



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
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NEWS RELEASE

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Education Department Announces Winners of High-School Video Contest

All Participants Recognized at a Reception Tuesday Evening at Twelve Acres Restaurant, Smithfield

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) today (Tuesday, June 9th) announced the winners of the Rhode Island High-School Video Contest, in which high-school seniors were invited to submit ideas for a television public-service announcement (PSA) that focused on a community or social issue important to teens.

The contest was offered in conjunction with the rollout of the new Rhode Island Diploma System. Information about the Diploma System is available on the new WaytogoRI.org Web site: www.waytogori.org; click on the New High School Diploma System box.

The winners and the names of their submissions are:

- First Place: *Drinking-Teens*, Alexandra Niaura and Andrew White, Exeter-West Greenwich Regional High School
- Second Place: *Teen Violence*, Kathryn Ryan, Portsmouth High School
- Third Place: *Cyber Bullying*, Martin Nolan, Lincoln Senior High School
- Honorable Mention: *Drunk-Driving Funeral*, Molly Sullivan, South Kingstown High School

The Office of Governor Donald L. Carcieri and a number of Rhode Island education agencies sponsored the contest, with the support of television station ABC6, cable station Rhode Island News Channel 5, Ronzio Pizza & Subs, and Twelve Acres.

“Our new high-school Diploma System is about students reaching beyond the classroom to apply their education in practical and meaningful ways,” said Governor Carcieri. “This contest challenged public high-school seniors to use their creative skills to talk to their peers about important issues.”

The Governor also reiterated that the private sector is an important component of the new high-school diploma system. “We need the support and involvement of Rhode Island businesses to make our high-school education successful,” said Governor Carcieri. “ABC6, News Channel 5, Ronzio’s, and Twelve Acres are setting a good example for the rest of the business community.”

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The Board of Regents does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, sex,
sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, or disability.

The winners and all participants were honored at a reception held from on June 9th, from 5 - 7 p.m., at Twelve Acres, 445 Douglas Pike, Smithfield.

How the contest worked.

Students graduating in 2009 (this year's seniors) were invited to 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 had to 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 recipients (seniors could enter individually or in teams of two, with the approval of their high school) win a \$1,000 Ronzio College Scholarship (split among both winning students). They also worked with ABC6 to produce the TV spot, which will air on Channel 6, Rhode Island News Channel 5, and on abc6.com. The PSA was first shown today (June 9th) on ABC6 and at the reception.

The second-place award winner receives a \$500 scholarship, the third-place award winner receives a \$300 scholarship, and the honorable mention award winner receives a \$100 scholarship. (These awards are funded through a National Governors Association grant.) All students who submitted entries will be presented with a certificate of participation. Seniors also had the option to include their entries as part of their senior project or portfolio, which is part of their Diploma System graduation requirements.

Rhode Island Diploma System

The Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education approved the Rhode Island Diploma System in January 2003 and amended it in September 2008. 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.

"Our Board of Regents recognizes the importance of developing a Diploma System that improves the performance of our students and enables more of our young people to acquire the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for success in college and the workplace," said Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. "The High-School Video Contest provided our seniors with an outlet to give voice to their social consciousness and organizational skills in a creative way while fulfilling their graduation requirements."

State offices and departments working together on the Rhode Island Diploma System communications effort are: The Office of Governor Donald L. Carcieri, the Board of Regents and RIDE, the Board of Governors for Higher Education, the Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority, and the Association of Independent Colleges & Universities of Rhode Island.