6-15-2016

Roger Williams University Recognizes Alumni Achievements at Annual Awards Ceremony

Public Affairs, Roger Williams University
Roger Williams University Recognizes Alumni Achievements at Annual Awards Ceremony

Mark Fallon ’78, Megan Alves ’91 and Theresa Agonia ’13 honored for their contributions to society, university community

BRISTOL, R.I. – In what has become an annual tradition to celebrate the professional and personal achievements of its alumni, Roger Williams University recognized three graduates whose contributions to society and the University community advance the common good and inspire others to address society’s challenges with insight and creativity.

Mark Fallon ’78, an international security consultant and counterterrorism expert, was named the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year in recognition of his long-term success both in federal law enforcement and the private sector. Fallon has been involved in the nation’s most significant terrorism investigations, including the investigation of the “Blind Sheik,” Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, who was convicted for his role in the attempted bombings of the United Nations and other landmarks in New York City. An advocate for the ethical investigation and prosecution of terrorists who threaten the U.S. and countries around the world, Fallon continues to oppose the use of torture and the Enhanced
Interrogation Technique program in favor of lawful and proven interrogation techniques that align with the Constitution, national ideals and universal values. Fallon continues to visit RWU and share his experiences with students in the School of Justice Studies. His book, “Unjustifiable Means,” will be published in October 2016 by Regan Arts and Simon & Schuster.

The Young Alumni Achievement Award was presented to Theresa Agonia ’13, a media communications graduate and Central Falls, R.I., native who currently serves as deputy chief of staff for Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza. An active student leader while at RWU, Agonia has been a dedicated ambassador for the University since graduating in 2013, including speaking to students during PRSSA Career Week and hosting current student interns in her workplace. In addition to her service on the Elorza administration, Agonia previously served as the business outreach and communications coordinator for Central Falls Mayor James Diossa. She currently sits on the board for the Central Falls Alumni Association, the Providence Performing Arts Center and the Children Youth Cabinet in Providence. In 2015 she was crowned Miss Rhode Island USA 2016, and on June 5 Agonia represented the Ocean State in the national Miss USA pageant.

For her ongoing service to Roger Williams University, theatre graduate Megan Alves ’91 was honored with the Alumni Service Award. A public relations ambassador and consultant for Weight Watchers across Southeastern Massachusetts, Alves has successfully led the planning process for the Alumni Weekend theatrical events that have been a highlight of the two-day event since 2013. Her work has included recruiting volunteers and performers, choreographing each show, organizing rehearsals, advertising the events, day-of production and more. Each year’s production takes at least six months to plan and is credited with bringing alumni back to campus after decades away.

The Class of 2001 was also honored with the Class Leadership Award.

“Each year the recipients are entirely different and entirely the same in their passion to make an impact, to leave a legacy,” said Vice President for Institutional Advancement Lisa Raiola. “It tells me that there is something special in the DNA of this institution. It is so clear that our graduates are driven to make a difference in society in ways that are meaningful and intimate, and bring credit to their profession above and beyond mere personal notoriety or gain. It is important that we acknowledge their accomplishments because they are, in many ways, our own.”

The Roger Williams Alumni Awards are selected by the awards committee of the Roger Williams Alumni Association Board of Directors and are presented each year during Alumni Weekend. The nomination process is open to the public, and nominees must have completed a minimum of a bachelor’s or master’s degree at Roger Williams University or College, or an associate’s degree from Roger Williams Junior College.

ACADEMICS   ALUMNI   LIFE @ RWU