

The 2017-2018 PrepareRI Ambassadors

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RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

Lynne Bedard

School-Based CTE Coordinator, Ponaganset High School



Dr. Lynne Bedard, Ph.D., currently serves as the school-based CTE coordinator for Ponaganset High School. She is also a NOCTI site coordinator and educational consultant. Dr. Bedard spent 34 years at the Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center, where she started as an instructor and from where she retired as the principal. The last four years of her tenure saw her role expand to include the position of principal at Woonsocket High School as well. Dr. Bedard is a member of numerous professional communities and organizations and continues to participate in career education-focused activities.

Project Summary

Problem: PrepareRI is a statewide initiative focused on ensuring all secondary students in Rhode Island have access to quality work-based learning experiences that contribute to college and career readiness. In order to effectively achieve this goal, there must be a point person at each high school that is designated to develop, manage, and sustain work-based learning while following the guidance of a set of job responsibilities that align with PrepareRI’s mission and vision.

Solution: In March of 2018, RIDE approved a set of job responsibilities for a “career coordinator” position that Dr. Bedard developed. Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, RIDE will encourage all high schools to designate a career coordinator who will manage work-based learning for their school and serve as the key work-based learning contact person for both students and external stakeholders, including business and industry groups, RIDE, and the Statewide Career Readiness Intermediary. The career coordinators’ responsibilities will include ensuring students’ readiness for success during their work-based learning experiences and on their future career pathways.



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Liz Dwyer

Mathematics Instructor, Rhode Island Nurses Institute (RINI) Middle College



Liz Dwyer is a mathematics instructor at the Rhode Island Nurses Institute (RINI) Middle College in Providence. At RINI, she modified the mathematics curriculum to better reflect what nurses might expect in the field, adding another layer of authenticity to her students' learning. Dwyer holds bachelor's degrees in finance and theology from Boston College and is certified as a highly-qualified secondary mathematics instructor. In 2016, she served as a Career Readiness Fellow during the writing of the proposal that secured the funding for the PrepareRI initiative. Dwyer continued her work in 2017-2018 as a PrepareRI Ambassador creating an interactive listing of statewide summer and school-year opportunities for high school students.

Project Summary

Problem: PrepareRI has a goal that every student in the state will have access to a work-based learning opportunity. The Summer Internship Program, piloted in spring 2018, is just one of the many work-based learning opportunities available. Various community organizations across the state offer other opportunities for academic development, college and career readiness, mentoring, and volunteering. However, students often do not know about any of these opportunities, as the information is not easily accessible. We need an online resource—accessible and user-friendly—that provides updated information about statewide opportunities.

Solution: As a PrepareRI Ambassador, Dwyer created an internship database to help students find summer and school year opportunities across Rhode Island. The online database includes opportunities in volunteering, academic development, mentoring, and more. Since this is a public resource, it is accessible to students, families, schools, and organizations. Users can view opportunities by category or location, and can submit new opportunities to the database.



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Stacy Haines-Mayne

Head of School Counseling, Chariho Regional School District



Stacy Haines-Mayne was recently hired as a Student Support Specialist at Exeter-West Greenwich Junior/Senior High School. Previous to this new role she served as the head of school counseling for the Chariho Regional School District for the last 17 years. Haines-Mayne started her career as a middle school math teacher at Chariho 28 years ago. In addition, Haines-Mayne is the former President of the Rhode Island School Counselor Association and former school counselor of the year. She has served on various committees at the Department of Education in addition to her role as a PrepareRI Ambassador. In her spare time, Haines-Mayne has volunteered at Friends Way, a children's bereavement center for 14 years.

Project Summary

Problem: When the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) was first mandated for all students in grades 6-12, there was little guidance on how to create an ILP. A committee formed to explore the current implementation of the ILP process discovered that many districts were struggling to complete the task and had difficulty making it meaningful. At the same time information was released that an ILP provider, currently being funded for schools to use, was no longer going to be available after the 2017-2018 school year, drawing concern from schools who relied on the product.

Solution: In spring of 2018, RIDE released an ILP Adoption Toolkit. That toolkit included a list of RIDE-approved ILP providers, which Haynes-Mayne helped select. Hayne-Mayne also created a sample ILP curriculum for grades 6-12 that school counselors across the state could adopt. The curriculum was aligned to both Rhode island requirements and the national American School Counselor Association's "Mindsets & Behaviors" activities. These two turn-key resources make it dramatically easier for Rhode Island schools to make ILPs impactful for students.



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Eric Hall

Director of Health Sciences and Medical Imaging programs, Rhode Island College



Eric Hall is a product of the Rhode Island public school system and a 1981 graduate of Rhode Island College. He went on to earn a PhD in Biology at Wesleyan University and has completed postdoctoral work at the NY Department of Health in Albany and Brown University. He has been on the faculty of Rhode Island College in the Department of Biology for over 20 years and now serves as a director of the Health Sciences and Medical Imaging programs at the college. He has been involved in the PrepareRI project for the last two years in his capacity as a Career Readiness Fellow and now as a Prepare RI Ambassador.

Project Summary

Problem: Currently, the transition from high school to college is fraught with guesswork, anxiety, and expense. While PrepareRI has seen success in expanding the number of college credits that high school students earn, other issues remain. High school students taking college credit while in high school without the appropriate information or advising may find that the college credits they earned in high school cannot be transferred or do not count toward the requirements of their desired major. There is information available to help students avoid this issue, but it is not easily accessible.

Solution: During his time as PrepareRI Ambassador, Hall started building supports for students interested in beginning to take college courses while they are still in high school. Hall worked to compile information on how the college courses taken by high school students align to the requirements of specific college majors. Ultimately, this information can be added to a centralized enrollment platform that RIDE is working to develop. This will make it significantly easier for students, parents, and families to find this important information. Going forward, PrepareRI can engage college administrators to promote these efforts while motivating college faculty to create and maintain the list of gateway courses for each major.



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Cynthia VanAvery

Director of Transition and Vocational Services, Northern Rhode Island Collaborative



Cynthia VanAvery currently serves as the Northern RI Regional Transition Coordinator. She is also the Director of Transition & Vocational Services for the Northern Rhode Island Collaborative. VanAvery has spent 19 years at the NRIC, where she started as an instructional assistant and advanced as a Special Educator and a Transition Leader in RI. Over the last six years, VanAvery saw her role expand to include presenting best practices in secondary transition throughout RI and at numerous national conferences. VanAvery is a member of several Special Education communities and is highly regarded by her professional colleagues.

Project Summary

Problem: PrepareRI aims to create a K-12 education system that is aligned with the demands of colleges and employers. PrepareRI has a goal that students with disabilities are provided with the supports they need in order to be able to participate in powerful work-based learning activities. Making this goal a reality for all students, inclusive of our youth with disabilities, involves a coordinated effort from teachers, school leaders, superintendents, and all stakeholders in Rhode Island's education system.

Solution: Building inclusionary pathways for students with disabilities and ensuring access to high quality work-based learning experiences is on the horizon for our youth. VanAvery led much of PrepareRI's outreach to the Rhode Island special education community, ensuring that stakeholders were brought into PrepareRI conversations at a district, state, and regional level. In addition, VanAvery supported the inclusion of PrepareRI goals in the statewide transition plan for special education. VanAvery has been a consistent advocate for the idea that "all students" means "each student"—particularly those with disabilities—have access and the opportunity to participate in all PrepareRI programs, including the PrepareRI Internship Program.



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