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URI's First Queer Town Hall

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The Good 5¢ Cigar

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1971

Volume 61

'Just what this country needs'

Friday

Issue 61

www.ramcigar.com

February 17, 2012

Student involved in fatal car accident remembered fondly by peers, teachers

BY FARAH CASALINI
News Editor

The University of Rhode Island is mourning the loss of a member of its family after senior Erica Knowles, 23, died in a car accident just past midnight on Wednesday.

Knowles was in the backseat of the vehicle when the driver crashed into a telephone pole while traveling east on Torrey Road in Wakefield, a statement issued by URI said. She was wearing her seatbelt, and was the only fatality.

"The entire community offers its condolences to Erica's family and friends," Vice President of Student Affairs Thomas Dougan said.

The 23-year-old was a senior journalism and women's studies major who was determined to finish her degree "in face of difficulties" she endured throughout her academic career, Dougan said.

URI issued an email to all those on the listserv early



Senior Erica Knowles, 23, passed away this Wednesday after being involved in a fatal car crash.

Courtesy of Facebook

dent and offered condolences.

"We will miss her greatly, and we offer our thoughts and prayers to her family, friends, professors, and classmates," the

When not attending classes, Knowles worked at Turtle Soup in Narragansett, wrote poetry and enjoyed photography. This past winter, some of her photo-

World's Smallest Art Gallery," a kiosk on the South County Bike Path.

Her classmates had nothing but positive remarks to say about Knowles, describing her as sweet, hard-working and generous.

"She just gave off a cheerful vibe," senior Emily Zaccardi said.

"She was one of those people that you meet and you could tell she had a bright future," senior Giana Campanale said.

Journalism Department Chair John Pantalone said, while she was a quiet student, he could tell she worked hard.

Jody Lisberger, Director of Women's Studies, also described Knowles as a hard worker, saying she was a "gifted artist, poet, writer and thinker."

"She could put pen on paper and write the most fluid, insightful things," she said. "It's so sad, especially when it's someone with such potential, so on the rise."

Barbara Meagher-Smith, a

Local alumnus talks teamwork, teaching, years as URI student

BY NANCY LAVIN
News Editor

University of Rhode Island alumnus and Pilgrim High School science teacher Michael Lobdell reminded students that collaboration is the key to success.

"It all comes down to collaboration," he said. "People need to collaborate and learn from each other to get better."

Lobdell, who graduated from URI in 1996 with a degree in zoology and then a master's in education, has been teaching science at Pilgrim High School for seven years. He was recently recognized as a 2011 Milken Educator Award, which gives \$25,000 to teachers across the nation.

"The recognition that comes from an award like this is exciting, and a little bit scary," said Lobdell. "With this new recogni-

Thursday afternoon. The email informed students of the acci-

professors and associates, the statement said.

graphs were displayed in "The

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Campus's first 'Queer Town Hall' held to discuss opinions on issues, possible changes at LGBTQ Center

BY BRIANNA RESTO
News Reporter

Last night members of the LGBTQ community, faculty members and students met in the basement of the Multicultural Center at the University of Rhode Island to discuss potential changes taking place at the LGBTQ Center.

The first-ever "Queer Town Hall" was organized by the new director of the LGBTQ Center, Dr. Elizabeth "Annie" Russell and Instructional Program Coordinator Joseph Santiago.

During the meeting, individuals were able to let out the feelings that they had about how the center is currently being run and give their own ideas as to what they would like to see happen



Members of the University of Rhode Island's LGBTQ Club held a Town Hall Meeting this Thursday night in the Multicultural Center.

in the future within the center.

Each person was able to have a say, if they wanted it, and that, Russell says she believes, will make the difference in the future.

"Tonight really clarified a lot of things," Russell said regarding the meeting. Her goal was to have each individual there weigh in on issues regarding the center so solutions may be worked

towards as a unit.

Since Russell has taken over as director of the LGBTQ Center, many changes have been suggested. Last night's meeting was the first step in reform.

"We made a lot of progress tonight," Russell said, during the two-hour-long meeting.

The students, although new to Russell's method of running things, were open to her ideas and responded enthusiastically, while Russell mostly sat back and stayed silent in order to observe and take in what the students were saying.

Notes were taken on each subject that had been brought up and will be acted upon at a meeting on Friday.

tion, I can talk about all the people and organizations that have helped me to become the teacher that I am."

Lobdell added that he does feel additional pressure and responsibility from receiving this award, and has since become more involved in education at the state level, joining the Educators Action Committee headed by Education Commissioner Deborah Gist and also the steering committee for Race to the Top.

Lobdell also said he owes much of his success as a teacher to his time at URI.

"I had so many really good professors at URI that made the content so interesting, and kind of validated my choice to go into science and learn as much about science as I could," he said.

In particular, Lobdell remembered Professor Clarence Goertemiller as a teacher who was always available to him, and encouraged his desire to go into teaching.

"I also remember URI specifically for helping me realize that

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The Best 3-Cent Cigar

Today's forecast
50 °F
Rain, rain, go away...

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Find out the results of the Student Senate elections.

See page 2.