12-14-2017

From Fundraisers to Pageant, Mr. RWU Contestants Give Back to the Community

Jill Rodrigues
Roger Williams University

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.rwu.edu/weekatroger_featured_news

Part of the Higher Education Commons

Recommended Citation
Rodrigues, Jill, "From Fundraisers to Pageant, Mr. RWU Contestants Give Back to the Community" (2017). Featured News Story. 224. https://docs.rwu.edu/weekatroger_featured_news/224

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the The Week at Roger at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Featured News Story by an authorized administrator of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact mwu@rwu.edu.
As the Mr. RWU Spectacular celebrates its 15th anniversary, annual competition has exceeded $250,000 for pediatric healthcare research.

The contestants and personal assistants show off their homemade costumes during the Mr. RWU Spectacular. All photos courtesy of Crossings Yearbook staff.

December 14, 2017  |  Jill Rodrigues ’05

BRISTOL, R.I. – In its 15th year as one of Roger Williams University’s signature annual events, the Mr. RWU Spectacular celebrated several significant milestones – an anniversary and reaching a major fundraising goal – in bringing together the entire campus community to enjoy wackiness and pageantry, all while raising funds for pediatric healthcare research.

This fall, 10 students and their “personal assistants” have competed in a lip sync battle, accepted students’ dares from the Wheel of Doom, and dished up all kinds of delectable snack offerings in an attempt to raise the most funds for the Children’s Miracle Network. It’s that commitment to service which motivates all kinds of innovative fundraising and volunteer work at Roger Williams, but taken an extra mile by the Mr. RWU contestants in a 10 week-campaign that culminated in the Dec. 2 pageant.
Mr. RWU contestants perform a choreographed dance number they spent weeks preparing.

“This is just a different way we serve the community at RWU,” says Carol Sacchetti, director of Student Programs & Leadership. “This is paying it forward by giving your time – just like our tradition of volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, these students are putting in the sweat equity behind their commitment.”

With this year’s fundraising netting $17,465 for the Hasbro Children’s Hospital in Providence, these dedicated students and alumni have exceeded a quarter of a million dollars – reaching $260,000 this year – to support pediatric care, research and education in the past decade and a half.

Nominated by their classmates, the contestants contended in several challenges throughout the semester. But raising the most money isn’t the only thing that claims the Mr. RWU crown. They also compete for judges’ votes in a Miss America-style pageant that features a choreographed group dance number, talent show and more.

It’s a major commitment of time and energy, says this year’s winner, Skyler Moncada, a senior architecture major from Farmington, Conn., but all for a worthy cause.

“I try to find a way to make a positive change in any community I’m in, and this was one of the best opportunities to give back to the community,” said Moncada, who shared his victory with his co-competitor Victoria Davis, her service dog, Tony, and all of the other contestants. “This is really a community-wide event that demonstrates how it takes a village to make a difference – that even small donations or actions can lead to monumental change.”
Skyler Moncada shares the Mr. RWU crown with his teammates Victoria Davis, and her service dog, Tony.

Contestant Joey Sullivan knew it would be challenging to ask his fellow “broke college students” to open their wallets, yet his team conceived one of the most successful individual fundraisers that raised $338 in just four hours. He and his personal assistant, Rosalita Capoldo, collaborated with a local Chipotle franchise to donate 50% of all proceeds from Hawks who dined at the taqueria and presented a flyer for Team Joey that had been distributed through social media. It was “super user-friendly” and hooked his fellow classmates with something they need and love: food.

“It’s humbling to see what two people can do when they fundraise for a great cause,” said Sullivan, a sophomore environmental science major from Cornwall, N.Y. who credits this experience with inspiring him to become more involved in charity work.
Joey Sullivan (right) and Rosalita Capoldo may not have taken the crown, but they earned a meaningful award.

This year had another milestone, with the first female student nominated to compete for the Mr. RWU title: Madison Mastriani, who was surprised but game to help support the Children’s Miracle Network. She contended with some confusion over her contestant status – the competition was originally conceived as a way to get male students more involved on campus – but she noted that the campus community responded with an overwhelmingly positive attitude.
Madison Mastriani (right) and Natalie Gambrell perform paint splatter as their talent.

“People kept asking who I’m the personal assistant for, and I’d have to explain that I’m the actual contestant,” said Mastriani, a junior economics major from Palmer, Mass. “The competition is open to all genders, but the ‘Mr.’ was throwing everybody off so mostly males were being nominated and wouldn’t make the top 10. We’re changing that. When people ask why I’m doing this, I say I’m raising money for a good cause – for the children, and that’s what really matters.”