and two interdisciplinary health programs, the College of Human Science and Services is one of the most dynamic and diverse colleges on campus.

HSS is comprised of the departments of Communicative Disorders; Human Development and Family Studies; Kinesiology; Physical Therapy; School of Education; Textiles, Fashion Merchandising and Design; and Interdisciplinary Studies in Gerontology and Health Studies.

Students study areas as diverse as textile chemistry, exercise science, teacher preparation, speech and hearing, global health, and college student personnel.

They go on to work as designers, physical therapists, teachers, health care employees, and college deans.

Welcome to the newest issue of the College of Human Science and Services (HSS) newsletter, *Inspire*, that highlights the big thinking and special achievements of some of our faculty, staff, and students. I am so proud of our undergraduate and graduate students, our faculty and staff, and the contributions they make to the vitality of our internal and external communities. With degrees related to health, education, and textiles, our diverse programs all share a common goal: to improve people's lives across the lifespan.

HSS is committed to student success and puts their classroom knowledge to work by offering internships and other national, global, and interdisciplinary experiential learning opportunities. We understand the importance of a college education and the need for our stu-

dents to be critical thinkers prepared for the work force.

Our talented and dedicated faculty are proud to work collaboratively with other colleges at URI as teachers and scholars to provide students the opportunity to participate in research projects that impact health, education, and human science. In the classroom, our world-class faculty are passionate about what they teach. They motivate students to learn in a relevant, fun, and meaningful manner.

As you read our newest issue of *Inspire*, you will see how our award-winning faculty "ignite" their respective fields with their research, collaboration with international visiting scholars, and significant outreach opportunities. Our students make us proud with their academic achievements and how they push the limits of greatness and cour-



age in and outside the classroom.

*Inspire* highlights all that our faculty, staff, and students have accomplished in the last year. I am filled with optimism that HSS will build upon its past successes and continue to thoughtfully and strategically improve people's lives across the lifespan.

Sincerely,  
Lori Ciccomascolo  
Interim Dean, College of Human Science and Services