



Jacqueline Marque | Staff photographer

Cyclists gather recently in Washington Square for a community bike ride on Bike to Work Day.

Bike Newport honored

PROVIDENCE—Grow Smart Rhode Island, a public interest group promoting sustainable economic growth, recognized Bike Newport with the Outstanding Smart Growth Leader award at the 2014 Power of Place Summit on May 23 at the Rhode Island Convention Center.

“This award shines a welcome spotlight on a young organization that is working very hard to make a difference,” said Deanna Conheeny Casey, board chair of Bike Newport, a nonprofit that works to improve, encourage and facilitate bicycling in and around Newport. “We are truly grateful for the recognition that bicycling is indeed smart growth, and can

have a powerful impact on the health of a community.”

Bari Freeman, Bike Newport’s founder and executive director, is a 53-year-old native New Yorker who became a Newport resident in 2009. She explained that her early motivation for establishing Bike Newport came from not wanting to depend on her car during Newport’s busy summer months. Seeing the challenges to cycling and cyclists, she created Bike Newport as a website in 2010. Her goal was to discover and connect with other cyclists interested in encouraging bicycling in the area. “Many people were already thinking about getting more people on bikes for

transportation and recreation, for health and quality of life. The goal of this new organization was to bring these people together in the best interest of community,” she stated.

Since officially launching as a Rhode Island nonprofit in 2011, Bike Newport has encouraged biking and has led a collaborative effort by city government, businesses and community-based organizations to improve bicycle safety and enhance the overall experience for bicyclists. Freeman noted: “We hope to be the first of many bike friendly communities all over Rhode Island. This award will help to make that happen.”