

# ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

One Old Ferry Road  
Bristol, Rhode Island 02809-2921  
401-254-3252, FAX 401-254-3599

Public Relations and Publications



## News

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Contact:

Debora M. Spano  
Dorothea Hesse Doar, APR

(401) 254-4652  
(401) 254-3252

## Marine Affairs Institute Established by Roger Williams University School of Law

**BRISTOL, RI (July 29, 1996):** Rhode Island's unique geography -- more than 400 miles of coastline -- makes the study of maritime affairs essential, and Roger Williams University School of Law is establishing a Marine Affairs Institute to fill this unanswered need. Under the direction of faculty members José L. Fernandez and Matthew P. Harrington, who will be co-directors, the Institute will be a focal point for the research and study of legal and policy issues surrounding the use of the oceans and coastal zones.

"There is a lot at stake here," says Harrington. "More than 8,000 jobs, upwards of \$390 million in tourism, more than \$24 million in commercial fishing, and millions of dollars in undocumented sources. The future uses of waters will impact greatly on these industries, in Rhode Island as well as other states and countries."

"The North Cape oil spill is a prime example of the issues which are still needing resolution," says Fernandez. "Look at the conflicts between aquaculture and commercial fishing -- decisions on these crucial issues cannot be made in a vacuum. They have repercussions in tourism, fishing, and property values."

"Of particular concern," says Harrington, "will be the legal implications of commercial development, policy and legal problems involved in environmental management, and the rights and obligations of commercial and coastal states. Our goal will be to encourage discussion and research into these issues."



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The Marine Affairs Institute will have a three-fold emphasis - traditional admiralty law and practice, environmental regulation, and the international law of the sea. In addition to research, the Institute will provide a forum for discussion through a lecture series, an annual symposium, faculty exchanges, and scholarly publications on issues of importance in marine affairs.

The proximity to the Roger Williams University's Department of Marine Biology, the University of Rhode Island's School of Oceanography and Department of Marine Affairs, the U.S. Naval War College, and the Wood's Hole Oceanographic Institute provides not only an experienced cadre of speakers in both law and marine affairs programs, but valued partners for the study of these issues and the formulation of policy solutions.

The Marine Affairs Institute and the Journal of Maritime Law and Commerce will jointly sponsor an annual symposium devoted to maritime commercial law. The first symposium, to be held at the School of Law in August, 1997, will focus on admiralty issues and will draw both speakers and attendees from the national maritime legal community. Future symposia topics being considered are managing the coastal zone, fisheries regulation and policy, aquaculture, marine pollution, and the law of the sea.

Professor Harrington, who worked for the oldest shipping law firm in the country, Rawle & Henderson (established in 1783), is an associate editor of the Journal of Maritime Law and Commerce, has written extensively on the admiralty law and is currently completing a book, *American Admiralty Law & Practice*, scheduled for publication by Lloyd's of London in 1997.

Professor Fernandez has written extensively on environmental rights and permitting, and global warming and continues his research and publications in coastal zoning, the public trust doctrine, and aquaculture, He was an assistant deputy public defender in the Department of the Public Advocate of New Jersey where he concentrated on environmental issues.

Founded in 1993, the Roger Williams University School of Law, is approved by the American Bar Association and will enroll 520 students in the fall semester -- 306 in the full-time day division and 214 in the part-time evening division -- representing 21 states and two foreign countries.

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