

Katie DeCubellis Memorial Foundation Donates \$100,000 to Support New Student-Athlete Development Center at URI

John and Meg DeCubellis to Name New Academic Advising & Counseling Office in Memory of Their Daughter

April 9, 2008

KINGSTON, R.I. -- John and Meg DeCubellis, on behalf of the Katie DeCubellis Memorial Foundation (KDMF), pledged a gift of \$100,000 to the University of Rhode Island.

The donation is specifically targeted to support the construction of the planned, state-of-the-art Student-Athlete Development Center (SADC) which will be built adjacent to Keaney Gymnasium. Their gift is part of URI's Making A Difference capital campaign.

The DeCubellis', of Narragansett, RI, are the parents of Katie, who was killed by a drunk driver just after her thirteenth birthday on October 29, 1999. The KDMF was established shortly thereafter and since then, the couple has addressed over 75,000 high school and college students, parents and military personnel throughout the country on the importance of making responsible decisions, particularly concerning drunk driving and substance abuse.

The DeCubellis' announced their gift before delivering an address to an audience of hundreds of students, including Varsity student-athletes, at Keaney Gymnasium at 7:30 p.m. The event was sponsored by URI's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), in conjunction with the Office of Greek Life. On-campus fraternities and sororities were also invited to the event, which was open to the public.

The DeCubellis' focus was on the deadly consequences that can result from making poor choices and acting irresponsibly. They gave a snapshot into the life of their oldest daughter and discussed the impact the tragedy has had on their lives.

John DeCubellis, '82, who currently serves as President of the Rhode Island Rams Athletic Association (RIRAA) said, "The KDMF is extremely pleased for the opportunity to continue Katie's legacy and spirit by supporting URI's Student-Athlete Academic Advising and Counseling Center. This opportunity encompasses every facet of the KDMF's mission to promote youth leadership, support education and generate public awareness of the dangers of drunk driving and substance abuse. Our gift will forever support all of these objectives in Katie's memory!"

Their gift of \$100,000 will contribute to overall construction of the new SADC and will specifically support the establishment of the Academic Advising & Counseling Center, one of three major components of the SADC, in addition to the Strength & Conditioning Center and the Athletic Training & Sports Medicine Center. The Academic Advising & Counseling Center will house the student-athlete computer lab and provide study hall space, academic tutoring, and meeting space. It will also be home to URI's NCAA CHAMPS/Life Skills Program and coordinator, dealing with alcohol issues and awareness and other areas of concern that impact the overall health and well-being of student-athletes.

"We are truly humbled that the Katie DeCubellis Memorial Foundation has committed to the naming rights of the Academic Enhancement Area within the Student-Athlete Development Center," Thorr Bjorn, URI Director of Athletics said. "The Academic Enhancement Center will also house our NCAA Life Skills program, which John and Meg DeCubellis continue to play a major role in." "It is a tremendous tribute by the foundation to the memory of Katie and all she stood for in her short time in this world and all those she touched and affected in a positive manner," Bjorn added.

The KDMF has a history of partnering with the University of Rhode Island on these issues. The Foundation has supported the Rhody Rides program, which provides safe alternative transportation for URI students who might otherwise drive under the influence or ride with someone who is intoxicated. It also partnered with the Center for Student Leadership Development's Citizen-Leader Activist Alliance to support service learning and alcohol awareness education. URI sororities and fraternities helped raise awareness of these issues within the Greek system on campus by making the KDMF the recipient of their Philanthropy Week fundraising activities recently.

Glen Kerkian, president of the URI Foundation, which administers the Making A Difference campaign, noted, "This generous gift, as well as the broader, ongoing support from the DeCubellis family and the Foundation, is a wonderful example of how both entities - the KDMF and URI - have identified common areas of concern and have partnered to maximize the impact of their efforts. We look forward to the construction of the SADC and to the naming of the Academic Advising Center in Katie's honor."



John and Meg DeCubellis announced their \$100,000 gift in conjunction with an April 7 presentation to URI Student-Athletes

The SADC capital building project includes the construction of 10,000 square feet of new space and 17,000 square feet of renovated space. The new facility, located on the west side of the existing athletics complex, will serve as the gateway to the practice fields. The total cost of the SADC and related improvements will be approximately \$10 million; half of which will be sought via charitable gifts. The remaining \$5 million will be a match provided by the University. Approximately \$7 million will finance the SADC directly, with the remaining \$3 million financing related projects including continued improvements to the football field.

The Student-Athlete Development Center is an important part of the Making A Difference campaign. The campaign seeks at least \$100 million to recruit and retain outstanding faculty, enhance the student-centered campus experience, provide scholarships and fund cutting-edge academic and research initiatives. For more information on the SADC, contact Kevin McGinniss, Director of Athletic Development & Associate Director of Athletics at 401.874.5287 or email at kmcginniss@foundation.uri.edu. To learn more visit the Foundation's Making A Difference page.