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## Miss Universe pageant allowing transgender women to compete

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# The Good 5¢ Cigar

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*Just what this country needs*  
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## Diversity Awards honor commitment to multicultural involvement

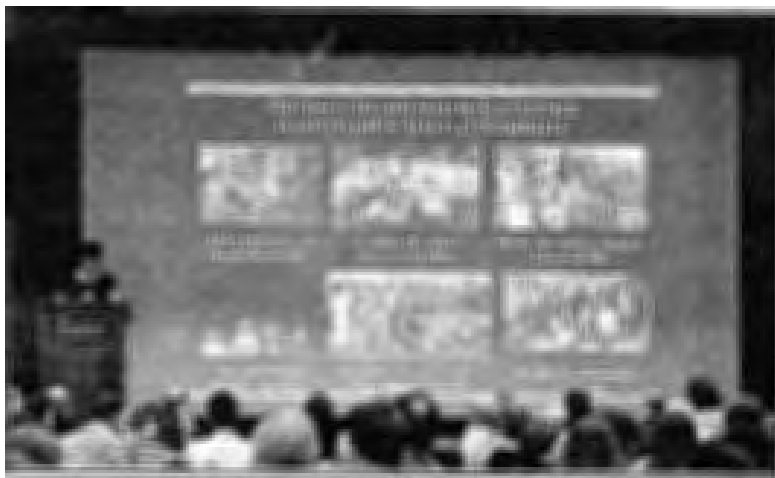
BY NANCY LAVIN  
News Editor

The University of Rhode Island celebrated its students, faculty, staff and organizations' commitment to multicultural inclusion at the URI Diversity Awards Banquet last night in the Memorial Union.

The event recognized 13 students, clubs and faculty members who have made unique advancements to URI's commitment to campus diversity. The winners were selected after being nominated by themselves or another member of the URI community, according to Mailee Kue, assistant director of the Multicultural Center.

"Anybody can nominate someone, and you can even self-nominate," Kue said. "Our process is that it's not the number of nominations you get, but what you have actually contributed to the community."

The Multicultural Center set out a call for nominations in late fall of 2011, according to Kue. After all the nominations were in, nominees were asked to fill out a supplemental form



Lauren Trad | Cigar

**The nominees for Student Organization Excellence are presented at the 14th Annual URI Diversity Awards Banquet.**

explaining more about themselves "so we could get a full picture of the individual," Kue said.

"It was a complete surprise [to be nominated]," senior Narvan Hilliard, who was awarded for Undergraduate Student Excellence in Arts and Culture for his commitment as president of the URI Capoeira Club, said. "I was minding my own business and I got an email from Mailee, and she told me I was nominated for an award. It was actually my instructor who nominated me

because I guess he got something similar during his day."

A committee of 12 undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff members then read the individual information and ranked them on how they answered the questions against others in the specific pool they were competing in. Kue then calculated the scores, and the group came to a consensus to select either one, two or three recipients, depending on the award category.

"We are a group that

works in collaboration, so we really shoot for consensus," Kue said. "If there's disagreement, I try to remind the group to look at how we impact the community on a larger level, and just keep the group focused on that."

Kue said since the committee does not really operate by a majority vote, coming to decisions can be difficult in some instances. Other times, however, there is clear agreement on the winner.

"Typically you'll find patterns of individuals who are ranked pretty high consistently across groups," she said. "Choosing a more flexible approach is appropriate, particularly in the work of diversity."

The event featured keynote speaker John Ramos, who is known for revitalizing urban education in Connecticut and promoting educational reform for students of all backgrounds. Ramos urged URI students and faculty to be pro-active in reaching the university's

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## Students to light lanterns for Africa in annual event

BY KIMBERLY DELANDE  
News Reporter

University of Rhode Island's Students for the Welfare of Africa (SAWA) is planning to hold their third annual Lights for Africa event, which was originally scheduled to take place this week, but has been rescheduled due to issues SAWA had with ordering lanterns for the event.

While the group does not have a concrete date as for when the event will take place, SAWA president Tete Joseph said that it should occur "in about two weeks."

Lights for Africa is an event where students gather on the Quadrangle and light a lantern for Africa. Joseph said the lanterns are a symbol of the optimism for a future where Africa is "liberated from war, poverty and famine."

While the lanterns had plain, clear lights the first year SAWA held the event, the group has decided to use lanterns with colored lights this year. SAWA experiment-

## Slow Food URI brings local, healthy fare to campus

BY AUDREY O'NEIL  
Contributing News Reporter



The Local Food Market consists of popular vendors throughout Rhode Island,

In an effort to, better their

# CAMPUS

## Rhody pic of the day



## Diversity

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diversity goals.

Hilliard echoed this idea, explaining that he has tried to get people involved in Capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian form of martial arts, and expose them to a new culture.

"I'm excited because I'm not doing what I do on campus just for an award," he said. "I'm doing it because I love Capoeira, the aspects of the particular martial art and getting more people involved in it. I didn't know I could even win an award for this."

Other award winners included Kayla Butts and Riley Davis for Undergraduate Student Excellence in Academics and Service; Erick Betancourt, Precious Kafo and Brian Sit for Undergraduate Student Excellence in Leadership and Service; Hillel and the URI LGBTQ Women's Group for Student Organization Excellence; Jennifer Brandy and Yifei Li for Graduate Student Excellence; Laura Beauvais for Staff/Administrative Excellence and Walter Besio and Yvette Harps-Logan for Faculty Excellence.

## Slow Food

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## Africa

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to those who might be worried about the lanterns' effect on the environment," Joseph said.

According to Joseph, hosting Lights for Africa is a critical event for SAWA to not only unite the campus on the Quad, but to teach students about the ongoing battles that countries in Africa are still facing today. The lanterns, Joseph said, do not only act as beacons of hope, but represent the "epiphany" people have after learning about the issues that are plaguing modern-day Africa.

"Some people say ignorance is bliss, but I say ignorance is a disease," Joseph said. "If you don't know what's going on outside of your state, then it's hard to say that you know anything at all. When people come out to the Quad, learn about all that's going on in Africa, and see the lights in the sky, they have an epiphany. It all comes together for them."

For Joseph, who is Liberian and has recently returned to URI after taking a trip to Liberia, being able to host Lights for Africa holds personal significance. According to Joseph, Liberia is one of the many countries in Africa that has been "torn apart" by war. Since the early

## Miss Universe pageant allowing transgender women to compete

NEW YORK (AP) — Allowing transgender women to participate in the Miss Universe beauty pageant next year is a step forward for equality, advocates said Tuesday after pageant officials announced the policy change.

The announcement came supporting equality for all women, and this was something we took very seriously," said Paula Shugart, president of the Miss Universe Organization.

The new rules will have to be approved by Donald Trump, who runs the Miss Universe Organization, and contest co-

the Institute for LGBT Studies at the University of Arizona, said she hoped to see similar progress in areas that would impact more people, such as employment discrimination issues and anti-transgender violence.

But she said trans women