

“Rehabilitation, reentry, and restoration”



SOURCE: Wikimedia Commons

A New Hope in Washington State

By Sydney Anderson

A nationwide and bipartisan push towards criminal justice reform, generally focused on assisting past offenders in reintegrating, has been gaining ground in recent years. Between 2017 and 2019, 20 states expanded or added laws to make it easier for people to move on from their criminal records, usually misdemeanors.

In Washington state, a law called The New Hope Act has been quietly making its way through congress. The bipartisan sponsored New Hope Act will reduce requirements for obtaining a criminal conviction vacation for those convicted of both misdemeanors and felonies. The bill is highly necessary in a country where the unemployment rate of those formerly incarcerated is almost seven times the national average, and in a state where between 8 and 10 percent of those exiting prison are released directly into homelessness. Instead of the common refrain in criminal justice reform efforts imploring companies to “ban the box,” this law vacates

the convictions of people who would have had to check the box.

The brainchild of Representative Drew Hansen (D) and Seattle Police Officer and Representative Morgan Irwin (R), the bill was originally proposed in the 2017-18 legislature, but faced misconceptions and was proposed too late in the session to go anywhere. It was put back on the table for the 2019-2020 legislature as House Bill 1041.

HB 1041 is being hailed as one way to reduce the far-reaching impacts of racist policies and practices that have long oppressed communities of color, and especially work to undo the restrictive and violent impacts of the war on drugs and three strikes laws. Laws such as these are partially to blame for the disproportionately high rates at which African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans are incarcerated in comparison to their white counterparts.

In Washington, around 37,000 people are incarcerated on any given day, and another 88,000 are on probation, meaning around 125,000 are directly involved with and restricted by the criminal justice system every

single day. This doesn’t even account for those no longer on probation who still deal with the daily impacts of having a criminal record. While Black people make up 4 percent of Washington’s total population, they are vastly overrepresented in the prison and jail population – at 18 percent of the prison population. Likewise, whites are underrepresented, and make up 73 percent of the total population, and only 60 percent of the incarcerated population.

The “brief description” of House Bill 1041 says that the bill is “promoting successful reentry by modifying the process or obtaining certificates of discharge and vacating conviction records.” The bill essentially has two parts – it eases the requirements for obtaining a certificate of discharge for those who have completed sentencing conditions for felony convictions, and subsequently allows these folks to apply to have their felony conviction vacated, which means the

SNEAK PEAK

From Maxcy Hall to Brown’s campus to the City of Providence, the Urban Studies newsletter has it all:



The Mystery of Half-Staff

INSIDE THE logistics and symbolism of everyday semaphore.

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Human Rights and the City

AN URBAN Studies concentrator attends a conference at Northwestern.

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Rhode Island Mourns PawSox

THE AAA baseball team is headed to Worcester after this season.

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FEATURES

Hope Cont.

offense no longer appears on their criminal record.

Currently, when a convicted person has met all legal financial obligations (LFOs), the sentencing court is required to provide them with a certificate of discharge (COD), restoring all civil rights, except the right to vote (which is restored immediately upon release). Meeting LFOs with a felony conviction can be nearly impossible, where the average person convicted in Washington Superior Court owes \$2,540 per case, and LFOs accrue interest while a person is imprisoned, and the ability to get a job and stable housing is severely restricted with any sort of criminal conviction. A failure to pay these court costs can even land someone back in prison.

House Bill 1041 modifies the conditions for obtaining a COD. The modified requirements only stipulate that the person (whether convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor) is only required to pay the restitution portion of the LFOs to obtain a COD.

Once someone obtains a COD, they may apply to have a conviction vacated, so this greatly reduces the financial requirements that limit reintegration rates. The Bill modifies the criteria for vacating felony convictions, allowing for second and third-degree assault to be vacated, as long as they were not committed against a law enforcement or peace officer, and makes second degree robbery eligible for vacation. Wait periods for peti-

tioning are no longer tied to date of COD and rather are tied to sentencing date, release of confinement, or from community custody (whichever came latest), decreasing the wait period.

The New Hope Act also eases the process of having misdemeanors vacated and allows an unlimited number of misdemeanor convictions to be vacated, as opposed to the current limit of one. HB 1041 expands eligibility and allows those with a Failure to Register conviction to have their conviction vacated and allows anyone to apply as long as it has been three years since any new misdemeanor convictions.

Bills like this one often require the cooperation of the entire criminal justice system to be effective in their implementation. Similar laws in Indiana and California have only found success as a result of supportive prosecutors and the hard work of on the ground community organizations to get the word out and provide the resources to assist people in their applications. A collaborative, statewide effort is necessary to effectively implement laws such as the New Hope Act.

Luckily, the time for criminal justice reform is ripe in Washington, where this bill is being pushed in the state legislature, and a former police chief running on a platform of criminal justice and broad police reform is a top contender for a Seattle City Council position. Several members of the Seattle Seahawks are engaging in a push for criminal justice reform, and working with bail reform groups

Washington New Hope Act

- *Streamlines the process for getting a Certificate of Discharge, which restores all civil rights*
- *Aligns the rules of misdemeanors and felonies – currently an unlimited number of felonies can be vacated, but past offenders can only have one misdemeanor vacated*
- *Makes offenses like robbery and assault eligible for vacation*
- *Expedites the vacation process and opens up an increased number of felonies to be vacated*

in Seattle, namely the Northwest Community Bail Fund. The King County Prosecutor and co-chair of the Governor’s Statewide Reentry Council (created in 2016), Dan Satterberg, says that the passage of HB 10401 is the Council’s number one recommendation for this year’s Legislature, emphasizing the impact of the “collateral consequences” of interacting with the criminal justice system on a person’s life, long after having served their time.

It’s also important to recognize the severe limitations of a bill such as the New Hope Act, which relies completely on both community efforts to get the word out and make vacations happen, but also on the discretion of a judge. The process of getting a conviction vacated is discretionary and requires petitioner to make their case to a judge after meeting a series of stringent requirements. An individual could complete all of the stipulations required to petition a judge for a conviction vacation only to be denied by the judge with no recourse. A system should be developed to monitor a judge’s discretion and to provide a process for those who have been denied a vacation to try again. Judges are given a tremendous amount of power in these situations, power that can often be informed by implicit biases and could make it much more difficult for people of color to get convictions vacated.

The New Hope Act also requires individuals to “stay out” of the criminal justice system for a certain

amount of time, dependent upon the conviction, which can be extremely difficult to do given the high rates of recidivism (around 30 percent in 2011) in Washington as a result of the lack of supports for folks who have been released from incarceration. The five to 10 years between incarceration and potential conviction vacation can be extremely difficult as employers and potential landlords regularly discriminate (legally) against those with criminal records. A serious effort needs to be made at assisting those in this in between stage to not re-offend and provide them with the resources necessary to not be caught in a cycle of petty offenses related to poverty.

Still, the New Hope Act could be an important step in demonstrating the importance of allowing folks to reintegrate, both for the formerly incarcerated and for local economies. Some states, after implementing similar laws have reduced limits for when vacation applications have been filed from five to three years. Given the bipartisan support for criminal justice reform across the United States, it would be wise to capitalize on this, and make even modest efforts at reform in order to continue the fight to restore full human rights and eliminate stigmatization of those who have been incarcerated. ■

From the Editor

Urban Studies has been one of few constants during my time at Brown; though my friendships, extracurricular interests, and general temperament have all ridden the waves of my emergence into (semi-)adulthood, graduating with a degree in Urban Studies is perhaps the only thing First Year Colin accurately predicted about Senior Colin. Luckily, I still have one more semester to bask in the interdisciplinary glory of Urban Studies—were it not for my somewhat ill-advised mid-college intermission, the Urban Studies barbecue

and commencement ceremony this May would be much more nostalgic affairs. I feel greatly indebted to the professors who shared their wealth of knowledge and experience, the staff who helped me navigate Brown bureaucracy, and my classmates who helped create a real community of enthusiastic and empathetic students amid a broader atmosphere about which I could not always say the same. ■

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FEATURES

RI Weighs Options Amid ‘Brain Drain’

By Harry August — Originally published in the *College Hill Independent* on 2/8/2019

Rhode Island is worried about its size, and for good reason. Absent a mass migration to the Ocean State before the 2020 census, Rhode Island will lose one of its two seats in the US House of Representatives, placing it in the company of the Dakotas, Alaska, Wyoming and three other states with one lone statewide representative. (It didn’t help that former Governor Lincoln Chafee announced his plans to move to Wyoming last week, even if he was just dodging estate taxes.)

This means that state lawmakers, worried not only about federal representation but a stagnant tax base, are desperate to convince current residents to stay and new ones to move in. State Representative Carlos Tobon of Pawtucket made headlines (and drew criticism) last March for pushing a bill, the “Qualified Family Migration to Rhode Island Act,” that would give out-of-state families \$10,000 in tax breaks just to move here for a year. “People think we are just losing a seat [in the US House of Representatives],” Tobon told the College Hill Independent, “but we have a lot to lose. There is going to be money [from congressional appropriations] lost and influence lost, and that’s going to turn into lost opportunities.”

Rhode Island has one of the worst rates of population growth in the country: between 2010 and 2018, Rhode Island was 46th in the nation with only a 0.42 percent increase in population. Massachusetts on the other hand saw a 5.41 percent

increase, while other New England states, Vermont and Connecticut, were two of the four states with slower growth than Rhode Island. This is in part due to a nation-wide trend of fast population growth in the Southwest of the US, but many also blame the so-called “brain drain”: college students fleeing to other states after they graduate.

Travis Escobar, a Rhode Island native who works on policy for United Way RI and was recently appointed to the Providence School Board, helped found an organization—“Millennial RI”—to tackle this drain. “Our population is old,” Escobar told the Indy, “We are constantly losing young people.” Escobar is backed up by numerous sources, from Providence Monthly to the Providence Journal, decrying the flight of young people. In fact, one recent study from the Brookings Institution found that Providence keeps only 36.5% of its college graduates in the state, the second lowest rate of any metropolitan area in the nation.

But whether Rhode Island actually suffers from this problem is far from certain, said Rhode Island College Professor Mikaila Arthur, who studied the trajectories of the school’s graduates. Arthur told the Indy that “it’s totally not founded,” to assume that college graduates are fleeing the state more so than they are other regions. Instead, Rhode Island’s small size and high number of students from out-of-state mean that “the issue is not that students are leaving Rhode Island, it’s that many

are not from here and never intended to stay here,” Arthur told the Indy. So, while the idea of fleeing grads has perhaps been over-hyped, the need for attracting a young and educated workforce to Rhode Island to combat the consequences of an aging and stagnant population remains. As Arthur’s report makes clear, beyond just losing half our congressional representation, Rhode Island’s ability to recruit educated workers puts the state’s prosperity at stake. For this reason, both the Governor’s free community college initiative and groups like Millennial RI are trying, in their own distinct ways, to plug the proverbial drain.

Escobar, now the president of Millennial RI’s board, stays true to his generation’s archetype: he’s worried about branding. “Rhode Island is just undervalued,” Escobar told the Indy. (Equally stereotypical: Escobar did not respond to multiple voicemails on his work landline but immediately responded to a Twitter direct message). “People here always say, ‘I can’t wait to leave,’ but growing up here, I just never believed that.”

“We kept seeing negative articles about millennials and the brain drain,” Escobar said. When the Providence Journal published a piece entitled “Middle Class Squeeze: Millennials seeking jobs find better prospects outside RI,” Escobar and other young professionals felt moved to action. After proposing the idea of a millennial professional group in a Providence Journal op-ed, and calling for those interested to get on board, Mil-

lennial RI is entering its fifth year of recruiting and representing the interests of the oft-mocked generation. Now, Millennial RI has over 200 dues-paying members (out of the 30,000 or so millennials in the state), Escobar told the Indy, that can attend the group events (like “Adulting 101: Uncovering the Cover Letter”) and get discounts at places like Seven Stars Bakery (but only on Mondays.) And on March 28, the organization will be hosting its fifth-annual “#ChooseRI Celebration,” the group’s “largest networking event of the year.”

The Millennial RI website walks a fine line between parody and sincerity, with a series of drone shots of the statehouse and the Gano Street bridge on its homepage and five different appearances of the “#ChooseRI” hashtag on the first page alone. Their most recent event was entitled “Doughnuts and Debt,” and all of the board member’s headshots are awkward selfies of them in suits. But behind these hyper-professional graphics is the very real apprehension that millennials face some of the worst job prospects of any recent generation. “College graduates,” Escobar said, “probably have high student loan debt and stagnant wages. These are issues that impact our entire generation—it’s harder and harder to live the American dream.”

With this in mind, Escobar is quick to point out that their mission (“We want you to keep your dreams here in Rhode Island”) is not just about

» DRAIN continued, PG. 7

Public Art Bus Tour Draws Students, Locals

By Colin Kent-Daggett

On a brisk afternoon this April, undergraduates, graduate students, and Rhode Island locals alike filed into the Urban Studies charter bus for one of the program’s acclaimed bus tours. Though the crowd was initially met with bad news—Yarrow Thorne, the founder and director of the Providence-based arts organization The Avenue Concept, would be unavailable to lead the tour of Providence public art—the group was still in good hands between Urban Studies director Dietrich Neumann and Ed Lawrence, a board member for The Avenue Concept.

The tour began in Kennedy Plaza, where Lawrence discussed the impact of public art. “40,000 people go through Kennedy Plaza on a daily basis, and they don’t go expecting art,” Lawrence explained. “There’s such a different dynamic than going to a museum to see works of art,” he continued, citing the sense of public propriety gained by sharing works with the community and trusting collective safekeeping. When pressed by a member of the tour about the potential for vandalism, Lawrence pointed to The Avenue Concept’s intentional inclusion and recognition of graffiti artists in its program as a more sustainable method of preventing vandalism. Just behind Kennedy Plaza is

a sculpture titled “Cosmic Flower” by Brower Hatcher and Marley Rogers of Mid-Ocean Studio. The sculpture, according to Lawrence, speaks to geometric complexity through its use of the Fibonacci sequence and is even more stunning at night (with flash) when its reflective coating is more apparent. Across the street is “Column 6” by Gabriel Warren, an interpretation of an ice core sample that, like “Cosmic Flower” explores the symbiosis between art and science.

Between stops Lawrence spoke at length about The Avenue Concept’s mission and method. The Avenue Concept has operated in Providence since 2015 and boasts over 170 public art installations throughout the city, including 2D (mural) and 3D (sculpture) projects. Though Lawrence said The Avenue Concept had previously operated fairly anonymously, as the organization continues to bring artists from across the world to Providence it has drawn more scrutiny and has increased public accountability—a development that aligns with the organization’s mission to promote truly public art. The Avenue Concept sees itself as an important participant in the creation of public space and dialogue and a contributor to the ‘Creative Capital’ (and its estimated

\$100,000 in annual art tourism). Throughout the tour Lawrence reiterated The Avenue Concept’s commitment to supporting local artists, artists of color and from marginalized communities, and to working quickly and proactively with landlords and city officials alike in order to ease the logistical burden on artists—“we want the artists to simply come and paint,” Lawrence explained.

The tour continued through Downcity with “Free Fall III” on the corner of Empire St. and Foundry St. This striking metallic sculpture by Bulgarian artist Rado Kirov showcases an original technique that produces an engrossing, mercury-like effect. The tour continued with the mural “Party Shark” by Sam White, who was a resident artist at The Avenue Concept in 2018. The Avenue Concept funds a residency program in order to better support local artists and to provide even more infrastructure for visiting artists—the organization will clean brushes, provide paint, and move more quickly than a traditional city government-led project.

The tour then explored two of Providence’s most recognizable murals—“Adventure Time,” by Natalia Rak, and “She Never Came,” by BETZ, which face each other on two enormous walls between Washington St.

and Westminster St. near Mathewson St. Next, Lawrence spoke about another mural, this time “Misty Blue” by Andrew Hem on Orange St., near the Jewelry District. As described on The Avenue Concept’s website, “Misty Blue” is a dream-like interpretation of a photo of a young Cambodian girl who Hem met while traveling.

Finally, Lawrence led the tour group to “Still Here” by Gaia, a vibrant and stunningly photo-realistic mural overlooking the Providence River on Custom House St. Created in cooperation with the Tomaquag Museum in Exeter, RI, “Still Here” shows a young woman holding a black-and-white photo of Princess Red Wing, a Narragansett and Wampanoag elder adn founder of the Tomaquag Museum who passed away in 1987. While leading the group through interpretations of the mural and Gaia’s techniques from different vantage points, Lawrence spoke about the value of such empowering representation of Rhode Island’s original inhabitants in such a prominent space in the city. The students and locals left the tour thoroughly impressed with Lawrence and The Avenue Concept, but not before returning to Maxcy Hall for coffee and cookies. ■

» PHOTOS on, PG. 8

NEWS FROM CAMPUS

U. Proudly Flies Flag—But Height Varies

By Jesse Barber — Originally published in the *College Hill Independent* on 12/7/2018



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Mark Barnes, Chief Property Manager of the Rhode Island Capitol Campus, might get the email from the Governor’s Office at 3:00 in the afternoon or when he arrives between 6:00 and 6:30 in the morning. Mark promptly directs his employee Ed Butler to lower the flags to half-staff. Ed retrieves the key to the roof of the Rhode Island State House and lowers the US and Rhode Island flags to half-staff. The matter of who and what the ritual honors is not in the purview of Mark and Ed. They do not make the policy; they execute it.

Half-staff is the tradition of displaying a flag at half the height of its flag pole in commemoration of the death of a significant person or a tragedy. It attempts to establish a national ritual of community mourning. Yet its conception of community and who is “deserving” of remembrance invalidates its project altogether. Half-staff and its authoritarian, top-down way of remembering people champions the lives of the political elite and law enforcement while ignoring the remembrance of almost everyone else. In its unwillingness to mourn those outside of state power structures, half-staff loses its supposed significance and becomes a hollow tradition.

According to The United States Flag code 4 USC § 7(m)(1), the logistics of half-staff, referred to as half-mast for flags at sea, are the following: “The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day.” US flags are directed to half-staff by proclamation of the President or Governor of the state in question.

There are two scenarios in which the U.S. flag is flown at half-staff nationwide. First, certain occasions oblige the President to direct flags to half-staff for specific periods of time. For example, if a sitting or former President dies, the flag must fly at half-staff for 30 days (this was called into effect just a few days ago for George H.W. Bush); 10 days for the death for the Vice President and other senior officials on Capitol Hill. Notably, President Trump was criticized for prematurely restoring flags to full height following the death of Senator John McCain. Many accused

the President for doing so because of his political disagreements with the Senator.

The second scenario is—and here is where it gets interesting—that “in the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries,” half-staff is at the President’s discretion as long as it is “in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law.” If that clause seems oddly vague—it is. In short, the flag can be ordered to half-staff whenever the President wants. In practice, the flag is generally flown at half-staff for three reasons: the death of a prominent figure (other than the cases already included in the explicit code), a fatal tragedy, or a national day of remembrance—think Memorial Day or Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. In 2018 so far, The US flag has been at half-staff on 11 separate occasions, totaling 40 days. Five of the 2018 occasions have been to honor the victims of mass shootings, four have been for public figures, and two have been days of national remembrance. However, many half-staff directions are up to the judgement of the President or Governor. On March 2, the President directed flags to half-staff in memory of Billy Graham, neither a public official or national tragedy. The code also explains that the Governor of each state can direct all US flags in the given state to half-staff for the death of current or former government official, the death of a member of the Armed Forces native to that state who dies while serving on active duty, or the death of a first responder who dies in the line of duty.

As most of the people honored by half-staff are political figures or first responders, it serves as a means for commemorating agents of the state. Other than occasions of mass killings, a majority of half-staff proclamations honor military or police holidays (like Police Officers Memorial Day and Patriot Day) and political leaders like George H.W. Bush or Nancy Reagan. As such, the tradition’s attempt to constitute collective mourning is nullified by its prescriptive and unrepresentative nature.

The tradition of half-staff is a public memorial, much like a monument or a day of remembrance. Urban Historian Dolores Hayden, in her book *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, illus-

trates that a bottom-up approach to public monuments and collective memory is vital to commemorating representative histories of places and people, and thus creating inclusive and democratic spaces for all. To uphold a collective history and establish pride in one’s community, it is important for that community to have agency over the stories they tell and the people, places, or things they decide to remember. By the nature of its top-down procedure, half-staff determines who is deserving of remembrance without regard to the communities that it supposedly attempts to serve. In doing so, it fails to contribute to an authentic collective memory or meaningful process of mourning. Similar to other forms of national remembrance or public symbolism—in the form of statues, plaques, murals, street names, or memorials—flag-lowering rituals are forms of national remembrance that celebrate white men and their glorified accomplishments. Monuments to radical popular movements and subversive political action, especially that which is carried out by marginalized people, are glaringly absent because so often they stand in direct opposition to the power structures that get to decide who is commemorated. Furthermore, because of its reliance on the flag as a symbol, half-staff requires a belief in an American identity in order for individuals to participate. The question of flying a flag at half-mast becomes not about community mourning or collective history, but rather an arbitrary value judgment of the President or Governor prescribed upon the people for whom it supposedly serves.

Both locally and nationally, half-staff proclamations idolize law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. It is customary for US flags to be lowered to half-staff in a locality for such an occasion. By drawing the distinction between the death of first-responders and the death of civilians, half-staff prioritizes the lives of first responders—a sentiment that is often weaponized to justify police violence. The death of civilians is only commemorated in the case of gruesome and publicized tragedies like the mass shootings in Pittsburgh, PA or Thousand Oaks, CA. According to the Officer

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HOPE Announces Housing Assistance Collaborative

By Nathaniel Pettit

This year, Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE) teamed up with local case managers and public-interest attorneys to begin an exciting new initiative, the Housing Assistance Collaborative (HAC). In its fifteen year history, HOPE, Brown’s student-led housing organization, has paired direct service for people experiencing homelessness in the Providence metro area with systems-change advocacy work. The organization’s leadership is tremendously excited about the potential of HAC in helping to lower the barriers for marginally-housed individuals to access affordable housing.

Through the Collaborative, HOPE students staff 10 clinics at sites throughout Providence, East Providence, and Pawtucket. Their work falls into three main buckets. First, students help marginally-housed individuals apply to subsidized housing developments. Second, with the help of the team’s attorneys - which include staff of the Rhode Island Center for Justice, Rhode Island Legal Services, and SouthCoast Fair Housing - the students help individuals appeal denied housing applications. Finally, the HOPE students assist individuals in retrieving vital documents, like State IDs and birth certificates, all of which are critical in housing processes.

HAC, in many ways, represents the massive impact that student-led direct service can have. Through the Collaborative’s short history over the past two semesters, students have played a critical role in getting many community members housed. For instance, just weeks ago, a team of students successfully assisted a 70-year-old neighbor appeal a denied application, helping this neighbor explain her housing history to the development’s managers. Low-income individuals seeking affordable housing are faced by a barrage of barriers. HAC volunteers serve as committed peer mentors who are willing and able to walk alongside individuals through these tremendously bureaucratic proceedings while also tapping into the expertise of HOPE’s unique array of community partners. ■

*Interested in
volunteering for
H O P E ?*

Email nathaniel_pettit@brown.edu

IN THE DEPARTMENT

Jones ‘19 Attends Chicago Conference

By Emily Jones

Each January, the Northwestern University Center for Human Rights hosts a conference for undergraduate students, and this year’s conference focused on the intersection of human rights and the city. Previous years’ topics have included deconstructing memory and human rights, protest and propaganda and human rights, and human rights in the digital age. The conference is run entirely by Northwestern students and in 2019 brought in over 30 undergraduates from all over the US, including three students from Brown.

The opening keynote speaker was Vishaan Chakrabarti, author of *A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for an Urban America* and founder of the architecture firm Practice for Architecture and Urbanism, which stresses a concern for public urban life in their approach to architecture and city planning. In 2016 his firm came up with a proposal for the renovation of Penn Station which included a repurposing of the Madison Square Garden building that stands directly above the station to create a more accessible, open, and enjoyable public transport hub.

The conference was grounded mainly in Chicago as a case study city and had panels focused on housing development and advocacy, orga-



Source: [instagram/nuhumanrights/](#)

nizing around public transportation, and urban resilience. Moderating the transportation panel was Emily Orenstein, one of the founders of the popular New Urbanist Memes for Transit-Oriented Teens (Numtots) group on facebook.

One panelist was Jacky Grimshaw, the vice president of government affairs at the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) in Chicago (which is just one of the many roles she has occupied related to community advocacy and equitable transit oriented development). CNT has created multiple research and analytical tools to help communities and cities advocate for more sustainable and equitable development. Their Housing + Transportation Affordability Index combines housing and transportation costs to provide a more comprehensive cost of living mea-

surement for neighborhoods that could be provided with housing prices alone.

We also heard from Gabe Klein, the Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Transportation from 2011 to 2013, who was involved in the conversion of the 606 from former industrial line to linear park. The 606 had come up previously in one panel as an example of a rushed development project that fueled rising adjacent property values and displacing residents. The 2.7-mile trail took just four years to construct, and Klein praised the project’s short concept to completion timeline.

The conference closed with a talk and documentary screening by Andreas Dalsgaard, a filmmaker from Denmark. After hearing several previous presenters speak about the problems with trying to “Copenhagen-ize” the world – or indeed the problems with exporting any design idea to different contexts without considerations for the local particularities of those contexts – parts of Dalsgaard’s talk on how to emulate Copenhagen’s urban design felt out of step with the rest of the conference. Despite the off-key closing note, the conference was informative and well-coordinated, and not even that snowy by Chicago standards. ■

Bamuwamye ‘19 Explores Dance, Justice in “Rainbow Round My Shoulder”

By Ruth Bamuwamye

Many would argue that the hallmark of Brown is the freedom and adventure that its open curriculum affords. As an urban studies senior, it’s been crucial to use that very freedom to explore the city from yet another perspective: through dance.

In TAPS1340, a reparatory-based modern dance class, I discovered a new world of artistic expression and political dissent. The class revolves around learning short etudes (condensed pieces of choreography for study and performance) of iconic 20th century dancers and choreographers, while also contextualizing the lives and historical events that informed the pieces.

The Rainbow Etude, a piece of mid-century modern lyrical dance, struck me as a crucial piece of urban political art. The Rainbow Etude is a distillation of Rainbow Round My Shoulder, a larger piece choreographed and performed by Donald McKayle and his company in 1959. The imagery of a ‘rainbow’ around one’s shoulder is a direct nod to the image of chain gangs who performed grueling public works projects throughout the American south during McKayle’s childhood. The physical swinging of hammers creates the illusion of a rainbow around an inmate’s shoulder, a symbol of hope or freedom that

contrasted the oppressive nature of their unpaid labor.

Chain gangs in the United States are yet another legacy of slavery and a foundational image of the prison industrial complex. Yet, they also carry with them the notion that all public space is political. In the Jim Crow south, where chain gangs were ubiquitous, the image of incarcerated young men performing road maintenance or repairing buildings striped jumpsuits was an urban reality until recent history. North Carolina did not outlaw the use of chain gangs until the 1970s.

McKayle used the physicality of this image to communicate the struggle of racism, and the persistence of hope, in the midst of the early days of the civil rights movement. The choreography highlights the humanity of labor, the tragedy of emotional abuse, and the reality of police brutality on the black form. McKayle himself said in an interview that while the phrase “Black lives matter” wasn’t used when he made the work, “it was in everything I did in that dance.”

The challenge of learning the distilled version of his piece has been embodying the contextual information, and the modern relevance of such a narrative. The voice of Leon Bibb, the legendary folk singer and civil rights activist whose echoing baritone completes the piece, can be

almost distracting in its raw emotion. In being a new dancer, I can get lost in the seemingly endless combinations, turns, and cues. The essence of the piece however, is found not in the movement itself but in each dancer’s exhaustion and enslavement to the piece.

It’s in this imagery that I was able to intellectualize the embodied knowledge in the piece, dancing for performance will never be a perfect translation of oppression to those privileged to have never experienced it. It can, however, be a crucial step to better understanding the emotional toll of an oppressive historic structure, whose effect is still evident today.

The Rainbow Etude is one of the repertory etudes taught by Julie Strandberg and her team of TAs who are supported by the American Dance Legacy Initiative (ADLI). The initiative is based out of providence and offers dance instruction of folks of all levels and abilities in order to promote the legacy and accessibility of the American dance tradition. Strandberg, a distinguished Professor of Theater and Performance Studies, founded the initiative in 1993 with her sister with the goal of fostering explorations of personal and cultural identity through promoting a dance literate public. ■

Undergrads Return from Study Abroad

By Calvin Thompson, Yasmin Toney, and Sydney Anderson

THOMPSON: For my spring 2018 semester, I studied abroad in an SIT: IHP Climate Change program spanning four continents and 22 cities, including Vietnam, Morocco, and Bolivia. The trip provided an exceptional opportunity to understand the immediacy and scale of climate change’s impacts in the developing world-- Vietnam’s 3000km long coast vulnerable to sea-rise, Morocco’s dangerous water scarcity, and political conflict over Bolivia’s mining resources as standout examples-- as well as fascinating cultural experiences, like a Moroccan “naming ceremony,” that I would never otherwise have had. Through home-stays in each country, students have ample time to broaden their understanding of how regular people around the world live and work. The trip included rigorous travel and constant adjustment, but for any person interested in adventure during their undergraduate lives, there may be no better opportunity than a trip like this one.

TONEY: My program was through SIT (The School of International Training) and specifically I embarked on the IHP: People Planning & Politics track in the fall of 2017. I traveled to three cities: Sao Paulo, Brazil, Cape Town South Africa, and Ahmedabad, India for a global comparative analysis study on my topic: contentious forces in both the informal and formal labor market. Aside from my own independent research, I took international courses studying contemporary urban issues, sustainable development, and city planning. Traveling so frequently was not the easiest, and by no means did those 16 weeks come without any challenges. My favorite part though, were actually the people in my program. I was so fortunate to have a team of predominantly students of color and Black women comprising the largest portion of students. I am still close with many of them and we have meetups about every 2 months. They contributed to my learning in ways beyond my imagination and overall I am so grateful for the experience.

ANDERSON: Last semester I studied abroad in Prague. The program was history-focused, and I took classes in Czech history and art and architecture. I used the opportunity to study the Czech “panelak dum,” or panel house, pre-fabricated buildings created en masse throughout the country. Over 80,000 of these buildings were built from the 50s through the 80s throughout the country. The Socialist planning that influenced the beginnings of these communities was sound and comparable to today’s New Urbanism, but as the production increased, quality worsened. Since

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NEWS FROM RHODY

Pawtucket Mourns Loss of Baseball Team

By Daniel Plaisance

In August, the beloved Pawtucket Red Sox announced that they will move out of Rhode Island to Worcester, Massachusetts in 2021. The move comes after years of negotiations between the team and state and local governments, which spurred months of fierce public debate.

The PawSox, who have been a mainstay in the state since 1973, had been looking to move out of the aging McCoy Stadium since the team changed ownership in 2015. Later that year, the team's owners lobbied for \$120 million in subsidies to build a stadium on a waterfront parcel in the former I-195 corridor, which advocates argued would provide much needed development on the land and bring the team to the center of Providence's civic life. This plan was abandoned after opposition from residents and city officials; Brown University also demanded \$15 million for a part of the parcel the University owns, which was far more than the team was willing to pay.

More recently, Governor Gina Raimondo's staff had worked closely with the PawSox to broker a deal between the team and the City of Pawtucket, seeking to devise a financing strategy that would meet the owners' demands while allowing Rhode Island to retain one of its signature sports franchises. In June, the state assembly agreed to take on \$38 million in "special revenue bonds"

from the Pawtucket Redevelopment Authority to enable the team to build an \$83 million stadium near Slater Mill in downtown Pawtucket. Under this agreement, only state and local tax revenue generated from the stadium itself or ensuing nearby development could be used to pay down the bond, theoretically ensuring that the project did not drain money from the broader public coffers.

The PawSox were ultimately won over by a coordinated effort on the part of Worcester's city officials, business community, and baseball fans. The city's financing package, which included a \$100 million bond and a commitment to upgrade infrastructure and redevelop the neighborhood surrounding the stadium, was profoundly more generous than what Pawtucket had put on the table. The brand new Polar Park--named after Worcester's native seltzer company--will seat 10,000 fans and host a variety of community events, fundraisers, and concerts in addition to baseball games. The city will repay the bond with a new taxation district, which is designed to safeguard taxpayers in a similar manner to the Pawtucket plan. Other developments in the area will include parking, residential units, restaurants, and infrastructure improvements largely financed by the State of Massachusetts.

The debate that played out in Pawtucket and Rhode Island illustrated lingering disagreements over the viability of sports franchises and

stadium construction as an engine of urban economic development. Proponents point to construction jobs, jobs in the stadium, and consumer spending on tickets, refreshments, and merchandise as positive developments for local economies and residents. However, most thorough economic analyses find that new stadiums rarely create enough economic activity to justify the sizeable public subsidies cities offer to the teams. Worcester is counting on the stadium to attract additional investment in a struggling part of the city, hoping that the increased activity will draw businesses, restaurants, and other sources of economic opportunity to the area.

Beyond the impact on a city's economy, sports teams can have an unquantifiable impact on civic pride and community cohesion. The PawSox were a central part of Pawtucket's identity for several decades, and the loss of the team was seen as a betrayal in the community. In the wake of the decision, House Speaker Nicholas Mattiello lamented, "It is disheartening the PawSox did not show the same loyalty to the City of Pawtucket and the State of Rhode Island as the taxpayers and fans have shown to them for many decades." ■

WANTED: Backseat Drivers

By Julia Bianchi



Source: RIDOT

When the Pawtucket Red Sox conAfter successfully integrating JUMP bikes and dockless scooters this past summer and fall respectively, Providence is not losing any momentum as an autonomous shuttle program rolls out this spring. A collaboration between RIDOT, the City of Providence, RIPTA, and May Mobility, the Little Roady Pilot Project promises to bring a small fleet of six self-driving shuttles to Providence, introducing new technologies and bringing in new business interests.

May Mobility, based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, was chosen last fall after an open call for proposals. The start-up currently runs similar autonomous vehicle programs out of Detroit, MI and Columbus, OH, bring a solid background to the Little Roady Project. Funding for Little Roady is provided by a public-private partnership, with RIDOT committed to contributing \$800,000 for the first year of the program. A large portion of that sum, \$500,000, comes from a grant given to the R.I. General Attorney's Office after the 2015 Volkswagen settlement in 2015, in regards to installing devices in their automobiles in order to falsify true emission rates.

From Spring 2019 to Spring 2020, the shuttles will offer free rides between Providence Station and Olneyville Square 7 days a week. The vehicles themselves are fully electric and can accommodate up to 5 passengers, in addition to a safety operator who can take command of the vehicle at any moment. Each shuttle is equipped with cameras and sensors that inform the vehicle when to halt for stop signs, red lights, pedestrians, and jaywalkers along the planned route.

The pilot program strives to provide service and connection along the Woonasquatucket River, a route not currently serviced by RIPTA. The 5-mile route will run between Providence Station and Olneyville Square, with stops along the way at locations such as the Providence Place Mall and multiple converted industrial parks. The converted industrial buildings along the route, including the American Locomotive Company (ALCO), U.S. Rubber, Rising Sun Mill, and the Plant, offer a mix of office, commercial, and living space to residents and visitors. Including these locations in the shuttle route will hopefully bolster established

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Flags Cont.

Down Memorial Page, a non-profit organization that memorializes law enforcement officers, there have been 134 officers who have died in the line of duty in 2018, a smaller proportion of whom died in a non-accident. A Washington Post article reports that 876 civilians have been shot and killed by the police this year. On Thanksgiving night, a Black man named Emantic Fitzgerald Bradford Jr. was shot and killed by police at a shopping mall in Hoover, Alabama. He was an Army

Veteran; he was not honored publicly. To commemorate him would be to acknowledge the state violence that is primarily carried out against people of color, despite his veteran status. So, instead of commemorating Emantic Bradford Jr., the flag was just directed to half staff for 30 days for the death of former president George H.W. Bush.

Even among civilian tragedies, half-staff is reserved for specific cases. Natural disasters—in the past several years—have not warranted half-staff directives. Yet, if a first responder dies in the rescue, localities may lower their flags in commemoration of them. What is the distinction between mass deaths during natural disasters and other tragedies like mass killings? The US flag recently was called to half-staff for the heartbreaking mass killings at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA and Thousand Oaks, CA. It was

even ordered down for tragedies in Paris and Brussels; however rarely, if ever, does it honor tragedies outside of the US or Western Europe. How many civilians must die to be remembered with half-staff? In what manner must they die? Who must die? When it comes down to it, the tradition of half-staff is not only unrepresentative, but also utterly arbitrary.

While the supposed purpose of half-staff is to honor figures and histories important to the public, ironically, it generally excludes the public from the decision making process and of being commemorated themselves. It is a tradition that fails to contribute to a meaningful ritual of community mourning.

If the tradition of half-staff largely fails to fulfill its purpose and remains unnoticed by the majority of people, why does it endure? Half staff's purpose is to uphold its own history—tradition for tradition's sake. It attempts to galvanize a nationalistic remembrance, telling the public who is important and who it should remember. It contributes to an ethic that governmental service is the highest honor and contributes to the erasure of victims of state violence. Still, the nation's flags will fly at half-staff for the next few weeks commemorating the 41st President of the United States. Much of the country, other than Mark, Ed, and countless others who are obliged to carry out the labor of this tradition, will not give it a second thought. ■

Roady Cont.

businesses and apartment buildings. Currently, several buses service Olneyville, including the 17, 19, 27, and 28. However, most of the routes are anchored by Kennedy Plaza, forcing commuters to the Boston area to complete the trip on foot across several major intersections. The shuttle route, on the other hand, bypasses Kennedy Plaza, depositing riders on Gaspee Street across from the State Capitol.

In the past several months, individuals have been interviewed for the safety operator positions and the shuttles have been tested at the Quonset Business Park in nearby North Kingstown, RI. Throughout February, Little Roady performed test runs along the planned route and is slated to begin carrying passengers this spring. If successful, there is the possibility of extending the contract

with May Mobility for an additional 2 years.

While the Little Roady project certainly offers transportation benefits, the greater opportunity lies in the chance to research the effects of autonomous vehicles within the city. As Providence and many other cities experienced, e-scooters descended overnight and left city planners scrambling to update laws concerning the use of the right-of-way, bike lanes, and the greater roadway system. As the possibility of sharing the road with driverless cars becomes more of a reality, the pilot program will give the city the chance to prepare legislation and safety measures based on how the shuttle fleet performs. RIPTA also stands to benefit from research gathered through the program, as data on ridership as well as the necessity of the route will be assessed throughout the coming year.

Providence needs to seize this opportunity to get ahead of the curve—a rare occurrence in the age of rapidly evolving technology. ■

Abroad Cont.

the end of the Communist regime the government and community members have focused on improving the quality of living in the buildings and the surrounding communities, as they still hold a lot of potential in terms of walkability and having the space to add amenities. It was exciting to study this under Czech professors, many of whom had lived through

the regime and understood the panel housing to be a symbol of that time.

My program also allowed me to take classes at the international film school nearby, FAMU, where I took four classes in writing and production with students from countries all over the world. Through these classes I was able to travel throughout the Czech Republic and make many international friends. We took transportation everywhere we went — it's the best way to get to know a city as every urban studies major knows!

Drain Cont.

singing the state's praises. (RI's culinary scene and coastline get special shoutouts on the website, in addition to Providence's "cradle for creativity and risk taking.") In addition to rebranding, Escobar understands the importance of addressing the structural problems that drive millennials to "leave and hit the reset button." Escobar and Millennial RI have prioritized various advocacy issues over the past few years, focusing on topics important to their members, like protecting net neutrality and expanding affordable housing. Housing is especially important in Rhode Island, where a recent US Census study found that it has the one of the highest rates of 18-34 year olds living at home: 37 percent. Furthermore, according to a 2015 HousingWorks RI study, only 28 percent of Rhode Island millennials are "heading households," down from 41 percent in 2000. The group is ramping up this advocacy element in the coming months, Escobar told the Indy, and will be releasing a policy agenda in late February: "Jobs, education, and housing are the big three."

While it is an easy problem to laugh about, there is little doubt that attracting millennials is an important policy objective for most mayors and governors nationwide. As a result, especially before census years, local governments have tried all sorts of measures to keep their populations in-state. Recently ousted Massachusetts representative Mike Capuano, for example, once told WBUR that increasing air conditioner use in the state "would keep our population in Massachusetts." Other towns, such as one in Iowa and one in Nebraska—in a kind of twenty-first century reiteration of the Homestead Act—will give free parcels of land to anyone willing to move there and build a home. Here in Rhode Island, Governor Gina Raimondo is trying her best to do the same, with two policies specific to helping recent graduates stay in Rhode Island. One of them, the "Ocean State Grad Grant," pays up to \$7,000 of recent college graduates down payments on their first homes. And the other, the "Wave-maker Fellowship," gives a refundable tax credit of up to \$6,000 a year for graduates working STEM jobs to cover their student loans. These policies, by

explicitly targeting those already educated—those who might attend a Millennial RI networking event—could miss the broader problems specific to Rhode Island.

To Professor Arthur, the fundamental issue is that Rhode Islanders are not graduating in the first place. "The reality is people are struggling to get through college—it's because they have trouble getting degrees in the first place. They don't have the resources they need." The Governor's recently launched initiative to offer free tuition at the Community College of Rhode Island will help address this, Arthur told the Indy, and should be expanded to include Rhode Island College as well. As her research found, "more than two-thirds of students graduating from Rhode Island College are still in Rhode Island a year after graduation, and the majority either stay in Rhode Island for their entire careers or leave for a time and return." And perhaps most importantly, the Rhode Island Promise gives Rhode Islanders "that feeling that the state has invested in them and cares about their future," thus reinforcing their desire to stay, Arthur told Indy.

These kinds of statistics show that as much as people love to envision a constant exodus of millennials, many Rhode Islanders educated in-state do, in fact, stick around. Still, both Arthur and Escobar reinforced that the inclination to disparage Rhode Island—jokingly or otherwise—is strongest among those born in-state. "There are a lot of people here who just have not seen what Rhode Island can offer compared to other places," Arthur said, while she and other transplants usually just think, "How did I get lucky enough to live here?" It is perhaps for this reason that just this past Wednesday, CNN Travel published an article, "Is Providence the USA's Most Underrated City?" Escobar and Arthur would probably say yes. ■

Below: Brain drain



Above: URBN students go abroad

whom had lived through the regime and understood the panel housing to be a symbol of that time. ■



BELOW: WORCESTER STADIUM RENDERING (BOSTON.COM) ABOVE: MCCOY STADIUM (STADIUM JOURNEY)



ETCETERA



Clockwise, starting top left: “*She Never Came*” by BETZ; “*Still Here*” by Gaia; “*Misty Blue*” by Andrew Hem, “*Party Shark*” by Sam White.
For more information see BUS TOUR, PG. 3. Photos by Colin Kent-Daggett.

“See You on the Green” By Colin Kent-Daggett

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- ACROSS**
1. What a feather goes in
4. Common diet omission
8. Sound of amazement
12. Offline: abbr.
13. Tear down to the studs
14. Known in practice as RBS (Rutherford backscattering spectroscopy)
15. Non-professionals
17. First cousin's mother
18. Hints
19. Spring Weekend '19 artist
21. Spring Weekend '19 artist
23. "___ die" (Sunderland documentary series)
24. Lion's 'do
25. Spring Weekend '19 artist
29. Home of the Beavers and Sooners
30. Yard enclosure
31. Pimples
32. Spring Weekend '19 artist
34. Peak
35. Television schedule unit
36. Spring Weekend '19 artist
37. Spring Weekend '19 last name
40. Indian flatbread
41. 11-Down
42. What precedes the highlighted clues
46. Like the cat that's got the cream, say
47. Send a cheap lager via the web?
48. Commonly-misspelled possessive
49. Andrews of Dancing with the Stars
50. Exceptionally creditworthy bonds
51. Hip hop magazine
- DOWN**
1. Government org. founded in 1947
2. Activate, as a bomb
3. Better than gold
4. Food available on Fones Alley
5. Orgs. for 15-Across
6. Scooter brand (without vowels)
7. Sully
8. Hypothetical question
9. Latin: genuinely
10. Hog sound
11. 41-Across
16. Fork part
20. Mononymous Spanish footballer
21. Manner of running
22. Tortilla ingredient
23. Cent : USA :: ____ : Azerbaijan
25. Choice between access and gossip?
26. Supplemental part
27. UOEJ
28. Thirty-one, in Super Bowl lingo
30. Trendy Italian sporting goods brand
33. Allot
34. They're needed for small electronics
36. Pirate noises
37. Detective's assignment
38. Trendy YouTube category
39. Small ornamental case
40. A member of the Nilotic people of Sudan
43. 1 PSI = 69 ____ (SI unit)
44. Texas airport code
45. French luxury fashion house