What’s new in your life?

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Address__________________________________________
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Is the above mailing address new? ☐ yes ☐ no

Please send your information to:
CCRI Office of Alumni Affairs
1762 Louisquisset Pike, Lincoln, Rhode Island, 02865
or fax to 401-333-7111 or E-Mail to Alumni@ccri.edu

Gem Plumbing’s Larry Gemma, Class of ‘77 and His Brothers

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SPECIAL INTEREST

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Clockwise from left - Brothers Edward, Leonard, Larry ’77 and Anthony Gemma. (Story on page 2)
Larry Gemma ‘77 & GEM Plumbing

As one of nine children, CCRI alumnus Larry Gemma ‘77 remembers a childhood spent helping out the family business. “As soon as you were old enough to climb into a truck, you were working,” he recalls of his father’s plumbing business, begun in 1949. Now, nearly 60 years later, Gem Plumbing & Heating has grown from a one-truck operation to a 200-vehicle enterprise servicing New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, and is considered one of the largest plumbing and heating companies in the U.S.

Despite the company’s unprecedented growth—it generates $35 million in sales—and its sizable employee roster—Gemma estimates his workforce at 350 strong—Gem Plumbing & Heating is still a family business at its core. Twins Edward and Leonard Gemma and younger brother Anthony Gemma join Larry at the helm, where the four combine their distinct styles to form a dynamic management team. “Lenny and Ed are very strong in production,” says Larry, recounting his brothers’ strengths. “Anthony is a visionary and a technical genius. And I’m a systems guy… Together we form three spokes of the same wheel.”

For many business watchers in Rhode Island, Gem Plumbing & Heating seemed to burst on the scene in 1999. Larry Gemma and his brothers, who had run the company since 1982, knew better. “From 1982 to 1999, we built a strong company based on technician skills,” he says. By 1999, however, once the brothers had achieved a goal of technical proficiency among their workers, they had shifted focus to customer service. The company adopted a policy of a 24-hour response time and a money-back guarantee—assurances that resonated with a background check, according to Gemma. “We don’t accept the sins of our industry;” he simply states.

Not only are Gem employees well-mannered, they are also well-trained. “We build value and skill sets through education,” says Gemma, who lists CCRI as a crucial player in his multi-layered education and training program.

The first layer of the program, says Gemma, is the company’s Institute for Performance Excellence. Each year, the institute hosts 30 contractors from around the country and the globe to expose them to best practices in industry education. “We’ve had Fortune 500 companies and small mom-and-pops participate,” says Gemma. “They both walk out saying, ‘Wow, that meant something.’”

The second layer of the program focuses on growing the skills of their own employees. New workers are matched with highly skilled master technicians who have been trained as trainers. The pairs ride together in an on-the-job mentoring arrangement. In addition, all technicians receive approximately 60 hours of additional training each year, with a focus on customer service. “Great teams never stop training,” says Gemma. “Doesn’t Tom Brady keep throwing passes every week?”

In a recent addition to the company training program, all apprentices without a college education can now enroll at CCRI, courtesy of Gem Plumbing & Heating. Gemma believes that this may be the first time nationally that a plumbing apprentice class is enrolled en masse in a college curriculum. The brothers’ goal is to have all their employees college-educated one day. Currently, only 20% of their workforce holds college degrees. “This is the beginning of something very large, and we feel CCRI can handle it,” he says.

Gemma’s confidence in the community college stems from personal experience. Before transferring to the University of Rhode Island, Gemma began his college career in the mid-1970s at the CCRI Providence satellite before moving to the brand new CCRI Lincoln campus. “I took a lot of business law classes. We were excellent in preparing me for business,” he says. Comparing his CCRI education to his URI education, Gemma reflects, “Some CCRI classes were as good if not better than URI’s.”

The Gemma brothers envision a future where all workers in the trades will be college educated. “We look forward to the day when we’ll be recruiting CCRI grads instead of placing our people in CCRI,” says Gemma.

In the meantime, the cost of educating his employees is a substantial commitment, and one that not all his industry peers embrace. Gemma is quick to refute any naysayers, and adds, “People ask me, ‘What happens if you train people and they leave?’ and I say, ‘What happens if you don’t train them and they stay?’

GEM’s plumbing class at the Lincoln campus, with GEM brothers Anthony (front left) and Larry ‘77 (far right).
(’68) Susan DeConte has been accepted as a member of the National Honor Roll’s Outstanding American Teachers for 2005 – 2006.

(’70) Gill Estrella, a Navy veteran and grandfather of two, has been retired since 1998. He is now enjoying Florida with his wife of 46 years, Judy.

(’74) Marilyn Asselin has been appointed associate vice president for patient care services at Kent Hospital. She is also an editorial board member for The Journal for Nurses in Staff Development.

(’75) Kathleen Bannan and her husband, Wayne, were blessed with a new grandson, Tyler Austin on that same date. Kathleen and Wayne met at the CCRI Knight Campus in 1975.

(’78) Helen Quinn retired at age 55 after 23 years as a nurse, including work in hospitals, nursing homes, hospice care, nursing home care, private duty, walk-in clinics and Brown University’s day care.

(’79) Susan-Marie Beauchemin received her MA in Holistic Counseling in 2001 and her CAGS in Expressive Art Therapy in 2002 from Salve Regina University. She is an agency psychologist and is working with the developmentally challenged.

(’80) Sandy Broadhurst, a former player on the CCRI women’s basketball and softball teams, has been employed by the U.S. Postal Service for the past 18 years. She is a one-year breast cancer survivor.

(’85) Nicole M. Provost has been promoted to officer/branch manager of the Coventry Stop & Shop branch of Citizens Bank.

(’88) Joseph Klucznik has been appointed fire chief for the East Providence Fire Department.

(’89) Patricia Cardillo was recently named to the Manchester Who’s Who Among Executive and Professional Women in Nursing and Healthcare.

Karen Fontaine and Michael Therrien were married on April 22, 2006 at St. Paul Church of Edgewood in Cranston.

Lydia Smith, who has worked as a licensed massage therapist, is now a junior level student at Arizona State University. She writes that she will become Lydia C. Smith-Wheelock shortly.

(’90) Kathy Irons appeared in The Community Players’ production of the rollicking farce, Love, Sex and the I.R.S., which was presented in June in Pawtucket.

(’93) Gina Pereira was promoted to assistant manager at Centreville Bank.

(’96) Cherie (Paliotta) Adams has released her solo debut album entitled, “The Sweet Life.” Over the last eight years, Adams has had an extensive career in the recording profession. In 1998, she signed a record contract with EMI/Sparrow Record Label and traveled with the award-winning Christian group, Avalon. As one of the lead vocalists of that group, Adams won an American Music Award, two Grammy Awards, two Dove Awards, and two gold records, and has had ten number-one hits in the inspirational pop genre. Since 2003 she has been writing and recording her own solo project. “The Sweet Life” is Cherie’s first solo offering and will be released to the stores in the coming months, but it is currently available for purchase on her Web site store. “Water,” the first single off of this album, has already achieved number one status. Cherie will be performing at the New Life Worship Center in Smithfield, RI, on November 19, 2006. For more information, please visit www. cherieadams.com.

(Continued on page 4)

2006 Alumni Donors

Presidential $10,000+
Ellen M. Burns 1992
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Robert J. Canulla 1969
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Suzanne S. &  1974
Edward R. Lemoine 1973
Patricia J. Leonard 1979
Alumni Golf Outing

The Fourth Annual CCRI Golf Outing was held on June 15, 2006 at the Cranston Country Club. Over 100 golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the course followed by lunch and a raffle. The generosity of all the participants helped to raise over $7,500 for the Alumni Association

InSkip AutoMall donated all of the Hole-in-One prizes including this car.

Registration volunteers: Liz Mancini ’71, Mary Pecchia, Sondra Pitts ’66, Tonia Fay ’87, Maria Albini, Don Baker ’73, Robin McDuff ’98 and Geraldine Peixoto.

John Ribezzo, CCRI faculty and CCRI alumnus, Class of 69, signs in at the registration table.

Deb Zielinski, Administrative Assistant to CCRI President, holds her raffle prize of NE Patriots memorabilia.

CCRI President Ray M. Di Pasquale and Ronald J. Caniglia, president, CCRI Foundation, share a laugh.

Lou Pullano ’73 helps President Ray M. Di Pasquale with the raffle prizes.

Rick Kavanagh, Richard Marchetti, Joe Pavone ’72 and Bill Guisti watch a very long drive.

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CCRI Alumni Book Scholarship Thank You Letter

My name is Cristian W. Potter, and I would like to emphatically thank you for offering this scholarship to students at the school. I am eternally grateful for the opportunities that this school has provided me already, and receiving this scholarship has only made me even more appreciative of CCRI’s efforts to make a college education accessible and affordable to everyone. I am planning on transferring to a four-year institution to study economics and hopefully pursue a career in government and/or politics. I believe CCRI is providing a service that benefits not only the students, but the economy, the community, and the whole of our great state.

This scholarship means a great deal to the typical CCRI student, often referred to as “non-traditional.” Many of us are working parents, and are not eligible for Pell grants or need-based aid. The federal loan has a cap of fifteen hundred dollars per semester, and has not been adjusted in several years, despite the constantly rising rate of tuition. The loan program stating that because of the school’s low cost, the loans are kept at that rate to cover only the cost of tuition and books, but the loan amount is no longer enough to buy more than one book after paying a full semester’s tuition. This is often a deterrent for students wishing to take five classes—we simply can’t afford the fifth book. This often causes students to delay graduation and/or transferring one additional semester. I hope that this issue can, and will, be addressed.

In the meantime, this scholarship is a godsend. Personally I was debating delaying buying one of my books for a couple of weeks (which, in some classes, puts students at a crippling disadvantage) because I need to fix the brakes on my car. The other alternative was to take the bus from Post Road after work, and go all the way downtown and back to the Knight campus. This would take my five minute drive and turn it into an hour or more bus ride. I depend on the time I have between work and class to study and finish homework. I currently have a 4.0 GPA, and would like to attend the kind of senior institution that I simply can’t afford. Not getting my books or my breaks fixed could’ve put that dream in jeopardy.

I’d like to reiterate my sincere gratitude for the Alumni Association’s generosity. I was so relieved when I was told that I had been granted the scholarship, that I couldn’t stop smiling the whole day. My father is very ill, and I would like to be able to have him see at least one of his children graduate from college before he passes. I also have a teenage brother in my care, and two small children whom I know it is imperative to show the benefits of education and hard work. This scholarship may only be for books, but for me it is a great relief for me and all of the people who depend on me. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Cristian W. Potter
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Lifespan
Sovereign Bank

Sponsors...
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Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Crute
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Please visit the Bookstore’s Web site at www.ccri.edu for alumni gifts & clothing.

“Changing Lives Achieving Dreams”
Inaugural Celebration President Roy M. Di Paugno March 19-23, 2007

Community College of Rhode Island
Alumni Book Scholarship Winners

Ten students were named recipients of the CCRI Alumni Association Book Scholarship. They are: Jillian Craig, Joelle K. Daspin, Kari Lynn DiMascio, Stephanie Gauvin, Amanda Lewis, Lisa Magiera, Nancy Nicholson, Janet Peters, Cristian Potter and Kimberley Vale. Each recipient was awarded $250 toward their textbooks. Pictured above are President Di Pasquale (center) and members of the scholarship selection committee with several of the recipients.

President’s Crusaders Council

The President’s Crusaders Council is a special group of donors who have distinguished themselves in supporting the College by giving $1,000 or more for a minimum of three years. Members of the Crusaders Council play a unique role, meeting privately with the President for coffee and conversation to learn of his vision and offer their perspective on CCRI’s direction. In addition, Crusaders enjoy select benefits including an intimate cocktail party at the President’s home to celebrate the winter holidays. Finally, Crusaders are recognized as star donors in the CCRI Foundation Annual Report. President Di Pasquale and the CCRI community deeply appreciate Crusaders’ ongoing generosity. We urge you to consider joining this prestigious group and help CCRI to continue “changing lives.”

President’s Crusaders Council Charter Members

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<th>Thomas and Maureen Brady</th>
<th>Jennifer Bramley</th>
<th>Ronald J. Caniglia</th>
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<td>Richard V. DiGennaro*</td>
<td>Leonard A. Di Lorenzo</td>
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<td>Kenneth G. Fuller*</td>
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(Supporters continued from page 5)

Alumni Book Scholarship Winners

From left to right... Ronald J. Caniglia, President, CCRI Foundation; Ray M. Di Pasquale, President, CCRI; Eileen & Walter (98) Jachna (Crusader recipients)

Crusader's Council Star

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<td>For more information call 401-333-7150 or e-mail <a href="mailto:foundation@ccri.edu">foundation@ccri.edu</a></td>
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For more information call 401-333-7150 or e-mail foundation@ccri.edu
Volleyball

The #20 ranked CCRI Lady Knights women’s volleyball team is in the midst of an amazing record-setting season both as a team and in crushing individual records. The Lady Knights have been ranked by the NJCAA in Division II for the first time ever, reaching as high as #15 and now standing at #20. The Lady Knights have set a new single season win mark of 36 wins (38-6 overall), six wins more than their previous record-setting season last year. As a team they have already surpassed the prior team records for kills, assists, aces and digs; they are only a handful of blocks away from setting that record as well. Individually the Lady Knights have set an amazing nine new records including:

- Kimiyô Garcia (East Providence) holds the single season kills record of 418, career kills record of 896, blocks in a season with 242 and blocks in a career with 425.
- Jasmine Bonanza (Swansea, Mass.) broke her own single-season digs record with 624 and career digs with 1,239.
- Ashley Markley (Preston, Conn.) set the single-season and career assists mark as a freshman with 937 assists. (Note: the team assists record before this year was 648!)
- April Oberhelman (Woonsocket) holds the career aces mark of 166 aces, as well as the single-season aces mark of 107 she set in 2005.

The Lady Knights have set all these records with two regular season matches, Districts and possibly Nationals yet to play. There have been many Lady Knights that have earned All-Conference and possibly Nationals yet to play. There have been many Lady Knights that have earned All-Conference and possibly Nationals yet to play. There have been many Lady Knights that have earned All-Conference and possibly Nationals yet to play.

Men’s Soccer

The CCRI Knights men’s soccer team finished the season 10-6-2, just narrowly missing out on the post season. Though they did not make it into post-season play, they finished strongly winning their last four contests. One of the main reasons for this success was the emergence of Travis Fraser (Blackstone, Mass.), who tallied nine goals in the last four games, including two hat tricks. For the season Fraser had 11 goals and three assists for a team-leading 25 total points. Also helping the Knights in the scoring department this year were Mario Clicache (West Warwick) with seven goals and two assists for 16 total points and Peter Maciel (East Providence) with five goals and five assists for 15 total points. Co-captain Kevin Dos Santos (Cumberland) excelled in goals this season, charting seven shutouts on the season with a miniscule 0.72 goals against average. The Knights should come out as strong contenders next year with players like Fraser, Clicache and Maciel set to return as seniors.

Cross Country

The CCRI Cross Country Team hosted the Northeast District Meet on October 28, where Ron Guenard (Cumberland) took first in the men’s field of more than 100 runners by more than a minute. With the victory Guenard becomes the New England District Champion and earns First Team All-District honors. Also running well on the men’s side was Hunter Stewart (Voisinet), who finished 13th with a time of 31:32.96 to also earn Third Team All-District honors and a trip to the NJCAA National Championship on November 11th.

On the women’s side all three runners advanced to the National Championship with solid individual performances. Rachael Procter (East Providence) was 4th in a time of 22:04, earning First Team All-District honors. Kristina Lanctot (Lincoln) placed 7th in a time of 22:19 for Second Team All-District honors, and Kristin Vanhoucke (North Smithfield) finished 11th in a time of 22:57 for Third Team All-District honors. The runners now look to the National Championship on Nov. 11 where they face the best NJCAA Division III has to offer.

Pride in CCRI Night at the PawSox

The CCRI Alumni Association and the Department of Athletics sponsored the 4th Annual Pride in CCRI Night at the PawSox on August 15, 2006.

2007 Winter Homecoming

Saturday, January 20th

Saturday, January 20th, 2007 – Games begin at 1 p.m. CCRI Women will play at 5 p.m. and CCRI Men will play at 7 p.m.

Sunday, January 21st, 2007 Losing teams play at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. and winning teams play at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Participating Teams

Monroe CC (Rochester, NY) Genesee CC (Batavia, NY)
Monroe College (Bronx, NY) Dundalk CC of Baltimore (Baltimore, MD)

(Donors continued from page 6 )

Richard P. Lukfin 1975
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Karen M. Licitra 1995
Christine C. McPherson 1990
Carolyn M. Light 1990
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Diane M. Mendes 1995
Deborah J. Lloyd, RDH 1992
Maria J. Merriam 1981
Lester Lawrence Lombardi, Jr. 1986
Robert A. Merrill 1967
Louis Long 1973
Debra E. Messinger 1980
Paula A. Lucia 1984
Joan E. Miga, R.N. 1976

Former Athletic Director Vin Cullen

inducted into the NACDA Hall of Fame

(L-R) CCRI Athletic Director Lou Pullano ’73, Vin Cullen, Assistant Athletic Directors Joe Pavone ’72 and Kevin Salisbury.
Note from an alumna: Anita (Torrelli) Carr, Class of 1991

CRI was key during a pivotal time in my life. I was going through a divorce, had two small children and was pregnant with my third when I enrolled in the Nursing program. The instructors there gave me an excellent education and instilled phenomenal habits early in my education to make me a very capable and successful nurse.

One of my instructors convinced me to tough out six more months to obtain my RN rather than become an LPN as I had originally planned. To her I am eternally grateful…. In all my jobs since graduating I found myself better prepared and more knowledgeable than many with B.S.N.’s and even some Master’s-level nurses. I can never thank CRI enough for the education they gave me.

Shannon Perry and Paul Asa- doorian were married on June 17, 2006 at Holy Apostles Church in Cranston.

(‘04) Laura Medeiros recently graduated from Emerson College in Boston. After intern- ing at WARM2Kids, Inc., she was hired as a writer and celebrity role model recruiter. WARM stands for We’re All Role Models 2 kids.

Kimberly G. Wilson has complet- ed her bachelor’s degree in psychol- ogy at URI. She received a Se- nior Academic Excellence Award for graduating in the top 5% of the Class of 2006 (GPA 4.0). Kim has been accepted into the psychology Ph.D. program at URI.