

Diversity Awards 2001

Awards Winner

Undergraduate Student Excellence (Leadership/Service) Award Recipients:

Patricia L. Dos Santos was selected for leadership and service as a Ronald E. McNair Undergraduate Scholar; President, Vice-President, Multicultural Liaison and Public Relations Chair of the Cape Verdean Student Association. Assistant Instructor and Secretary of the URI Capoeira Martial Arts Club; undergraduate intern for the Rhode Island Select Commission on Race and Police-Community Relations, and the Committee for a Smoke-Free URI; and membership in the URI Psychology Club and the Higher Calling Gospel Choir. A senior majoring in Psychology, Patricia is the winner of the William Gould Award for Outstanding Achievement. As a McNair Scholar she conducted a research study on "Ethnic Differences in Child Rearing Attitudes," and presented papers at two scholarly conferences. A trained Kingian Nonviolence Advocate, she has also been active with the URI Health Promotions Partnership. Her outstanding record of accomplishment has earned Patricia an assistantship to study Political Science at Rutgers University.

Carlos J. Pena was selected for his leadership and service as a member of the URI Student Senate Chair of the Multicultural and Equal Opportunity Committee of Student Senate and as hermano of Lambda Upsilon Lambda (La Unidad Latinos). A sophomore majoring in Management Information Systems, Carlos exhibited poise and balance when running in the most closely contested Student Senate presidential election in URI's history. Carlos has been a leading advocate for the establishment of the Multicultural Alliance, an umbrella group of multicultural and social justice student organizations.

Undergraduate Student Excellence (Academic/Service) Award Recipients:

Vannou Nhem was selected for academic excellence, and for service as President of the URI Fashion Merchandising Society, Vice-President of the Asian Students Association, Public Relations Chair of the Cape Verdean Student Association, and Liaison to the Multicultural Student Council. A senior majoring in Psychology, Vannou has designed her own clothing lines. Currently, the Manager of Two-Lips Flower shop in the URI Memorial Union, she loves working with children and has been a mentor with the Rhode Island Children's Crusade.

Mavis Nimoh was selected for academic excellence and for service as a student staff member at the URI Women's Center, Treasurer and Public Relations Chair for the African Awareness Association, Student Mentor for the URI South County Mentors Program, and a member of the steering committee of the inaugural President's Commission on the Status of Women at URI. A junior majoring in Political Science, Mavis currently serves as an Undergraduate Teaching Assistant for the URI South County Mentors Program. Having previously served as a lead organizer for the Women of Color Conference and the Women's Leadership Summit, she is also a Resident Assistant at Coddington Hall, and a member of the Student Alumni Association.

Lawrence Perry was selected for academic excellence, and for service as Resident Assistant for Rainbow Diversity House, Student Organization Consultant for the URI Center for Student Leadership, Executive Board Member for the Student Alumni Association, and Orientation Team Leader for University College. In addition, Larry has been active with Bridges, Unity Weekend and

the URI Hunger Center. A senior majoring in Marketing, Larry is a 2001 winner of the E. Robert Rainville Award for Student Leadership.

Undergraduate Student Excellence (Artistic/Cultural) Award Recipients:

Pedro J. Malave was selected for his artistic expertise and cultural leadership on campus. Known as "AKUWRIT," he practices an inclusive form of hip-hop culture that is idealistic, seeks authenticity, and advocates for youth issues. Active in Brothers United for Action, Pedro helped to organize an open mic against arming the URI campus police, and participated in the Multicultural Center Poetry Slams, the URI Annual Talent Show, the Uhuru SaSa Culture Fest, and the Artists Against Racism Rally. He is the performer featured in the commercial advertisement developed by the Committee for A Smoke Free URI. A sophomore majoring in Psychology, Pedro has brought excellent publicity to the state and university through his youth leadership and advocacy. Sponsored by the Carriage House Center for the Arts, he attended the American Legacy Foundation's inaugural youth conference against tobacco. Recognized for his leadership he was asked to extend his stay in Washington D.C. to hone his skills as a trainer and media spokesperson, and to help lead a national youth movement against tobacco. Subsequently he attended the Truth Summit in Seattle, Washington and took part in a six-week, 27-city caravan to combat teen smoking.

Student Organization Excellence (Leadership/Service) Award Recipients:

The Psychology Club was selected for leadership and service because of their efforts to include students across lines of identity and discipline. Skillfully advised by Dr. Su Boatright-Horowitz of the Psychology Department, members presented scholarly papers on multicultural issues at conferences such as the Eastern Psychological Association and the Greater New York Conference of Psychological Research; and events, such as the URI Undergraduate Research Colloquium. Open to students from all departments, the Psychology Club has afforded interested students the opportunity to learn research methods and to present research papers. Diverse students have served in leadership positions. Among their programs are the Faculty Coffee Hour, various symposia, poster presentations, recruiting events, graduate school workshops, and award ceremonies. Students from the Psychology Club were instrumental in organizing the recent Candlelight Vigil in support of a gay student at URI.

National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) were selected because of the quality and quantity of their collaboration with each other. The competitive behaviors that inhibit collaboration between many student organizations have been largely transcended by SHPE and NSBE. During February 2001, NSBE organized a high-quality series of weekly learning experiences in commemoration of Black History Month. SHPE members attended about as frequently as NSBE members. The highlight of the series was the lecture, "What Prospective Engineers Need To Know About Changes In The Profession Caused By The New Economy?" presented by Dr. Wole Soboyejo, Princeton University's only tenured and full professor of color. After meeting Dr. Soboyejo at the national NSBE convention, Igor Garcia and Ben Wesley of NSBE asked that he come to campus and he did! In addition, NSBE and SHPE have represented the university effectively at regional workshops sponsored by the New England Board of Higher Education. The collaboration between the two reflects the multicultural model for student organizations in the 21st

Staff/Administrative Excellence (Leadership/Service) Award Recipients: N/A

Lifetime Achievement Award: N/A

Graduate Student Excellence (Academic/Service) Award Recipients:

Christine F. Volpe was selected for her leadership and service in developing links between the URI Writing Center and students from Special Programs for Talent Development, and for her academic research on multiple intelligences. Responsible for hiring work-study student staff, she chose to diversify her hires by recruiting TD students. The result has been a more welcoming environment at the Writing Center, and a diverse, expanded client base. A graduate student in English, Christine is participating in a research study designed by the Writing Center and funded by the URI Foundation. Countering the deficit model of learning that underlies much research on underrepresented students, she seeks to improve writing skills by incorporating new tutoring strategies based on the learning styles of students whose intelligences are often non-linguistic. In both her service and her dissertation research, Christine has demonstrated inclusivity and creativity.

Silas O. Pinto was selected because of his leadership and service in teaching and promoting the practice of Capoeira, a Brazilian martial arts form of African origin. Under Silas's leadership, the URI Capoeira Club, which he founded, has experienced explosive growth. Founded on September 13, 1996, the Capoeira Club was recognized by the URI Student Senate in October 1997. Since 1996, 175 students have participated in the weekly rehearsals. Capoeira has staged performances in Providence, Pawtucket, and South Kingstown. On April 28, 2001, Capoeira will host a Martial Arts Fest in Edwards Auditorium, featuring students from universities in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. A graduate student majoring in Psychology, Silas is a previous winner of a Diversity Award for his undergraduate activities. Currently, he is a Residence Hall Assistant Director for Heathman Hall, and teaches Capoeira classes at the New Wave Karate School in Providence. He is engaged in training for the Cape Verdean Karate Team for the 2004 Olympics.

Faculty Excellence (Academic/Service) Award Recipients:

Dr. Alfred G. Killilea was selected for his leadership and service in founding and implementing the innovative URI South County Mentors Program, and in chairing the Truman Scholarship Committee. One of the most successful strategies for improving local town-gown relations, the Mentors Program provides URI students the opportunities to exercise and enhance interpersonal and leadership skills in interacting with high school youth. A professor of Political Science, and Co-Director of the John Hazen White Center, Dr. Killilea has also chaired the Truman Scholarship Committee since 1990. Under his leadership, a number of diverse students have won the \$30,000 awards to encourage study and commitment to public service, including Elise Mussington, URI's first African-American winner; Daryl Finizio, URI's first openly gay student body president; Shelly Costa, a Portuguese-American now studying math education for girls in a PhD program; and John Di Muro, who led a campaign to protect a local AIDS house from destruction, and who currently leads the all-male Grace Church Choir in Providence. In addition, Al Killilea was a 1999 Multicultural Center Faculty Associate.

Dean Ruth Waldman was selected for her leadership and service in coordinating a health care and education outreach program to the Dominican Republic; and in nominating and sponsoring Nursing students for the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program. An Assistant Dean in the College of Nursing, she received a grant to develop the outreach program to the Dominican Republic and

enable students to utilize it as a practicum for their required senior clinical experiences. In addition, she has advised outstanding students, such as Keisha Gallagher-Smith, Belinda Bracey, and Anilda Pena in their success as McNair Scholars. Ruth Waldman has also striven to increase diversity as Chair of the College of Nursing Diversity Committee, Chair of various Nursing search committees, and a 1999 Multicultural Center Faculty Associate.