



Live Your Dream. It Starts Here!

Volume 1, Issue 3

Winter 2011

Top 10 New Year's Resolutions Using WaytoGoRI!

1. Spend more time exploring WaytoGoRI
2. Have students take a career assessment
3. Batch create accounts for your students
4. Use the Professional Center to collect student data
5. Build a resume



6. Learn about the electronic ILP
7. Use the 4-year plan
8. Use Roads to Success for Advisory
9. Explore the financial aid section
10. Set grade-specific milestones for your students

Now Available... Presentations For Students & Parents

Start the New Year off with a resolution to book a free presentation for your students and parents to learn more about using WaytoGoRI.org. Presentations were recently given to a variety of schools throughout Rhode Island to include Joseph L. McCourt Middle School, Esek Hopkins Middle School, Johnston High School, and Exeter West Greenwich Junior High School. Have WaytoGoRI visit your school next!

Presentations are free and customized for each school. Topics for presentations could include an overview of WaytoGoRI, helping students get started on WaytoGoRI, the ILP, career exploration, college planning and/or how to use WaytoGoRI. Call today to request a presentation at your school!



Call today to book your free presentation!
 Lisa Shevlin at 401-736-1147 or lshevlin@riheaa.org

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The Student Ambassador Program at Westerly Middle School



Educators across Rhode Island testify that they love WaytogoRI! Throughout Rhode Island many educators are creating innovative solutions to implement WaytogoRI. One of the biggest concerns about using WaytogoRI is that counselors have limited time to work with all their students in a computer lab setting. Carolyn Ferris, school counselor at Westerly Middle School created a solution to this concern. Westerly Middle School has a WaytogoRI Student Ambassador Program!



The WaytogoRI Student Ambassador Program was created to help students learn about WaytogoRI. When Carolyn created the program, she was assigned a group of students for advisory. Carolyn decided to take this group of students (who were randomly selected) and give them a basic overview of WaytogoRI. The students were then charged with learning WaytogoRI on their own. Next, the students were asked to visit other advisories 1 time each week to present WaytogoRI.org. Throughout the school year the student ambassadors met with groups of students in a computer lab. By the end of the school year, every student at the middle school created an account and used WaytogoRI. Carolyn was able to teach her advisory career and college exploration while she used this same group of students to act as peer leaders and trainers for the entire school. Is this something you can replicate at your school?

Financial Aid Myths

You've heard advice about scholarships, deadlines, free money & loans. Have you heard about them from reliable sources? Have you heard any of these common myths?

Myth: Our income is too high to qualify for financial aid.

Reality: The only way to know for sure is to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The federal government has a formula that considers a number of factors to determine the amount a family is expected to contribute to a child's college costs.

Myth: We have money saved for our child's college education, so we won't get any aid. **Reality:** The federal formula has allowances for savings and assets. Only a small percentage of parental assets are expected to be contributed for education.

Myth: Our daughter wasn't eligible for much financial aid last year, so our son entering college this year won't be eligible either. **Reality:** On the contrary: The number of family members in college has a big impact on your financial aid eligibility.

Myth: Our child will be attending college part time, so he won't be eligible for financial aid. **Reality:** Financial aid is available for part-time students. Ask your college's financial aid office for information on aid for part-time students.

Myth: There isn't enough aid for everyone. **Reality:** The amount of federal aid available for college students increases every year. This does not include billions in state and private scholarships and grants that colleges administer or award themselves.

Myth: You can get more federal money by shifting your assets around. **Reality:** Almost anything you do to lower your Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) will have an impact on your personal income, assets, and taxes. Don't bother with financial strategies that may result in tiny increases in financial aid. Instead, focus on getting your taxes done early and correctly.

The moral is the story is: Apply for aid, no matter what you think your chances are.

Visit WaytogoRI's Financial Aid section for financial aid guidance and links to resources.

Rhode Island Financial Aid Update-by Greg Silva

We are now in the midst of Financial Aid season! Be sure to go to the correct link to fill out your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)!! www.fasfa.ed.gov.

Remember that the deadline for RI State Grant is March 1st. Never miss a deadline due to Income Taxes that are not yet completed. You can either estimate, or use last year's tax returns and then make corrections when you file your returns. Also, be sure to check with each school that you are applying to for any institutional deadlines and additional financial aid forms that need to be filled out. You

also want to register for a Personal Identification Number before you fill out the FAFSA. This is your electronic signature and can be obtained at www.pin.ed.gov.

Help will be available at College Goal Sunday on January 30th. For more information, go to www.collegegoalri.org.

Always fill out the FAFSA form, even if you think you are ineligible. EVERYONE is eligible for some type of aid!



Tips and Tricks

How do I reset/change my student's password?

- Go to the Professional Center
- Click on Students & Groups
- Click on Student Finder
- Search by the name of the student or by class
- Click on View Account Name or reset password
- Change the password

How does a student change the school he/she is attending?

- The student signs into their account
- Click on Your Portfolio
- Click on Your Profile
- Click on the Basics
- Click on add another connection
- Click on change primary connection

How do I compare two careers?

- Click on Career Planning
- Click on Explore Careers
- Click on compare careers
- Compare two careers side by side

WaytogoRI Humor A New Year's Resolution: I plan to more walk because...

- Walking can add to your life. This enables you at 85 years old to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home.
- Grandpa started walking five miles a day when he was 60. Now he's 97 years old & we haven't a clue where the heck he is.
- I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.
- The only reason I would take up walking is so that I could hear heavy breathing again.
- I joined a health club last year, spent about 400 bucks. Haven't lost a pound....apparently you have to actually go there.
- Every time I hear the dirty word 'exercise' I wash my mouth out with chocolate.
- The advantage of exercising every day is so when you die, they'll say, 'Well, he looks good doesn't he.
- We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our skulls. *That's my story & I'm sticking to it.*
- Every time I start thinking too much about how I look, I just find a Happy Hour and by the time I leave, I look just fine.



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The Voice of WaytogoRI... by Kathy Sisson

Did you know that.....

I hope that you all had a wonderful holiday break and I wish you a happy New Year! I am pleased

THE VOICE

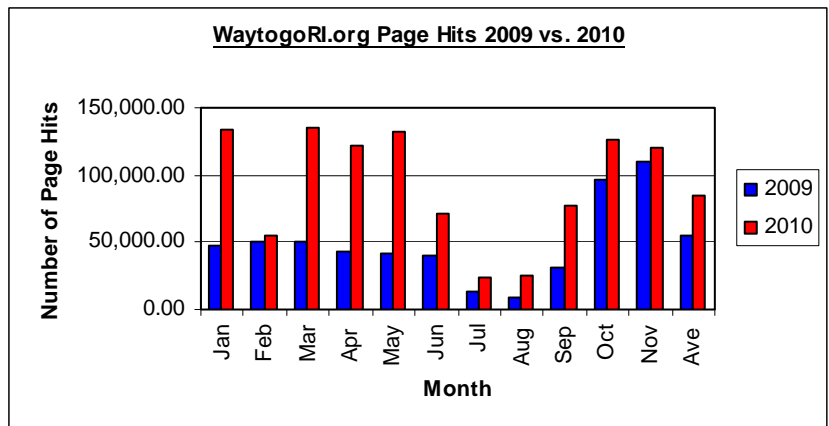
to tell you that due to the growing demand for WaytogoRI, we have added another staff member to assist with training and program implementation. Please join me in welcoming Sonia Rodrigues as our Program Planner. Sonia brings a wealth of experience to the WaytogoRI team and she will start to visit schools in the near future.

As always, please feel free to contact me at (401) 736-1108 or ksisson@riheaa.org if you have any questions, would like more information, need materials for your students or would like to schedule a guest speaker or training at your school.



Every school district in RI has visited WaytogoRI over the past 12 months.

On average in 2010, WaytogoRI received over 85,000 page hits each day and we now have over 88,000 student accounts! The graph below demonstrates the significant growth and page hits over 2 years.



WaytogoRI is utilized in different ways to meet the needs at individual schools. We welcome you to use WaytogoRI to support your programs. Counselors have reported that they are using WaytogoRI to support Advisories, ILP's, comprehensive guidance program, transition planning, technology courses, career exploration and college access initiatives.