

RIC Opens Up Studies on Addiction

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Posted: 1/22/08

The Institute for Addiction Recovery, a scholastic hub for the analysis of issues related to addiction, prevention, treatment and recovery, and to support individuals and families in recovery, has been formed at RIC using a \$40,000 donation from the Del Prete Family Foundation. As a kick-off event they held there inaugural forum on Thursday, Jan. 17.

Sandra Puerini Del Sesto has been named director of the Institute. Del Sesto is the co-founder of Initiatives for Human Development, Rhode Island's only statewide prevention agency. She is also co-founder of CODAC, a statewide agency providing substance abuse treatment services, and the R.I. Teen Institute, a program that has trained and supported youth leadership in prevention since 1989. This great level of experience will be needed in her new position at RIC.

"This is a personal and professional commitment," she said of her position at the Institute. "I look forward to the challenge of establishing an Institute at Rhode Island College and in the state that focuses on recovery."

In 2004, about 103,000 people in our state over the age of 12 were, or could have been, diagnosed with alcohol, drug dependence or abuse. This represents greater than 10 percent of the population. Many studies find that only one in eight of those found treatment.

Tom Coderre, a former state senator from Pawtucket who now he serves as the national field director for the Faces and Voices of Recovery, is one of a seven-member steering committee for the Institute that will oversee its operation.

"The Institute will be a central source for state and local government health and human service providers, and law enforcement officials, to obtain unbiased and insightful information," Coderre said.

The Institute will work collaboratively with academic departments on campus that offer degree programs and courses in addiction studies. RIC's psychology department offers a bachelor's of science degree in chemical dependency and addiction studies. About 10 other departments at RIC, including the Schools of Social Work and Nursing, also offer chemical dependency and addiction studies as part of their curriculums.