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Newsroom: Commencement 2011 at Roger Williams

Roger Williams University School of Law

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Newsroom

Commencement 2011 at Roger Williams

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From the Providence Journal: "[Roger Williams University graduates 1,000](#)" by Gina Macris

For RWU Law press release, click [here](#).



BRISTOL (May 23, 2011) — U.S. Sen. Sheldon

Whitehouse borrowed from one of modern history's most famous jurists Saturday in urging about 1,000 graduates of Roger Williams University to have courage and persistence in their chosen paths in life, particularly in these uncertain times.

Echoing Oliver Wendell Holmes, Whitehouse said, "The one and only success which is yours to command is to bring to your work a mighty heart."

"You enter a world that is smaller, louder and more crowded" than ever before, "with each day in your life a potential turning point," said Whitehouse, addressing about 5,000 people gathered under tents on the athletic fields of the university, which overlooks Narragansett Bay.

Whitehouse advised the graduates to go forward with "persistence through frustration," a quality which has served him and many others at various points in their lives, he said.

The president-elect of the university, Donald J. Farish, offered his own advice to the graduates. Quoting Mark Twain, he said. "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Farish was welcomed by Richard L. Bready, chairman of the Board of Trustees, who also thanked interim President Ronald O. Champagne for his stewardship during the past year.

Whitehouse recognized members of the Class of 2011 who have already begun to show they are entering the world as “independent men and women.”

They included Julie Guest, who has won a Fulbright Scholarship to study international adoptions in El Salvador, where she and her siblings were adopted by their American parents as triplets when they were 10 months old.

Others mentioned by Whitehouse have joined the armed forces, or signed up for Teach for America or the Peace Corps. One has brought national distinction to RWU’s sailing team, and another has been hired as an associate engineer by Sikorsky Aircraft.

Whitehouse and Denise M. Jenkins, a RWU trustee and the education officer at the Rhode Island Foundation, received honorary degrees Saturday.

At the RWU Law School graduation Friday, honorary degrees were awarded to **Paul A. Suttell**, chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court; **Robert G. Flanders Jr.**, former state Supreme Court justice; and Law School alumna **Betty Ann Waters**, who persisted in an 18-year quest to prove the innocence of her brother, who was exonerated of a murder conviction in 2001.

One of Friday’s Law School graduates, **Misty Delgado**, was also awarded a master’s degree in criminal justice studies Saturday.

A single mother at the age of 15, Delgado has juggled the needs of her daughter and her education for the last 10 years.

For RWU Law press release, click [here](#).

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