



RHODE ISLAND  
FOUNDATION

# Giving Changes Everything

Fall Issue, 2019

“Rhode Island  
has flourished  
through tolerance,  
acceptance, and  
pride in individuality.”

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# The Rhode Island Foundation is a proactive community and philanthropic leader dedicated to meeting the needs of the people of Rhode Island.



Welcome to the Fall 2019 issue of Giving Changes Everything. I'm Jessica David, and my role at the Foundation is to lead and manage our strategy and community investments. I joined the Foundation over a decade ago, and feel so privileged to contribute as a team member.

In the pages that follow, you'll meet an inspiring pair of donors and a valued, trusted, local professional advisor. And you'll read compelling stories about two organizations that are working diligently on behalf of Rhode Island's kids.

We are also pleased to introduce you to six young Rhode Islanders who are headed to college this fall (and who will, mark my words, do great things), thanks in part to the generosity of the Carter family.

Finally, you'll read about our interest in the state of local media—and we hope you'll reach out with your own impressions and feedback as well.

Please enjoy!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica David".

Jessica David  
Executive Vice President of  
Strategy & Community Investments

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#### Contact us at:

Rhode Island Foundation

One Union Station, Providence, RI 02903

(401) 274-4564

[rifoundation.org](http://rifoundation.org)

# Making college possible

*By Lisa DiMartino, Strategic Initiative Officer for Educational Success*

Nothing opens doors and creates possibilities for young people like education. But for many students in our state, college seems like an unrealistic dream. For thousands of such students, The College Crusade of Rhode Island has made college a reality.

Andrew Bramson, president & CEO, states, “The mission of The College Crusade is to help young people be the first in their families to attend and complete college. Those words are easy to say, but the obstacles associated with helping young people achieve these is really complex.”

One key is to start early. Students enroll in The College Crusade in the sixth or seventh grade. The program then provides the steady presence

what we’re expected to do. We are able to go out into society and be well-prepared for anything that is coming our way because of this great program.”

The Foundation has supported the establishment and growth of The College Crusade over the past 30 years. Today, The College Crusade runs more than 60 different programs in 38 schools, serving approximately 4,200 students each year. That is 4,200 individuals and families whose lives are transformed by higher education.

Andrew recalls, “I met a father who came up to me and said, ‘I’m a single dad and I’ve got a really smart kid on my hands. She needs to go to college, and I need you to help me make that happen.’ I remember that conversation so vividly and it reminds

**“I met a father who came up to me and said, ‘I’m a single dad and I’ve got a really smart kid on my hands. She needs to go to college, and I need you to help me make that happen.’”**

**– Andrew Bramson, President & CEO, The College Crusade**

of caring adults, academic enrichment, social and personal development, and career exploration from middle school right through their college years.

One of those caring adults is Joshua Flanagan, a college advisor at The Crusade, who explains, “I try to be their biggest ally from day one and make sure to help them navigate the college process. It can be very difficult for our kids. A lot of them are first generation students who don’t have someone in their family or in their network to go to who understands how to navigate some of these things.”

Speaking for her fellow Crusaders, Stacy Paulino, a 2019 graduate of Providence’s Classical High School, shares, “It’s great for us to be part of this program (which helps us) go above and beyond

me every day of the fact that all of our parents have great dreams for their children, and we are lucky enough to be partners in helping those dreams become a reality.”

For their unwavering commitment to the next generation of Rhode Islanders, we were proud to recognize The College Crusade with our Community Leadership Award at our 2019 annual meeting.





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– Joshua Flanagan, College Advisor, The College Crusade





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Introducing this year's

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Carter Roger Williams Scholars

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*By Ricky Bogert, Grant Programs Officer*





In addition to scholarships, the Carter Roger Williams Initiative offers educational resources for students and educators. Learn more at [findingrogerwilliams.com](http://findingrogerwilliams.com).



Modesty, compassion, integrity, and courage.

These are among the values of Roger Williams that recipients of the 2019 Carter Roger Williams Scholarships cited in their applications for the four-year, renewable awards. The scholarships were launched two years ago by philanthropists Letitia and the late John Carter.

Roger Williams had the chance to further his education because of the people around him. Because of the vision of the Carter family, these Rhode Island students have a similar opportunity to think big about their future.

## 2019 Carter Roger Williams Scholars



*Jacqueline Contreras*, a graduate of Providence's Classical High School, is attending Providence College. She states, "Roger Williams exemplifies modesty and compassion. He believed developing your potential goes beyond helping yourself; it's about elevating others around you."



*Marissa Henley*, a graduate of Woonsocket High school, is attending Kent State University. She notes, "Roger Williams' relentless campaign for religious freedom, separation of church and state, and democracy are still ubiquitous today. Roger Williams' representation of freedom and equitability in the early stages of America are the ideals that I have built my passion of social reform on."



*Ezra Monteiro*, a graduate of Newport's Rogers High School, is attending Howard University. He believes, "In today's day and age, many people have forgotten about Roger Williams' principles and how they should apply to our everyday lives. When Roger Williams founded Rhode Island, he gave the colonists a chance to live a better life, regardless of their religion."



*Angella Nakasagga*, a graduate of Cranston High School East, is attending the University of Miami. She shares, "The steps he (Roger Williams) took towards creating a space for people to worship their God freely contributed to the freedom that permeates almost every area of today's society, including religion and politics. As a result, Rhode Island has flourished through tolerance, acceptance, and pride in individuality."



*Abel Ndungutsye*, a graduate of Providence's Mount Pleasant High School, is attending Roger Williams University. He says, "He (Roger Williams) gives me hope that everyone can achieve their dreams no matter where they come from. This is my motivation to never give up on my beliefs and dreams."



*Alfusatny Saine*, a graduate of Woonsocket High School, is attending the University of Rhode Island. He states, "Roger Williams possessed the ability to be open minded, he showed integrity and had courage. These are values that I try to emulate in my daily life to become a better me."





# What you leave behind

*By Neil D. Steinberg, President & CEO*

“It’s really about the small things that you do on a day-to-day basis that make the difference. It’s being in a school and talking to that at-risk kid who’s thinking about dropping out of school and convincing him to stay one more day,”

says Tim Hebert who, along with his wife Kim, established the Hebert Family Fund at the Foundation in 2015.

The Heberts’ grantmaking, with a focus on education, technology, and innovation, as well as generous support of our Civic Leadership Fund, is well-aligned with Tim’s career path. He is CEO of Trilix, a custom software development firm he founded in 2017, having earlier served as long-time president and CEO of Atrion, an IT services firm.

“I’ve been very fortunate in my career. The businesses I’ve been involved with have done really well, and they’ve grown and prospered. And as I became more successful I wanted to talk about what my legacy would be. I think once you reach a certain age, it’s more about what are you going to leave behind,” Tim explains, adding that the couple recently joined the Foundation’s legacy society by including the Hebert Family Fund in their estate plan.

Of their desire to help others, Kim says, “I don’t need a \$5,000 purse. I would rather pay somebody \$5,000 to help them get off the street.”

The Heberts, like the Foundation, are committed to improving the lives of Rhode Islanders. “When we started talking with the Rhode Island Foundation and started looking at a donor directed fund, we realized it was everything we wanted to accomplish without the headaches of managing it. The Foundation allows us to make our investments more strategically and to have a stronger impact at the end of the day, which makes the nonprofit industry in our state a lot stronger,” Tim states.

Tim has, through the years, also given generously of his time and expertise. He currently is on the boards of the Tech Collective, Boy Scouts of America-Narragansett Council, and the Rhode Island Museum of Science and Art, and has mentored youth through Year Up and the Rhode Island Academy of Career Exploration.

Tim and Kim are savvy donors who care about making a positive change in people’s lives now, but their generosity will continue to benefit the people of Rhode Island for generations to come. We are grateful for their partnership and were pleased to honor Tim and Kim with our 2019 Carter Inspiring Partner Award which recognizes donors who have demonstrated a thoughtful approach and commitment to philanthropy.





The most  
important  
thing you  
can do while  
you're here  
is to ensure  
the world  
will be  
better when  
you're not.

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One of life's great  
achievements is  
the ability to leave  
a lasting legacy.  
We can help.

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[rifoundation.org/legacy](http://rifoundation.org/legacy)  
or call (401) 274-4564



Tim and Kim Hebert



# Giving by example

*By James S. Sanzi, JD, Senior Vice President of Development*





If you also want to give back to the community, consider talking with your professional advisor about supporting the causes or organizations you care about, now or through an estate or planned gift. We work with many advisors and are grateful for the trust they have placed in the Foundation's ability to help fulfill their clients' philanthropic goals.

To learn more visit [rifoundation.org/advisors](http://rifoundation.org/advisors) or contact James S. Sanzi, JD, Senior Vice President of Development, at [jsanzi@rifoundation.org](mailto:jsanzi@rifoundation.org) or (401) 427-4025.

As a child, Rob Sherwin remembers collecting money for the Kiwanis Club to be donated to the Boys & Girls Club of East Providence. "Giving back is in my blood. I've watched my whole family be involved in charitable things my entire life," Rob recalls.

**"When I meet people in the community and I know they have the ability to give, I often ask them what their legacy will be. They will talk about wanting to give back to the community at some level, wanting to be involved with family, and long-term goals. That's what I'm all about, trying to leave some sort of a legacy where, when I'm gone, my family and the community will realize that I've had some impact," Rob states.**

Today, as a financial consultant, Rob advises his clients on their plans to support charitable organizations, leading by his own example.

"I've been reading about the Rhode Island Foundation for a long time, watching their activities and how they're involved with the community. I have a great deal of respect for how the organization is run and how they figure out how to impact the community. I don't think anyone in this area carries out a mission statement better than they do." This is why Rob has referred a number of his philanthropic clients to the Foundation through the years.

Trusted by his clients and committed to their values, including philanthropy, Rob was presented the Harold B. Soloveitzik Professional Leadership Award at our 2019 annual meeting.



Family, friends, and colleagues joined to celebrate Rob as he was recognized by the Foundation for his outstanding service to his philanthropic clients and to the community.



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# Improving children's lives, one data point at a time

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*By Jennifer Pereira, Vice President of Grant Programs*

A child's chances for success depend on many people—community leaders, government leaders, elected officials, educators, businesses, faith organizations, neighbors, and families. But no matter how well-intentioned we may be, the decisions we make affecting our children's futures are only as good as the data they are based on. Twenty five years ago, Rhode Island had no reliable, evidence-based source for that information.

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“Today, as we have done for the last 25 years, we take stock of where Rhode Island effectively supports our children's development, and where we need to focus increased attention and efforts.”

– Rhode Island Kids Count, Executive Director, Elizabeth Burke Bryant.

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That all changed in 1994 when the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation brought Kids Count to Rhode Island. Their early factbooks tracked fewer than two dozen indicators of child well being. But policy makers, philanthropists and other stakeholders were hungry for the data. Kids Count became an independent nonprofit in 1997 and today they track over 72 key indicators that tell a deep story about how the children of Rhode Island are doing.



Kids Count tracks the well-being of Rhode Island's 206,972 children. Data is tracked for the state and each of Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns. Here's a sample:

- In 2017, 74% of Rhode Island's children ages 19 months to 35 months were fully immunized, above the national average of 70% and 14th best in U.S.
- In Rhode Island between 2013 and 2017, there were 965 emergency department visits and 649 hospitalizations of youth ages 13-19 due to suicide attempts.
- In Rhode Island, the average age of school buildings is 56 years. The cost for updating schools in Rhode Island over the next five years is estimated to be \$793.5 million.
- Between 2013 and 2017, 64% of Rhode Island's children living in poverty lived in four cities: Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.
- Rhode Island ranks as the third best state in the U.S. for children with health insurance coverage. In 2017, 2.1% of Rhode Islanders under age 19 were uninsured.

Through a series of data- and research-driven publications, frequent convenings of key influencers, and a commitment to consistent public leadership on policy issues that affect children, Kids Count has earned the distinction of being Rhode Island's go-to information source for policymakers, advocates, and community members.

But this track record of reliability and commitment has made them something even more important in our community: the public conscience on issues affecting children in our state.

“By implementing well-informed, data-driven policies, we can improve the health, development and education outcomes for Rhode Island's children,” explains Bryant.

And there have been important improvements. Lead poisoning has been reduced. The rate of children's health insurance coverage has increased. The state has launched a high-quality Pre-K program. RI Kids Count has been at the forefront of important legislative wins, programs, and policies like these that prioritize Rhode Island children and families. These are the kind of complex long-term issues that could only be addressed with Kids Count and their massive 25 year “data well” for policy makers, philanthropists, and business leaders to draw on.

Kids Count recognizes that there is much more work to do. And the Rhode Island Foundation will continue to work toward positive outcomes that will guarantee opportunity and growth for all Rhode Island children.



Among key indicators tracked by Kids Count is the percentage of children who have health insurance coverage. In 2017, 97.9% of Rhode Islanders under age 19 were insured, making Rhode Island the third best state in the U.S.



Elizabeth Burke Bryant, who has led RI Kids Count since its inception 25 years ago, enjoys a light moment with a few of Rhode Island's more than 206,000 children for whom her organization advocates.

There are several ways to support programs that benefit children through the Foundation:

1. Make a gift to the Fund for Rhode Island in any amount, and join thousands who have entrusted the Foundation to direct grants in innovative and effective ways to forever meet the needs of all—even the littlest—Rhode Islanders.
2. Align giving from your donor advised fund with our strategies. We're happy to help you stay on top of the grants we are making that support children and families in Rhode Island.
3. Name the Foundation in your will or trust, and identify your legacy as supporting the needs of organizations that serve and speak for Rhode Island's kids.

**Want to learn more?**  
Contact James S. Sanzi, JD, Senior Vice President of Development, at [jsanzi@rifoundation.org](mailto:jsanzi@rifoundation.org) or (401) 427-4025.



# A public good

*By Jessica David, Executive Vice President for Strategy & Community Investments*

The press is sometimes called the fourth branch of government—providing additional checks and balances on decisions made and actions taken that affect each one of us. There is no law that says there has to be a fourth estate, and it's easy to take news media for granted because it has always been part of the fabric of society. That has only been the case because outlets have been able to turn journalism into viable businesses.

Yet as we all know,  
technology is radically  
changing many  
industries—and perhaps  
none more than media.  
And Rhode Island has  
not been immune to  
these changes.

From our perspective as a community foundation, a free and thriving media represent much more than an additional branch of government or an economic engine—it's a public good. Access to accurate, timely, in-depth information about what is happening locally is key for an engaged citizenry. In order to advocate for themselves and participate in their communities, people must know what is going on.

Luckily, here in Rhode Island there is plenty of journalistic talent. We are home to some exceptional local reporters, across many channels and outlets. We're seeing new, scrappy models take shape to share information at the hyperlocal level. And, media outlets that serve ethnic communities are finding their stride. That said, the coverage is not even across the state, and the audiences

in some cases are too small to be sustainable. Meanwhile, the strength of our statewide media outlets has diminished. Many of Rhode Island's news sources have been purchased by out-of-town companies that seem focused on making a profit but lack a long-term, place-based commitment.

The ways that each of us seeks out news and information is changing rapidly—my dad reads the paper and watches the evening news, my nephew shares bits of information with friends by text, I monitor social media, read news blogs, and listen to podcasts. In short, the press has splintered into countless iterations of varying quality and economic viability.

As a public good, we believe Rhode Island's diverse population deserves a diversity of news sources and delivery methods. And so—like many of our philanthropic colleagues across the country—we're beginning to explore ways to strengthen and support local, inclusive journalism. We've begun conversations with researchers at the University of Rhode Island and we've connected with a group of local media experts to discuss how we might invest wisely in the sector.

Where this will ultimately lead is not clear, but as a civic leader it is our responsibility to build, and strengthen, community where we can. It is a unique and important task, and we would love to hear your perspective.

With thoughts or comments, please reach out to me at [jdavid@rifoundation.org](mailto:jdavid@rifoundation.org) or (401) 427-4005.







The Urban Greens Food Co-op, which opened this past summer, has the potential to positively impact community health in west and south Providence, create economic security through job availability and profit sharing, and boost the food economy by sourcing from local providers. We are proud to support the co-op with an impact investment.

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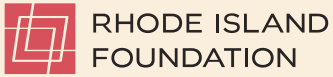
**Lead.** We have earned the trust of our donors, community leaders, and Rhode Islanders through a century of effective investments, strategic grants, and responsible decisions.

**Transform.** We align our fundraising, grantmaking, and leadership to inspire and engage Rhode Islanders to address today's challenges and create lasting improvements in our community.

**Inspire.** We challenge and encourage Rhode Islanders to become active and involved in the community, to form meaningful partnerships, and to work together for the good of Rhode Island.

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One Union Station  
Providence, RI 02903

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