



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 21, 2017

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## **BankRI Awards \$3,000 Grant to College Visions in Support of Low-Income, First-Generation Rhode Island Students Earning College Degrees**

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** – With another school year in the books, local high school students who will enter their senior year in the fall will soon turn their attention to the next chapter of their academic careers—visiting colleges of interest. For many, but particularly first-generation and low-income students, exploring college opportunities is often accompanied by a complex admissions and financial aid process.

To help these students realize their dream of higher education, **Bank Rhode Island (BankRI)** has awarded a \$3,000 charitable grant to College Visions in support of its College Access and College Success programs.

In the last year alone, College Visions has worked with 350 low-income, first-generation students, guiding 70 local high school students through the admissions process while coaching another 280 college students to stay on track to earn a degree. The organization’s work focuses on closing the opportunity gap for students from economically-disadvantaged households by providing comprehensive advising and access to resources that promote enrollment and graduation. In the spring of 2017, College Visions celebrated its 265<sup>th</sup> college graduate, including graduates from Boston College, Brandeis University, Guilford College, Providence College, Rhode Island College, Rhode Island School of Design, the University of Rhode Island, and more.

“College Visions’ track record for success speaks for itself; 97 percent of the students they work with enroll in college directly after high school, which is nearly twice the rate of low-income high school graduates statewide,” said Mark J. Meiklejohn, President and CEO of BankRI. “Education has long been a focus of BankRI’s charitable giving and we are honored to be a partner of College Visions to help students succeed in the classroom and beyond.”

Through the College Access program, College Visions students meet weekly with a staff advisor to identify colleges of interest, register for the SATs, develop their creative essays, and work on financial aid applications. The organization also organizes a series of spring and fall campus visits. Once a student completes the College Access program and enrolls in higher education, they transition to College Visions’ College Success program, where they receive individualized coaching that provides the support they need while on campus to persist and graduate.

### **About Bank Rhode Island**

Bank Rhode Island, a wholly owned subsidiary of Brookline Bancorp, Inc. (NASDAQ:BRKL), is a full-service, FDIC-insured financial institution headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island. The bank operates 20 branches and more than 55 ATMs throughout Providence, Kent, Newport and Washington Counties. For more information, visit [www.bankri.com](http://www.bankri.com). You can also find BankRI on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland](https://www.Facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland).

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