Remembering President Emeritus

EDWARD J. LISTON

CCRI’s longest-serving president leaves a legacy of changing lives
Student recipients of the CCRI Alumni Association Book Award were honored during a breakfast with the board of directors on Oct. 8 at the Knight Campus in Warwick. Book awards are $350 grants that benefit students with financial need. Funding for the awards comes from alumni donations and other fundraising efforts.

Those honored (clockwise, from left) include Yoni Corleto, Kai Younger, John Colvin, Chelsea Fletcher, Amy Wittekind and David Felix.
The value of a college degree is a hot topic these days. Research has shown that students who earn a two-year technical degree earn an average of $7,000 to $11,000 more than graduates with bachelor’s degrees in some states. That is a compelling statistic, especially when you consider the soaring cost of a higher education. While there are more factors to consider besides earnings when choosing a career or college, return on investment is important, particularly for middle- and low-income students who cannot afford to make mistakes.

CCRI’s mission is to make a quality higher education both affordable and accessible. And with the lowest tuition in the state plus 80 degree and certificate programs for students to choose from, it succeeds. The college really does prepare students to change their lives and achieve their dreams.

To me, the value of a CCRI degree goes well beyond a dollar figure. It is not only an investment in one’s future, it also establishes a connection to a network of 60,000 graduates across the state and beyond. The Alumni Association wholeheartedly supports this mission through its mentoring, book award and scholarship programs for students.

But we can do more to strengthen our network. As CCRI approaches its 50th anniversary in 2014–15, with a number of events and activities being planned, I encourage you to take pride in your alma mater and get involved. Tell people in the community how CCRI changed your life. For many, this great college has made all the difference.

Louis J. Saccocecio ’68
President
CCRI Alumni Association
College appoints new leaders of advancement, academics and business

Laurie Bosio  
*Interim associate vice president for Institutional Advancement*

Laurie Bosio comes to CCRI from LB Strategies, a firm she founded in 2001 that concentrates on political consultation, fundraising, organizational management and public relations. She has managed large staffs and has been responsible for all aspects of fundraising, event planning and management. She received her bachelor’s degree in industrial organizational psychology from Suffolk University.

Bosio is charged with oversight of fundraising activities for the college, including capital campaigns, planned giving, the annual fund, donor relations and event planning. She serves as the executive director of the CCRI Foundation, the college’s nonprofit arm, and coordinates the activities of the Alumni Association.

Greg Lamontagne  
*Vice president for Academic Affairs*

Dr. Greg Lamontagne has a doctorate in linguistics from the University of Massachusetts. He previously served as vice president of Academic Affairs at Niagara County Community College and also has worked in the Massachusetts community college system. During his 20-plus year career in higher education, Lamontagne also has served as assistant vice president, dean and assistant professor in linguistics.

At CCRI, his responsibilities include articulating expectations for quality outcomes and providing systems and support necessary for faculty and staff to carry out their roles. He oversees multiple task forces and committees that contribute to expressing program and course outcomes and to assessing how well CCRI meets its goals. He also facilitates meaningful connections with Rhode Island communities and businesses to foster a greater understanding of workforce needs.

David Patten  
*Vice president for Business Affairs*

David Patten has served many financial leadership roles in strategic planning, budget management, finance, staffing and facility planning during his 25-year career, most recently as an independent consultant for governmental and higher education institutions. He is an elected member of the school committee in Westerly and serves as its chairman.

As the college’s chief financial officer, Patten oversees the development and management of the college’s budget and is responsible for 250 personnel within the division of Business Affairs, including accounting, information technology, human resources, payroll, physical plant, bursar and campus security. He plays an active and collaborative role in strategic planning, policy development, forecasting and resource analysis for the college and also serves as the college’s fiscal liaison to the Board of Education.

In memoriam

**Dwight Decker**, retired professor of Physics, died on Sept. 12. He was 79, and while at the college, he was active as an NEA delegate, a diehard fan of the CCRI men’s basketball team and an advocate for mastery learning.

*Donations in his memory may be made to a college scholarship fund at Beneficent Church in Providence. Please note “Boys’ Scholarship Fund” and mail to Beneficent Congregational Church, 300 Weybosset St., Providence, RI 02903.*

**Daniel J. Donovan**, professor of Paralegal Studies and Criminal Justice, died on Oct. 8. He taught at the college for nearly three decades, touching the lives of thousands of students and colleagues.

*Donations in his memory may be made to Rhode Island Family Shelter, 165 Beach Ave., Warwick, RI 02889.*
Program receives national accreditation

The college’s Fire Science associate degree program has been recognized for meeting the standards of the National Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education Program. Although the Fire Science program has long been a popular course of study at the Community College of Rhode Island, this year marks the first that it bears the National Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education, or FESHE, stamp of approval from the U.S. Fire Administration.

Program Director and Assistant Professor Robert Howe said this accreditation will be instrumental in providing added legitimacy for new graduates, who likely will have to spend time further developing themselves and preparing for additional testing. In addition to fighting fires, there are jobs available in insurance, building inspections, private sector inspections, crash firefighting at the airport, education and other related fields.

CCRI graduate keynotes nursing conference

The Community College of Rhode Island welcomed more than 180 nursing alumni and students for a professional development conference called “Connect to the past: Care for the future” on Oct. 19 at the Newport County Campus. The CCRI Nursing Alumni Chapter sponsored the event.

Keynote speaker Antonia G. McGuire ’75, president and CEO of the Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center in Worcester, Mass., discussed the Affordable Care Act and the nurses’ role in its implementation. Following her presentation, a panel of CCRI alumni professionals shared how nurses can transform health care in Rhode Island.
**Renowned stem cell researcher speaks at the college**

Dr. Robert P. Lanza presented “Cloning Stem Cells and the Future of Life” on Oct. 29 to a crowd of more than 900 in the Bobby Hackett Theater at the Knight Campus in Warwick. Lanza is chief scientific officer at Advanced Cell Technology and an adjunct professor at Wake Forest University School of Medicine. He has created hundreds of publications and inventions and written more than 30 scientific books including “Principles of Tissue Engineering” and “Essentials of Stem Cell Biology,” which are recognized as the definitive references in the field. The CCRI Foundation, Human Services Club (Flanagan Campus) and Biology Department sponsored the event.

**Professor’s exhibition highlights the women who supported, loved Poe**

Assistant Professor of Computer Studies Sandra Luzzi Sneesby created a multimedia exhibition that reveals the heart and mind of Edgar Allen Poe as told by the women who loved him. The installation, called “The Women Who Loved Poe,” was on display at the Governor Henry Lippitt House Museum in Providence in October. Sneesby’s work fulfills the requirements of her Master of Fine Arts in media art at Emerson College.

*For more information, visit www.thewomenwholovedpoe.com.*

**CCRI hosts public security awareness day**

In recognition of National Cyber Security Awareness Month, CCRI hosted “Building a Culture of Security Awareness,” a one-day program open to the public at the Knight Campus in Warwick on Oct. 30. Leading subject matter experts shared their insights and perspective on the foremost security trends, prevention awareness, identity management, impact on personal privacy, digital forensics, detection and prevention technology, the cost of security and strategies to build an in-house security program.

Speakers included Rebecca Herold, the nationally recognized “privacy professor” and Scott Brown of the Boston FBI Intelligence Branch as well as leaders from the international SANS Institute, the URI Digital Forensics Center and Brown University.
Remembering President Emeritus
EDWARD J. LISTON
CCRI’s longest-serving president leaves a legacy of changing lives

“Ed Liston was a giant among community college presidents and he left an indelible mark on CCRI. During his tenure, CCRI was renamed, the Foundation was established and the Providence campus, which bears his name, was opened. He serves as an inspiration and will never be forgotten.” — CCRI President Ray Di Pasquale

As part of CCRI’s 25th anniversary celebration in 1989, President Emeritus Ed Liston cuts the cake while Bob Henderson, former vice president for Business Affairs, and Bob Silvestre, former vice president for Academic Affairs, look on.
Edward J. Liston, CCRI’s longest-serving president, died on July 30. He was 82. Liston began his tenure as president in 1980, and is credited with establishing the nonprofit CCRI Foundation. He also oversaw the construction of the Providence campus and laid the groundwork for the college’s future, including a major expansion of the Knight Campus in Warwick, an addition to the Liston Campus in Providence and the development of the Newport County Campus. In 2000, he retired from CCRI and published a book, “Recollections of a Pioneer President,” to document the milestones of the college’s history.

To the college community, Liston was known as an enthusiastic leader who was passionate about helping students achieve their educational dreams. Former Vice President for Student Affairs Joe DiMaria, whom Liston hired as registrar in 1987, described him as a “great man” to work with, a driven leader who “didn’t have a lot of money growing up in a working-class family, and understood that education was the way out.”

Liston’s work in establishing the nonprofit CCRI Foundation made it possible to attract the private funding that was unavailable on the state level. The impact of his leadership and values continues in the lives of the students helped by the Foundation scholarship in his name. Granted annually, this scholarship is for students who are in good academic standing and are continuing their studies at the Providence campus named in his honor.

“He was a firm believer in people having to prove themselves, and if they did, he wanted to give them opportunities,” DiMaria said. “He knew that people not only had to have the opportunity to get ahead, but the means, as well.”

After graduating from Mt. Kisco High School in 1949, Liston joined the U.S. Army, serving three years in Germany. He returned home, working as a lineman for the New York Telephone Co. before continuing his education. Liston earned a bachelor’s degree from the State University of New York in Albany and a master’s degree in business administration from Ball State University. He completed graduate work in economics and higher education at the University of Missouri, Syracuse University, University of Denver, University of Colorado and New York University. He also participated in the Harvard University Institute for the Management of Lifelong Education.

Before he was appointed the second president of Rhode Island Junior College in 1978, he served as president of Los Angeles Pierce College, a community college in Woodland Hills, Calif., for five years. He was founding president of
Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, Conn., and has served on the faculty at Jefferson Community College in Watertown, N.Y., and Rockland Community College in Suffern, N.Y.

Near the beginning of Liston’s tenure as president, Rhode Island Junior College officially changed its name to Community College of Rhode Island in 1980. With the new name came a new mission that expanded the college’s offerings of off-campus credit and noncredit courses at satellite locations.

Liston oversaw the construction and planning for the urban Providence campus, which opened in 1990. At the end of his presidency, he was expanding CCRI’s footprint, planning a major expansion of the Knight Campus, an addition to the Providence campus and the development of a fourth campus on Aquidneck Island.

To honor him for his positive impact on CCRI and its graduates, the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education voted to name the Providence campus the Edward J. Liston Campus. After his retirement, he was inducted into the CCRI Hall of Fame in 2002 and received an honorary degree from Rhode Island College.

Throughout his career, Liston was very active in state and national organizations. He was twice elected to the board of the American Association of Community Colleges and the National Junior College Athletic Association. He was a member of the board of the Community College of the Air Force and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Liston is survived by his wife, Judith, six children and five grandchildren.

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Donations in Liston’s memory may be made to the Edward J. Liston Scholarship Fund, c/o the CCRI Foundation, 1762 Louisquisset Pike, Lincoln, RI 02865-4585.

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Notable achievements

2002  Inducted into the CCRI Hall of Fame
2001  Established the Edward J. Liston Scholarship
2000  Published “Recollections of a Pioneer President”
1990  CCRI Providence campus opened
1980  Rhode Island Junior College officially changed its name
1979  Established the CCRI Foundation
1978  Appointed second president of the college

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Recipients of the Edward J. Liston Scholarship

2013 – Alexander Gonzalez-Trejo
2012 – Elizabeth L. Husted
2011 – Karla S. Arango
2010 – Lauren E. Macbeth
2009 – Amil M. Byleckie
2008 – Mamai Soben
2006, 2007 – Lisa M. Fortier
2005 – Jenny Cortorreal
2005 – Reuven S. Saultanoglou
2004 – Fanta Kaba
2002 – Jessica M. Lupo
Al Castiglioni steered himself on course at the college, where he found himself coming into his own. After feeling like an adult for the first time, he said, he was quick to mature, focusing on his studies and as a dean’s list student.

Al Castiglioni ’80 developed entrepreneurial spirit at CCRI

Al Castiglioni ’80 is the owner of Meritage and Chardonnay’s restaurants.
I’ve always dreamed big,” said Al Castiglioni, sitting in the corner of one of the sleek yet warm dining rooms at Meritage in East Greenwich. “I actually thought I’d be further along right now,” he added with a chuckle.

But it’s hard to feel sorry for Castiglioni, who has turned decades of hard work in the restaurant business into an incontrovertible success story. He not only sits at the helm of Meritage, an acclaimed new American cuisine restaurant that he opened in 2000, but also owns Chardonnay’s, a staple of the Seekonk, Mass., dining and lounge scene since 1996. And while the pursuit of restaurant ownership seems to suit the affable Castiglioni quite well, he admitted that his path wasn’t always so clear.

That’s where the Community College of Rhode Island, where Castiglioni earned his associate degree in Business in 1980, comes in. He had always been intrigued by hotels, and knew that he wanted to be a business owner. But after graduating from Johnston High School, he had seen a friend fail out of Bryant University’s hotel management program and felt hesitant to jump into a four-year college environment without treading in some calmer waters first. “I was a ‘C’ student in high school,” he said.

Castiglioni steered himself on course at the college, where he found himself coming into his own. After feeling like an adult for the first time, he said, he was quick to mature, focusing on his studies and graduating as a dean’s list student. Also, while enrolled at CCRI, Castiglioni began working full time at the Providence Marriott with the goal of getting experience in the hotel industry. He got more than he bargained for: at 19 years of age, after nine months as a barback, he was promoted to the beverage and lounge manager position, a grueling and “thankless” post. After a summer in that position and trying his hand in the restaurant, he wound up back in the lounge as a bartender, where he remained for 14 years.

When he wasn’t working (and networking) in one of the city’s busiest lounge spots, he earned his bachelor’s in finance from Bryant University – where he again occupied a spot on the dean’s list – and bought and sold houses on the side. It was clear that he was gathering momentum. But as he approached 30, he was tiring of the long hours tending bar, and wanted to put his entrepreneurial spirit to use.

“I put the word out to a lot of my customers from the Marriott – we had a lot of business guys who came into the lounge – that I was looking to open up a bar or restaurant. One of my customers knew someone who had put a restaurant in a shopping center he’d built, and that was Chardonnay’s in Cranston,” said Castiglioni of his first acquisition in 1993.

That first year was grueling; he joked that there wasn’t anything rewarding about the experience. He and his business partner, who ran the kitchen end while Castiglioni managed the bar and dining room, put in 90-hour workweeks and took home no money for the first two years. “I’d get in in the morning and wash the floors, do painting, do the books, go home and take a nap and be back at night with my tie on to close the place. It was horrible. It wasn’t until we got a good review in The Providence Journal that business quadrupled and we started making money,” he said.

After the review, Chardonnay’s had clearly found a comfortable niche in the business, serving simple bar food and happy hour specials to loyal customers who had come over from the Marriott. Now that they were making money, Castiglioni thought it prudent to grab another location in case the partnership dissolved – a common side effect of the restaurant business, he explained. He purchased the Seekonk Chardonnay’s and his partner kept the Cranston location. While he made a brief return to square one, Castiglioni said another review in the Journal gave the Seekonk location the boost it needed, and he hasn’t looked back since. When Meritage opened its doors, it was packed from the get-go.

Now Castiglioni said he has time to really enjoy what he loves about the business: the people, the food, the wine and the fun. Two longtime managers and a full-time bookkeeper take care of the day to day, and he’s free to travel and spend time on his boat in between site visits, running reports and watching his customers enjoy themselves. He said he enjoys being a part of the burgeoning Rhode Island food scene, which has been steadily gaining recognition with a regional and national audience over the years.

But it’s not all business for Castiglioni; he’s also used some of his time to give back to the institution that gave him his start. Recently, he’s been volunteering his extensive mailing lists and contacts to the Alumni Association for fundraising purposes in the hopes of assisting the college with its mission: to continue to provide a high-quality, affordable education to students looking to better themselves.

“I think everyone should go to CCRI,” he said. “If an education is what you need to further yourself, this is the place to do it.”
Why I give: Jane Masso '89

When asked what prompted her to embark on the path that led her to open the Breezy Knoll Child Care Center in Smithfield, Community College of Rhode Island alumna Jane Masso’s answer is simple: an aptitude in the field came naturally to her. But the path itself was anything but simple for Masso, who started the business while she was still earning her associate degree at the college and raising two young daughters. “It was mirrors and strings and determination, I think,” said Masso of how she got through juggling such epic responsibilities.

Now, with Breezy Knoll celebrating its 25th year in business, she finds herself with more time to give back to the institution that gave her career its running start. She’s in her second three-year term as an Alumni Association board member, where she gives generously not just of her dollars but also of her time and effort. Masso cherishes the opportunity to give other students the chance to change their lives, as she was able to when starting out. “I’ve always had a very strong affinity for CCRI. I feel like I got my roots here. It gave me a tremendous start and the confidence that I needed,” she said.

Masso said that the faculty was part of what helped her balance the tremendous workload that comes with being a mother in combination with her studies. “The professors were wonderful,” she said. “They were so supportive. I found it very comfortable to be here and take classes, and everything fell into place,” she said.

After she completed her associate degree in Early Childhood Education largely on the Flanagan Campus in Lincoln, Masso went on to Roger Williams University for her bachelor’s. Guiding her own children had given her a clear vision of what she wanted to do with her life, and she knew she had an aptitude for early childhood education. When she began Breezy Knoll after being approached by someone who admired her teaching style, the center had an enrollment of 12. Now, Breezy Knoll is licensed to care for and educate 81 children, and within the first two years of opening her doors, Masso said she was enrolled to capacity. “It’s so rewarding,” said Masso, who found not just the field itself, but the process of starting a small business particularly fascinating. “Everywhere you turn, there’s a different challenge, and it’s not the same thing every day, that’s for sure.”

It’s fair to say that Masso values education, not just for herself, having made it a priority to go back to school, but for others as well. This is part of what drove her to become more involved with the Alumni Association, particularly in terms of raising funds to grow scholarship opportunities for students who otherwise would not have the opportunity to better themselves as she did those years ago. “These donations help students stay focused and not have to worry about affording school,” she said.

But dollars aren’t all that Masso has to offer; she and other alumni who are active in the college community can provide valuable examples and networking opportunities for students. Masso said she sends her employees to CCRI for continuing education opportunities, and is actively exploring the creation of an early childhood education affinity network, much like the one that the nursing program’s alumni boasts. “I think donation of time through mentoring and affinity groups can be a very positive influence,” she said.

Apart from her own fond memories of the classes and faculty at CCRI, Masso said that the camaraderie of the board is what keeps her involved. “It makes me proud to be part of this. … I love the people on the board and I love the school. The people that are on the board are very invested, wonderful people; they feel like they really got their roots and start from CCRI and they all went on to continue their education,” she said.

Masso’s connection to the college also extends further than her own education; her daughters, Jenna and Julia, both began their higher education at their mother’s alma mater. Her youngest daughter, Julia, is working full time at Breezy Knoll while completing her studies at UMass-Amherst online, and Masso said that she will one day take the helm of the family business. In addition to watching her daughters move through their programs at CCRI, Masso said she was extremely touched by the experience of the 2013 commencement exercises, where she got to listen to many of the stories that the graduates shared. “Many of us have the same story,” she said, “how we gained confidence to go on and be successful through the experiences we gained at CCRI. I’d encourage anyone who wants to start out in something, especially in early childhood education, to begin at CCRI.”

To learn how to establish a scholarship for students, call the Office of Institutional Advancement at 401-333-7150.
Crime Scene Unit commander, sniper team leader, lead instructor for the firearms training unit, department armorer, taser instructor and SWAT team commander. After a brief retirement, he will join the Foster Police Department as a patrol officer.

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### ’00s

**2003**

Julia Trainor, advanced registered nurse practitioner, joined Bond Clinic where she works with Dr. C. Jake Lambert in his cardiovascular and thoracic surgery office. She earned a Master of Science degree in nursing at Florida Southern College.

**2004**

Mark Cadoret and Alyssa Falvey were married at St. Martha’s Church in East Providence on May 25. Mark is a police officer for the city of East Providence. Alyssa, who attends CCRI, also worked for the city of East Providence.

**2006**

Jaime Elliott and William Ellis were married at the Japanese Garden in Roger Williams Park in Providence on Sept. 22. Jaime is the owner of Peas in a Pod Home Child Care in Cranston.

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### ’90s

**1990**

Ken McDonald, a member of the CCRI Athletic Hall of Fame and former basketball standout, recently was named head coach of the Austin Toros of the NBA Development League.

**1990**

Steven P. Tefft is a master tattooist who owns 12 Tattoos in Groton, Conn. He is one of 16 tattoo artists who will be competing in this season’s “Ink Master,” a reality show on SPIKE TV.

**1993**

Steve Rioux has been named assistant superintendent of schools for the Killingly School District in Connecticut. In this role, he will focus on state-mandated reform efforts, including implementation of the Common Core State Standards for students and the new teacher evaluation process.

**1996**

Raymond Peters recently retired from the Johnston Police Department. During his career, he served in the patrol division as a detective, BCI/
The Community College of Rhode Island men’s baseball team captured a third-place finish in the Junior College World Series in 1988. Rheal Cormier ’88, who was named to the All Junior College World Series Team, went on to pitch for 16 years in the major leagues and was inducted into the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame last year. The CCRI Department of Athletics retired jersey No. 20 in his honor during a ceremony at the close of All College Week 2012. The ceremony marked the first time in CCRI’s 47-year history that the college retired a jersey in honor of an athlete.

Back row, from left: Coach Art Pontarelli, Len Olsen, Scott Generazo, Mike Shannon, Michael Natale, Greg Centracchio, Chris Ayotte, Dan Kennedy, Doug Haynes and Assistant Coach Jay Grenier.


Front row, from left: Keith Pasqua, Steve Birkett, Rheal Cormier, Kevin O’Leary, Chris Dopart and Donald Cormier. (Missing: Dan Fitta)
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MEMBER UPDATE

The Community College of Rhode Island is always seeking unique stories about members of the college community, especially alumni.

Are you a graduate who is changing lives or helping others achieve their dreams? Share your story with us for possible coverage in a future issue of the Green & White, online or in a special commemoration of the college’s 50th anniversary in 2014–15.

Please send your story to: CCRI Office of Alumni Affairs, 1762 Louisquisset Pike, Lincoln, RI 02865, alumni@ccri.edu

We’re looking for a few good alumni
A holiday gala honoring champions of education, community and business in Rhode Island

CHANGING Lives Celebration

6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013
Rhodes on the Pawtuxet Cranston, R.I.

Music, hors d’oeuvres and buffet, awards, raffles and more. Cash bar.

EDUCATION CHAMPIONS
The Honorable Sen. Hanna M. Gallo ’76, ’81
The Honorable Rep. Joseph M. McNamara

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS
Sondra V. Ahlijian Pitts ’66
Thomas E. Pitts Jr., Honorary Alumnus ’07

BUSINESS CHAMPION
Carousel Industries of North America Inc.

This annual event sponsored by the CCRI Foundation will raise funds to connect students with their dreams. Sponsorships are available. To register or sponsor this event, call 401-333-7132 or visit www.ccri.edu/foundation.