

campus news



Suited for success

WHEN ANTHONY J. “TONY” GALVIN ’89 returned to Rowan, he saw a reflection of his own college experience in today’s ambitious students—talented and driven, but sometimes lacking professional attire. His \$500,000 gift helps ensure they can show up confident and ready to succeed.

Students who attended the launch of the Galvin Dress for Success Program and Professional Closet last fall were smart, driven and ready to chase their dreams. They had everything they needed to succeed—except, in some cases, a great suit.

Galvin, a graduate of Rowan’s Rohrer College of Business (RCB) and a member of the Rowan University Foundation Board, has a long history of supporting Rowan’s business students. He recently committed \$500,000 as part of “Forging Forward: The Campaign for Rowan University,” an initiative to support students, innovation and impact.

Galvin knows firsthand how a polished appearance can affect opportunity, so his gift included \$150,000 to ensure that RCB students have access to professional attire for interviews, internships and first jobs.

“This type of investment has a direct, real-time impact on students who are in a similar situation as I was,” said Galvin, the first in his family to attend college. “When people are dressed well, it makes them feel good. It makes them feel successful.”

The program began in 2023 as a simple concept: 50 suits for 50 students to celebrate RCB’s 50th anniversary. But funding was uncertain—until Galvin wrote a check for \$15,000.

“Making a good first impression is always important,” Galvin said at the time. “If you’re going into a traditional path—maybe work for a public company—you need to look and act the part.”

Finance and accounting major Mosharaf Khan, one of the first recipients of a J. Crew outfit funded by Galvin three years ago, proudly wore his blue suit to the ribbon cutting.

“What a lot of people don’t realize is the effect Tony Galvin has had beyond the financial,” Khan said. “He talks to us, mentors us, and we’re so appreciative.”

Galvin’s commitment to Rowan runs deep. A Distinguished Alumni Award recipient and member of the RCB Dean’s Advisory Council, he retired from the retail outlet industry after leadership roles at Coach,

Above: Sukhmun Bains and Samantha Tamtama visit the Galvin Professional Closet in Business Hall, which offers business apparel and accessories thanks to Tony Galvin’s leadership gift to establish the resource for students.

Inc., and Chelsea Property Group, and was inducted into the Outlet Industry Hall of Fame in 2016.

Through the Anthony J. Galvin Foundation, he has long supported scholarships and youth programs. His funding established the Anthony J. Galvin Scholarship Fund within RCB in 2005, providing \$250,000 to support 28 scholarship recipients to date. His latest gift furthers that commitment, including support to outfit 30 students annually with new suits.

Rohrer College of Business students may access gently used professional clothing and accessories through the Galvin Professional Closet. So far, more than 100 students have benefited.

Elsewhere on campus, students from all colleges and schools can borrow or keep professional clothing from The Shop, Rowan's on-campus food pantry and resource center.

President Ali A. Houshmand, himself a first-generation college student, reflected on the importance of Galvin's gift.

"I still remember as an undergraduate putting on a suit and how much it boosted my confidence," Houshmand said. "Tony's been an amazing friend of the University. On behalf of our students, thank you so much."



AND THE WINNER IS: Everyone who visits Edelman Fossil Park & Museum

Jean and Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University keeps wowing visitors of all ages with full-scale dinosaur sculptures, live animal exhibits, indoor and outdoor hands-on adventures and more.

In its first year, EFM already has won six national and international awards for architecture—as well as a place in USA TODAY's 10 BEST Readers' Choice Awards competition.

To see how EFM is sharing more wonder about our world and ways to take better care of it, visit efm.org.

OUTTA' THIS WORLD: EXPERIMENT SENT SKYWARD

Could growing crystals in space lead to better drugs? Gerard Capellades, Ph.D., an assistant professor of chemical engineering in the Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering, recently sent crystallization experiments into Earth's orbit aboard the International Space Station (ISS).

Through this research, he hopes to better understand how microgravity (or very low gravity) affects the formation of crystals like those in tablets and powder-filled capsules, with an eye toward improving drug production.

While others have crystallized drugs in space before, previous experiments have focused on crystals made of one substance. By contrast, Capellades' experiments were conducted inside of Redwire's innovative, automated platform for growing high-quality protein crystals in microgravity called PIL-BOX (short for Pharmaceutical In-space Laboratory –



Lukas Shelton, a Ph.D. student in chemical engineering, prepares an experiment for the International Space Station.

Bio-crystal Optimization eXperiments). Capellades' experiment was the first to incorporate an additive to this process.

"We aim to use microgravity to grow multicomponent alloys with controlled purity in a way that would not be possible on Earth," Capellades said.

For this latest investigation, Rowan University is working on behalf of Redwire

to advance mutual research opportunities. Redwire funded the study through a contract from the NASA In-Space Production Applications (InSPA) program. The experiments traveled to the ISS onboard the May 15 SpaceX CRS-34 commercial resupply mission. The results could lay the groundwork for improvements to medications made on Earth and to multicomponent crystals used in other fields.

Advances in space technology could make off-Earth production increasingly feasible in the future. Capellades foresees drug companies using space-grown crystals as seeds for better crystal growth on Earth in cases where the additive stabilizes a new crystal structure. Full, in-space production of crystalline alloys is more likely to make sense for high-value materials used only in tiny quantities—such as in certain semiconductors or laser optics.



EXPANDING NEW JERSEY'S PRIMARY CARE PIPELINE

New Jersey faces a shortage of primary care physicians, especially in rural and underserved communities, limiting access to care for vulnerable populations. To help address this gap, Millicent Channell, D.O., of Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine, above, has secured a three-year, \$3.9 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration.

The funding supports “Pathways to Primary Care,” an initiative to encourage students to pursue careers in primary care fields such as family medicine, pediatrics and internal medicine. The program provides scholarships covering half of in-state tuition for 54 medical students, along with academic support, research opportunities and MCAT preparation.

The grant will also ensure students gain hands-on experience through clinical rotations, physician shadowing and a new mobile Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine clinic supporting underserved communities. A planned 3+3 program will further accelerate training by allowing students to complete medical school in three years.

“We want to encourage people to meet the mission of primary care: forming long-term relationships with patients, preventing them from developing chronic diseases and keeping them from getting into acute crises with any chronic conditions they may have,” Channell said.

By reducing financial barriers and increasing exposure to primary care practice, this grant-funded program aims to prepare more physicians to strengthen long-term patient care across the state.

REPAIRING DAMAGE IN MINUTES

Researchers advance composite repair

Rowan University researchers have developed a faster, more effective method for repairing damage in advanced composite materials—an innovation with potential applications in industries ranging from aerospace, automotive and maritime to energy production.

In a recent study, a multidisciplinary Rowan-led team explored the use of polymer cold spray, a process that deposits fine powders onto damaged surfaces without high heat, to restore strength in glass fiber-reinforced composites. These lightweight materials are widely used for their durability but can suffer hidden internal damage that weakens performance over time.

To explain how that damage spreads, researchers likened it to a zipper—once one fiber breaks, the failure can quickly cascade. To counter this, the team’s approach works much

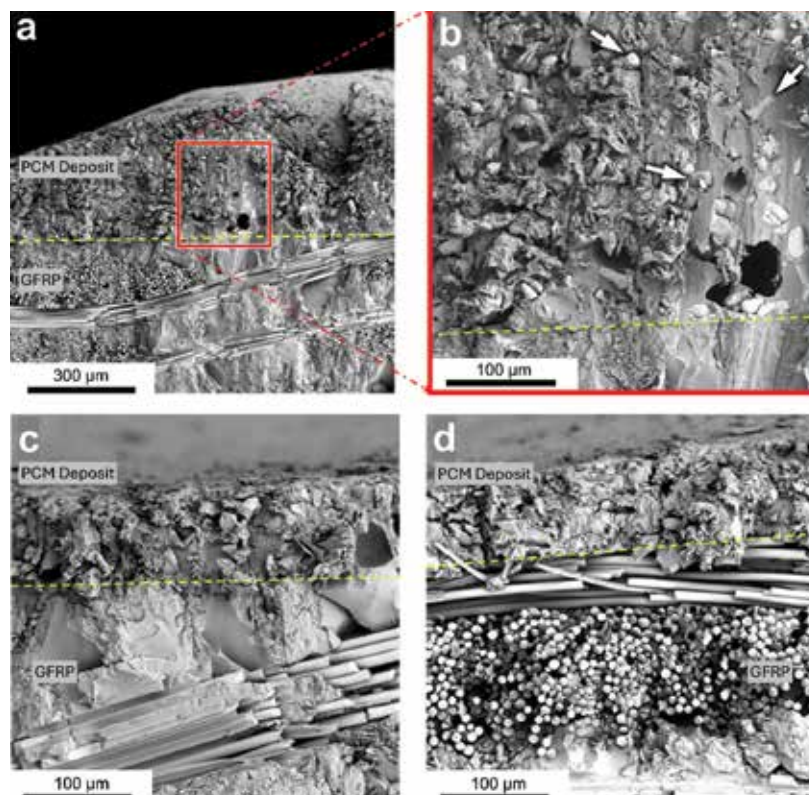
like a dental filling, sealing cracks and reinforcing weakened areas.

For shallow damage, the method restored up to 80% of a material’s original strength—and about 40% in more severe cases. Just as important, the process is fast: repairs can be completed in about 30 minutes, compared with up to two days for traditional resin-based methods.

The work was led by Behrad Koohbor, Ph.D., Francis M. Haas, Ph.D., and Joseph F. Stanzione III, Ph.D., in Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering, with significant contributions from students and the Advanced Materials & Manufacturing Institute. The team also collaborated with the U.S. Army Research Laboratory, which funded the work.

The technology could extend the lifespan of wind turbine blades, aircraft components and other critical structures, making repairs quicker, more efficient and more practical in the field.

The research was sponsored by the Army Research Laboratory (ARL) and was accomplished under Cooperative Agreement Number W911NF-19-2-0152. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not reflect official U.S. Government policy. The U.S. Government is authorized to reproduce and distribute this material.



Microscope images show where sprayed material meets the fiberglass composite.

Source: Image courtesy of Anni et al., Journal of Thermal Spray Technology (2026). Used under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.



BIOPHYSICIST NAMED AAAS FELLOW

The American Association for the Advancement of Science, one of the world's largest scientific societies, has elected Susy Kohout, Ph.D., a biophysicist and associate professor of biomedical sciences at Cooper Medical School of Rowan University (CMSRU), as an incoming fellow.

Kohout, who joined CMSRU in August 2022, is recognized for her contributions to biophysics and cell biology, particularly her work on how cells use interconnected electrical and chemical signals. Her research has important implications for understanding cell migration, including how cancer spreads.

Funded by the National Science Foundation, her work centers on voltage-sensing phosphatase, or VSP, a unique protein that reads an electrical signal and changes a cell's chemistry in ways scientists are still working to understand. Kohout is investigating whether VSP plays a role in how cells move in response to electrical fields, which may help explain one of the mechanisms behind cancer metastasis. Her lab is exploring this connection in collaboration with researchers at the Camden Cancer Research Center to study melanoma and breast cancer.

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Art as prescribed

MILITARY VETERANS and active-duty service members find healing and connection through the transformative power of art thanks to a program offered by Rowan University's George Family Center for Healing Arts. The free initiative at WheatonArts in Millville invites participants to explore a range of glass art techniques, from glassblowing and fusing to stained glass and painting, during two-day weekend workshops.

"The goal is to bring military people together to promote wellness," said Morgan Yacoe, director of the George Family Center. "Glass is so tied to this region, and we wanted to honor that connection in a meaningful way."

Among the attendees was James George, M.D., a retired emergency room physician and celebrated painter who donated \$1 million in 2024 to establish the George Family Center. George, who turned to painting during his rehabilitation after a fall, observed

how glass fusing required a different mindset from his abstract acrylics.

"I don't make creative decisions until the very last second," he said. "That's when my mind picks colors and dictates what my hand will do."

Retired Navy Captain Kathy Henley of Cinnaminson, another participant, emphasized the emotional value of the experience. "Whenever you meet veterans, you meet family you never knew you had," she said. "You always have something in common."

The George Family Center is also home to an arts prescribing program, Artwise Rx. Available through Rowan Medicine and the Wellness Center, the program provides students and community members with free creative experiences to boost well-being.

For more information about the George Family Center, visit: sites.rowan.edu/healingarts

Veteran Christopher Charlow participates in a glass art workshop.



EXCELLENCE TIMES FIVE

Rowan University Police Department earned its fifth accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), the leading national standard for public safety agencies. Rowan was the first college or university police department in New Jersey to achieve CALEA accreditation and has since gained accreditation from the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA). Police Chief Rachel Baum said that the dual accreditation underscores the department's dedication to transparency, accountability and excellence.



The planetarium has been internationally recognized for its efforts to create an accessible and inclusive environment for all visitors.

SPACE FOR EVERYONE

Edelman Planetarium earns autism certification

The stars and planets are for everyone.

And for visitors of the Ric & Jean Edelman Planetarium, so are its astronomy programs and laser shows.

This year, the planetarium achieved designation as a Certified Autism Center by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards. The designation is granted to organizations that have completed autism and sensory-sensitivity training, certification and a facilities review by the board. Funding for the project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Director Amy Barraclough said the planetarium now offers downloadable

sensory guides to help schools, groups and families understand what to expect during a visit. Visitors can also request sensory kits that include headphones to soften noise and fidget toys to occupy busy hands.

The goal, she said, is to make the planetarium “a place where everyone feels welcome and supported.”

“For us, this project is about fostering an environment where curiosity and learning are accessible to all,” Barraclough said. “Nothing should prevent someone from learning about the universe, and this designation helps every visitor experience the joys of discovery.”

LEARNING IN LONDON

In June, a group of students from Rita & Larry Salva School of Nursing & Health Professions traveled to Dagenham, London, for an internship with Urban Promise UK.

Led by associate professor Nicole Vaughn, Ph.D., the students participating in this study abroad experience worked closely with children aged 5–13, leading activities related to sports, reading and cooking. Before traveling abroad, students spent the spring semester developing lessons to use for the internship. Rowan’s internship program in Dagenham began in 2025, and Vaughn hopes to continue helping the community for years to come.

Urban Promise UK is an outgrowth of Urban Promise International, which started in Camden, New Jersey, in 1988. Since then, the group has worked to rebuild under-resourced communities by providing academic and spiritual support to urban youth.



Freshman nursing student Abigail Forte works with children on a coloring page.



PRINT, PAVE, PROGRESS

Federal grant supports roads and 3D housing research

Congressman Donald Norcross, center, delivered \$1.9 million in Community Project Funding to Rowan University and Gloucester County this spring to support research on concrete 3D printed housing and roadway improvements at Rowan’s West Campus. The additive manufacturing research is led by Islam Mantawy, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering. “It’s about resiliency and affordability, particularly in housing,” Norcross said. “It’s a game changer.”



VIRTUA HEALTH COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER OPENS FOR DISCOVERY

Rowan University and Virtua Health celebrated the West Campus opening of Virtua Health College Research Center, a new facility designed to advance biomedical research and innovation in South Jersey.

The center, which boasts more than 20,000 square feet of space, houses multidisciplinary teams and features new institutes focused on orthopedic, neuromuscular, transplant and regenerative medicine research. It will also support the New Jersey Accelerator for Innovation in Medtech (NJ AIM), which is aimed at developing and commercializing cutting-edge medical technologies.

Leadership highlighted the center as another step in Rowan's growth and its partnership with Virtua Health, strengthening efforts to transform healthcare education and expand research in the region.

"The new research facility aligns ideas from basic science and early discovery with preclinical studies leading to clinical research for improved patient outcomes," said Dianne Langford, associate vice chancellor for Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences. "We are committed to building knowledge that produces solutions to real-world problems."

Officials emphasized the center's potential to drive economic growth as a regional hub for healthcare innovation, advanced manufacturing and workforce development.

NATIONAL NOTICE

A few key numbers tell what national ranking organizations see at Rowan—and what students, alumni and employers can count on when they look for quality and value at the University:

#1

FASTEST-GROWING PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY IN HIGHLY COMPETITIVE NORTHEAST AND TOP 10 NATIONALLY
Chronicle of Higher Education

TOP 50

ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM
The Princeton Review

#92

AMONG PUBLIC NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

#114

BEST VALUE SCHOOLS

#122

BEST COLLEGES FOR VETERANS

#189

SOCIAL MOBILITY

U.S. News & World Report



Graduate student Cameron Wilburn, right, provides a crash course in the Zooniverse transcription platform for community volunteer and Harrison Township Historical Society member Robert Green.

TEAM TRANSCRIPTION

Side by side, campus and community volunteers helped preserve Black history during Rowan's fourth annual Douglass Day Transcribe-a-thon, part of a global event honoring abolitionist Frederick Douglass with more than 180 participating sites nationwide. Hosted by the Center for Digital Humanities Research, part of Ric Edelman College of Communication,

Humanities & Social Sciences, more than 50 participants armed with laptops gathered to transcribe records from the Colored Conventions movement spanning nearly 70 years of Black civic organizing. Volunteers transformed handwritten letters, newspapers and records into widely accessible resources for scholars, students and future generations, advancing awareness of often-overlooked histories.

Team and individual honors mark '25-'26 season

Profs head into new year powered by performance on national stage

The men's indoor track & field team led the way by winning the NCAA Division III Championship, marking the 12th national team title in the history of Rowan Athletics, and the school's first since field hockey won in 2002. Rowan placed 18th in the Division III Learfield Directors' Cup, which recognizes the overall excellence of athletics programs, and owns the distinction of being the second highest-ranked public institution in Division III. It also marks the second straight year that the Profs finished in the nation's top 20. The Profs claimed NJAC Championships in nine of 18 sports while winning the NJAC Cup for the sixth year in a row.

*National rankings follow in ()

MEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD (#1)

The Profs won the NCAA Division III Championship, which was also the first-ever indoor national championship for Rowan and the sixth all-time in the history of the men's track program. Seth Clevenger captured a pair of national titles in the 3,000 and 5,000 meters and the Profs saw 17 student-athletes collect All-America honors. The Profs won their 11th consecutive NJAC title with David Brown being named the NJAC Rookie of the Year. All told, 25 Profs were named All-Conference and total of 33 received All-Region honors. Dustin Dimit was the Regional Coach of the Year, Norm Tate was the region's Assistant Coach of the Year, and the Profs' staff was voted as the top in the NJAC.

MEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD (#2)

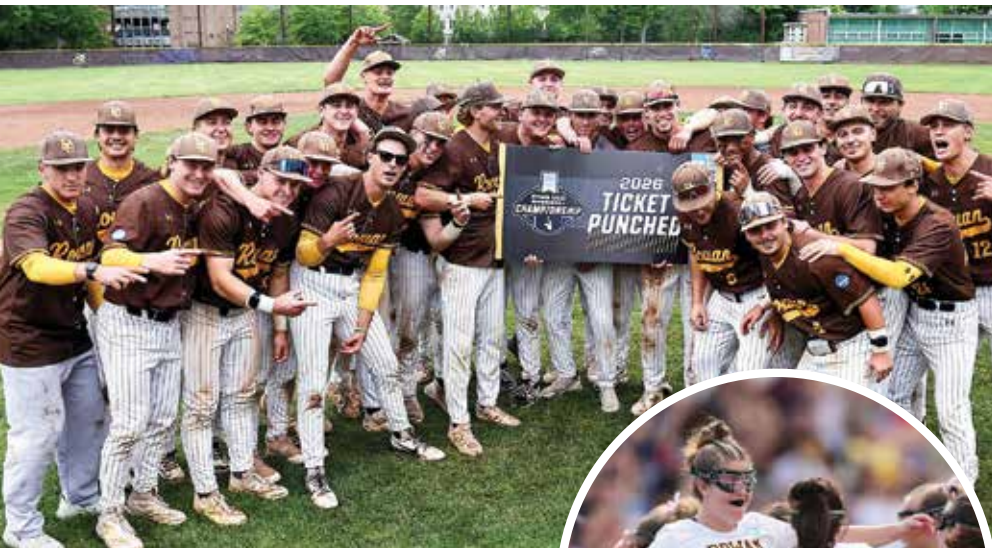
Rowan finished as the national runner-up in the NCAA Outdoor Championships, highlighted by individual national champions Damitrius Hester (Javelin) and David Brown (High Jump), and a total of 19 All-Americans. Additionally, Rowan brought home its 11th consecutive NJAC title and its fifth straight AARTFC Regional Championship. Hester was named the Regional Field Athlete of the Year, Evan Corcoran earned the Regional Track Athlete of the Year award and Dustin Dimit and staff received Coaching Staff of the Year awards in both the NJAC and the NCAA Metro Region.

BASEBALL (#4)

The NJAC champion Profs made their second straight appearance in the NCAA Division III World Series, earning the trip after winning the NCAA Super Regional, which they hosted on campus for the first time ever. Brayden Davis was one of the nation's top hitters and earned a host of honors, including All-America Second Team, ABCA Region Player of the Year and NJAC Player of the Year, Rowan's first honoree since 2015. Austin Kreyenhagen and Damon Suriani joined Davis on the All-Region Team while Joey Bogart, Mason Dorsey, Ian Murphy,



Men's Track & Field



Jason Schooley and Nick Watson joined the trio on the All-NJAC Team. Mike Dickson '02 recorded his 700th career coaching victory and was named the ABCA Region IV Coach of the Year, while he and his assistants picked up the NJAC Coaching Staff of the Year award.

SOFTBALL (#6)

The Profs won their third straight NJAC title and reached the NCAA Division III World Series for a program-record fourth consecutive season. Pitcher Emily McCutcheon earned a prestigious distinction with her selection to both the NFCA All-America Team and the CSC Academic All-America Team. The senior, who was dubbed the top player in both the NCAA Regionals and Super Regionals, led a school-record nine Profs receiving All-NJAC honors and was one of six to be named to the All-Region Team. Head coach Kim Wilson reached another milestone when she recorded her 1,000th victory at Rowan in 30 seasons with the Profs. Last year, the NFCA Hall of Fame coach surpassed 1,000 career wins, becoming the first woman in Division III to achieve the feat.

FIELD HOCKEY (#12)

The Profs won 12 of their final 15 games en route to claiming their fifth straight NJAC Championship and fifth consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance. Senior Tess Herman became a two-time All-American and was the first Prof to earn the NJAC Defensive Player of the Year award twice. Sydney Kowalczyk was named the NJAC Rookie of the Year and Mia Foti, Gracie Merrick, Aurelia McManis and Mariah Juiliano joined Herman and Kowalczyk on the All-NJAC squad.



Elaina Corson

MEN'S SOCCER (#12)

Rowan won the NJAC title for the second year in a row and advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Championship for the first time since 2019. Johnny Troiano closed out his career as one of the most decorated athletes in Rowan history being named to both the All-America and Academic All-America Teams for the second year in a row. A repeat awardee as the NJAC Offensive Player of the Year, he was also named the College Sports Communicators Academic All-America Men's Soccer Division III Team Member of the Year, becoming the first such honoree for Rowan Athletics. Troiano, also named the NJAC Male Athlete of the Year, was joined on the All-Region Team by Ryan Cleary, Davide Caputo, Gil Ferreira and Evan Schlotterbeck.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE (#16)

Rowan made back-to-back appearances in the NCAA Championship for the first time since 2013 and reached the NCAA Third Round for the second year in a row. Senior Elaina Corson solidified her place in Rowan history when she became the Profs' all-time leading scorer with 332 points and in goals with 273. Corson picked up IWLC A All-America honors for the second time and was joined on the All-America Team by Madison Rothwein, who

Men's Baseball

also set school records for draw controls in a game and the season. Rothwein (NJAC Midfielder of the Year) and Leah Corkhill (NJAC Defensive Player of the Year) were joined on the All-Conference Team by Corson, Fiona Lockhart, Alexis Lowry and Jenna O'Neill.

WOMEN'S SOCCER (#18)

The Profs reached the NJAC title game and received their fourth consecutive bid to the NCAA Championship. Twin sisters Julianna and Olivia Giordano led the way and received All-America honors. Julianna was named to the All-America First Team and chosen as the NJAC Defensive Player of the Year with Olivia being selected to the All-America Third Team and the All-Conference squad. The duo earned All-Region honors along with MaKala Baker, Lianna SanFelice, and Sara Wiedeman.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

The Profs were the fifth seed in the NJAC Tournament and reached the NJAC Semifinals. Senior Taz Cantey was voted onto the All-Conference Second Team with Brycen Williams and Khalil Baker receiving Honorable Mention. Cantey was also recognized as South Jersey's Small College Player of the Year.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The Profs finished with a 16-10 record for their second straight winning season and earned a berth as the third seed in the NJAC Tournament. Senior Charlotte Carlies and junior Haley Selmer received All-Conference honors while Carlies, Jes Mastriano, Jess McLaughlin, and Emily Poulas were chosen to the CSC Academic All-District Team.

MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

The Profs recorded a second-place finish in the NJAC and placed four runners on the All-Conference Team—Matthew Conway, Sean Hice, Colin Patterson and Elijah Whitaker. Conway finished seventh at the NCAA Regional meet



Softball



Gabriella Pagano

and repped Rowan in the NCAA Cross Country Championship.

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

The Profs won their second straight NJAC title led by individual champion Gabriella Pagano. The senior was named the NJAC Runner of the Year and the Metro Region Athlete of the Year and was a repeat participant at the NCAA Cross Country Championships. Shedrick Elliott III and staff earned the Coaching Staff of the Year award with Pagano, Jezena Aponte, Juliana Sieminski, Shannon Stakelbeck and Ally Wernik being named to the All-Conference Team.

FOOTBALL

The Profs returned to post-season play for the first time since 2014 and recorded a 26-20 win over Utica in the ECAC Asa S. Bushnell Bowl, closing out the year with an 8-2-1 record. Giaini Derameaux was named an All-American by D3football.com and Anthony Henriquez garnered the NJAC Defensive Player of the Year award as they led the NJAC's top rushing defense. The duo was among 14 student-athletes named to the NJAC All-Conference Teams with Jaeden Everett, the Defensive Rookie of the Year, and Mordecai Ford, the Offensive Rookie of the Year, picking up marquee awards.

MEN'S SWIMMING

The Profs placed fourth at the NJAC Championship meet as junior Braden Sheehan led the way, earning four All-Conference honors and setting a program record in the 200 Individual Medley. The junior picked up two first-team selections

and was joined on the All-NJAC list by Julian Huynh, Joshua Oliveira, and Drew Westhoven.

WOMEN'S SWIMMING

Ella Pennington capped her outstanding Rowan career by earning an All-American honor, her seventh overall, with her fourth-place finish in the 100-meter backstroke at the NCAA Swimming & Diving Championships. Kaitlyn Crouthamel also qualified in two events for the national meet to represent the Profs along with Pennington. Rowan placed third at the NJAC Championships with Pennington receiving All-NJAC honors in six events and Crouthamel earning All-Conference status in five events.

WOMEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

For the first time since 2016-17, the women's track team claimed the NJAC Indoor Championship, which was the sixth in the program's history. Denirah Jones received the conference's top rookie award and led a group of 14 Profs who earned All-NJAC recognition. Nyla Jones and Gabriella Pagano qualified for the NCAA Championships with Jones garnering All-America status in the 60m hurdles. Shedrick Elliott III and staff were named the NJAC Coaching Staff of the Year while assistant Eric DuBois '12 earned the Regional Assistant Coach of the Year award.

WOMEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

The Profs won their first NJAC outdoor track championship since 2019 and the first under head coach Shedrick Elliott III. Nyla Jones was named the NJAC's Outstanding Athlete while she was joined by Gabriella Pagano and Ava Reardon in earning All-America honors at the NCAA Outdoor Championships. Elliott was named the Regional Coach of the Year and the entire staff was named the NJAC Coaching Staff of the Year.

VOLLEYBALL

The Profs showed great resilience in a difficult season after the untimely passing of beloved head coach Deana Jespersen. Jespersen was honored posthumously as she and her staff were named the Joy Solomen NJAC

Coaching Staff of the Year after Rowan went 25-6 and earned the second seed in the NJAC Tournament. Jessica Smart won the conference's Rookie of the Year award and was joined on the All-Conference team by Raven Albrecht, Abby Chadwick, Vanessa Hutchinson, and Jena Kaul. Smart and Chadwick received AVCA All-America Honorable Mention, marking the first time in the program's history that the Profs had multiple All-Americans in the same year. Assistant coach Matt Verlinghieri, who guided the Profs after Jespersen's passing, was named the AVCA Division III Assistant Coach of the Year.

WELCOME BACK!

Two former Profs—Casey Burford '14 and Rob DePersia '19—have returned to Glassboro and are making their debut as Rowan head coaches in 2026–27.

Burford was named Rowan's head volleyball coach, returning to her alma mater after serving in the same role at Catholic University for the past two seasons. She brings years of experience at the Division I and Division III levels as an assistant coach, having also worked at Goucher College, Delaware State and Frostburg State.

Burford (nee Grasso) played at Rowan from 2010 to 2014 and was named the NJAC Defensive Player of the Year in 2013, while also serving as a team captain for two seasons.

DePersia, Rowan's new head men's basketball coach, returns to Glassboro after working at the Division I level for seven years. He spent a total of five seasons with the Villanova basketball program, including two with Naismith Hall of Fame coach Jay Wright, while also gaining experience at Fordham and New Haven.

A four-year starter and three-year captain for the Profs from 2015 to 2019, DePersia earned All-NJAC Honorable Mention in 2017 and 2019. He scored 1,004 points in his career and ranks second all-time in assists (498) and is among the Profs' career leaders in three-point field goals (93), free throws (309) and games played (104). In his senior year he and his twin brother, Nick, were double-digit scorers who helped the Profs to the 2019 NJAC Championship.



Field Hockey

PLAYING SMART

Rowan athletes aren't just winning on the field, they're scoring high in the classroom, too.

4.0  33

3.5  225

3.0+  325



Johnny Troiano

 =25 Student Athletes

5
NCAA Individual
Champions

48
All-Americans

2
Academic All-Americans

Making it happen

More than 5,500 graduates celebrated their achievements as Rowan honored distinguished leaders and challenged the Class of 2026 to shape the future.

Balloons, bouquets and beaming smiles abounded as more than 5,500 graduates and 47,000 guests celebrated at 14 ceremonies in a grand week of academic tradition.

The festivities began with Ph.D., Ed.D. and Ed.S. graduates, whose prolific research and scholarship continues to advance Rowan toward Carnegie R1 status. Twelve college and school ceremonies during five more days welcomed loved ones to share joy in their graduates' accomplishments.

Inductotherm Chairman and Rowan Trustee Virginia Rowan Smith brought the keynote address and received the Honorary Doctorate of Humanities (mid-page opposite, wearing white regalia hood). With key examples of people who made a difference, she encouraged everyone, "Don't wait for things to 'just happen'. Develop a 'Not yet' attitude and go ahead and make them happen."

At the University ceremony, Professor Emerita Toni Libro '60, M'67, Ph.D., accepted Distinguished Alumnus honors for her decades of achievements (top right, presented by Alumni Association President Lisa Westfield '95 and President Ali Houshmand).

For being chosen as 2025 National High School Principal of the Year, Lenape High School Principal Tony Cattani '98, M'02 received the Medal of Excellence in Alumni Achievement (bottom right, presented by Provost Voki Pophrastic and College of Education Dean Gaëtane Jean-Marie).



FOR MORE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS:
view.rowan.edu/commencement-2026





Celebrating 20 years of leadership

Rowan's seventh president marks a rare milestone in higher education—and keeps moving to make more possible

FOR TWO DECADES, ALI A. HOUSHMAND has served Rowan University with a bold belief in what's possible when institutions take smart, strategic risks. First as provost and now as president, he has shaped an era of remarkable growth—guided by his own journey from poverty to opportunity and his conviction that education can change lives.

Informed by data, driven by ideas

From Houshmand's first major initiative to expand access to Rowan's academic programs—creating what is now known as Rowan Online—to planning for Rowan's second century, his bold thinking is based in data and being inclined to defy whatever odds arise.

Early in his leadership, Houshmand committed to four strategic pillars from which every step forward would be made and measured: expand access, increase affordability, maintain quality and serve as an economic engine.

The result is breathtaking advances for the institution and unprecedented opportunities for individuals and organizations, including students, alumni and partners collaborating to help drive the region's economy.

The gains have been extraordinary as Rowan:

- became a top 100 public research university and one of only two in the nation granting M.D., D.O. and D.V.M. degrees
- rose to be ranked as the fastest-growing public research university in the Northeast and in the nation's top 10 since 2018
- doubled enrollment, employees and academic programs
- rapidly advanced from a Carnegie master's

institution to operating as an R1 university

- forged partnerships that are transforming higher education and expanding access to high-quality, affordable education.

Indeed, Houshmand has led a transformation of the institution comparable only to the broad growth and change more than 50 years ago during President Thomas E. Robinson's term. That historic perspective underscores Rowan's progress under Houshmand and confirms its potential to do more.

Full speed ahead

Rowan University has had only seven presidents in its 103-year history, each serving, on average, a decade and a half. The national average for university presidents is under six years.

Marking 20 years in Houshmand's leadership—six years as provost and 14 as president—is an exceptional institutional milestone as much as it is proof of Houshmand's pledge to make a critical difference in people's lives for generations to come.

Ultimately, every data point and goal links to a person who Houshmand believes Rowan University can—and should—help: a student facing obstacles as he did; an aspiring entrepreneur with an idea; the healthcare professionals, educators, artists and innovators who find Rowan not just a resource, but the essential catalyst for change in themselves and all they encounter.

President Houshmand's insight, vision and willingness to challenge convention continue to inspire Rowan's ambitious drive and growth. But just for a moment, we pause to celebrate 20 years of bold leadership and meaningful accomplishments and the future they make possible. ■

1 2017: Signing a jar of Houshmand's Hazardous Hot Sauce at a local charitable event.

2 2023: Joining hundreds to start the University's Centennial celebration.

3 2019: Greeting families at Holly Pointe Commons during Welcome Weekend.

4 2019: Presiding over Commencement.

5 2019: Taking a test run during the Esports Xtreme Tournament.

6 2017: Eyeing the solar eclipse with guests at Science Hall.

7 2015: Cutting the ribbon on another new home for Rowan's expanding base in Glassboro.

8 2011: Celebrating with Board of Trustees Member Linda Rohrer support for William G. Rohrer College of Business.

9 2022: Officially welcoming the Class of 2026 for its first semester.