



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
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NEWS RELEASE

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Education Department Seeks Entries in “High School Video Contest”

All seniors in public high schools in Rhode Island are invited to test their creative skills by submitting ideas for a television public-service announcement (PSA) focused on a community or social issue important to teens. This “High School Video Contest” is being offered in conjunction with the rollout of the new Rhode Island Diploma System.

Governor Donald L. Carcieri’s Office and a number of Rhode Island education agencies are sponsoring the contest with the support of television station ABC6, Ronzio’s Pizza & Subs, and Twelve Acres Restaurant of Smithfield.

“Our new high-school Diploma System encourages students’ creativity, imagination, and the active pursuit of areas of personal interest,” said Governor Carcieri. “This contest provides an opportunity for public high-school seniors to venture outside the classroom and into the real world of communications.”

The Governor also explained that this type of partnership between the public and private sectors is critical to the effectiveness of the new high-school diploma system. “We need our Rhode Island businesses to become active participants in our education system,” the Governor said. “I applaud ABC6, Ronzio’s, and Twelve Acres for stepping forward with their generous assistance.”

Here’s how the contest works:

Students graduating in 2009 (this year’s seniors) may submit “storyboard” concepts (storyboards are rough illustrations depicting the PSA action) accompanied by a script or narrative along with a rough-cut video of their vision for the spot. Submissions must focus on community or social issues that are important to teens, such as smoking, drinking, drug use, drinking and driving, teen violence, bullying, peer pressure, depression, cliques, the environment, or community service.

The first-place award recipient (seniors can enter individually or in teams of two, with the approval of their high school) will win a \$1,000 Ronzio College Scholarship (split among both students should a team win) and ultimately work with ABC6 to produce the TV spot, which will air on Channel 6, the Rhode Island Cable News Channel, and on abc6.com. Recognition also will be given to second and third place, as well as honorable mention. The awards will be presented at a reception to be held at Twelve Acres. Seniors also have the option to include this work, whether they win or not, as part of their senior project or portfolio.

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Storyboards and video rough cuts are due by January 31, 2009. Details can be found on WaytoGoRI.org, under “New High School Diploma System.”

The Rhode Island Diploma System was approved in January 2003 and amended in September 2008 by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. To receive a diploma from a public high school in Rhode Island, students must, among other requirements, demonstrate proficiency in six core areas of learning by applying skills and knowledge at a rigorous level.

“The Regents established the new Diploma System in order to improve graduation rates and to better prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st-century workplace,” said Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “The video contest provides an opportunity for our students to apply their classroom experience, their problem-solving skills, their teamwork, and their creativity.”

State offices and departments working together on the Rhode Island high-school Diploma System communications effort are: Governor Donald L. Carcieri’s Office, the Board of Regents and the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education, the Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority, and the Association of Independent Colleges & Universities of Rhode Island.