

School principal team gears up for school year

By Michaela Kennedy

The Jamestown School District will open its doors to students next week with new faces and challenges that promise an exciting year. Principal Kathleen Almanzor was all smiles when she introduced co-principal Carole Melucci, who will spend the year working alongside Almanzor.

"We have people from all over, bringing a lot of diversity to the schools," Almanzor said. Educators from places as far away as California and Hawaii, not to mention New England and the South, have flocked to Jamestown to join the staff.

Aspiring principal Melucci also beamed as she talked about her opportunity to help lead the district as an assistant. The native islander has moved from grade school student to grade school teacher to grade school administrator in the course of her life here on the rock. Melucci showed pride in the chance to participate integrally in a place that she has always called home. "I want to bring it (her focus) back to the



Carole Melucci and Kathy Almanzor

kids," she said.

Melucci taught second grade, and recently obtained a master's degree in Special Education. She went on to join the Principal Residency Network, an initiative that pairs aspiring principals with mentors in the work of

school leadership. The one-year internship is designed to meet the standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium.

Almanzor finds the match especially exciting, since she completed a similar internship with Cathy Sipala, the former superin-

tendent of Jamestown Schools. "I like developing leadership within the teaching staff," Almanzor noted.

Almanzor's mentoring influence on Melucci reaches back in history to her grade school years. "I was her eighth grade math teacher," Almanzor revealed with a laugh.

Almanzor and Melucci make up an aggressive team, ready to tackle all demands posed by the schools. A major focus will be to lead the staff in preparation of the School Accountability for Teaching and Learning (SALT) visit in February. The women will organize a district-wide self study, a mock SALT visit with internal staff, and work closely with the School Improvement Team. Documentation on all aspects of school life will be a key element. "It's intense," she nodded. "We need to be open to all possibilities." Both administrators have previously participated in SALT visits, so they exuded confidence. "It's good to get an outside perspective," Almanzor said about the process.

The leaders said they will con-

tinue to keep pressure on meeting high standards. One way of challenging high-end learners is through differentiated instruction, a rigorous learning approach that both educators are well-versed in. "We have a full-time math coach who will meet with teachers during their planning time," Almanzor added.

Other goals the co-principals will keep close tabs on are changes in emergency drill procedures, new directives from the state in health and wellness, and discipline.

Almanzor and Melucci agreed the new superintendent, Marsha Lukon, was a good fit for the district, and are looking forward to working closely with her. "We're very lucky to have her," Melucci said. "She's very current."

The leadership team will kick off the school year with a twist. The teacher orientation day, which takes place Sept. 4, will be conducted at Camp Canonicus in Exeter. Events planned for the day will focus on supporting teachers in bringing rigor to the classroom. "We will learn together," Almanzor said.

Committee studies champion tree program

Sanne Kure-Jensen, a field examiner for the Helen Walker Raleigh Champion Tree Program, gave the Jamestown Tree Preservation and Protection Committee an update on statewide progress to add to the state's Champion Trees at the committee's Aug. 21 meeting.

Richard Champlin, a noted ecologist from Jamestown, was a champion trees pioneer. He measured and recorded thousands of trees throughout Rhode Island looking for champion trees until his passing a couple of years ago.

Through the generosity of many donors and technical support from leaders in the forestry community, the Rhode Island Tree Council recently hired field examiners to update, record and

document champion trees. The goal is to find and profile the biggest trees in Rhode Island. This will develop a database of significant trees, stimulate public awareness about our tree resources, and educate citizens about our botanical heritage.

For the initial phase of the project, Kure-Jensen is working in Jamestown with Matt Largess, an arborist and owner of Largess Forestry, and the Jamestown tree committee to identify potential trees. If the tree is on private land, she will contact the owner for permission to come on the property to measure the tree. She explained that, "The sizes of trees have been noted for well over a hundred years in Rhode Island. A method developed by American Forests has a formula based on circumference, height and crown spread. The total gives us a number to declare a champion."

Once trees from around the state are measured, state and local champions will be named. Later, the Rhode Island Tree Council hopes to work with the Jamestown Tree Preservation and Protection Committee and the owners of Champion Trees to preserve and protect them. Champion Trees in Jamestown

will be added to the list of Significant Trees maintained by the Tree Preservation and Protection Committee.

Jim Rugh, chairman of the committee is asking for the public's help in locating possible champion trees. To nominate a tree, go to the Tree Council's web site www.ritree.org/ChampionTree.html and locate and download the application. A link to the application can also be found on the tree committee's page on the town Web site, www.jamestownri.net.

URI dean's list announced

The following Jamestown residents were named to the dean's list at the University of Rhode Island for the spring semester:

Caroline H. Anderson, Marie A. Andrews, Andrew F. Aveledo, Andrea C. Brayman, Bethany C. Clarke, Adam C. Diluglio, Alexandra G. Flowers, Christopher C. Hart, Lydia M. Lis, Michael A. Nadeau, Marisa R. Nixon, Nicole J. Pellegrini, Jacqueline M. Richardson, Rosita V. Smith, Erin V. Tiernan, Richard S. Tutalo, Rebekah L. Wigton, Rachel A. Wigton, and Krystina M. Winsor.

CCRI late registration offered

It is not too late to register for fall classes, and CCRI's Student Services Division has revamped its walk-in late registration process to better serve students.

Through Sept. 4, students registering for credit classes at all four campuses – Warwick, Lincoln, Providence and Newport – will follow signs to designated one-stop registration areas, where they will be directed to nearby academic testing, advising and registration staff depending on their individual needs.

Students should note that testing and advising may take several hours to complete and that a \$30 late registration fee will be assessed.

Hours are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Thursday (testing must begin before 4 p.m. and advising before 6 p.m.) and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday (testing must begin before noon and advising before 2 p.m.)

Fall classes begin on Sept. 5. For more information, visit www.ccri.edu.

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