Rhode Island Launches State-Specific Energy Savings Calculator

Rhode Island leaders came together to launch the first state-specific energy calculator made by Rewiring America, WJAR reports.

US Senator Jack Reed, Governor Dan McKee, Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources and Rewiring America officials discussed the new calculator on December 11 at the United Way of Rhode Island’s Valley Street location. State leaders said the new tool helps homeowners and renters find out how much money they can save by taking advantage of new incentives.

State officials said that Rewiring America, an electrification nonprofit, created the calculator to help residents quickly estimate how much they can save on energy by leveraging multiple incentives on state and local level. Read more.

Rhode Island College is Poised to Become Leader in Cybersecurity

Rhode Island College reports that a group of dignitaries recently converged on Sapinsley Hall in support of the launch of the Institute for Cybersecurity and Emerging Technologies at the college.

Led by former US Representative and RIC alumnus Jim Langevin and housed in RIC’s School of Business, the institute is slated to become a national center of excellence in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, machine learning and other emerging technologies.

The mission of the Institute for Cybersecurity and Emerging Technologies, Langevin says, is to “nurture, educate and train the next generation of leaders and innovators in cybersecurity,” to “become a hub for research, education and workforce development.” “This is not an endeavor that Rhode Island College will do on its own,” he says. “It will be a collaborative effort, pulling together the strength of
public and private sectors and also college and universities and K-12 schools in the region.”

Beyond cybersecurity, the institute will be at the forefront of research, education and training in emerging technologies, such as biotechnology and quantum computing. The institute will also explore the limitless potential of AI. Read more.

**URI Professor, PBS Kids Teaming to Break Down STEM Barriers**

*The Westerly Sun reports* that Sara Sweetman, associate professor of education at the University of Rhode Island, and the creators of the Emmy-nominated PBS Kids show “Elinor Wonders Why” are enlisting Elinor, a curious little bunny, and her friends Ari and Olive to help break down barriers that girls face in the STEM fields.

Thanks to a $3.4 million grant from the National Science Foundation, Sweetman will work with creators Jorge Cham and Daniel Whiteson to develop eight new 11-minute episodes of the popular animated show with the goal of improving boys’ and girls’ perceptions of female scientists and increasing their understanding of mixed-gender collaborations in STEM.

“I really want to shift the thinking about the gender equity role in terms of what we can do to build better collaboration between boys and girls starting at a young age,” said Sweetman, the principal investigator on the grant. “In the past, efforts have focused on getting women excited about STEM and providing opportunities for them to excel. I think doing those is great. But if we really want to have a gender diverse field in sciences, we need to work with both men and women.” Read more.

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