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## eMCC: Multicultural Center eJournal (Winter 2011)

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# emcee

The Multicultural Center e-Journal



MULTI-CULTURAL CEN

Memorial honors the life and work of the Reverend Arthur L. Hardge, who died in 1927, a man who led by serving his brothers and sisters until his death in 1983. He was the child of many cultures: Africa, Europe and those of the Americas who lived on this land. The great grandson of a man whose fingers lopped off for teaching and preaching, Arthur Hardge had a passion for learning that could not be so easily quelled.

Hardge was a minister from the age of seventeen. He was a leader of the Civil Rights Movement, jailed in Florida for refusing to leave a restaurant reserved for whites, and later becoming the first black man in Rhode Island to head a state agency, creating jobs and hope for those who had little of either.

Building on a program established by Harold Langlois and assisted by Joseph DiMaio, Rev. Hardge later founded the Special Programs for Student Development at the University of Rhode Island, in which "Mr. D" and "Mr. D" changed the lives of thousands of young men and women. From those whom others gave no chance to succeed, Rev. Hardge inspired a new generation of doctors and lawyers, teachers and nurses, leaders in business and government, music and theater -- the pride of this University. It was, he liked to say, "always a pleasure."

In his name, we dedicate ourselves to justice, equality and opportunity for all.

Dedicated September 12, 2000

Issue 1 Winter 2010



# Green Expression

The eMCC is a bi-annual electronic publication from the University of Rhode Island's Multicultural Center. It features original creative works from undergraduate/graduate students, staff/faculty members, and guest contributors. eMCC is a growing branch off of an idea that a wealth of diversity exists in our daily lives. Often, we continue on our ways without noticing the smallest details or the most simple gestures. eMCC strives to give light to the beauty we sometimes forget to see.

In our first ground-breaking issue, we celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in a theme that questions, "How has community service influenced you to become the person you are today?" This theme was open to a variety of interpretation in a multitude of forms and formatting.

The resulting publication is an expressive collection of our efforts.

Editorial Staff: Holly Tran



# Saree from Gujarat

The suitcase opens, seven girls lean in,  
the familiar smell of earth and dusty roads  
spirals into the room, coiling around me.

A package. Black and white newspaper,  
cotton string. I untie the bow and glimpse

aqua, purple, magenta. I tear paper, colours  
spill into my lap, the silk like sand  
slipping through my fingers.

Gems, beads, sequins, exquisite and exotic.  
I sink my hands into the silk, lose myself  
in the smell, the touch, I can taste the richness.

I let silk fan out by my feet,  
jeweled under-layer. This is the one.

I bundle it quickly. Seven girls  
eyeing the sparkling border.

*This poem was written with the intention of capturing the moment that we return from India after being in the extreme conditions, having donated old clothes to the villages that my grandmother used to live in and therefore being eager to indulge in the luxuries of having new items to replace the old. The idea here is that community service carried out by myself and other family members heightens our appreciation for beauty and luxuries after witnessing the lives which others lead.*



Amita Joshi is an English Literature student from England studying at Oxford Brookes University. From a young age, she has enjoyed writing and studying literature, acknowledging how relevant and influential creative writing can be in society today—encouraging people to broaden their views on culture, religion and other issues of today's day and age. Having her poetry recently published in England, she decided to study abroad in America to explore the East coast for inspiration for more writing possibilities. She has thoroughly enjoyed her stay at the University of Rhode Island, and looks forward to returning with a journal filled with excellent memories, photographs and many examples of the wonderful places and people she has met here.



Community Service has shaped me,  
To be a person I didn't thought was there,  
A person who can actually impact their surroundings  
A person who is able to raise someone's voice to the ceilings  
Community Service made me realize that even my actions lead can lead to

Community Service made me a better person,  
Having help someone make a difference  
Experiencing protests and marches that change more than the surface  
Knowing that you're fighting for a cause that will benefit someone else  
The joy of being part of a movement or action plan greater than myself  
Community Service has made me open my eyes

Community Service gives me power  
The power from taking that step for Breast Cancer Survivors,  
The power in spreading knowledge to prevent or save the abused,  
The power is standing together in unity for equality  
The power of being able to donate to causes like Habitat for Humanity  
The power from making a difference in someone's life  
The power in teaching young children that they have a future,  
The power from reading and spending time with cancer patients  
The power of just being there for those in need  
Community Service is powerful to me

Community Service brings power, unity, common value and a voice to every-  
one involved. It's shaped me today and helps for a brighter tomorrow.



Denise Dujon is currently a senior at the University of Rhode Island, majoring in Biology.





## Introspection is a bear

Introspection is a bear that takes its time to recognize when it has awakened from its sleep. It's eyes moving across the memory of landscapes that bristle and tickle its fur as its attention stirs up perception to repeat again. The bees and butterflies fuss and frolic about their daze and sometimes stumble across a bear. Why one bee darts away and one butterfly floats around to see what can be seen, I cannot say. It may be that a bee feels stung by another and the butterfly playfully tickles along its way. Each brings a different experience to the bear and so they often get very different things.

When introspection lays its head down to follow its dream it forgets that it is part of the experience. As the dream plays with the dreamer, Introspection will wander through wonders. All the time asking, "I wonder what this could be?"

## Community Service

I grew up learning about community service through church, then TV, and finally by the stories brought back to the family through friends and relatives. Often it was around holiday meals where the desire to give of oneself was to be emphasized through the theme of the season. Growing up I remember several different ideas that became part of how I think of community service that developed out of the conversations and arguments that the people around me held. Today I ask myself about the ideas that help shape me as a citizen. Thinking of myself as a citizen brings to mind a nameless identity that is often labeled upon others.

Reminiscing to when I was a boy I vaguely remember a holiday discussion with Christmas specials squawking away on the TV in the background. The message I took away from this memory in time was that the best possible things that I could do would mean the most if no one knew that I was doing them. Today, I still cling to this perspective culture and had to internally wrestle with myself to begin to share some of them on a resume. Another bit of perspective culture that I have carried through the years is that helping others with a hands on approach is the most meaningful way to help someone. Coming to terms with what that statements means to me was not an easy task. Sometimes it meant that I said yes when I should have said no to remain in my comfort zone. Over the years I found no shortage of causes that have deserving missions and make the big and small differences that produce a difference in the quality that people live their lives. In helping others I have discovered that I have also been cared for, supported, and encouraged myself.

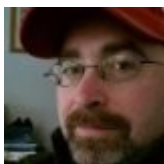
In my teens I worked at a homeless shelter and I overheard one of the individuals talk about how much debt he owed. I listened to how this man felt his burden affected his life and the future of his family. One sentence he spoke I never forgot. "Sometimes the cheapest way to pay the price for something is with money." I remember thinking how many people donated money to keep the shelter running and how much money it took to keep it going. That man was running over his life and was looking through a painful lens that colored him and his family as a task to be dealt with from others who were better off.

Money is something many people end up fighting over and too often will determine much about what people do with their lives.

When life is busy and I am struggling to find time with my family and self I remember back to how my father worked. My father worked seven days a week and then came home to more work. He helped his friends and attempted to have a social life by meeting up even when I thought he couldn't possibly keep his eyes open for much longer. When life is so busy that I cannot give any more to others I remind myself that I am a model of opportunity and culture that is being shared with all that I meet. Sometimes community service is being upfront about what you believe in and stand behind. When encouraging any element of culture there will be varying opportunities to support it through our lives every day.

Supporting a cause directly or indirectly can be done by sharing an attitude of openness on a topic, facilitate opportunities to learn about a topic, challenge discriminatory attitudes and remarks, share the learnings from both success and failures from investing in a topic, communicate that we all are role models of the behavior we seek, and give positive feedback when others display the behaviors that you seek to further. When individuals are made aware of the sacrifices that others are making to improve the conditions of others there begins an opportunity of communication and awareness that can be shared. When other people begin to see a familiar face on some of the issues that confront the community the chances are better that they will do something no matter how small to improve or advocate for the topic or cause. Whether we realize it or not, we all have the opportunity to be a consequential stranger to someone who will be interacting with many of the same issues as us. Sharing what we believe in while being open and respectful can create enough doubt to invite new experiences to break the ignorance of an unjust sentiment.

The status quo is supported by the actions of everyone and so the actions we take should be questioned, discussed, and openly respectful to ourselves and others. Recognizing what my affect is on the world and others is part of cognitive and spiritual development, but learning from my actions and sharing myself with the intent to make something better is also community service. Realizing what I share and give every day has shown me how much I have received and have been given.



Joe Santiago is the Instructional Program Coordinator for the University of Rhode Island's GBLT Center, an independent writer, and the founder for Santiago, Inc., his own publishing company.

**PINK.**  
*Women*  
ful Independent Notoriously Knowledgeable  
ESTABLISHED SPRING 2007



# R.I.N.K.

(POWERFUL . INDEPENDENT . NOTORIOUSLY . KNOWLEDGEABLE.)

## THE FOUNDERS!



Divya, Nehalga, Sam, Sheena, Meech

OUR MISSION

*[Handwritten text in a pink box, likely detailing the organization's mission statement]*

# WOMEN







*URI 101 students spend a Saturday morning harvesting over two tons of vegetables from the university's Agronomy Farm to benefit the RI Food Bank.*

*The Agronomy Farm, in addition to donating its produce, provides the university campus dining halls with tons of delicious veggies. Yum!*

**bonding**

# URI 101 MENTOR TUTOR

*Photos: URI 101 classes;  
Mentors—Mecca Smith and Jamie Kievit*







In 1998, Dean Richmond approached me and asked if I would teach our mentors for the freshmen seminar. At the time there were about 25 mentors, so I agreed. The idea of guiding students who were dedicated to helping our new students adjust to college was exciting to me. What I did not anticipate was how passionate these students were about the URI and local community and how that engagement could lead to such a connection with a class. This experience was a turning point in my life and shaped my view of service. It caused me to think of my own personal and professional mentors, reflect on what made them excellent mentors and try to model that same behavior.

Mentoring is such a powerful and transformative experience for the mentor and mentee that it is a great match for URI students who truly walk through the doors of Roosevelt each day and say, "I want to help others, what can I do?". This engagement has led to hundreds of students applying to be mentors now. The 25 students I started with many years ago results in 160 mentors each fall. It has also caused me to become a mentor in a professional association for another professional educator. Mentoring is contagious!

I will close by saying that I believe I have the best job on campus. I am able to see the transformation on a community through the influence of experiential learning and navigating that path with my students. Lucky, lucky me.

Kim Washor

Coordinator, Office of Internships & Experiential Education

University College

# Learning Through Mentoring

During my junior year of high school, I volunteered as a student teacher in the Summer Bridge program. The Summer Bridge program takes students from all throughout junior high schools in Providence; and attempts to prepare them for high school by introducing them to more advance material. By volunteering as a student teacher in the Summer Bridge program, you and another student teacher are given a class room of about 20 to 30 students. You are also expected to prepare a lesson plan teaching or expanding on a certain topic each week.

I chose to become a student teacher at Summer Bridge for community service hours because I needed community service hours—it is a requirement for graduating high school. Of all the things I could have chosen from as community service, Summer Bridge had to be one of the most difficult and frustrating. Originally, I thought Summer Bridge would be great. I'm usually pretty good with kids, and teaching is something I was curious about. The only thing I was ignoring was that teaching and kids don't usually mesh so well. Oh, and I forgot to mention that Summer Bridge is about a 14 week program. . .

In the beginning, Summer Bridge really wasn't that bad. My first day, I was introduced to my class, and since it was my first day, I was left alone to get to better know my students. For the entire class session we just hung out. We played games, laughed, and I got to better know their interests; some students better than others. After my first day I walked away thinking that this Summer Bridge thing might be some what fun. Unfortunately, my next class session weren't as fun and pleasurable.

By the end of every weekend, we as student teachers at Summer Bridge had to submit lesson plans to our head teacher's approval to be taught that week. At first this didn't seem like a problem, but after a while the head teacher that I submit my lesson plans too became very critical. In my opinion, he began to nit-pick and point out some of the most menial flaws in my lesson plans. I also found out that I wasn't the only student teacher to think this when the topic came up in discussion with a fellow student teacher. Although with time, this became the least of my problems. Once I had my lesson plan approved by my head teacher, I was ready to put it into action come Thursday. This is an easier said task than it was completed. For the most part, I enjoyed having the majority of my students, but there were a few that just made my job difficult.

Which led to another problem, because once those few students were out of control; they would disrupt the entire class. It would usually take 10 to 15 minutes to get the class back in order each time they became out of hand. Sometimes there would be a big behavior problem which required me to call in the head teacher to handle it. It was a real head ache. I soon began to dread going to Summer Bridge on Thursdays.

Despite all the trouble I had with the Summer Bridge program, it wasn't all bad. There were a few of my students that I really connected with, and never minded seeing. I would run into them around Providence, and we would talk for a little while until we went our separate ways. I also greatly appreciate the Summer Bridge Program when I take a step back to appreciate it. When I was a student teacher, they were short handed and took all the help they could get.

Their short handedness is understandable, because I can't really name too many people I know that would want to put themselves through the headache of teaching and keeping a class in order every week; while not getting paid to do so. I can also understand why the students may find it difficult to focus after being in school already for six hours, and then going to Summer Bridge for three more hours. The Summer Bridge program is also has very good intentions by preparing students to excel in high school by giving them more advanced material. Summer Bridge also takes the students on educational field trips as I stated earlier. In its entirety, I really do like Summer Bridge. The Summer Bridge program made me realize the difficulties faced and selflessness that goes into becoming a teacher. I do not regret participating in the Summer Bridge program, it's just not on the top of my list as things I'd do again.



Stefan Correira is a sophomore at the University of Rhode Island majoring in economics. He enjoys writing, creating hip/hop music, and spending time with his friends and family when he's not busy with his academics and professional endeavors.

How can you give your heart and not expect it to change you,  
Work your bones, and not let it re-arrange  
Your priorities, your dreams, your goals, and beliefs  
To lend a hand, a shoulder, in another's time of grief  
To be a friend, an ear, the support that's here  
Takes a selfless soul to give and cheer  
It takes a little to put a smile on one's face  
It takes a little to rekindle a fall from one's faith  
Change a life, and see a change in your own  
Take a hand, and give thanks, because you're never alone

Learning comes best by experience.

In service learning, one is able to fully jump into a situation and offer one's knowledge, skills, and lending hand. Community service is where one freely acts for the good of others without expectation of any gains or reimbursement. That being said, in performing service, one can never fully walk away without gaining something, without learning something, without discovering something. Something. What is this something I speak of? It is the smile that breaks across the face of an elderly man as you hand him a piping hot plate of food—this first he's had in days. It is the gratitude you not only hear, but the unspoken kind that radiates from the room as you sort through boxes of canned goods despite the pouring rain. It is the indescribable feeling that plants itself in your heart and blossoms unexpectedly. It's moments like these where you realize that you, as an individual, can make a difference. You can truly change someone else's day, life, outlook. This epiphany can in turn change how your perspective and how you see yourself, the world, and others.

Service. It is the act of selflessness. It is holding a candle in the dark. A flickering light, it is a sign of hope. Spread the flame.

Special thanks to our contributing artists/writers:

Angie Aries  
Stefan Correira  
Denise Dujon  
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Joseph Santiago  
Holly Tran  
Kim Waahor

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