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Message from the president

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reason & RESPECT

A JOURNAL OF CIVIL DISCOURSE AT ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

From the President

I am pleased to introduce the first of two issues of *Reason & Respect: A Journal of Civil Discourse at Roger Williams University* that explores the theme of service.

While many universities publish scholarly journals at the graduate level, few do so as a means of engaging undergraduate students in intellectual inquiry. *Reason & Respect* is designed with our students in mind—both as readers and as writers. Its purpose is to offset more popular forms of discourse, where too often volume has replaced substance and reason. It provides a venue for all members of our community to respond critically, but respectfully, to diverse ideas and perspectives.

As an institution committed to civil interchange about the important topics of our time, we believe that discourse, no matter how passionate, can and must be conducted with reason and respect because we also celebrate those values as inherently important to our community.

Able edited by Professors Kate Mele, Robert Engvall, and Roxanne O'Connell, the journal reinforces a number of core values important to our university: a love of learning for its own sake; faculty-student scholarly efforts; commitment to service; a global perspective and mutual respect. Those values form the foundation of our university and are represented by *Reason & Respect*.

In particular, the Winter and Spring 2007 issues bring into focus the University's commitment to service. What is "service"? What motivates us to perform service? These are the questions our writers—mainly students—investigate in the Winter edition. The writers to be published in Spring 2007 grapple with how best to implement our service goals.

The journal has sponsored a student writing contest for the best essay on the theme of service. Interestingly, our Winter 2007 contest judges have selected an essay that "envisions a way in which writers help us to see the world differently—a kind of service which isn't often recognized." I am pleased to announce that Cora Tetreault, a freshman Legal Studies major, will be awarded \$100 for her essay "*Interpreter of Maladies: A Commonplace for Cultures*." Many thanks to the contest judges—Professors Paul Bender, Kathleen Micken, and Anjali Ram—for their time and effort in choosing Cora's essay from among these fine contributions.

I look forward to once again reading the various thoughtful perspectives presented in *Reason & Respect*, which, hopefully, will lead to further discussions about service among administrators, staff, faculty, and students.

Sincerely,
Roy J. Nirschel, Ph.D.
President, Roger Williams University