

# GIVEN THE CHANCE TO SHINE

Rider provides students with equal access to higher education through SSS

By Jamie Papapetros

Lending support academically and financially is only one of many duties undertaken by the Student Support Services Program. In the past, the staff has done a student's laundry, helped others secure housing and provided counsel in times of personal hardship. Most of all, the staff does not mind the daily grind-work that comes with the job.

"It doesn't have to be in our job descriptions," said Freedman. "It's just if something is needed by a student we will be the ones to do that."

Introduced in 1993 to the University, the Program accepts students who are first generation college undergraduates, have financial need according to government standards or a disability. The intent is to make sure students who fit the profile are given equal access to higher education, said Queen Jones, Student Support Services (SSS) program director.

"If they had SSS when I was an undergraduate I would have qualified," recalls Dana Lopes, assistant director of the program and Rider alumna. "I was the first to go to college and my parents had so many questions."

## Q&A:

What is the funniest thing you've ever seen on Halloween?



Photo by Arthur A. Couthen

"It was an impromptu costume. She said she basically grabbed a shopping bag and cut the bottom out of it. It had bras and other weird items hanging out."

—Ellen Parrington, sophomore



Photo by Arthur A. Couthen

"There's a guy who sets up a tube from his top window and tells the kids that are trick-or-treating what they're wearing, but they can't see him. Then he throws the candy down the tube."

—Kate Mazur, visitor



Photo by Arthur A. Couthen

"This guy was hunched over with a baby carriage on the back of his costume. It was baby blue and pink and had actual feet on the hunchback. It was really cool."

—Marcelina Guzman, sophomore



Photo by Arthur A. Couthen

"I saw a guy dressed as Napoleon Dynamite and he did a really good impression. It was probably the weirdest and the coolest thing I saw on Halloween."

—Mike Kessler, freshman



Photo by Matt Freedman

Queen Jones, Sally Martinze, Marsha Freedman and Pat Dell, from left, Rider's Student Support Services, pose outside of their offices in the Academic Annex.

Among the many types of services this unique program offers: orientation to first-year and transfer students, routine assessment to determine if a student is meeting his or her goals and objectives, workshops on leadership development, test taking techniques and several other areas.

"I love working in this Program because when I reflect on my own

days as a college student, I don't think there was anywhere to go for help," said Marsha Freedman, Student Support Services Program professional tutor.

The satisfaction Jones, Lopes, Freedman and staff receive is seeing the students excel and achieve success.

Above all, the determination of the students "to continue no matter what others have told them," is what inspires

the staff to soldier on in their daily efforts, said Lopes.

Jones attributed the success of the Program to the ensemble of professionals she works with.

"I admire them all because it's like a family and what's amazing is that we all have the same mission in mind," Jones said. "We're here for our students and there is no other reason that we have a job. We take that to heart."

In fact, the SSS Program was recently recognized as one of the top of its kind nationally. It is presently one of the 14 SSS programs in the state. In honor of that recognition, Rider's program was given over \$270,000 in additional funding.

"I really love this program, and I truly believe in its mission, so I'm always willing to share it," said Jones with a smile.

Nevertheless, Student Support Services professionals refuse to be recognized as heroes.

"It's not magic," said Jones. "I don't think we perform magic, but I do think our students know that we honestly care about them."

<p><b>FRIDAY</b></p> <p><b>Nov. 4</b></p> <p><b>SEC Film:</b> <i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i> 7:30 p.m., BLC Theater</p> <p><b>WCC Opera Theater:</b> <i>Albert Herring</i> 8 p.m., WCC Playhouse</p>	<p><b>MONDAY</b></p> <p><b>Nov. 7</b></p> <p><b>Lecture Series: Rubin "Hurricane" Carter</b> 8 p.m., BLC Theater</p> <p><b>Pub Alcohol Night</b> 9 p.m., BLC Pub</p>
<p><b>SATURDAY</b></p> <p><b>Nov. 5</b></p> <p><b>Enjoy Family Day!</b> <b>Andrew J. Rider Awards Ceremony</b> 11 a.m., BLC Theater</p> <p><b>SEC Film:</b> <i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i> 12:30 p.m., BLC Theater</p> <p><b>WCC Opera Theater:</b> <i>Albert Herring</i> 8 p.m., WCC Playhouse</p>	<p><b>TUESDAY</b></p> <p><b>Nov. 8</b></p> <p><b>Election Day!</b> <b>Go out and vote!</b></p>
<p><b>SUNDAY</b></p> <p><b>Nov. 6</b></p> <p><b>WCC Conservatory Faculty Recital</b> 3 p.m., WCC Bristol Chapel</p> <p><b>WCC Opera Theater:</b> <i>Albert Herring</i> 3 p.m., WCC Playhouse</p> <p><b>SEC Film:</b> <i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i> 7:30 p.m., BLC Theater</p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAY</b></p> <p><b>Nov. 9</b></p> <p><b>Lunchbox Lecture Series</b> 12 p.m., BLC Theater</p> <p><b>Guest Artist</b> <b>Lecture: Mari Lyons</b> 7 p.m., BLC Art Gallery</p> <p><b>PCM Open Mic Night</b> 7:30 p.m., BLC Pub</p>
<p><b>THURSDAY</b></p> <p><b>Nov. 10</b></p> <p><b>CCM Trenton Area Soup Kitchen</b> 2:45 p.m., Meet at Gill Chapel</p> <p><b>Fine Arts Preview: Hair</b> 7 p.m., Yvonne Theater</p> <p><b>SEC Film: Stealth</b> 7:30 p.m., BLC Theater</p> <p><b>Pub Alcohol Night</b> 9 p.m., BLC Pub</p>	