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Roger Williams University dedicates new Cummings School of Architecture

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Shown (from left) are: RWU dean and professor of Architecture Stephen White, AIA; dean of Engineering, Computing, and Construction Management Robert Griffin; and executive director of Real Estate Programming Richard Godfrey with Cummings Foundation co-founders Bill and Joyce Cummings. Photo credit: Roger Williams University

Bristol, RI A celebration at Roger Williams University (RWU) formally honored the \$20 million partnership between the school and Cummings Foundation, of Woburn. The university-wide event included a dedication and naming ceremony for Cummings School of Architecture.

“Roger Williams is thrilled to partner with Cummings Foundation as we grow and add a new depth and breadth of programming,” said RWU president Ioannis Miaoulis, Ph.D. “Bill Cummings’ legacy as a real estate entrepreneur will serve to inspire our students and support many future generations

who will design and care for the built environment of tomorrow.”

Cummings School of Architecture’s new interdisciplinary real estate program will integrate architecture, business, law, planning, community development, construction management, and engineering with the social and natural sciences, humanities, and entrepreneurship.

The renaming coincides with the 35th anniversary of RWU’s architecture school. In addition to its nationally accredited Master of Architecture, the school offers a concentration in Urban and Regional Planning and the country’s oldest Historic Preservation program. RWU will introduce a Graduate Certificate in Real Estate this fall, with undergraduate and graduate degree programs planned for the fall of 2023.

RWU is the most recent inductee to Cummings’ group of “Affiliated Colleges.” Although unconnected to each other, these five Cummings-named schools have received a pledge of at least \$10 million each from Cummings Foundation. In further recognition of this new relationship, president Miaoulis has joined the Foundation’s board of trustees.

“Ioannis is a highly effective leader whose keen intellect and investment in justice and equity will greatly benefit the Foundation’s continued development,” said Cummings Foundation co-founder Bill Cummings.

Miaoulis, a first-generation college student, was born and raised in Greece. He holds a doctoral degree in Mechanical Engineering, plus a Master of Arts in Economics, and a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from Tufts University, as well as a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The former college educator used his role as dean of Tufts’ College of Engineering to build gender parity. Under his leadership, the number of female undergraduates and faculty members both increased by approximately 25 percent, and today more than half of all Tufts engineering graduates are women.

Miaoulis is a staunch proponent for STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education, and spearheaded an initiative to introduce an engineering and technology curriculum in MA public schools. Before taking the helm at RWU, he directed operations as president of Boston Museum of Science.

Miaoulis joins five other college presidents on Cummings Foundation’s board, including Dr. Agnes Binagwaho, of University of Global Health Equity; Dr. Steven DiSalvo, of Endicott College; Dr. Aisha Francis, of Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology; Dr. David Harris, of Union College; and Dr. Anthony Monaco, of Tufts University.