

It's all about the **why**

In fundraising, “**How much?**” matters. Of course, “**To whom?**” matters, too. But whether the donation is \$25 or \$2 million, the big question is “**Why?**” Why give to a public institution? And why give at all?

HENRY ROWAN BELIEVED investing in education was the best way he could make a difference in people's lives.

Jean '81 and Ric '80 Edelman have spent decades creating opportunities for students to discover what they're capable of becoming.

Larry '77 and Rita Salva are making sure future healthcare professionals can pursue their calling without financial barriers.

The stories of Rowan's benefactors are different. Their motivation is remarkably similar.

Throughout the University, donors invest in students, faculty and programs because they believe in possibility. They understand how education changes lives, how discovery expands opportunity and how one act of generosity can influence people they may never meet.

The following pages tell the stories behind some of those gifts made through Forging Forward: The Campaign for Rowan University, the ambitious comprehensive campaign that spanned the past five years.

More importantly, the stories reveal the values that inspired donors' gifts, from modest to millions, giving back in order to give to the future—to new pathways, discoveries and growth.

Students are at the heart of Rowan's philanthropy—both as recipients and as part of the staff who invite donors to give. Opposite, Advancement Relations specialists gather to help launch the Forging Forward campaign.





...because legacies are built on life lessons

JOHN MORTIMER reached for the phone with apprehension.

Thousands of miles away from Inductotherm's headquarters in New Jersey, Mortimer, the company's young chief engineer in Australia, had made an expensive mistake on an ambitious project. His new approach hadn't worked, and fixing the problem would cost the fledgling company six figures—a costly sum in the early 1970s.

Mortimer called the company's founder, Henry Rowan, to accept responsibility and to offer his resignation.

His boss's response surprised him.

"What?" Rowan exclaimed. "You mean you're quitting after I've just spent \$100,000 on your education?"

Rowan knew how costly the error was, but he also saw in John Mortimer the making of a leader who would learn from the mistake and who would act with integrity as part of Inductotherm's engineering executive team. Mortimer went on to become president and CEO of the worldwide Inductotherm Group and helped shape the future of the global metals industry.

The most recent gift from the Henry M. Rowan Family Foundation honors the confidence Henry Rowan had in Mortimer to realize his potential, and it is a tribute to Mortimer's capacity to rise to challenge after challenge. This \$3 million commitment creates the John H. Mortimer Endowed Chair in Engineering. Endowed chairs ensure academic excellence by attracting and retaining distinguished scholars with the vision and ability to enhance the quality of teaching, research and service.

Virginia Rowan Smith, daughter of the Inductotherm founder and the Inductotherm Group chairman since 2016, learned from her father and Mortimer as they directed the thriving company's growth around the world from the company's headquarters in Rancocas. Inductotherm's success enabled her parents to make the historic \$100 million gift in 1992—the catalyst for all Rowan University is today—and to establish its respected engineering school, named for her father. Smith recalled her dad's high regard for education and how the opportunity to make a profound difference in higher education was what motivated him.



"My dad believed that education is the most critical factor for individuals to achieve their potential," said Smith, a longtime member of the University's Board of Trustees. "He valued people who worked hard, had high standards and didn't settle for 'good enough'. Our family is immensely pleased to establish this endowed chair and to name it for John Mortimer. He shared Dad's professional and personal values, the essentials in building our company's strong reputation. Every faculty member and student—far beyond the engineering school—can learn from John's example."

Mortimer served on the advisory board for the engineering school while he was an Inductotherm executive, working to help recruit its founding faculty and to develop the curriculum to dovetail with industry standards and practices. He demonstrated the highest ideals of leadership and a deep appreciation for education. He retired from the company in 2010, but his business acumen continues to influence its engineering and business philosophy.

He learned of the endowed chair named for him in January. "This gesture means more to me than I can adequately express," Mortimer said. "This chair represents an investment in students, faculty and innovation, and will help to ensure future engineers are well-prepared to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. I'm deeply honored by this recognition."



Virginia Rowan Smith presents John Mortimer a certificate acknowledging the endowed chair named in his honor.

WHY GIVE?

To be able to help those who may not have the means, but have the talent, drive, mission and clarity to become the best they can be? That's why we do it.

—STEPHANIE GEORGE LENCHINSKY '78
AND WILLIAM LENCHINSKY '77

The new faculty position will be filled after a national search. “This is the first endowed chair in engineering at the University,” said Giuseppe Palmese, dean of the Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering. “It is an extraordinary opportunity to embody the legacy of John Mortimer and the Rowan family for generations to come.”

The endowment is the most recent in the Rowan and Smith family's longstanding history of philanthropy at the engineering college and the University. Their support includes engineering scholarships and academic programs, as well as the Marie Rader Presenting Series, now in its 18th season.

“I look forward to being part of the welcome we extend to the new endowed chair,” said Smith. “John Mortimer remains a great model of professional integrity and accomplishment within Inductotherm. I am pleased and proud to know that his example of personal character and leadership will influence our Rowan engineering faculty and students in perpetuity.”

...because first-generation hopefuls need first-generation advocates

RITA AND LARRY SALVA understand the transformative power of education because they have lived it. Their experiences as first-generation college students shaped successful careers and inspired a lifelong commitment to helping Rowan students create their own futures.

For decades, the Salvass have supported scholarships and programs benefiting aspiring physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, researchers, engineers, filmmakers and broadcasters. Their philanthropy reflects a belief that



The new home of nursing education at Rowan welcomed students for fall 2026 on the West Campus.

WHY GIVE?

We're very grateful for the relationships we built, from our relationship together to those with our professors, mentors and friends. Our paths began at Rowan, and we want to support those journeys for current students and what they can become.

—HOWARD '00 AND RACHEL '00 BECKWITH

talented students should have access to the same opportunities that helped launch their own careers.

"In order to succeed," Larry Salva said, "you need the right chance...the right door to open for you."

Larry Salva worked his way through Glassboro State College with the help of financial aid while serving in student leadership roles and excelling academically. He went on to a distinguished career in accounting and finance, including leadership positions with PricewaterhouseCoopers, the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission and Comcast Corporation, where he retired as executive vice president and chief accounting officer. Throughout his career, he remained deeply engaged with his alma mater and today serves as vice chair of Rowan's Board of Trustees.

After earning her degrees, Rita Salva built an accomplished career in dental hygiene and higher education. As an educator and advocate for community health, she continues to teach future health professionals and serves on the advisory board of Cooper Medical School of Rowan University.

Together, the Salvass have dedicated their philanthropy to opening doors for students pursuing careers that improve lives and strengthen communities. In recognition of their leadership, service and generosity, Rowan awarded them Honorary Doctor of Humanities degrees in 2013.

In 2023, Rowan acknowledged the Salvass once more by naming the Rita & Larry Salva School of Nursing & Health Professions, part of the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences.

"Rita and I are honored to have a school at Rowan University bearing our names, especially a school that educates healthcare professionals in the compassionate care of others," Salva said during the first White Coat Ceremony at the newly named school. "As Rita and I are both first-generation college students and college graduates, we are particularly mindful of the cost of higher education. So, we wanted to help those who might not otherwise pursue a career in healthcare due to their inability to handle the financial burden."



...because science inspires a world of opportunity

EACH TIME JEAN AND RIC EDELMAN have decided to support their alma mater, they've publicly shared part of their college student origin story. "We were just two kids from South Jersey," Jean has recalled. And Ric has said repeatedly, "Everything we've accomplished is a direct result of our education at Glassboro State College."

What the entrepreneurial Edelmanns have accomplished has made it possible for them to support their alma mater with extraordinary generosity for 46 years, demonstrating their



facility opened more than 20 years ago. Since that time, they have also made major gifts to ensure that the planetarium continues to offer state-of-the-art productions and outstanding education programs.

The Edelmans' most recent gift included support for the restoration of a model of NASA's Apollo lunar lander, acquired from Marshall Space Flight Center through NASA's Artifact Program. It sits just outside the planetarium. And soon, a Mars Viking lander model also will become part of the permanent exhibits at Science Hall.

The Edelmans' philanthropic focus on science, technology, engineering, arts and math education grows from their knowledge of what makes our country the world's financial leader. "If the United States is going to maintain its leadership in the global economy, we need more engineers, scientists and mathematicians," said Ric. "That means we need to get schoolchildren excited about science—and there's no better way to do that than to give them the opportunity to stare at the stars or dig for fossils."

Center: At Edelman Planetarium, visitors of all ages explore the universe. The Edelmans' enthusiasm for science education inspires much of their philanthropy.

...because challenge and rigor build stronger students

IN 2022, VENTURE CAPITALIST John H. Martinson pledged \$5 million to expand and enhance Rowan's honors curriculum. The following fall, with 224 students, the largest-ever honors class entered Rowan University, joining roughly 400 continuing honors students in a college growing and thriving thanks to Martinson's gift.

Named John H. Martinson Honors College, the program reflects the ideals of a successful and generous business executive who believes in both honors education and Rowan's distinctive mission.

Honors students like Joseph Rozier, below right, present their research findings to guests at the Martinson Summer Scholars poster session on July 29. Twenty-two honors students received financial support this summer to focus on research projects.

personal and professional interests as well as their philanthropic creativity and practicality.

They've provided "kids" just like them with scholarships and opportunities to flourish at Rowan. They enrich the lives of thousands of people each year through experiential science at the Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum. They both devote time to their alma mater to help it achieve its mission of preparing the next generation to succeed.

One of their favorite projects is the planetarium that bears their names at Science Hall. The couple's commitment to STEAM education is the basis for their efforts to nurture everyone's wonder and understanding of the universe. The couple's gifts ensure that all students who visit the planetarium on school field trips do so at no charge—it's one of the first pledges Ric and Jean made when the



FORGING FORWARD by the numbers

As of the campaign's close on June 30, friends of Rowan University supported scholarships, academic programs, infrastructure and technology advances, research and more. (See additional coverage of gifts by Tony Galvin '89 and James George, M.D., on p. 4 and p. 7, respectively, plus photos of campaign events on p. 46.)

NEW GIFTS, PLEDGES AND COMMITMENTS RAISED

\$244,748,280

TOTAL UNIQUE DONORS

15,459

TOTAL CAMPAIGN GIFTS

65,479

GIFTS OF MORE THAN \$1M

23

MEDIAN GIFT AMOUNT

\$50

TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED FROM GIFTS OF \$100 OR LESS

\$1,106,702

ALUMNI DONOR PARTICIPATION

39%

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN AND ITS IMPACT

**ROWAN.EDU/
FORGING-FORWARD**

"I'm certainly impressed with the leadership, faculty and students of the Honors College," said Martinson, chairman of Martinson Ventures. "I'm eager to accelerate that progress."

Like honors colleges throughout the nation, Rowan's brings together academically motivated students across disciplines, offering interdisciplinary courses, enhanced classes, priority registration and honors housing. It stands out, however, for fostering a diverse community of "citizen scholars" committed to civic engagement, leadership and service beyond the classroom.

Martinson is a strong supporter of that approach. His gift expanded paid research opportunities, spring break service trips at no cost to students and study abroad experiences, while also helping launch initiatives like the Martinson Summer Scholars Program, where students gain hands-on research experience across fields from biomedical engineering to sociology.

"In the John H. Martinson Honors College, we look for incredibly well-rounded scholars who give back to the community," said Dean Lee Talley. "We want to cultivate citizen scholars. Mr. Martinson appreciates the strength of that. His gift broadens and deepens absolutely everything we do."

For students like James Flocco, a dual major in geographical information systems and philosophy, Martinson Honors College opens doors to meaningful research and personal growth. Through a project examining food security initiatives in New Jersey, he developed critical research and time-management skills. "This experience pushed me out of my comfort zone," Flocco said. "It can help you cross bridges you would otherwise not have the opportunity to."

Martinson also supported the creation of Rowan's marching band, the Pride of the Profs, further enriching campus life and student engagement.

His gift for high-achieving students builds on a legacy of support, following the 2004 contribution

from Thomas N. Bantivoglio that provided \$1 million to expand honors education and programming.

...because even prehistoric adventures start with parking

WHEN SCHOOL BUSES filled with excited students pull up at Jean and Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University (EFM) and when guests of all ages scramble out of their family vehicles, their tires stop in parking lots sponsored by AAA South Jersey.

In October 2025, the region's well-known travelers advocacy organization committed \$774,000 to EFM to establish the AAA South Jersey Improved Parking Infrastructure Fund. This generous investment is already supporting the expansion of parking facilities to accommodate the museum's growing popularity and its increasing numbers of visitors.

The gift ensures that parking will remain free for school field trip buses, families enjoying the playground and guests exploring the nature trails. The partnership also includes exclusive discounts on AAA services for Rowan students and employees, as well as discounted EFM admission for AAA members.

AAA South Jersey President and CEO David Antrilli considers it a priority for the organization to strengthen its partnership with Rowan. "We're proud to make this landmark gift and support what Edelman Fossil Park & Museum is doing, starting with welcoming visitors to the EFM grounds," Antrilli said. "This investment reflects AAA South Jersey's commitment to expand access to education and recreation and to promote one of South Jersey's premier destinations."



Visitors arrive at Edelman Fossil Park & Museum, with parking lots supported by AAA South Jersey as part of its commitment to education and recreation in the region.

WHAT IT MEANS TO ME

People have invested in me. My brother told me, 'You have people who believe in you. Make them proud of you.' I'm focused on being successful.

—DENIS ABAINE,
SENIOR HISTORY MAJOR

...because financial literacy empowers people

MANAGING WEALTH MAY sound like it's for the "one percent," but everyone faces daily choices about money—how to earn it, spend it and invest it. With 40 extraordinarily successful years of guiding more than 1 million people every day in their efforts to achieve financial independence, Edelman Financial Engines is bringing its skills and experience to Rowan to establish the School of Financial Planning within Rohrer College of Business.

In April, the University announced a \$10 million commitment to establish the school, powered by Edelman Financial Engines. The school is designed to address the nation's growing shortage of financial planning professionals by offering undergraduate and graduate degrees with an emphasis on preparing students to attain the Certified Financial Planner® (CFP®) professional designation.

"Expanding access to high-quality financial advice starts with investing in the people who deliver it," said Ralph Haberli, CEO and president of Edelman Financial Engines. "We have championed greater access to financial education, literacy and guidance for four decades, and we are committed to further advancing this mission by building a strong and diverse pipeline of talent prepared to guide investors at every stage of their financial journey."

As an independent wealth management firm, Edelman Financial Engines has helped people from coast to coast navigate their financial lives—from their first paycheck through retirement, supported by an independent, fiduciary planner model that puts clients' best interests first. The firm's landmark gift will help create the next generation of financial planners.

Rohrer College of Business Executive-in-Residence and University Distinguished Lecturer Ric Edelman will serve as the school's founding head. At the April



ceremony that announced the formation of the school, he addressed the need for new financial advisors.

"Today, there are more Certified Financial Planners® over age 70 than under age 30," Edelman said, noting that 38 percent of advisors are expected to retire within the next decade, leaving a substantial service gap for American families.

Edelman, a nationally recognized leader in financial planning, founded the company in 1986 with his wife, Jean, a Rowan trustee and, as an undergrad, the University's first woman elected as SGA president. As founding head, Ric will work with Rohrer College faculty to develop curriculum and teach classes. Programs will include degree programs, certificates and executive education.

"Financial planning is one of the most meaningful careers," Edelman said, "and through the new Rowan University School of Financial Planning, we intend to produce the industry's largest pipeline of CFP®-ready professionals."

Rohrer College of Business Dean Matthew Sarkees noted the distinction of the commitment. "We are forming a first-of-its-kind East Coast financial education ecosystem," he said at the announcement. "The significance of starting this school with Ric and Jean Edelman as expert, passionate advocates for financial education can't be overstated."

Beginning this fall, the school will offer its first courses on personal financial planning, investments, and insurance and risk management. The curriculum will combine technical training with communication skills while building strong industry partnerships to support student development and career pathways.

Celebrating the historic Edelman Financial Engines gift that launched Rowan's new School of Financial Planning are, from left, Rohrer College of Business Dean Matthew Sarkees, Rowan University President Ali Houshmand, Rowan University Board of Trustees member Jean Edelman, School of Financial Planning Founding Head Ric Edelman and Edelman Financial Engines CEO and President Ralph Haberli.

...because robust technology supports advanced discovery and practice

Students will benefit from hands-on experience with supercomputing systems that power global research.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS RAPIDLY transforming the modern world—and global tech leaders are helping universities keep up.

Donated by HPE in partnership with SHI International, a high-performance computing cluster valued at more than \$6.4 million will give Rowan students and faculty access to research-grade computing resources that are increasingly essential to teaching, discovery and workforce preparation. The HPE system will support coursework, student research and faculty-led projects that depend on large-scale modeling, simulation, artificial intelligence, data analysis and scientific computing.

For students, the gift creates direct experience with advanced infrastructure in fields where computation is central to discovery and practice. Computer science, data science and mathematics

Accepting a Rowan University Medal of Excellence, Dennis W. Pullin, president and CEO of Virtua Health, participates in 2022 Commencement ceremonies with then-Provost Tony Lowman, left, and President Ali Houshmand.

students will be able to work with large-scale parallel computing, GPU acceleration and AI workflows. Students in engineering, physics, chemistry, biology, the humanities and other disciplines will be able to connect classroom theory to computational experimentation, from materials and molecular modeling to complex systems analysis.

“This gift changes what we can ask our students to imagine, build and test,” said Voki Pophristic, Ph.D., Rowan University provost. “Access to high-performance computing will transform how students learn and how researchers pursue discovery. It allows us to bring advanced computation into the curriculum, expand faculty research capacity and prepare graduates for fields where data, modeling and artificial intelligence are fundamental tools.”

...because tomorrow's healthcare depends on today's students

IN 2022, ROWAN AND VIRTUA HEALTH launched Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences of Rowan University, creating a first-of-its-kind academic health partnership dedicated to educating the next generation of physicians, nurses and allied health professionals while advancing research and patient care across the region.

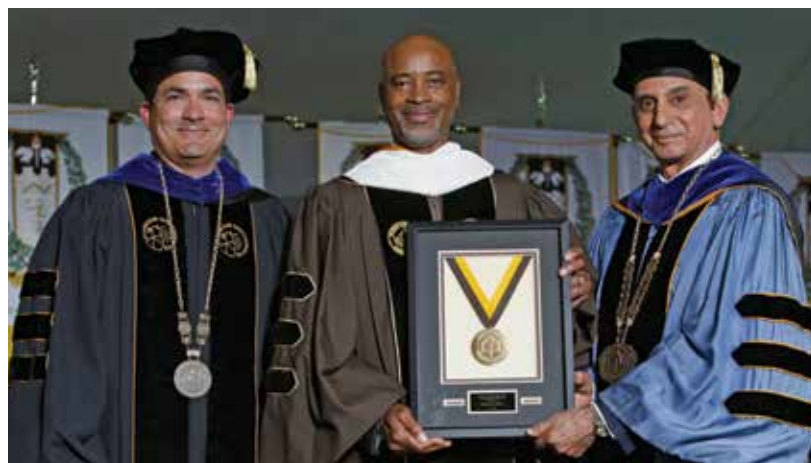
With \$85 million donated by Virtua Health and \$140 million dedicated to the initiative by the University, the partnership quickly accelerated Rowan's ability to address one of New Jersey's most-pressing challenges: a growing shortage of healthcare professionals. New academic programs, expanded clinical training opportunities and increased graduate medical education capacity are helping create a stronger workforce pipeline for South Jersey and beyond.

“Rowan and Virtua share a vision of improving lives through education, innovation and compassionate care,” said President Ali A. Houshmand. “Together, we are building opportunities for students while helping meet critical healthcare needs throughout our communities.”

Among the most visible examples of that shared commitment is the new home of the Rowan-Virtua School of Translational Biomedical Engineering & Sciences on Rowan's West Campus. The facility, which opened in the spring, expands the University's capacity to advance technologies, discoveries and innovative therapies in areas including transplant, regenerative medicine, neuromuscular and orthopedic research.

For Virtua Health, the institutional partnership represents an investment not only in Rowan students, but also in the health and well-being of the communities both organizations serve.

“By training highly skilled and compassionate nurses and allied health professionals, we are addressing a critical healthcare need and improving





Families find high-quality primary care for pets at the teaching hospital, with specialty and urgent care among the available services at Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine.

the quality of life for countless individuals,” said Virtua Health President and CEO Dennis Pullin.

The collaboration has also expanded opportunities for working healthcare professionals. Through programs such as tuition benefits for Virtua Health employees pursuing advanced nursing education at Rowan, the partnership supports lifelong learning while helping experienced clinicians advance their careers.

From medical student rotations and residency programs to translational research initiatives and innovative new degree offerings, the Rowan-Virtua relationship continues to demonstrate the power of strategic philanthropy and partnership.

...because we need compassion for all creatures, great and small

A RENOWNED ENTREPRENEUR, philanthropist and longtime supporter of animal welfare, the late Gerald B. Shreiber built J&J Snack Foods into an international success story. Yet friends and colleagues often noted that his greatest passion was animals.

From caring for stray dogs as a child in South Jersey to supporting animal welfare initiatives throughout his life, Shreiber’s compassion shaped his legacy. He and his wife, Melanie, welcomed rescue animals to their home and farm, reflecting their shared joy in making room for animals in the family.

Shreiber’s \$30 million donation to establish the Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine (SSVM) is a landmark achievement not just for Rowan University, but for New Jersey. His extraordinary investment is helping address a critical national shortage of veterinarians while expanding educational opportunities for students across the state.

“Animals help all of us live richer, fuller, more active lives,” Shreiber said when announcing the gift in 2023. “They have enriched my life tremendously.”

Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine is a centerpiece of Rowan’s rapidly growing West Campus. Designed to educate future veterinarians, researchers and animal health professionals, the school represents a major step forward for New Jersey, which previously relied on

out-of-state programs to train aspiring veterinarians.

Importantly, Shreiber’s philanthropy provides lasting scholarship support for veterinary students, helping reduce financial barriers and encouraging graduates to build their careers in New Jersey. The investment directly supports efforts to address workforce shortages affecting companion animal care, livestock health and public health initiatives throughout the region.

“This really is a capstone gift and a game changer for our students,” said Founding Dean

WHAT IT MEANS TO ME

To those who may not understand the power of giving back, look at all the students at this institution who are able to heal and change lives. Some of us are only able to do so after receiving financial help.

—GABRIELLE GEORGES D.O.’25

Matthew Edson, D.V.M. “It will allow us to provide substantial, perpetual scholarship support for aspiring veterinarians for generations to come.”

Shreiber was a longtime investor in Rowan students and their success. In 2012, he began his support with Rohrer College of Business and later established the Gerald B. Shreiber Scholarship for entrepreneurship students. In 2019, he expanded his support with a \$3 million gift to create the Shreiber Family Pet Therapy Program, one of the University’s premier wellness initiatives.

For decades to come, Shreiber’s legacy of generosity will create opportunity and improve life as it supports animal, human and environmental health.

Read more about Shreiber, who passed away in May, and the school named for him, in this issue, p. 35. ■