

COMPASS

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF RHODE ISLAND

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL TREASURER SETH MAGAZINER

As the Coronavirus pandemic continues to impact our state and country, I remain committed to strengthening the pension system so that our members have the secure retirement that you deserve.

I am pleased to report that during the crisis Rhode Island's pension system has outperformed 95% of pension plans across the country. The Back to Basics investment strategy we launched in 2016 has served Rhode Island well during this challenging time, saving the pension system hundreds of million of dollars. You can read more about our strong investment performance on page 2.

At the same time, we are moving forward on our plans to enhance the customer service that we offer to you, our members.



We are now phasing in one-on-one retirement counseling. In May, we launched one-on-one counseling for members who are planning to retire within 6-12 months, and we plan to make one-on-one counseling available this winter for those within 5 years of retirement. This is just one of several customer service enhancements that we will be launching over the next year, including a new ersri.org website and benefit calculator. Learn more about one-on-one retirement counseling on page 4.

If the Covid-19 crisis has shown us anything, it is that our public employees are absolutely essential. Many members of the pension system are on the front lines of the fight against the virus. In this issue, you will also read a short profile of Stefanie Boyer, RN. As a Charge Nurse at the Veterans Home in Bristol, Stefanie is on the frontline of the pandemic, caring for the men and women who have served in our Armed Forces.

To Stefanie and all of the dedicated state and municipal employees, teachers, and first responders who serve the people of Rhode Island, I thank you for your incredible efforts. It is an honor to support you.

Thank you for your service to the people of Rhode Island,

Seth Magaziner

➤ **Retirement System Update**
(Page 2)

➤ **Virtual Town Hall for Members on 9/23**
(Page 3)

➤ **Meet: Treasurer to host Member Town Hall**
(Page 4)

➤ **Meet: Stefanie Boyer, RN**
(Page 5)

RETIREMENT SYSTEM UPDATE

R.I. Pension outperformed 95% of U.S. Pension Plans during the Covid-19 market crisis

During the first quarter of 2020, the Rhode Island pension system's investments outperformed 95% of public pension funds in the United States, according to Investment Metrics LLC, a leading aggregator of investment data. The data shows that from January through March, as the financial markets reacted to the spread of the Covid-19 crisis, Rhode Island's performance ranked 28th out of 546 public pension funds in the United States.

If current trends continue, 2020 will be the third consecutive year in which Rhode Island achieves stronger investment performance than most other funds according Investment Metrics.

In 2016, Magaziner launched his "Back to Basics" strategy for the pension system, which included a nearly \$800 million Crisis Protection allocation designed to grow in value during times of market stress.

As of April 30th, pension system assets were valued at more than \$8.3 billion. Although the stock market suffered its sharpest decline since the Great Recession, the pension system earned a positive 1-year return of 2.6%, and a 10-year annualized return of 6.8%.

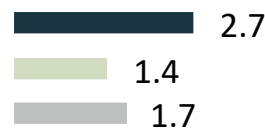
Detailed information about the Rhode Island pension system, including the 'Back to Basics' investment strategy, performance, and information about its managers are published online as part of Treasurer Magaziner's "Transparent Treasury" initiative at:

investments.treasury.ri.gov

"In these challenging times it is more important than ever that we deliver strong performance for the State's finances, and protect the retirement security for the many teachers, first responders, and other public employees serving our communities," said Treasurer Magaziner.

Investment Performance

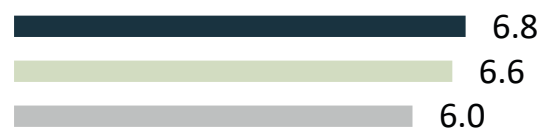
1-Year



3-Year



10-Year



- State of Rhode Island
- Benchmark Portfolio
- Traditional Portfolio
(60% Stock/40% Bonds)

Periods end April 30, 2020.

Performance is net of fees and expenses.

MEMBER NEWS

Treasurer Magaziner Hosting Virtual Town Hall for Members

Members of the retirement system are invited to join Rhode Island Treasurer Seth Magaziner for an online, virtual town hall meeting on:

Wednesday, September 23, 2020
from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. ET

During the one-hour meeting, Treasurer Magaziner will discuss the State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pension system, and steps the system is taking to improve member service.

The Treasurer will be joined by Frank Karpinski, Director of Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island for a Q&A session.

You can sign up to attend the webinar at:

treasury.ri.gov/townhall

If you register, but can't attend the meeting on September 23, we will automatically send you a link to the recording that you can view on-demand.

New Report Highlights Impact of Rhode Island Treasury Programs

The Office of the General Treasurer has released its 2019 Annual Report, outlining programs and initiatives to support small businesses, strengthen the state pension system, protect student loan borrowers, support victims of domestic and other violence, and return millions of dollars in unclaimed property back to its rightful owners.

Highlights include:

- Continued progress in strengthening the retirement system for the 60,000 teachers, first responders, state and municipal employees who serve our community.
- Helping small businesses access the capital they need to expand their business and hire more people, by moving millions of dollars of the state's cash to local banks and credit unions
- Reuniting millions of dollars of unclaimed property to thousands of individual Rhode Islanders, nonprofits, and small businesses
- Investing in infrastructure projects to improve Rhode Island's school buildings, water systems, and carbon footprint
- Providing financial support to over 1,200 Rhode Islanders, including 200 children, who were victims of violent crimes

All of the programs outlined in the Treasury Annual Report remain open and available to assist Rhode Islanders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report can be downloaded at:

treasury.ri.gov/annualreport

MEMBER NEWS *cont...*

Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island: By-the-Numbers

State Employees

Active members:	11,318
Average salary:	\$64,447
Average active member age:	49
Average length of service:	14 years
Retirees & beneficiaries:	11,224
Average annual benefit:	\$32,853
Average retiree age:	74

Public Safety

Active members:	1,596
Average salary:	\$69,988
Average active member age:	41
Average length of service:	13 years
Retirees & beneficiaries:	836
Average annual benefit:	\$37,002
Average retiree age:	62

Teachers

Active members:	13,511
Average salary:	\$79,232
Average active member age:	46
Average length of service:	15 years
Retirees & beneficiaries:	11,196
Average annual benefit:	\$44,320
Average retiree age:	73

Municipal Employees

Active members:	5,971
Average salary:	\$42,483
Average active member age:	52
Average length of service:	12 years
Retirees & beneficiaries:	4,827
Average annual benefit:	\$16,145
Average retiree age:	

Individual Counseling Sessions Available for Retiring Members

If you haven't previously attended a retirement counseling session, and are retiring in the next 6-12 months, the Employees Retirement System of RI is now offering one-on-one retirement counseling sessions.

After making an appointment, members will receive a retirement packet, with member-specific forms and information.

During the counseling session, which will take place via phone or video conference, a Retirement Counselor will explain the retirement process and review your retirement eligibility date, benefit amount, and benefit payment options.

The counselor, who will work with members throughout the entire retirement process, will also provide step-by-step instructions on how to complete the necessary forms, and how to use the ERSRI online member portal.

This is just the first phase in Treasurer Magaziner's effort to overhaul the customer service experience for members of the pension system. This winter, one-on-one counseling will be extended to employees earlier in their career, www.ersri.org will be overhauled, and an improved online benefit calculator will be made available, among other enhancements.

Eligible members can schedule an appointment for a counseling session by calling the ERSRI Customer Service Center at:

(401) 462-7600

Weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET

MEMBER PROFILE

Meet: Stefanie Boyer, RN

"I love working at the Veterans Home in Bristol. The residents are a like a second family."

In 2010, Stefanie Boyer, RN joined the staff at the University of Rhode Island, where she worked providing healthcare to students during the academic year. During the summer and holiday break, Ms. Boyer worked at the Veterans Home in Bristol, serving in a variety of nursing positions over the years.

"About two years ago, I transitioned to working full-time at the Veterans Home," said Stefanie. "It was an easy decision, as I loved working there. It was also better for me because I could earn credit for my pension for the entire calendar year, not just the academic year."

Ms. Boyer started her career as a hospital nurse, which gave her the chance to work in different areas of healthcare. She also worked in treatment centers, ambulatory care, as well as family medicine. The opportunity to develop deeper personal relationships with residents at the Veteran's Home, and their families, has been rewarding for her.

"In all of my years of nursing, the Veterans Home is the best long-term care facility that I've seen – and that's because of the commitment of the staff. And now, we have a beautiful new building."

Her career in nursing hasn't been without challenges, of course. There is a well-documented shortage of nurses nationwide, and here in Rhode Island. That, along with perennial budget issues, means that nurses are frequently required to work 12 hours or more during their

shift. The condition of the old Veterans home was pretty awful, which had a negative effect on both staff and residents.

"Our residents, Rhode Island's servicemen and women, have made real sacrifices," Stefanie added. "They deserve to be in a place like the new Veterans Home, receiving the best possible care."

As the Coronavirus pandemic continues, individuals in congregant-living facilities are among the most vulnerable, especially those in long-term care facilities. Stefanie credits the professionalism and dedication of her colleagues for providing high-quality continuity of care to the residents and mitigating the risks of COVID transmission.

"In nursing, we learn about infection control. I know that if I use proper PPE I can take care of our folks, while also taking care of myself. We're working hard to keep Coronavirus out of the building and keeping distance between COVID-positive residents and COVID-negative patients. We all feel a great sense of responsibility to each other."

Over her career, Stefanie has been able to compare a different set of challenges being a nurse in the private sector compared to public service.

"But the reality is, 'nursing' is 'nursing', wherever you go. I get to do something I love for people who have served our country," Stefanie concluded. ✨



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IN THE SUMMER 2020 COMPASS NEWSLETTER

➤ *Meet: Stefanie Boyer, RN*

➤ *Retirement System Update*

➤ *RI Pension Fund Outperforms
95% of Other Plans in Q1-2020*

➤ *Message from the Treasurer*

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Chairman, ERSRI Board