



MEDIA RELEASE

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The Poverty Institute celebrates 10 years, plans to incorporate

*The 10-year-old source for research on tax and economic policy
will incorporate as a non-profit organization*

PROVIDENCE, RI (November 12, 2009) – Ten years after being founded at Rhode Island College School of Social Work, The Poverty Institute will incorporate as a non-profit organization this fall. The non-partisan research and advocacy organization is best known as a reliable source for information about the impact of public policies on low- and modest-income Rhode Islanders.

The organization has been housed at the Rhode Island College School of Social Work since it was founded in 1999 by the late Nancy Gewirtz, a longtime professor of social work, and attorney Linda Katz, who now serves as policy director. The Rhode Island College Foundation has served as The Poverty Institute's fiscal agent since its inception.

The organization has always been separately funded through competitive grants and individual contributions. With the incorporation, The Poverty Institute will assume responsibility for back-office functions such as accounting and human resources administration, and rent office space at the Rhode Island College School of Social Work.

"Ten years ago, The Poverty Institute was founded by two passionate volunteers. Today we have a growing team of expert staff and a dedicated Board of Directors. Becoming a separate organization will help us continue to grow and build on our successes advocating for low- and modest-income Rhode Islanders," said Kate Brewster, executive director of The Poverty Institute.

Policymakers, journalists, and community groups frequently rely on The Poverty Institute's research and analysis about issues such as health care, child care, cash assistance, workforce development and taxation. Most recently, the organization reported on the latest state and local poverty rates, the cost to the state of tax credits used by local companies, and the direct benefits made available to Rhode Islanders through the federal stimulus package.

Ron Pitt, Vice President for Academic Affairs at Rhode Island College offered his congratulations on this milestone. "Rhode Island College faculty were integrally involved in the founding of The Poverty Institute, and the college continues to see the Institute as an important resource for the community and the state. We celebrate the Institute's growth in scope and importance to the point where it is now prepared to manage its affairs independently of the Rhode Island College Foundation. We look forward to future years of collaboration in areas of mutual interest."

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About The Poverty Institute

The Poverty Institute is a non-partisan organization that develops and promotes policies to improve the economic security of low- and modest-income Rhode Islanders and to ensure that tax and budget policies are equitable and adequate to fund vital public services. Financial support comes from foundations, corporations, and individuals who care about social change and economic justice. For more information visit www.povertyinstitute.org.