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Public Affairs, Roger Williams University

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School of Continuing Studies Creates Pipeline for Inner City Youth and Adults to Career Opportunities with New Partnership

RWU's New Providence Campus to House Incubator that Includes Over a Dozen Community Grassroots Organizations



April 25, 2016 | Public Affairs Staff

PROVIDENCE, RI – Roger Williams University School of Continuing Studies and Unified Solutions, a collaboration of grassroots community based organizations, today announced the establishment of a partnership incubator to be housed at the new RWU Providence Campus at One Empire Plaza.

“Partnering with Unified Solutions will further connect us to the community by expanding our reach and engagement with a growing population of people,” said Roger Williams University President Donald Farish. “This unique incubator is another example of the University’s revolutionary model of engagement and immersion into the urban community.”

Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza and dozens of members of the community, as well as representatives from local and State Police departments were on hand for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the new partnership incubator.

"This new partnership incubator will expand the reach of Roger Williams University's School of Continuing Studies and Community Development and enable them to further engage community partners like Unified Solutions," said Mayor Jorge Elorza.

The new partnership incubator leverages the strength of RWU's School of Continuing Studies and Community Development Program to remove barriers for community-driven efforts to deliver tailored programming. Since Unified

Solutions reaches hundreds of urban teens and adults through its comprehensive training, athletics, art, and media programs the incubator will create a direct pipeline to access RWU's School of Continuing Studies professional development opportunities.

"Unified Solutions at Roger Williams University represents the true value within community collaborations," said Kobi Dennis, Co-Founder, Unified Solutions. "We are both about changing lives one student at a time and in many ways we are pioneers and revolutionaries that are organically infusing 'hope' into the minds of scholars both young and old."

The partnership incubator represents a best practice model for Universities working with the community to provide cultural and ecological contextualized economic community development.

"Unified Solutions reaches hundreds of teens and adults through its programs such as the Midnight Basketball League, the Teen Connect Program and dozens of other grassroots organizations," said RWU School of Continuing Studies Dean Jamie Scurry. "This partnership means we will now join forces to literally and figuratively meet people where they are. For example when a participant, family member or friend at Midnight Basketball is interested in exploring a career path but doesn't know where to begin, we will be there to help them identify a path that aligns with their career goals, is affordable, and is meaningful in the marketplace."