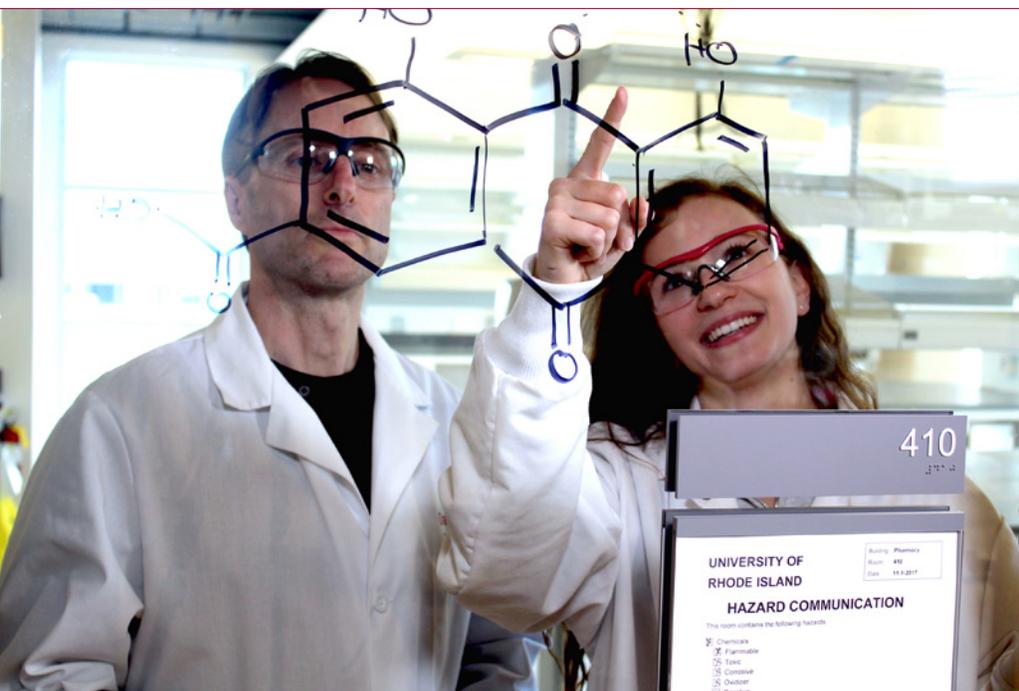


## URI College of Pharmacy ranked 11th in nation in federal research funding

*Ranking places URI second among all pharmacy colleges on East Coast*



URI College of Pharmacy Professor David Rowley works with student Zoe Perkins in a research lab in Avedisian Hall in Kingston. [URI PHOTO/PATRICK LUCE]

KINGSTON – The University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy is now ranked 11th in the nation in total federal research grant funding after securing nearly \$12 million in federal funds in fiscal 2017, the latest year for which numbers are available. The number 11 rank – of 138 pharmacy colleges nationwide – is a record for URI.

URI is now the number one pharmacy college in the Northeast in terms of federal research funding, primarily from the National Institutes of Health, and number two on the East Coast. The only other school on the Eastern Seaboard with a higher national ranking – at number two – is the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which has more than double the number of full-time faculty members as URI.

In the five-year period preceding 2017, the College consistently ranked in the 20s. A dynamic faculty focused on scientific breakthroughs, along with a concerted effort to increase grant funding and research partnerships, contributed to the move up the ranks, said URI Pharmacy Dean **PAUL LARRAT**.

“Many of our faculty members are in the middle, the primes, of their research careers and they’re really hitting their stride,” Larrat said, noting he expects the College will maintain the momentum going forward. “These successful, seasoned researchers are also mentoring our younger professors, whose new research funding isn’t even reflected in the 2017 rank. That’s what makes this sustainable.”

A committee of researchers, led by professors **NAVINDRA SEERAM**, **KERRY LAPLANTE**, **BONGSUP CHO** and **ANGELA SLITT** meet regularly to strategize research efforts and target grant funding. LaPlante recently held a grant writing workshop, helping researchers from the Colleges of Pharmacy, Nursing and Health Sciences as well as the R.I. Idea Network of Biomedical Research Excellence program

to improve their grant applications. Slitt is chairwoman on the URI Council for Research Grants Program, serving as a university-wide advocate for grant funding.

The funding fuels critical research in such areas as drug development, cancer treatment and prevention, health outcomes, neurological health and the use of natural ingredients like maple syrup in maintaining health, among a host of other important subjects. The benefit to the community of such scientific breakthroughs is obvious, but the grant funding also helps the College continually improve its educational offerings, Larrat said.

“We harp on our students to make a difference, and they see our faculty members doing just that,” he said. “Being able to take salient discoveries from the research labs and bring that work into the classrooms is of benefit to our students; it makes us better teachers, and it makes our students better scientists and health providers. And the access to work in those labs is incredibly valuable to our students. And it is translated into helping the patients we all serve.” ❖