

**2025 -- H 6152**

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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025**

**H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N**

**CONGRATULATING THE TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND ON THE JOYOUS OCCASION OF REACHING THE MILESTONE OF  
5,000 GRADUATES IN 2025**

Introduced By: Representatives Cotter, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Morales,  
Stewart, Giraldo, Kennedy, Tanzi, and Ajello

Date Introduced: April 01, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

1           WHEREAS, The Talent Development Program, currently led by the outstanding  
2 leadership provided by Director Gerald R. Williams, was established at the University of Rhode  
3 Island in 1968, in the midst of the Martin Luther King assassination and at a time in America's  
4 history when marginalized groups in the United States were fighting for equality and for their  
5 voices to be heard; and

6           WHEREAS, The Talent Development Program at the University of Rhode Island was  
7 established as a special admission program for Rhode Island's students of color and those from  
8 disadvantaged programs. From a start of 13 students, the Talent Development Program currently  
9 has 1,000 scholars enrolled and is proud to have nearly 4,900 alumni; and

10           WHEREAS, The mission of the Talent Development Program is to recruit and serve  
11 Rhode Island high school graduates who have college potential and come from disadvantaged  
12 backgrounds. A majority of these scholars are students of color. The core mission of the program  
13 is its commitment to Respect, Academic Excellence, Mental Health & Wellness, and Scholar  
14 Success. Over the past 58 years, the program has had an outstanding 83.6 percent first year  
15 retention rate, and students on average graduate with a degree in 4.62 years; and

16           WHEREAS, One of the outstanding contributors to the success of the Talent  
17 Development Program since 1995 has been Senior Academic Advisor Edward Steven "Ted"  
18 Shear, a son of parents born during the Great Depression and who were the first in their families  
19 to attend college. As a young man, Ted's parents instilled in him the important values of attaining

1 an education and having an opportunity at living a successful life in America; and

2 WHEREAS, Ted Shear earned a Bachelor of English degree in 1991 from the University  
3 of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a Master's degree in Liberal Studies from St. John's College in  
4 Annapolis in 1993, and a PhD in English from the University of Rhode Island in 2004. Prior to  
5 joining the Talent Development Program at URI, Mr. Shear worked as a computer analyst,  
6 technical writer and as a college-level instructor; and

7 WHEREAS, Ted Shear's career with the Talent Development Program began in 1995,  
8 when he joined a team that was charged with creating a computer skills instruction program for  
9 the Summer Success Program. Mr. Shear discovered that the Talent Development Program and  
10 its scholars were more than a job, it was a new home for him, and he was welcomed as a member  
11 of the family. Since 2001, he has served with distinction as a full-time academic year tutor within  
12 the program; and

13 WHEREAS, The extraordinary success the Talent Development Program has  
14 experienced, and continues to experience, in providing educational and career opportunities to the  
15 marginalized in our society would be impossible without the hard work and tireless devotion  
16 provided by its leadership, including Director, Gerald R. Williams, Pam Rosa, Higher Education  
17 Administrative Assistant II, Kristina Moyet, Ed.D., Associate Director, Academic Programming  
18 and Assessment, Edward P. Givens, Assistant Director for Campus Life, Ted Shear, Senior  
19 Academic Advisor, Corey Fernandez, Academic Advisor/Success Coach, Kevin Smith,  
20 Academic Advisor, Sara Caitlin Potter, Coordinator, Karol Ramirez, Coordinator, Bethania  
21 Badeau, Coordinator, and Kassie Paquette, College Success Coach; now, therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
23 heartily congratulates the Talent Development Program at the University of Rhode Island on the  
24 joyous occasion of reaching the milestone of 5,000 graduates in 2025; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
26 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mr. Gerald R. Williams, Director of the Talent  
27 Development Program at the University of Rhode Island.

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