

Rowan Magazine

FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF ROWAN UNIVERSITY

SUMMER 2025



Why dinosaurs (still) matter 23 | Here to serve 32



stay connected

reconnect, reminisce and relive your college days with fellow Profs!

Visit alumni.rowan.edu/Y2K to register. Tickets are \$25.

Rowan Alumni Night with the Philadelphia Union

Wednesday, July 16

Subaru Park, Chester, Pa.

Alumni, family and friends are invited to watch the Philadelphia Union take on CF Montréal. Game tickets include reserved seating with fellow Profs.

Visit alumni.rowan.edu/union2025 to register. Tickets are \$45.

ASCEND/EOF Alumni Mixer and PCI 2000 Class Reunion

Friday, July 18

Chamberlain Student Center Expansion, Glassboro campus

This special event hosted by the ASCEND Program provides an opportunity to connect with fellow alumni and PCI 2025 students. The event will also celebrate the 25th reunion of the PCI Class of 2000.

Visit alumni.rowan.edu/2025ascendmixer to register. Tickets are \$20.

save the date

Homecoming Weekend 2025

Friday, October 17–

Sunday, October 19

Glassboro campus

Rowan Alumni Reception at NJEA, Hosted by the College of Education

Thursday, November 6

Atlantic City



Scan here or visit alumni.rowan.edu/events for more information and a calendar of events

Benefits and services

The perks of being a Prof don't stop at graduation! The Office of Alumni Engagement offers a range of benefits and services to alumni.

Visit go.rowan.edu/alumnibenfits

Class Notes

Share updates such as an award or recognition, birth or adoption, job announcement, retirement, wedding, union or other noteworthy achievement.

Visit go.rowan.edu/classnotes

Profs Connect

Our exclusive networking and mentoring platform creates opportunities to connect alumni and students. Find job listings, view upcoming events, access the Alumni Business Directory and more.

Visit rowanprofsconnect.com

Update your info

Each month, the Office of Alumni Engagement sends its monthly e-newsletter, Prof Post and other timely information about events, announcements and all things Rowan!

Update your information at alumni.rowan.edu/update

Social media

Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn to stay up to date on alumni events and more!

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featured events

Rowan Reunion at Bar A

Saturday, July 12

Bar Anticipation, Lake Como

Join the Rowan University Alumni Association for its annual reunion at the Jersey Shore. This is the perfect opportunity to get together with Rowan alumni and friends for a summer night out. Registration includes an all-you-can-eat BBQ buffet, drink specials and Rowan giveaways.

Visit alumni.rowan.edu/rowanreunion2025 to register. Tickets are \$10.

Y2K @ Bar A

Saturday, July 12

Bar Anticipation, Lake Como

Join us for a mini reunion hosted by the Class of 2000 especially for alumni who graduated at the turn of the millennium. Registration includes a BBQ buffet, drink specials and an exclusive Rowan T-shirt for Y2K attendees. This addition to our annual event is a great chance to

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features

COVER STORY 23 Why dinosaurs (still) matter

Jean '81 and Ric '80 Edelman invested in a STEM project unlike any other, determined to educate and inspire generations of citizen scientists of all ages. International attention and sold-out admission prove Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University is both important and exceptional.

by Steve Levine '87, M'07

32 Here to serve

Politics is the business of the people, for the people. Rowan alumni, educators and friends show how serving the public is central to Rowan's leadership, training and outreach.

by Barbara Baals

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ON THE COVER

In the Monstrous Seas Gallery at Edelman Fossil Park & Museum, a life-size replica of a mosasaur dwarfs visitors. It is suspended in the exhibit at what roughly would have been sea level 66 million years ago in southern New Jersey.

ROWAN MAGAZINE

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Can it be?! 30 years of your magazine

What's your favorite Rowan Magazine memory? See photos and more of our top 30 at go.rowan.edu/magazine30 or scan the QR code:



Thirty years ago, "Toy Story's" Woody and his friends came to life—theirs and ours. We keyed our way into Windows 95, eBay and Match.com for the first time. The Million Man March made history. The Devils brought the Stanley Cup home to New Jersey. Some of us danced the "Macarena." Many of us still have an earworm of a certain

age: "I'll Be There for You," courtesy of The Rembrandts and all the "Friends" NBC introduced us to.

And with notably less historic fanfare but lots of heart, Rowan Magazine made its debut that fall, the first full-color periodical for Rowan family and friends.

The inaugural issue featured a bold choice

for its cover: 85-year-old alumna Margaret Flannagan sporting a swimsuit and some of the 20 gold medals she'd won as a Senior Olympian.

Since then, Rowan Magazine has reached readers with the latest from our news desk and nostalgia from our archives.

You—more than 122,000 alumni—have generously told us your stories and we've been honored to share them on our pages.

Together, we are keepers of Rowan's generational knowledge.

Caretakers of shared and cherished experiences. Reporters of each next Rowan-proud thing.

From our grateful staff—most of us fellow alumni and veteran employees—thank you for being the soul of Rowan Magazine, our most thoughtful readers and our proudest fans.

Forget the '95 earworm, but count on Rowan Magazine to be there for you.

Lori Marshall
Lori Marshall M'92
Editor

EXCLUSIVE LICENSE.

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Rowan University license plates are coming to New Jersey!
Scan QR code or visit go.rowan.edu/licenseplates to reserve yours.



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Rowan Medicine

an affiliate of Virtua Medical Group



PRIMARY AND SPECIALTY HEALTH CARE

FOR SOUTH JERSEY

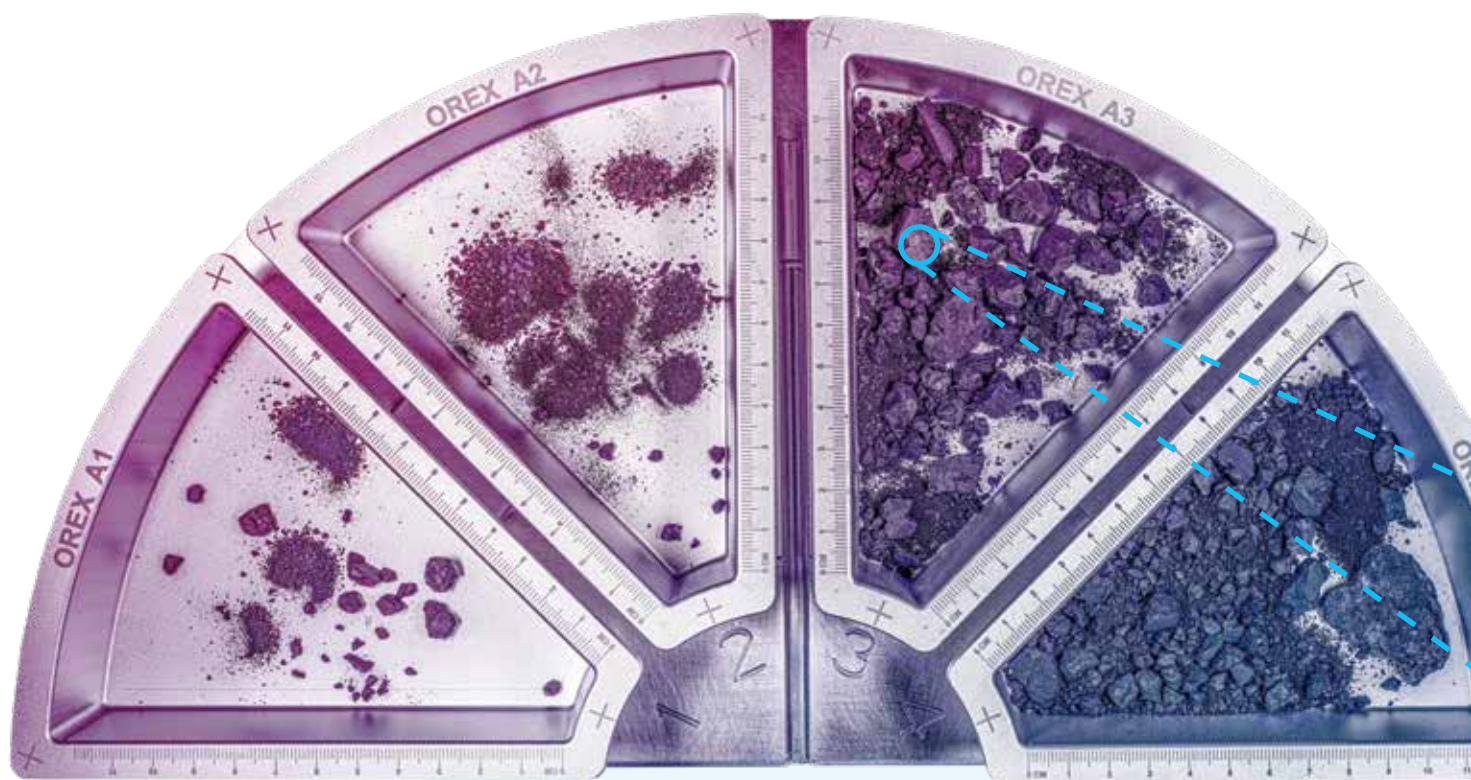
For more than 30 years, Rowan Medicine has integrated high quality health care with a great patient experience in both primary—including Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and OB-GYN—and specialty care services. And, our affiliation with Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine means that we're committed to training the health care leaders of tomorrow.



rowanmedicine.com

Learn more about how
we can serve you





COURTESY OF NASA/ERIKA BLUMENFELD AND JOSEPH AEBERSOLD

Connolly and NASA team find more clues in space about origin of life

Above: A view of four sample trays containing dust and rock material collected from asteroid Bennu. In October 2023, the curation team at NASA's Johnson Space Center encountered two stuck fasteners preventing removal of the Touch-and-Go Sample Acquisition Mechanism (TAGSAM) canister head. Still, the team was able to recover 70.3 grams of material from the top plate. The initial material extracted was fine dust, but as the collection process progressed, the team retrieved larger pieces of rock material.

After creating a new custom tool, the team removed the fasteners in January 2024 and collected an additional 51.2 grams of material. In total, the mission yielded 121.6 grams of pristine sample—the largest asteroid sample ever collected in space.

Scientists have long surmised that the ingredients for life on Earth may have originated in space. New research directed by a Rowan University professor helps support that theory.

Harold C. Connolly Jr., founding chair and professor of geology in the School of Earth & Environment is supervising the sample analysis phase of the NASA OSIRIS-REx mission, which in 2023 delivered material from the asteroid Bennu to Earth. Research from that quest is producing monumental results, including articles published in the journals *Nature* and *Nature Astronomy*.

Connolly said those and other studies indicate that the sample from Bennu, a carbonaceous asteroid with an orbit similar to Earth's, holds clues to the origin of the solar system as well as to the source of water and organic molecules on Earth.

"One of the most important questions we ask is regarding the origin of life," said Connolly, the OSIRIS-REx mission sample scientist. "We need to know how the compounds from which life evolved were formed and how they were delivered to Earth."

In 2020, the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency sent a craft to the asteroid Ryugu, returning with a sample. Connolly, who worked on that mission as well, said the sample delivered by Hayabusa2 also teased the possibility that the seeds for life on Earth might have originated in space.

NASA sought a pristine sample from Bennu—an asteroid likewise descended from distant, ancient bodies—because meteorites degrade when they breach the atmosphere and land on Earth.

Still, he emphasized that the latest findings are not about life coming from

Below: Nature's January 30, 2025, cover story detailed how researchers found salt minerals in Bennu samples deposited from brine evaporation on the asteroid's parent body. Notably, they found sodium salts, including needles of hydrated sodium carbonate, highlighted in purple in the false-colored image.



IMAGE: ROB WARDELL/TIM MCCOY/SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION;
COLORIZATION: HEATHER ROPER/UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA.

space but “the materials from which life formed, the building blocks and the carrier of those building blocks.”

As mission sample scientist, Connolly continues to direct work by the entire OSIRIS-REx Sample Analysis Team, which includes some 260 researchers from institutions around the world.

The latest published studies on the sample described minerals known as evaporites, or salts, as well as organic compounds and ammonia, an inorganic chemical compound that on Earth catalyzes biological reactions and acts as a fertilizer to promote plant growth.

And while the findings do not offer proof that life began in space, they hint it may have.

Reported NASA, “these ingredients for life could be widespread across the solar system.”

ROWAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM RANKED #1 IN NEW JERSEY. AGAIN!

The Princeton Review, which annually compares the top entrepreneurship degrees in the country, in November ranked Rowan's program #1 in the Garden State for the second consecutive year. Nationally, the organization ranked the program #37 for 2025, a 13-spot boost in four years.

For 2025, it also ranked Rowan's entrepreneurship programming, which is centered in the Rohrer College of Business (RCB), #4 in the Northeast, up one spot from 2024.

Based in the RCB's School of Innovation & Entrepreneurship (SIE), a variety of programs teach and inspire students to think and act entrepreneurially.

In 2024-25 there were 524 students enrolled in SIE's entrepreneurship offerings—up from 459 the previous year. Additionally, nearly 10% of Rowan's undergraduate students took at least one entrepreneurship course in the last year.

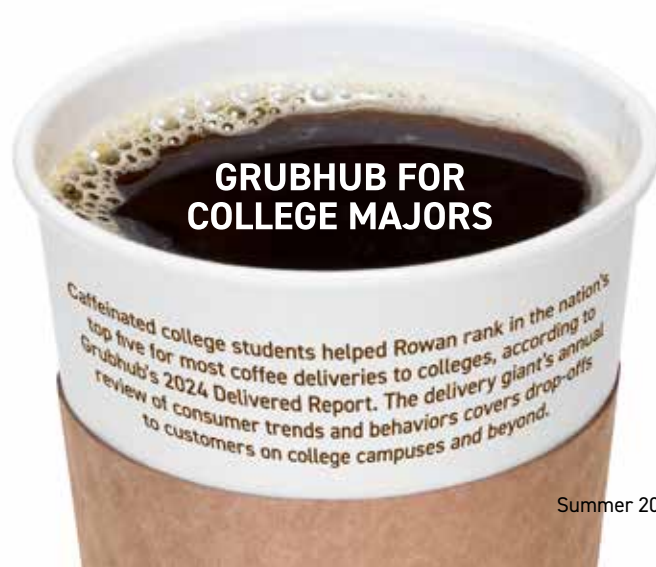
RCB Dean Matthew Sarkees noted that President Ali Houshmand has led a university-wide embrace of entrepreneurship that extends to all schools, colleges and campuses.

“We're helping students see that entrepreneurship is not just a great degree but a mindset that can be applied to any walk of life,” Sarkees said.

In addition to its undergraduate curricula, the college hosts more than 120 annual programs that support aspiring entrepreneurs. They include: Think Like an Entrepreneur, a summer academy for high school students that awards free college credits; the Idea Challenge competition each fall; and the New Venture Expo and Rohrer New Venture Competition each spring, which awards \$30,000 to the most promising new business venture.

In compiling their list of the top programs, editors for The Princeton Review surveyed more than 300 colleges and universities that offer entrepreneurship studies.

Students benefit from experience and networking on- and off-campus, including at the 2024 Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization Global Conference & Pitch Competition in Tampa, Florida. Five Rowan startups were named to the Top 100 list at this year's event.



Training new teachers on the job in Camden



Paraprofessionals in the Camden school district are on their way to becoming certified teachers in city schools through Teach Camden. The program is a partnership between the College of Education and the Camden school district.

A partnership between the College of Education and the Camden school district has created a free pathway for paraprofessionals to become city teachers.

Through Teach Camden, 17 instructional aides and teacher's assistants are receiving professional development, tutoring and mentorship from the College of Education as they work to become state-certified teachers in the fall.

The program is funded by the school district. All Teach Camden fellows already have earned their bachelor's degrees and are currently full-time district employees. They have committed to teaching in Camden for five years after achieving certification.

For Jackie DeSesso '23, a teacher's assistant at the Martha F. Wilson Early Childhood Development Center for seven years, Teach Camden is offering the professional and financial support she needs to become a classroom teacher.

"This is basically walking me through everything," said DeSesso, who earned her degree in psychology from Rowan as a first-generation college student. "I'm really grateful for this opportunity."

Camden Superintendent Katrina McCombs noted that the Teach Camden fellows already have a deep commitment to—and connection with—city schoolchildren. The program builds upon the idea of "growing our own," McCombs added.

College of Education faculty lead monthly professional development sessions for the fellows and also presented the weeklong Teach Camden Urban Institute last summer.

When she achieves certification, DeSesso's salary will double. But the big reward will be teaching in her own classroom each day, she said.

"I love that I'm our students' first real experience with school," DeSesso said. "This is my passion."

"I love that I'm our students' first real experience with school. This is my passion."

—Jackie DeSesso '23

PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATE MASTER'S PROGRAM: ROWAN'S NEXT STEP IN MEDICAL EDUCATION

Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM) is expanding degree offerings with a new Master's of Physician Associate (PA) Studies.

Slated to enroll its first class in fall 2026, the two-year program will equip students to pursue medical specialties as licensed clinicians working under the supervision of physicians. The profession, established in 1967, offers the ability to practice medicine in every specialty and setting after completing training and certification.

Students will learn in a facility being built on the Sewell campus. It will feature a state-of-the-art simulation center, a clinical skills lab and a fully equipped anatomy lab. Like all students enrolled in Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences, PA students will benefit from SOM's partnership with Virtua Health, South Jersey's largest health system, as they complete clinical coursework in the region's top facilities.

"We are thrilled to launch a much-needed physician associate studies program at Rowan-Virtua SOM," said Dean Richard Jermyn, D.O. "Physician associates make up a vital and growing portion of health care teams throughout the country. We have developed this program to meet the needs of our region."

The course of study will encompass a rigorous classroom component, a research component and thousands of hours of clinical experience in a variety of health care settings.





Seeking to reduce the demands on sand, biogeochemist Charles Schutte and geology major Lou Morgan were on the team experimenting to determine if Jersey Shore dune grass would grow in recycled glass.

Seeing promise for planting with recycled glass

Kaleidoscopic and beautiful, fragments of glass glittered among grains of sand filling planters of dune grass seedlings. The hope: that vast quantities of fragments, sharp edges tumbled smooth and mixed with beach sand, would offer renewed promise for recycled bottles and jars.

An initiative of faculty and students on the Glassboro campus seeks to make use of the vast, often discarded, potential resource. Among the researchers, School of Earth & Environment faculty Charles Schutte, Ph.D., and Lily Pfeifer-Johnson, Ph.D., conducted experiments over the summer to determine if Jersey Shore dune grass would grow in mixtures with glass.

“Our idea was, there is something about this material that can supplement beach sand and that plants can grow in,” Pfeifer-Johnson said.

Ultimately, Schutte said, dune grass near the shore did not grow well in high concentrations of untreated crushed glass, but glass mixed with greater concentrations of sand, especially away from the shore, proved promising as a planting medium.

Pfeifer-Johnson said there are currently no plans to use glass in any form for dune replenishment in New Jersey but there remains great potential in recycled glass.

Derived from sand, crushed glass won’t likely ever replace the material but could offset the need for it, she said.

“We need to think about sand as a finite resource,” said Pfeifer-Johnson, a sedimentologist in the Department of Geology. “We either dredge it, which is not efficient, or we mine it.”

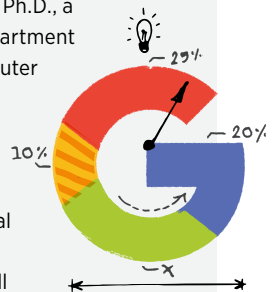
AND THE FIRST GOOGLE RESEARCH AWARD GOES TO...

Two computer engineering experts have received Google’s inaugural Google Academic Research Award (GARA) to support an innovative project to boost education through computing and technology.

Ying “Gina” Tang, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE), and Nidhal C. Bouaynaya, Ph.D., associate vice president for artificial intelligence (AI) and professor of ECE, will receive \$100,000 in funding and mentorship from Google to advance their research on “Personalized Instruction and Need-aware Gaming (PING).”

This project, in partnership with Camden City School District, creates AI tutors and peer companions for K-12 educational games. The AI assistants offer personalized scaffolding and emotional encouragement, helping students build confidence and take more control of their own learning.

One of 21 awards made nationally, the project aligns with Google’s commitment to responsible innovation in making education equitable, accessible and effective using AI.



TELELITERACY: NO ONE KNOWS TV LIKE BIANCULLI

The year David Bianculli began his print journalism career as a TV critic, “All in the Family,” “The Jeffersons,” and “M.A.S.H.” were among the pillars of prime time.

Since then, Bianculli has produced lively, nuanced and entertaining reviews for National Public Radio, television and online sources, continuing to research and teach about TV. “I began reviewing in 1975 and I haven’t stopped,” he said. “Nobody else has been watching TV professionally as long as I have.”

A professor in the Department of Radio, Television & Film, he brings all that history and passion for television into the classroom, where he’s been known to pay students for having the right answers to pop questions. “If a student says something really interesting, something I didn’t think of, they might even get five dollars.”

Often tapped by documentarians to speak about TV, Bianculli developed the Rowan graduate program in television. He is writing his fifth book, covering the Beatles’ TV appearances, videos, movies and more, for a scheduled release in 2026.



Inspired by “agora,” main campus gathering place grows



At 31,000 square feet, the addition to Rowan's Student Center is styled after a Greek “agora,” a central gathering place. The \$31.4 million expansion opened in March when hundreds packed the new space for a ribbon cutting ceremony. The new structure,

which connects to the 135,000-square-foot Chamberlain Student Center, includes a commons, a 150-person event area, a Student Government Association suite, an amphitheater, a café and workspaces for student organizations. Outside, the expansion

features a redesigned plaza and terrace. The busiest building at Rowan, the student center welcomes more than 10,000 visitors daily during the academic year. The expansion will help serve student enrollment, now at more than 24,500.

Research for pain relief with fewer risks

With \$2.3 million in support from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), neuropharmacologist Amanda Fakira is pursuing groundbreaking research that could lead to a new, safer medication for pain.

An assistant professor of biomedical sciences at Cooper Medical School, Fakira is targeting the PEN-GPR83 pathway in a quest to improve pain relief, while reducing the potential for opioid misuse.

Her research focuses on the neurobiological mechanisms in the brain that mediate the balance between the pain-relieving and addictive properties of opioids. By studying



Amanda Fakira, Ph.D., is working to develop a new, safer therapeutic that targets the cravings that promote addiction.

how the PEN-GPR83 system interacts with opioid receptors in a specific region of the brain, Fakira aims to uncover new therapeutic targets.

“This research has the potential to redefine how we think about pain management and opioid use. By understanding how PEN-GPR83 affects opioid reward and pain relief, we hope to develop more effective treatments that reduce the risk of addiction,” Fakira said. “The support from NIDA will allow us to explore these mechanisms in-depth and move closer to clinical applications.”

“Dr. Fakira’s work represents the kind of cutting-edge research that has the potential to change lives,” said Dean Annette C. Reboli, M.D.



When national ranking organizations look at quality, value and specific programs, Rowan keeps rising in their lists. It's good news for students, alumni and employers. Just a few key numbers so far this year:

U.S. News & World Report

#92 among public national universities

#98 best value national university

#120 best American colleges for veterans at national universities

Chronicle of Higher Education

#3 fastest-growing public research university in America

The Princeton Review

#1 entrepreneurship program in New Jersey

Faster, better mapping for brain tumors

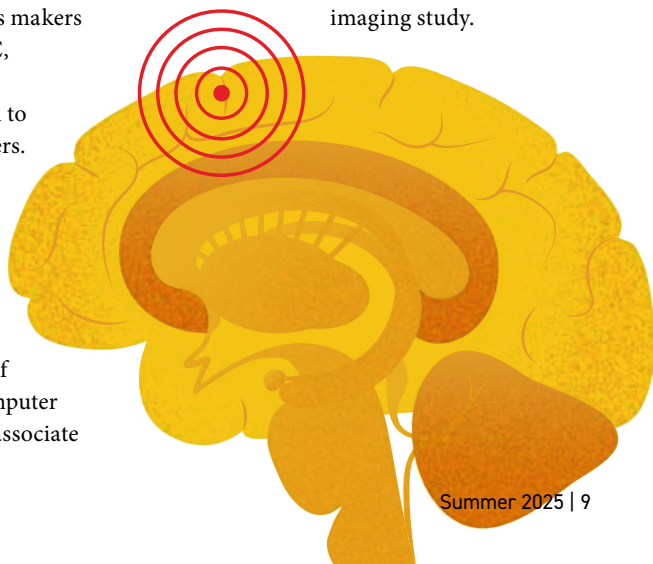
MEDICAL INNOVATION RECEIVES FDA CLEARANCE

A cloud-based, artificial intelligence-powered medical innovation, jointly patented by Rowan University and the University of Alabama at Birmingham to speed the mapping and measurement of glioblastoma brain tumors, has received clearance from the Food and Drug Administration. The regulatory decision means its makers at MRIMath, LLC, are permitted to market the tool to potential customers.

The medical technology company was co-founded in 2017 by Nidhal C. Bouaynaya, Ph.D., professor of electrical and computer engineering and associate

vice president for artificial intelligence at Rowan University, and Hassan Fathallah-Shaykh, M.D., Ph.D., a neuro-oncologist and mathematician at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Their cyber tool, called MRIMath i2Contour, is designed to improve efficiency and accuracy, saving physicians hours per imaging study.



National awards for next-level scholars

Four of Rowan's highest achievers earned some of the nation's most competitive and prestigious scholarships in 2024. Fly high, Profs.

Fulbright U.S. Student Program

Kavin Haldo of Middlesex County was accepted for a highly competitive Fulbright English Teaching Assistant award before graduating at age 19 from the William G. Rohrer College of Business with a degree in marketing.

The award is one of several scholarships available through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, which matches Americans with teaching assignments in more than 140 nations, where they also serve as cultural ambassadors. He was assigned to teach English to university students in Timor-Leste, a small Southeast Asian nation.



Goldwater Scholarship

Two engineering juniors received the prestigious 2024 Goldwater Scholarship, awarded to students pursuing research careers in the natural sciences, engineering and mathematics.

Matthew Conway of Haddon Township and Madeline "Maddy" Dunsmore of Mantua Township, both in the Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering and the Martinson Honors College, received funding toward their senior years through the program, among the oldest national scholarships supporting the next generation of research leaders.



National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program

Madison Dautle, a Ph.D. student in complex biological systems, earned support through the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program. She works with Yong Chen, an assistant professor of biological and biomedical sciences, to develop deep-learning methods for better understanding the millions of simultaneous interactions made by a cell's chromatin, the material within a cell's nucleus made of RNA, DNA and protein.

The prestigious, five-year fellowship provides an annual stipend for three years, along with financial support for tuition and fees, as well as access to professional development opportunities.

The Cherry Hill resident earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in bioinformatics at Rowan.



ART INSPIRED EVERYWHERE

For many people, art and science live in separate realms, but Sam Horowitz, above, in the Department of Art doesn't hold that view. An accomplished welder, he's so committed to math and science in his work that he had rulers tattooed on his forearms, just in case he needs a measurement. Horowitz finds inspiration for his art everywhere. Now at work on a project that would mimic stalactites, he said "the idea would call attention to a natural phenomenon, but in the context of a form that's more recognizably human-made. We'd be modeling art from nature."

Making materials 'super'

Rowan University researchers are collaborating with the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Army Research Laboratory and government partners on a five-year project to develop new "super" materials and manufacturing processes.

Led by Joseph Stanzione, Ph.D., professor of chemical engineering and founding director of Rowan's Advanced Materials & Manufacturing Institute, the project includes researchers at Drexel University and PPG, a global supplier of paints, coatings and specialty materials.

The multimillion-dollar research project aims to revolutionize composite materials and their manufacturing processes used by the U.S. Army and its industrial base.



Graduate student Elias Timmons is part of the team studying how to create "super" materials that are lightweight, durable and available on demand.

Reading warnings from Atlantic shores' ghost forests

Below: Faculty and student researchers hike to study Atlantic white cedar standing along coastal New Jersey highways. Killed by saltwater intrusion, the trees still point to ways to reduce climate threats to people and our planet.

They've been dead for years but still stand, the conspicuous contradictions both caused and researched by humans.

Known as ghost forests, the haunting woods of Atlantic white cedar are dying because of climate change resulting from greenhouse gas emissions, explained Jennifer Walker, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the School of Earth & Environment.

"Atlantic white cedar live in freshwater swamps, near the coasts but not in saltwater," Walker said.

When the offshore waters they grow in are breached, either from storm surges or infiltrated groundwater, it can be lethal to the trees. The entire ecosystem that they support, from birds and fish to mammals, insects and plants are endangered, too.

Research shows climate change that began during the Industrial Revolution

has continually worsened, resulting in sea level rise. Off southern New Jersey, seas have risen an estimated 1.5 feet in the last 100 years.

Along the state's coastline, a clear indicator of sea rise is the ghostly groupings of Atlantic white cedar that died from saltwater intrusion but remain standing because their wood is resistant to rot.

Though the stands of Atlantic white cedar cannot be brought back, all is not lost. Trees and forests can migrate over time, Walker said, under the right conditions and "if they have the right type of land to move to."

Walker said New Jersey's widespread development limits the migration of trees and forests, but behavioral changes that reduce the release of greenhouse gases can make a big difference in limiting sea level rise and its potentially disastrous effects.



PALS WITH A PURPOSE

Connection is everything for Prof Pals, seven Rowan students who help their peers find a sense of belonging on campus. Hailing from various majors, members connect with students, forming bonds over meals, events and activities, as well as online and through text and social media. The program is housed in The Center for Well-Being. Founded last fall, the center focuses on holistic health for the entire campus community. It supports the Rowan Thrive wellness framework that includes physical, emotional, community, social, purpose and financial well-being.

Prof Pals this year include (clockwise, from bottom left) Julia Lipsett, Pia Schelp, Paul Gambone, Grey McDermott, Rishika Madipeddi, Ryn Kelly and Razan Elzain.



Not just born with it: Advanced degrees for creatives and innovators

Virtually everyone would like to be more creative.

What many don't know is that creativity can be learned. It can be mined, explored and expanded.

With two new degree programs, Rowan is providing a master's-level theatre curriculum and a Ph.D. for practitioners in diverse fields, such as science, medicine, engineering, business and the social sciences.

"Our goal with the Ph.D. in Creativity is to transform the ways students think in any field," said Sanford Tweedie, dean of Ric Edelman College of Communication & Creative Arts, where the degree program is housed. "Creative thinking is not limited to the arts. The arts provide a fundamental tool



for nurturing innovation in every industry and every walk of life."

While the doctoral program is designed for professionals in a broad range of practice, the new graduate degree in the College of Performing Arts focuses on theatre artists. The College and Philadelphia's Pig Iron Theatre Company announced in the fall a partnership to offer a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) and a graduate certificate in performance. The first cohort of MFA students began this spring in the program centered on movement, improvisation and ensemble creation.

For more information:
ccca.rowan.edu/phdincreativity
and go.rowan.edu/PigIronMFA

Celebrating the future of nursing education

In February, a standing-room-only crowd from Rowan University, Virtua Health, and state and local government gathered to celebrate the beginning stages of building the new home of the Rowan-Virtua Rita & Larry Salva School of Nursing & Health Professions (Rowan-Virtua Salva SNHP) on West Campus.

The event marked the start of construction, as well as the generosity of the Salva family, Rowan's ongoing partnership with Virtua Health through Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences at Rowan University and the

University's growing influence on health care in New Jersey and beyond.

The 42,200-square-foot facility (rendered below) will be home to the newly launched four-year nursing program, which has enrolled 120 students in its first year. This building and the new program it will house are vital parts of the continued partnership with Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes School of Nursing to provide RN-to-BSN programming, enabling registered nurses to earn their bachelor's degrees.

"We all know that in health care, the need for well-trained nurses is substantial," said President Ali A. Houshmand. "We are so fortunate that we have two amazing partnerships that will help us meet that need. One is with Virtua Health and the other is with the Salvass, who have been so generous in providing the gift for this wonderful new addition to the University."

The first cohort of four-year nursing students, as well as subsequent classes, will move into their new home on West Campus in fall 2026.



Cleaning the air in Camden

Rowan received a \$100,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to help address the ongoing health threat to residents of Camden, one of America's poorest cities, posed by low air quality.

Mahbubur Meenar, Ph.D., associate professor of geography, planning & sustainability in the School of Earth & Environment, leads the multi-point project funded by the grant. The goal is to help city residents claim a larger role in improving air quality, in particular through greening efforts like tree planting and community gardens.

Though air quality varies from place to place in Camden, as it does in many municipalities, "there are areas where there is heavy truck traffic and polluting industries," contributing to lower air quality, Meenar said. "More heat and less vegetation are triggers."

Researchers and students are helping

address the city's air quality concerns through coursework, air quality monitoring, detailed mapping (to pinpoint areas with poor air quality as well as green space initiatives), and the development of grassroots action plans.

Rowan is one of three organizations in New Jersey and New York that will each take one-third of a \$300,000 EPA grant to develop educational programs and resources to improve urban air quality.



Studying survivors' stories in Holocaust books

One thousand professionally bound books—filled with photos, illustrations and maps—were published to memorialize the victims and communities in Eastern Europe devastated by the Holocaust.

Known as yizker bikher, the books have been "exceptionally under studied," according to Jenny Rich, executive director of the Rowan Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide & Human Rights.

Last November, Rich and Robert M. Ehrenreich, a scholar at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, co-convened a symposium that brought to Rowan interdisciplinary researchers from the U.S., Poland, Israel and the U.K. to discuss the power, legacy and historical and academic relevance of the memorial books.

"The books were a way for Jews to tell their own stories," said Rich, whose book on yizker bikher is forthcoming.

Martina Ravagnan, collections manager at The Wiener Holocaust Library in London, examines Holocaust memory books during a Rowan symposium in the fall attended by international scholars.



Softball



A big year for Profs Athletics, with team and individual honors for students and coaches

More champions were crowned and history was made in 2024-25 as the Profs earned accolades across the country. The year culminated in a monumental spring season which saw women's track and field make great strides, women's lacrosse post one of its finest years ever and men's track and field finish third in the nation. Already among the nation's best, the softball and baseball teams were competing at press time in the NCAA championships. Rowan was the only school in Division III with teams competing in the final round in those two sports.

BASEBALL

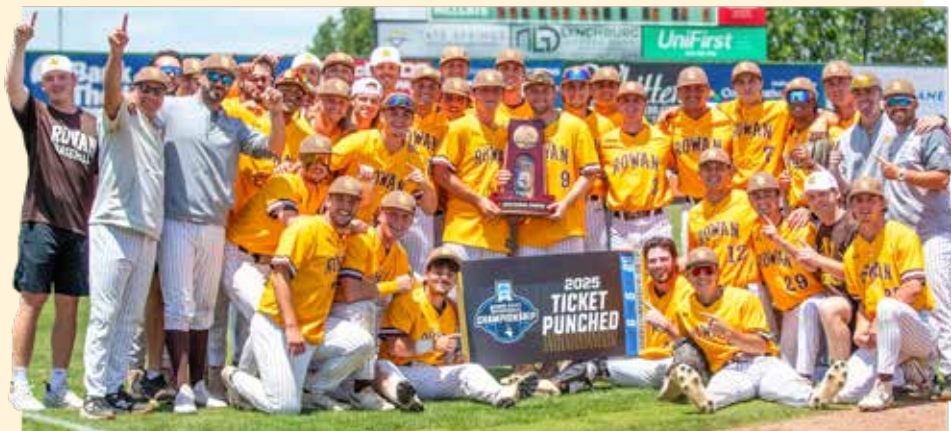
The baseball team rebounded from a mid-season slump and an early exit from the NJAC Tournament to make a run to its first Division III World Series since 2021. Ranked all season in the Top 25, the Profs dominated the NCAA Mount Union Regional and pulled an upset of #5 Lynchburg in the Super Regional to earn the berth in the eight-team national championship. It marked the second Super Regional title under head coach Mike Dickson, who recorded his 300th win at Rowan during the season. The Profs placed seven players on the All-Conference Teams, led by Rookie of the Year Damon Suriani.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

After starting the season with an 8-0 record, the Profs finished with a best-ever 16-3 mark, and made their first appearance in the NCAA Championship since 2018. Rowan hosted the NCAA Second Round and reached the final 16, which was the furthest advancement in the tournament in the 18 years under head coach Lindsay Delaney. Molly Green (midfielder) and Katie Montenero (defensive player) earned top honors from the conference with Delaney and assistants earning NJAC Coaching Staff of the Year honors. Molly Green and Elaina Corson each did their part to rewrite the Profs' record books as Green closed out her career as the all-time leader in three categories (ground balls, draw controls, caused turnovers) with Corson setting the school record for goals in a season (82) and game (10). Green and Corson also became the program's first All-Americans since 2019 with Green picking up first-team honors.

SOFTBALL

Ranked as high as #2 in the nation during the year, the softball team made its return to the NCAA Division III World Series for the third consecutive season, and the eighth time in the program's history. Rowan went 31-0 at the start of the year to own the longest winning streak in the nation in any division as the Profs were the last NCAA softball team to lose a game. The Profs captured their second straight NJAC Championship as Hall of Fame coach Kim Wilson and staff again earned the



Baseball

conference's top honor. The Profs earned the right to host both the NCAA Regionals and NCAA Super Regionals and dominated both to advance to the Championship round. Heading into the final round, Rowan had totaled 48 victories, which is the most in school history.

MEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

The Profs were ranked among the nation's top teams all year and solidified that with a third-place finish in the NCAA Championships. Rowan also crowned another national champion as Jamir Brown won the 110-meter hurdles, giving the Profs victories in that event in consecutive years. The Profs amassed 11 All-American honors in the meet, including hurdlers Brown, Jason Agyemang and Anaias Hughes, and high jumpers Jamile Gantt, Arrington Rhym and Noah Wampole. Earlier in the season, Rowan captured its 10th consecutive NJAC Championship with Agyemang earning the Outstanding Athlete of the Year award and Brown being named Rookie of the Year, while Dustin Dimit and assistants were named Coaching Staff of the Year.

WOMEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

The women's outdoor track & field team was the runner-up in the NJAC Championships by the narrowest of margins (3.5 points) but the Profs grabbed a number of individual titles. Rowan also claimed three of the conference's top awards as Gabriella Pagano was the

Outstanding Athlete of the Year, Izzy Deal was the Outstanding Field Athlete for the second time, and Nyla Jones received the Rookie of the Year award. The Profs capped off the season at the NCAA Championships with Deal earning All-America honors in two events (shot put, javelin) and Jones, a freshman, being named a first-team All-American in the 400m hurdles.

FIELD HOCKEY

The field hockey team (15-8) put together an 11-game winning streak in the second half of the year and won its fourth straight NJAC title. Rowan defeated #16 Ursinus in the first round of the NCAA Championship before suffering a loss to #3 Tufts in the Second Round. Senior transfer Allie Palumbo was the conference's Midfielder of the Year and junior Tess Herman was named Defensive Player of the Year with both student-athletes being named to the All-America Team. Head coach Michelle Andre '99 and staff picked up regional and conference coaching honors as Rowan finished the year ranked 22nd in the nation.

Wilson hits 1,000

In the spring, Kim Wilson became the first female NCAA Division III softball coach to notch 1,000 victories.

The milestone came in Wilson's 29th year leading the Profs. The squad defeated Wisconsin-Stout on March 18 during Rowan's Spring Break in Florida. At that point, the Profs ranked second in the nation in D3 and Wilson was focused on the season, not her coaching record.

With the win, the team handed their beloved coach a landmark victory she didn't even know was happening.

"I knew we were getting close, but I don't pay attention to that stuff. The players knew and the coaches knew," she said.

As the 2025 season progressed, Wilson knew Rowan's hefty record would be tested by every opponent. A lot has to go right for the Profs to win their first national D3 title, she said.

Under Wilson's leadership, the Profs have won nine New Jersey Athletic Conference titles and have made 20 NCAA Tournament appearances. With her tutelage, Rowan has reached the Division III Championship Tournament five times. In 2023 and 2024, the Profs claimed back-to-back third-place finishes. At press time, the team is competing in the national championships again.

But, Wilson said, what's most important is the growth of her players as students and people.

"Our players come to Rowan and they get a great education," Wilson said. "Softball is a bonus for them."





Men's soccer

FOOTBALL

Pat Ruley '13 was named the eighth head coach in the program's history, making his return to Glassboro after six seasons as the associate head coach/defensive coordinator at Susquehanna. He promptly guided the Profs to wins in their final three games leading to final record of 6-4, with a 4-2 mark in NJAC play, that including a thrilling 16-10 overtime win over Montclair State on Homecoming. Nine Rowan players received All-Conference honors, led by defensive back AJ Ryker, who was named NJAC Defensive Rookie of the Year.

MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

Rowan won the NJAC Championship for the third consecutive year and finished second at the NCAA Metro Region

Championship. Senior Joshua Cason was the conference's individual champion and at Regionals, placed second in a field of 100 runners. Cason, Matthew Conway and Miles Voenell closed out the year representing Rowan at the NCAA Championship. Dustin Dimit and Eric Dubois '12 were named NJAC's Coaching Staff of the Year for the third consecutive season.

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

The Profs made history by capturing their first-ever NCAA Metro Region title and qualifying as a team for the NCAA Championship for the first time. NJAC individual champion Mia Guerra, along with Anna Sasse, Ally Wernik and Gabriella Pagano, each placed in the Top 20 at the Regionals. First-year head coach Shedrick Elliott III was Metro Region Coach of the Year

and Rowan earned NJAC Coaching Staff of the Year honors as the Profs won their first NJAC title since 2019.

MEN'S SOCCER

The men's soccer team finished strong, compiling an eight-game winning streak, and capturing the NJAC regular-season title and the conference championship for the second time in three years. Rowan (12-5-5), which reached a high of #9 in the Top 25, made its fourth appearance in the NCAA Championship in the last five seasons under head coach Scott Baker '93, who guided the NJAC Coaching Staff of the Year. Junior Johnny Troiano, the NJAC Offensive Player of the Year, earned a rare double of national accolades when he was named to the All-America Third Team and the College Sports Communicators Academic All-America First Team. Senior Turlough Gartlan received All-America honors as well with his selection to the fourth team.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Rowan went through its first 15 games without a loss, posting eight shutouts along the way, to earn the number-two seed in the conference tournament. Despite a loss to Montclair State in the semifinals, the Profs (13-3-2), under the direction of head coach Scott Leacott '93 received an at-large bid and made their third straight appearance in the NCAA Championship before falling to #7 Tufts.



Men's cross country

VOLLEYBALL

The volleyball team continued its 10-year streak of qualifying for the NJAC Championship and reached the Semifinals while posting a winning record (16-14). Senior Brooke Adams became the school's all-time leader in assists with 4,185 and earned All-Conference honors along with Jena Kaul, Maya Iovacchini and Vanessa Hutchinson.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

The Profs battled through a difficult conference season and earned the sixth seed in the conference tournament with a 9-9 record, while finishing 12-14 overall. Khalif Meares, who finished just shy of 1,000 points in two years, was named to the All-NJAC First Team for the second consecutive season.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Rowan ended the year with a 17-9 overall record and went 13-5 in the NJAC to earn the fourth seed in the conference tourney. Senior Kate Herlihy set a new school record with nine three-pointers in one game and surpassed 1,000 career points while finishing as the 10th-best scorer in Rowan history. The guard was named to the All-Conference First Team and earned All-America Honorable Mention by the WBCA.

MEN'S SWIMMING

After a fourth-place finish at the NJAC Championships, Rowan sent four swimmers to the NCAA Championships. Jack Watson earned his second individual All-American honor in as many years, with Alex Volin picking up his first. The duo then combined with Tobias Cahnbley and Braden Sheehan on the 800 freestyle relay to receive All-American status.

WOMEN'S SWIMMING

The women's swimming team finished third at the NJAC Championships, with seven Profs earning All-Conference honors. Junior Ella Pennington led the way as she was named

NJAC Women's Swimmer of the year and went on to earn All-America honors in three events at the NCAA Championships—the 100 fly, the 100 back and the 200.

MEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Ranked in the nation's top five for most of the year, the Profs earned a third-place finish at the NCAA Championships. Jason Agyemang was the National Champion in the 60-meter hurdles, becoming the 13th Prof to win the national title in that sport and the 74th individual champion in the history of Rowan Athletics. All-American honors were earned by hurdlers Jamir Brown, Marquise Young and Kwaku Nkrumah as well as the 4x400 relay team. The Profs won their 10th consecutive NJAC Championship, with Rajahn Dixon being named the conference's Most Outstanding Athlete, Brown tabbed as Rookie of the Year and head coach Dustin Dimit and staff capturing the Oscar Moore NJAC Coaching Staff of the Year for the 10th year in a row.

WOMEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Under first-year head coach Shedrick Elliott III, the Profs put together a runner-up finish at the conference championships as they claimed a total of four individual titles and won one relay. Rowan placed 12 student-athletes on the All-Conference team, led by senior Molly Lodge, who was named NJAC's Most Outstanding Track Athlete.



Field hockey

SAVE THE DATE

The induction ceremony for the Shirley O'Day/Joy Solomen Rowan/Glassboro State Athletics Hall of Fame will be held on Sunday, October 19 during Homecoming weekend. Visit RowanAthletics.com for registration information.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Sandy Duda '96

Field Hockey/Lacrosse

Jamie Elias Laspata '02

Softball

Tony Racioppi '04

Football

Abby Singley '05

Field Hockey

Clinton Tabb '03

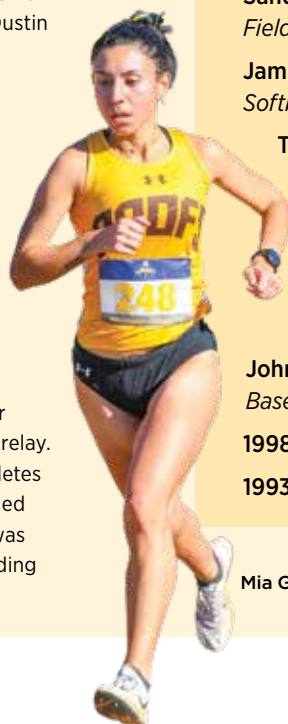
Football

John Yurkow '01

Baseball

1998 Field Hockey Team

1993 Softball Team



Mia Guerra

Commencement 2025



"POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE" and a sea of caps and gowns provided the tradition. Pop classics and proud loved ones brought the energy and excitement.

And the focus for six days and 13 ceremonies: more than 5,500 new Rowan alumni, degrees in hand from bachelor's to doctoral, plus professional health care credentials earned at the nation's third fastest-growing public research institution and one of just two in the country with three medical schools.

Through Commencement Week's sunshine and downpours, more than 35,000 guests packed ceremony venues to celebrate achievements and inspire even more.

President Ali A. Houshmand affirmed graduates, saying, "You came here in part because of our successes and vision. You trusted us to prepare you for the future. And you were right. We've given you what you need to influence change, to lead change, to transform challenges into opportunities."

From the C-suite, South Jersey native son and Wawa CEO Chris Gheysens encouraged graduates to value individual authenticity—

"that truly holds the key to unlocking your potential now and in the future," he said.

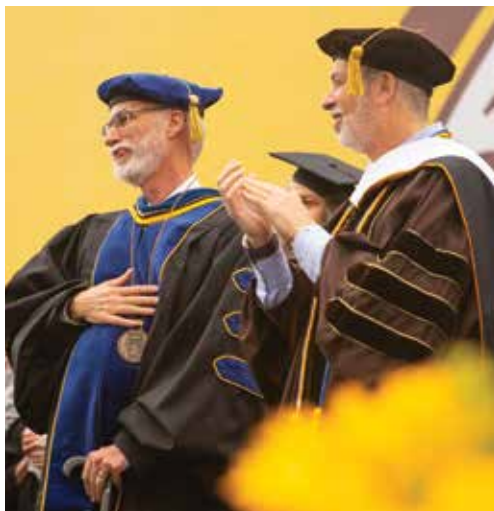
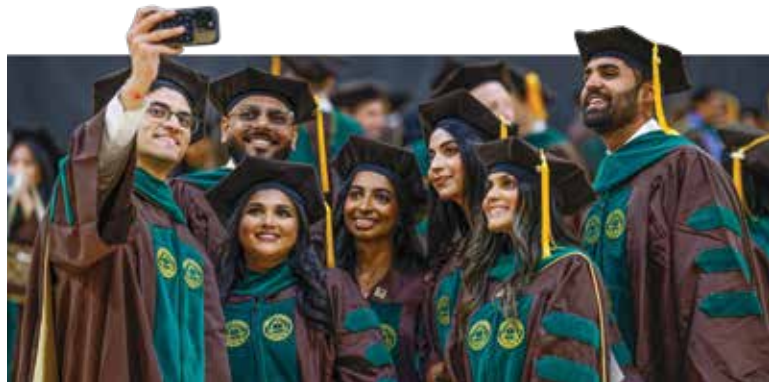
Honored by his alumni peers, Chris DeMayo '02, MBA'04 received the 2025 Distinguished Alumnus Award for distinction as professional accountant, technology innovator and executive adviser.

And for his profound impact on biomedical engineering and society, Nicholas Peppas, a biomedical and chemical engineer and nanotechnologist, received an honorary Doctor of Entrepreneurship degree.

Yet, as always in mid-May, Rowan's newest graduates were the center of attention, called by name at each college and school ceremony as loved ones cheered and proud professors applauded.

In his farewell address, Student Government Association President Zackary Brown told his classmates to treasure the community they found at Rowan. "In a world that can often feel divided, we found unity here. That is the power of community," he said. "As we step forward, I hope we carry that with us. Our stories are not just our own. They are part of something greater."





See photos and more at
go.rowan.edu/congrats2025
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Opening doors for first-time students and those advancing in their careers, Rowan delivers more access to quality programs and options for success.

For years, Rowan University’s presence and reputation have been growing far beyond New Jersey’s borders. Now, Rowan Online is poised to reach across the nation and help fulfill the University’s goal of providing more access to high-quality public higher education. By 2035, the institution anticipates serving as many as 35,000 students, helping individuals advance and strengthening communities and professions, while driving innovation and broader economic opportunity.

Workforce advancement options

Today’s college students often prefer the flexibility of online learning, especially those fresh out of high school and those already in the workforce. Spring 2025 enrollment data show roughly 58% of Rowan’s student population—11,628 students—took at least one online course and about 1,700 were in 100% online programs.

“Rowan Online is listening to students and industry experts, giving them the courses and programs they want, delivered how they want,” said Rowan Online CEO Michael Roark. “There’s an attraction for current undergraduates, but there’s also a big appeal to alumni seeking a graduate degree or working people who might not have gone to college but want to.”

There’s also a big appeal to alumni seeking a graduate degree or working people who might not have gone to college but want to.

In fact, people in health care and construction trades increasingly find their best options with Rowan Online, which provides flexibility for learners and employers. Through its partnership with Virtua Health in nursing education, Rowan Online has developed an array of degree and career advancement certificate programs that will address the severe nursing shortage New Jersey faces in the next decade.

Already, an industry-transforming arrangement with construction trade unions is giving workers academic credits for apprenticeships and preparing them to complete bachelor’s degrees in construction management.

“We’re offering about 20 really strong programs that we know students want and employers need,” said Roark. “Our goal is to increase access to high-demand programs, nationally and internationally.”

A vast online resource

As Rowan refines and strengthens online offerings, courses will be created to meet the demand specifically for online learners. More than ever, the University is committed to delivering high-quality, engaging and innovative online learning experiences. Through Rowan Online, learners of all ages can depend on Rowan University for education how, when and where they want it. ■

Redesigned and growing options, with courses and certificate programs, online and hybrid

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Cybersecurity, M.S.	Nursing, B.S. (R.N. to B.S.N.)	Wellness & Lifestyle Management, M.A.
Computer Systems Technology, B.A.	Nursing, M.S.N.	
Construction Management, B.A.	Psychology, B.A.	BEING DEVELOPED, MORE TO COME
Educational Leadership, Ed.D.	Respiratory Therapy, B.S. (DA)	Business Administration, B.S. (fall 2025)
Educational Technology, M.A.	School Administration, M.A.	Data Analytics, B.S. (fall 2025)
Engineering Management, M.E.M.	Special Education & Inclusive Practices, M.A.	Healthcare Management, B.S. (fall 2025)
Law & Justice, B.A.		

For more information: rowan.edu/online

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GO.ROWAN.EDU/OPENDOORS

Why dinosaurs *(still)* matter

by Steve Levine '87, M'07

In the heart of South Jersey, Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University brings visitors face-to-face with ancient creatures and the future of our planet. It's the field trip for everyone.



In the heart of South Jersey, Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University brings visitors face-to-face with ancient creatures and the future of our planet. It's the field trip for everyone.



Nine-year-old Henry Bain counted down what seemed like a forever wait on a bright spring morning until he could step into what Smithsonian Magazine called one of the world's most anticipated museums: Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University.

"This is such a special day," he said. His smile and tone of voice made clear both the thrill and serious business of being one of the museum's first guests.

BIG DAY At the museum's public opening in March, young visitors join in the ribbon-cutting with Founding Executive Director Kenneth Lacovara (in cap), University President Ali A. Houshmand, benefactors Jean and Ric Edelman, Managing Director Kelly Stoetzel and Mantua Township advocate for EFM, Michelle Bruner.



Henry's encounter with ancient Earth history at Edelman Fossil Park & Museum (EFM) happened because of another day 66 million years ago when a giant asteroid tore through space and slammed into Earth. The catastrophe triggered earthquakes, tsunamis and wild swings in temperature that incinerated and then froze the planet, wiping out the dinosaurs and nearly all other life.

Eons later, just a few miles from Rowan's Glassboro campus, life-sized sculptures of the lost creatures loom over visitors in EFM galleries that depict the last days of the Cretaceous period, the heyday of the dinosaurs and their verdant prehistoric environment.

For Henry and the thousands of children and adults who've visited since it opened in March, EFM opens the door to discovering the past, understanding the present and taking action to improve the future.





PHOTO: EDELMAN FOSSIL PARK & MUSEUM

KEEPING IT REAL An Astrodon stomps on the throat of an Acrocanthosaurus. “At EFM, the dioramas are designed to show the gritty underbelly of the dinosaur world. We want to portray them as authentic beings that had their own triumphs, challenges and tragedies. These creatures were real and we want to tell their stories,” said paleontologist Kenneth Lacovara.

We need to understand how the dinosaurs lived and, most importantly, how they died, because it offers incredible lessons for us in the preservation of our planet and the sustainability of our own species.

—Ric Edelman



WHAT'S REALLY OVERHEATING THE PLANET?

In the Hall of Extinction & Hope, visitors explore past extinctions and today's climate crisis. A gesture-controlled interactive lets them test natural and human-caused factors—like volcanoes, solar cycles and fossil fuel consumption—and discover that greenhouse gases are the true driver of planetary overheating.

Investing in life lessons

The museum, made possible in large part through a \$25 million gift from Jean '81 and Ric '80 Edelman, continues the couple's generous commitment to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education, which includes Edelman Planetarium on the main Glassboro campus. “Ric and I love science and we love to get children excited about science,” said Jean, leading up to the museum's opening. “We knew that this was the right thing to do, to make this investment.”

Inside and out, the museum provides a look at Earth's history with a keen eye on the planet today, in particular the worsening climate and biodiversity crises. EFM also looks forward, presenting original videos and digital interactives

created to show how everyone can advocate for the environment and push back on climate change.

“We need to understand how the dinosaurs lived and, most importantly, how they died,” said Ric Edelman at the museum's ribbon-cutting, “because it offers incredible lessons for us in the preservation of our planet and the sustainability of our own species.”



This is the best window in the world into the pivotal moments that wiped out the dinosaurs.

—Kenneth Lacovara

From mining marl to discovering die-off

The spectacular facility is a \$75 million investment at the center of a 123-acre tract in southern New Jersey's Mantua Township, minutes from Philadelphia. There, in several acres mined for marl for more than 100 years, workers, students, researchers and visitors have unearthed fossils, from large aquatic reptiles like sea turtles and mosasaurs—which grew as big as a school bus—to dime-sized invertebrates and prehistoric sharks' teeth.

EFM Founding Executive Director Kenneth Lacovara '84, a Rowan alumnus and world-renowned paleontologist, had discovered dinosaurs around the globe, including *Dreadnoughtus schrani*, one of the largest known specimens, in Argentina, and *Paralititan stromeri* in Egypt. Back in South Jersey behind a suburban shopping center, he excavated, led scientists and volunteers working at the old quarry, and taught school and community groups who visited.



EYES ON DETAILS

In Collections & Conservation, Michael Heierbacher demonstrates the meticulous work of cleaning, stabilizing and repairing specimens. The EFM collection includes more than 100,000 fossils representing more than 100 species found on site, plus donated collections from John and Joan Wolf, and others.

PHOTO: EDELMAN FOSSIL PARK & MUSEUM



PHOTO: EDELMAN FOSSIL PARK & MUSEUM

SITE-SPECIFIC Young explorers, above, search for 66-million-year-old fossils. “When they find a fossil, they are the first person to see it; they are the first person to know something,” said Lacovara. “It’s a real discovery and they become authentic explorers.”

A life-sized reconstruction of an extinct crocodile, *Thoracosaurus neocesariensis*, right, is based on a 25-foot skeleton unearthed in the quarry by Lacovara and his team. Renowned paleoartist Gary Staab sculpted this and more than 50 full-scale reconstructions for EFM galleries. Each is set in an immersive diorama, complete with accurate plant life, dynamic lighting and a soundscape that transports visitors to a vanished world.

The museum (opposite, left) overlooks the quarry and the pumphouse that keeps groundwater from flooding the dig site.



When the mining company ceased operation, the quarry and its globally significant paleontology research site were in jeopardy. Knowing the magnitude of such a loss to science and having dreamt of building a facility that would educate and inspire generations of students and citizen scientists, Lacovara worked with local officials to preserve the land that Rowan eventually purchased.

“As it turns out, this is the best window in the world into the pivotal moments that wiped out the dinosaurs,” he said. “I’ve researched the world to find a site that would provide proof of the mass die-off, only to find it in my backyard, behind a Lowe’s Home Improvement store in Mantua Township.”



LEARN AT EVERY TURN

EFM galleries are packed with discovery for all ages—kid-friendly content down low, deeper dives higher up for grown-ups. It’s a place where kids become confident experts and adults rediscover their inner child. With hands-on fun, awe and wonder throughout, there’s something for everyone to enjoy.



MEET MABEL THE MAMMAL!

In 10 playful mini-dioramas made just for little ones, Mabel the Mammal struggles to bake, paint—even hang a disco ball—while dinosaurs stomp overhead. But after a big bang one day, Mabel finds the world is hers. The Age of Mammals has begun!

PTEROSAUR PTERRACE

EFM's one-of-a-kind paleontology-themed playground is free to the public.



MORE TO EXPLORE In addition to three major exhibit galleries, EFM includes hands-on Discovery Forest and Critter Cove live animal center, plus Expedition Voyager VR Experience, the Quarry Dig experience, nature trails and more. Guests can drop in at Darwin & Co. museum store, lower right, for science-themed apparel, gifts and books, and Quarry Grounds Cafe, for freshly roasted coffee and light bites. The cafe and shop are open to the public without admission to the museum.



A world of wonder

With repeatedly sold-out admission, international news coverage and architectural awards for design, it's clear that Smithsonian Magazine's enthusiasm about Edelman Fossil Park & Museum was well-founded.

In addition to the galleries with dinosaur sculptures and specimens found on site, EFM features an indoor fossil hunt that uses Explorer Keys (technology-enhanced ID cards) that allow visitors to track their discoveries and reveal fun facts as they explore. More inside and out adds to guests' experience, including a live

animal exhibit, a free-roaming virtual reality expedition, plus a museum store, cafe, theater, nature trails and a paleontology-themed playground.

In the quarry just outside the museum, visitors can still dig for fossils and take home their finds, as well as observe Rowan scientists at work in the area dedicated to paleontological research.

Going back to the beginning usually is essential to problem-solving and propelling progress, which Rowan University President Ali A. Houshmand reflected on during the museum opening.

TOOTHY TERROR

The ultimate apex predator of the ancient seas was not a dinosaur, but a massive marine lizard stretching up to 55 feet, with paddle-like limbs, a six-foot jaw and a second set of backward-pointing throat teeth to trap prey. During the Cretaceous, the museum site was underwater—and mosasaurs swam where this model hangs today.





PHOTO: EDELMAN FOSSIL PARK & MUSEUM

“Soon enough, school buses full of excited students will pull up to this magnificent facility,” Houshmand said to hundreds gathered on the veranda overlooking the quarry. “Those very same students will eventually make their way to Rowan and other leading research universities. Some will pursue degrees in STEM disciplines, but also in business, education, arts and humanities.

“One of our primary responsibilities as a research institution is to foster exploration and keep our country at the forefront of science and technology. We will continue to do so by attracting and training the next generation of scientists and engineers—now with Edelman Fossil Park & Museum to encourage young explorers to dream and discover. It’s extraordinarily exciting to think of that cycle repeating itself year after year.”

DISCOVER THE PAST. PROTECT THE FUTURE.

The Fifth Extinction Wall, above, captures the dramatic story of the asteroid impact that ended the age of dinosaurs—featuring both victims and unlikely survivors.

At the Act Now! kiosks, right, visitors discover practical ways to help build a more sustainable future.

In Discovery Forest, lower right, young explorers uncover an Ice Age treasure: a woolly rhino jaw.

Wide-eyed visitors meet a lively cast of real animals in EFM’s Critter Cove, below.



HOUSHMAND'S HAZARDOUS HOT SAUCE

HELPING STUDENTS, ONE PEPPER AT A TIME



Our president makes hot sauce to help students.
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ROWAN.EDU/HOTSAUCE

ALL PROFITS BENEFIT EMERGENCY STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP FUND.



HERE TO

Rowan grads and two bustling campus centers built on decades of political experience work for public good through policy, lobbying and advocacy.

by Barbara Baals

Politics is the business of the people—as powerful as a single, decisive vote and as varied as the reasons that motivate people to join the fray.

An ironworker by trade, Steve Sweeney pursued public office to advocate for people with disabilities after his daughter was born with Down syndrome.

Drawn by a commitment to serve others, Chrissy Buteas '04 wanted to work for the FBI or CIA. Brian Woods '12 and Kyle Sullender '17 both considered journalism, leaning in on their strength as communicators. A first-generation student devoted to democratic ideals, Hafiza Kazi '20 was certain she'd have a career assisting political campaigns.

And Ben Dworkin, Ph.D., continues the work he began 17 years ago that would earn him recognition as one of the 100 most powerful unelected people in New Jersey politics. At Rowan, he teaches and leads a thriving center serving students and the public.

Through experience, coalition-building and exceptionally hard work, all found their way to public service. They are among an impressive—and growing—number of Rowan University alumni, affiliates and educators who hold key leadership roles locally, statewide and nationally.



SERVE



Now running for governor, Steve Sweeney brings decades of insight and coalition-building to New Jersey politics.

Public higher education for public service

While career choices that land people in politics may be unexpected, Rowan's public roots help direct a flourishing academic environment and outreach programs. Two University entities—the Rowan Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship (RIPPAC) and the Steve Sweeney Center for Public Policy—work to educate and engage students, faculty and the public in politics, policy and citizenship while addressing New Jersey's most pressing issues through evidence-based research.

Both centers are housed in the College of Humanities & Social Sciences. So, too, is Rowan's new Master of Public Policy program, which provides students with the skills and experiences necessary to be successful leaders and public servants.

Students in the program can specialize in a host of public policy areas—from criminal justice and

emergency management to engineering and education, among others.

In concert, the centers and graduate program elevate Rowan's role in educating students and the public on civic issues and engagement while offering research-based solutions that help move New Jersey forward.

Work ethic and grit

When it comes to moving the state forward, Buteas always is all in. As president and CEO of the Healthcare Institute of New Jersey (HINJ), she heads up the leading trade association for the state's top research-based biopharmaceutical and medical technology companies. She has seen Rowan's growing impact firsthand.

"I'm running into more Rowan alumni every day, especially in Trenton," said Buteas, who recently recruited Sullender, her former intern at the New Jersey Business & Industry Association (NJBIA), to join HINJ as its director of government relations.

"Our alumni have a certain work ethic and grit to them."

Buteas's ascension to the highest levels of public policy, lobbying and advocacy began with the undergraduate internship she didn't land.

"I applied for an internship with the FBI, which I didn't get. It was an honors program for approximately 50 students across the nation," said Buteas, who earned her bachelor's degree in law and justice studies.

"But then I got an internship with Sen. Jon Corzine when Professor (Bruce) Caswell offered to connect me with a Rowan alum in Corzine's Barrington office."

Eventually, Buteas, who juggled five internships during her undergraduate years while also playing for the Profs' 2002 national championship field hockey squad, completed a 40-hour-per-week unpaid internship with Corzine's Newark office. Even before graduation from Rowan, she was offered a position as a front desk clerk.

She learned about government and the importance of making—and keeping—connections.

"It was more about being in a place where I had room to grow," she said. "The work really interested me—learning how our government functions, learning about the work they do and how that impacts people's lives."

Buteas's career includes, among other positions, serving as chief government affairs officer for the NJBIA, where she was chief lobbyist and political strategist for the nation's largest statewide employer association; leading the Home Care & Hospice Association of New Jersey, where, as president and CEO, she advocated for the state's home care and hospice agencies; and serving as executive director of NEW JOBS PAC, the largest business political action committee in the state.

"I enjoy interacting with policymakers and stakeholders," said Buteas, a former council member in South Plainfield. "I'm in the people business. I tell people, 'If you're not uncomfortable when you walk into rooms, it's time to expand your horizons.' The growth never stops. "In this work, you're always interacting, coalition-building."

Chrissy Buteas '04 chats with students during the gala presented by the Rowan Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship in the spring. President and CEO of the Healthcare Institute of New Jersey, Buteas was alumni host committee co-chair of the gala.

In this work, you're always interacting, coalition building.

—Chrissy Buteas '04



The Sweeney Center brings together the best experts and rigorous researchers to develop pragmatic solutions to improve New Jersey's competitiveness, grow our economy, enhance our quality of life and make the state more affordable for all of us.

—Steve Sweeney



Centered on straight talk and solutions, Steve Sweeney continues to connect leaders

New Jersey politics doesn't often feature much nuance. But with his leadership amid hard lines and high stakes, former State Senate President Steve Sweeney showed his capacity to work for people and progress across political divides.

The Steve Sweeney Center for Public Policy at Rowan, founded in 2022, reflects the commitment to bipartisan policymaking that Sweeney modeled at the Statehouse and throughout New Jersey for his nearly 25 years in public office. Sweeney was chair of the center's advisory board until he stepped down in 2024 to announce his candidacy for governor.

"The Sweeney Center brings together the best experts and rigorous researchers to develop pragmatic solutions to improve New Jersey's competitiveness, grow our economy, enhance our quality of life and make the state more affordable for all of us," Sweeney said.

Since its inception, the Sweeney Center has assembled groups of the

state's most prominent policymakers and brightest minds to focus on myriad issues—from New Jersey's fiscal outlook to emerging clean energy to housing challenges to education. The center focuses on clear, independent analysis, initiating reports and leading conferences to address issues in a collaborative, bipartisan way.

Since 2022, the center's multiyear budget workgroup, comprised of a group of high-profile budget officials, including policy experts, academicians and economists, has provided a multiyear perspective to developing fiscal policy issues while working to find solutions.

The center has led two conferences on off-shore wind energy, as well as a conference on emerging energy, which brought leading CEOs and the president of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to Glassboro for frank talk on developing a long-term approach to policy that addresses green energy while ensuring affordability and reliability for customers.

The Steve Sweeney Center for Public Policy regularly hosts prominent leaders to address pressing topics ranging from energy to education to housing for people with disabilities. Above, from left, Michael Renna, president and CEO of South Jersey Industries, Azim Haque, senior vice president of PJM Interconnection, and Bob Gordon, former director of the Board of Public Utilities, discuss clean energy at a forum in March.

The center collaborated with the College of Education to create the Rowan School Regionalization Institute to host a conference and conduct regionalization studies for interested school districts.

Additionally, a conference on restructuring higher education last fall included Secretary of Higher Education Brian K. Bridges, Sen. Joseph Cryan, chair of the senate higher education committee and representatives from seven New Jersey colleges and universities, as well as the American Federation of Teachers.

In the spring, the Sweeney Center hosted two more conferences: "Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Opportunities for Government and Business" and "The Future of Journalism."

For more information, please visit: go.rowan.edu/sweeneycenter.

Centered on students, RIPPAC leads engagement in politics, policy

The Rowan Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship (RIPPAC) works to educate and engage students, faculty and the public in politics, policy and citizenship.

Established in 2018 and led by founding director Ben Dworkin, RIPPAC hosts politically prominent guest speakers for formal programming, as well as informal discussions with students.

Students involved with RIPPAC receive mentorship in career development, including landing internships and scholarships.

In 2024, nearly 300 Rowan students attended RIPPAC events. This academic year, every top-tier major party candidate for New Jersey governor visited Rowan, according to Dworkin.

Altogether, more than 50 students have received scholarships through the institute. The scholarships support students taking on summer internships in politics, government or issue advocacy. Because most internships in public service are unpaid, the financial assistance is key for students interested in the field, Dworkin noted.

Last year, RIPPAC awarded \$38,500 in intern scholarships to students. This year, Dworkin expects that amount to increase to \$62,500.

The RIPPAC Gala held this spring raised \$185,000 for civic programming and student scholarships.

“Our scholarship funds will continue to ensure that no student is ever denied the opportunity to experience public service because of financial need,” Dworkin said.

Currently, Rowan alumni who were involved with RIPPAC are employed in eight state legislative district offices. Three work with members of Congress, according to Dworkin.

“In seven years, we’ve been able to train and support scores of young people, from both sides of the aisle, for public service,” Dworkin said.

“Through RIPPAC, students from all different majors learn new political skills, engage in critical networking and develop advanced leadership abilities. After graduation, they remain a part of our growing RIPPAC family of committed citizens eager to make a difference. “We are engaged in workforce development for democracy.”

For information, please visit go.rowan.edu/RIPPAC



**We are engaged
in workforce
development
for democracy.**

—Ben Dworkin



MSNBC and NBC national political correspondent Steve Kornacki breaks down the results of the 2024 presidential election during an appearance at RIPPAC last December. Kornacki's talk was part of the RIPPAC Speakers Series.



Brian Woods '12 serves the state in a multitude of ways. Chief of staff to State Sen. Latham Tiver and Assemblyman Michael Torrisi, Woods also is a councilman in Shamong and a member of the Burlington County Bridge Commission.

Just say yes

That's how Brian Woods built his career. A former reporter, Woods is chief of staff to State Sen. Latham Tiver (R-8) and Assemblyman Michael Torrisi. Moreover, he is a councilman in Shamong and serves on the Burlington County Bridge Commission, which he covered as a reporter.

"I wasn't expecting to transition into politics. I never had a plan for it. I just said yes to things," Woods said, attributing his interest in politics to covering township and school board meetings.

"The chief of staff's most important role is managing the schedule, the day-to-day minutia," said Woods, who began his career as communications director for former Assemblyman Ryan Peters (R-8).

"In state politics, the things you think more about are the relationships," Woods said. "That's the crux of the job. You really see it on the lobbying side of things. In the beginning of your career, you go to

In the beginning of your career, you go to all of the events, you talk to people and you say yes to everything after hours. You have to put in the work.

—Brian Woods '12

all of the events, you talk to people and you say yes to everything after hours. You have to put in the work."

Ask the right questions

Kyle Sullender earned bachelor's degrees in journalism and philosophy—two areas that have helped him tremendously at both the NJBIA, where he was director of economic policy research, and now HINJ, he said. He also covered local governments as a freelance reporter.

"I gained the ability to ask the right questions and identify what the questions were," said Sullender, who formerly was executive director of Focus NJ, an independent research nonprofit focused on economic and workforce research.

"The incredible part of my job is that I get to engage people with different views," he continued. "At the end of the day, everyone is here because they are trying to make our state a better place to live, work and raise a family—even if we don't always agree on how to get there. When I sit down, I try to understand not only what the law is, but where the support is and how we can move policy forward."

A former editor for The Whit and a former resident assistant, Sullender said he connects easily with alumni he encounters in his work.

"I see Rowan alumni constantly," he said. "I feel like we are a little family. There's so much camaraderie.



D.C. is now home to Hafiza Kazi '20, who serves as scheduler for U.S. Sen. Andy Kim. While an undergraduate, Kazi was heavily involved and used her connections through the Rowan Democrats to work on political campaigns.

Without the network I made, I wouldn't be here.

—Hafiza Kazi '20

In the Statehouse, the number of staffers that have come through RIPPAC is fantastic.”

Priorities on a very different level

Hafiza Kazi, who was involved with RIPPAC, is unabashedly pro-New Jersey and pro-Rowan, so much so that she signs her emails to certain folks—even alumni from rival institutions—with “Go Profs.”

At 26, the political science graduate is the scheduler for the Washington, D.C., office of first-year Democratic U.S. Sen. Andy Kim. Kazi’s high-profile position requires her to maintain the calendar for Kim, who serves on five Senate committees.

“It’s a very intense role,” Kazi said. “It’s generally an on-call job all the time. When I was a student, I didn’t realize how valuable a role like this is, the level of detail you need. I like being behind the scenes and knowing how things come about. Schedulers see everything. They deal with the most personal part of someone’s life, which is their time.”

Active with the Rowan Democrats—“They were a big part of my time at Rowan. The Rowan Dems gave me an incredible network,” she said—Kazi

worked on political campaigns throughout her undergraduate years. She interned with both the Gloucester County and state Democratic parties and worked on two congressional campaigns simultaneously, including Kim’s 2020 election.

“I never had a free summer,” said Kazi, the daughter of immigrants from Bangladesh.

“I fell in love with campaigning. If you asked me five years ago what I’d be doing today, I would have thought I would be helping people I believed in get into office.”

Right after graduation, Kazi joined Kim’s district staff working in constituent services. Eventually she took the scheduler position. When Kim won his Senate seat, she moved with him.

“I enjoy logistics, planning and operations. You’re in the room hearing reasoning from senior staff. You learn priorities on a very different level. It’s an enriching experience.

“I think I’m most proud of the relationships I’ve made on the Hill and in D.C.,” Kazi added.

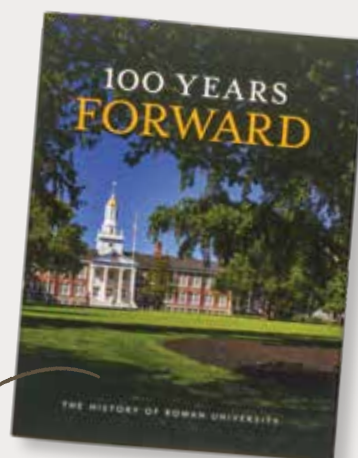
“Without the network I made, I wouldn’t be here.” ■



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Each purchase benefits the Student Emergency Fund and provides small grants that help students stay enrolled when confronted with emergencies.



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class notes

60s

Dian Dwyer McDermott '68, Bernadette "Bernie" Boyle '68 and Barbara Byrne Thompson '68 gathered together at Fripp Island, South Carolina, for a week in July, renewing their friendship and remembering their time as roommates at Glassboro State College. They also celebrated their 78th birthdays together.



Rock, Ribs, Ridges—and GSC/Rowan

Andy Leahy '83, William "Tim" Pewitt '83, Keith Minter '83, Scot Merkle '83, Robert MacEwen '86 and Patricia "Tricia" O'Connor MacEwen '86 gathered last June at the Rock, Ribs & Ridges Festival at the Sussex County Fairgrounds.

70s

Robert "Bob" Bachman '72 retired in 2012 after teaching mathematics for 40 years at Phillipsburg High School. Throughout his career and continuing in retirement, he has officiated high school and college sports in football, soccer, basketball, baseball and softball. Since retirement, he has worked long-term mathematics jobs, including his latest

assignment at Warren Hills Regional High School in Washington (Warren County).

Mamie G. Jackson '72 celebrated her 100th birthday in February. A former administrator of an early childhood education program, she was active in her community in Atlantic City.

Donna Moyer '73 was named "Artist of the Month" by the Voorhees Art Commission in September. A retired Winslow Township art teacher, she works in watercolor, textiles, 3D assemblage, and ink and pen. Most recently, she has focused on creating intricate pine needle designs.

Marie Natale '75, M'78, an award-winning watercolor artist, shared an art exhibit, "Creative Inheritance – A Family's Artistic Legacy," with her sister, Mila Klick, and her niece, Marissa, at Casciano Coffee Bar & Sweetery in Hammonton.

Jean Perrini '75 has spent 23 years as a correctional education teacher at Maryland Department



Start at Mimosa, make lifetime friendships

Dan Weaver '76, Carol Weierstall Weaver '76, Rich Rizzetta '76 and Bonnie Koll Rizzetta '77 celebrated a birthday and donned Mimosa Hall t-shirts, a tribute to where they met as students.

of Public Safety and Corrections facilities, where she assists incarcerated individuals with the GED testing program, so they can attain their Maryland high school diploma. She is also a certified GED teacher-trainer.

Gail Priest '77 recently released her fifth novel, "Soul Dancing" (Red Adept Publishing, April 2024). She is an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Theatre & Dance at Rowan University.

Mary-Lauri Bartola '78 wrote a children's picture book titled "Rowana's Perspective" (Austin Macauley Publishers, May 2024). It is available online

at Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Photo, p. 45.

Michael Cudemo '78 was inducted into the All Sports Museum and Hall of Fame of Southern New Jersey in September. He was honored for his 18-year career as a sportswriter, sports editor and columnist for various daily newspapers in South Jersey, including the Bridgeton Evening News and The Daily Journal.



Peggy Gentile-Van Meter '78

was elected to serve a two-year term on the international board of directors for Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc., a global volunteer organization serving women and girls.

80s

Robert Dibble '81 serves on the board of directors of Manasquan Bank, based in Wall Township. Before his retirement, he worked in human resources for 30 years with Deutsche Bank.



Brian Jones '81, president and CEO of The First National Bank of Elmer, joined the trustee boards for Atlantic Cape Community College Foundation and Cape May County Coast Guard Community Foundation. He also serves on the executive committee for the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, where he is vice chair of the audit committee.

Mark O'Hara '81 began his 41st year of teaching and his 26th year at Stephen T. Badin High School, a coed college preparatory Catholic high school in Butler County, Ohio. He has taught English, creative writing and introduction to film. He's also an adjunct professor at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and a published poet.

David Barger '82 was awarded a trip to Lisbon, Portugal, for his work as a top performer in sales for Canon Solutions America, Inc.

Margaret Fanourgakis '83 was named 2024-2025 Burlington County Teacher of the Year by the New Jersey Department of Education. A health and physical education teacher at Shawnee High School for 41 years, she has coached volleyball and

cheerleading, and served as an athletic trainer.

Thomas Skevin '83 and a business partner arranged for William Austin, a drone expert and president of Warren County Community College, to be interviewed by CNN, "Fox & Friends," MSNBC, Associated Press and international media in London and Germany, among others. A former journalist, the Sussex County resident works in media and public relations. He also writes for NJArts.net.

Robert Lickfeld '84 and **Mary (Trout) Lickfeld '86** completed America's Great Loop on March 26, 2024. The yearlong journey aboard the couple's 2022 Ranger Tug circumnavigated the inland waterways of eastern United States and Canada, beginning from their home port of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, on April 3, 2023. The 6,000-mile nautical trip included 120 port towns, including stops in New York City; Mackinac Island, Michigan; Nashville, Tennessee;

Key West, Florida; and Savannah, Georgia.



Glenn Porter '84 has written a new book called "Journey with Jesus through Black History" (Judson Press, 2025). The collection of eight sermons highlights the contributions of African Americans throughout history. He is senior pastor at Queen Street Baptist Church in Norfolk, Virginia.

Kerri Lee Farrell '86, M'90 began her term as president of the Morris County Council of

Education Associations in September. The council represents almost 10,000 New Jersey Education Association members.

Nicholas Bozza '88, M'05 is the author of "Sister Gloria's Sneakers" (Fulton Books, July 2024), his third children's book. The story is based on a fourth-grade teacher in South Philadelphia. His other children's books are "Be Home in Time for Supper" and "Sunday Funday." He is a retired elementary schoolteacher.



Back at Bar A

The Rowan University Alumni Association brought together #RowanPROUD alumni, family and friends for a fantastic summer evening at Lake Como's Bar A. Guests enjoyed a BBQ buffet, drink specials and exclusive Rowan giveaways, creating the perfect atmosphere for reconnecting and making new friends. This year's event is scheduled for July 12 at 2 p.m. (see details on inside front cover).

1. Jason Wilkowski '20, M'21, Matt Grisley '20, M'21, Alex Juall '20.
2. Karen Pettit Larned '78, Peggy O'Brien '78.
3. Charles Pusloski '07, Gina Lemanowicz Pusloski '03.
4. Amber Minuth '23, Ava Grignon '24, Lindsey Kaiser '24, Jenna Stout '24.
5. Trista Reiser-Nerich '91, Liz Miguel '92, Stacey White Kennedy '95.
6. Catherine Fee '78, Susan Uscenski.





Rowan-Virtua SOM and friends golf for a good cause

Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine held its annual DRIVE for Scholarship outing at Topgolf in Mount Laurel last fall, with 100-plus alumni, student doctors, faculty and friends attending. Dedicated volunteers and generous sponsors included Inspira Health and MMC Family Medicine. The outing raised over \$15,000 for the Alumni Association's student scholarship fund.

Linda Rosenson, Dean Richard Jermyn, Tyler Pigott, Alejandra Coe, Jordan Spusta, Millicent Channell, Danielle Cooley DO'07, Chanakya Bavishi DO'18, Deanna Janora, Ian Maitin, James Bailey.

Dana Lambert '89 is the 2024-2025 Educational Support Professional of the Year for West Milford High School in West Milford. She is a school counselor. Photo, p.43.

90s

Scott Milstein DO'90 has joined Delaware's Beebe Primary Care Milton as a family medicine physician.



Stephanie (Yusko) Knific '91 was named executive director of strategic communications and marketing for Robert Larner, M.D. College

of Medicine at the University of Vermont, the seventh oldest medical school in the nation. She previously served as director of marketing for Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas.



Thomas Raniszewski '91 co-wrote a Christmas

song, "The Carpenter's Son," with his lifelong friend, the Rev. Edward Namiotka, pastor of Saint Thomas More Parish of Cherry Hill. The recording is available on major streaming platforms with all proceeds benefiting the Diocese of Camden's South Jersey Catholic Ministries Appeal.



SAVE THE DATE



Monday, October 13–Sunday, October 19

Join us for a celebration of Prof pride that brings the Rowan community together!





Year's best

Dana Lambert '89 and Heather Hamilton Burns '97 earned professional honors at West Milford High School. Notes, p. 42 and p. 45.

Eric Avedissian '92, M'20 is the author of "Blood Family," the third novel in "The Martyr's Vow," a four-book series that combines horror and Armenian folklore. The series is published by Shadow Spark Publishing.

Loren Jay Chassels M'95 published a memoir, "Sven of the Arctic," detailing his adventures traveling from New Jersey to Barrow, Alaska. The book is available on Amazon.

Julie Hopp '93 is principal of Whitman Elementary School in Washington Township. Prior to joining Whitman, she was the director of curriculum, instruction and professional development in the Butler Area School District in Pennsylvania. She previously taught elementary school in Pennsylvania, Arkansas and Kentucky.

Joseph "Joe" McGee '94, M'12 is a visiting faculty member in the low-residency MFA in creative writing program

at the University of Nevada, Reno at Lake Tahoe. The author of several children's books, he's also an associate professor of English at Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College.

Neil J. Cleary '95 joined Genova Burns, LLC, a full-service law firm in Newark. As counsel, he spearheads the firm's white-collar crime practice. Previously, he served as first assistant prosecutor at the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office. He has also worked for the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and the New Jersey Judiciary.

John Connolly '95 is assistant superintendent of Millburn Township School District in Essex County. He previously served as principal of Millburn Middle School.

Melanie Bruno Lisitski '95 was promoted to director of human resources for the Hamilton Township School District in Atlantic County at the same time that her daughter, Gennavieve, began



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Gathered to celebrate friendship and remember a beloved dean of students

Rowan University Black Alumni Network kicked off Homecoming 2024 at Landmark Americana with a heartfelt event that welcomed generations of graduates and celebrated the life and legacy of the late Dean of Students Richard Jones.

1. Melanie Burney '84, Rita Roberts '93.
2. Kimmie Collins, Penny McPherson-Myers '92, M'05, Ed.D.'15.
3. Kiara Gilbert '16 and Troi Barnes '17.
4. Kevin English '12, Kori Haggie '18.
5. Jessica Smith '11, Amil Mussaffa '18.

6. FRONT: Anthony Phillips '84, Chevalle Phillips '89, Imani Phillips '19, Linda Sistrunk '94, Melanie Burney '84, Angie Pollard '96, Lisa Westfield '98.
BACK: Kiara Gilbert '16, Penny McPherson-Myers '92, M'05, Ed.D.'15, Troi Barnes '17.
7. Alice Kamara '16, Karin Abercrombie '17.



Still honoring and inspired by Paul A. Hilton '83

Rowan University Black Alumni Network closed 2024 Homecoming weekend with its annual Paul A. Hilton '83 Fellowship Breakfast celebrating the legacy of the late, longtime alumni leader, mentor and friend.

1. Isaiah Hughes '22, Angelique Hilton '15.
2. Antoinette Wilson '87, M'98, Michelle Jones Dabney '90.
3. Gerald James '89, the Honorable James P. Wilson '90, John L. Bunting '78, M'97, Stephen Mays '86 and Estéban Na'im Prince.
4. Lyla Rochelle Wilkins '91, Michelle Hickson '92, Crystal Carter-Savage, Renee Cuyler-Hugee and Cynthia Wright-Suarez '90.
6. Terry Henry '85, Robert Shawn Chester '19, Tim Mason '98, Jonathan Sutton, Naheem Saunters, Jerrell Lathan Sr., Michael Love '83.

at Rowan University as a junior transfer biology major.

Jennifer Beilis '96 has published "Making Positive Changes," her second book. The book discusses self-growth, mental illness, disabilities, advocacy and accommodations. Beilis is an adjunct professor who teaches American Sign Language at Middlesex College.

Carly Broomhead '96 was named 2024-2025 Atlantic County Teacher of the Year by the New Jersey Department of Education. She is a visual

arts teacher at Emma C. Attales Middle School in Absecon. She has taught for the district since 1997.

Kyle Cassidy '96 is the photographer behind the special exhibition, "Trusted Messengers," at Philadelphia's Mütter Museum. On display now through Feb. 2, 2026, the collection documents the impact COVID-19 had on 25 frontline health care workers.

Tabitha Dell'Angelo '96 serves as a trustee for Bucks County Community College. She is a professor of education and interim

dean of the School of Education at The College of New Jersey.

Heather Hamilton Burns '97, a theater teacher, is the 2024-2025 Teacher of the Year for West Milford High School in West Milford.

Kristen Coppock Crossley '97 is a volunteer with Girl Scouts of Central and Southern New Jersey. She is a regional voting delegate representing Burlington County, a service unit manager in Marlton, and a troop leader, as well as a past national delegate for Girl Scouts

of the USA. She is an editor in the health care media industry.

Kellyn Muller '97 was named one of the top 50 women leaders of Miami for 2025 by Women We Admire, a professional women's network. She is general counsel at International Materials, a global bulk raw materials trading firm.

Christy O'Gaughan '98 is chief data officer for GE HealthCare, a global medical technology and digital solutions company. She joined the company in 2023. Previously, she served



Alumni bookshelf

A new book from Mary-Lauri Bartola '78. Note, p. 40.



Homecoming 2024

More than 4,000 alumni, family and friends made a day of it on the main campus with picture-perfect traditions. See details for this year's big reunion on p. 42.

1. Anthony Razzano '54, JoAnn Razzano '56.
2. Johnny Giacalone, Sydney Basis, Hannah Corbin '23, Nick Mahon '23.
3. Izzy Thompson, Pam Thompson '05.
4. Matthew Dilloian DO'28, Emily McCarrick DO'28, Mallory Toci DO'28, Thomas George DO'28, Kunal Shah M'22, DO'27.
5. Crystal Toomer '28, Robert Toomer III, Lydia Toomer, Robert Toomer Jr., Victoria Toomer, Rachel Toomer.
6. Nan Thompson Mooney, Debbie Fass Krakower, Gigi Iantosca Shupp, Nancy Mooney Goodman, all '82.

class notes

in executive roles at McKesson and Roche. Earlier in her career, she worked for the Campbell Soup Company as a statistician and SAS programmer.

John Comito '99 is president of Yoh, a Philadelphia-based staffing services company. He formerly was senior vice president of staffing for the company, where he had extensive experience in financial management, strategic planning and operations.

00s

Rasheed J. Daniel '00 is executive producer and showrunner of Netflix's new series, "W.A.G.s to Riches." The series features the wives and girlfriends of athletes Tyreek Hill, Amar'e Stoudemire, Chad "Ochocinco" Johnson and Philip Wheeler.

Patrick McQueeney '00 is superintendent of Westwood Regional School District. A former teacher and principal, he previously served as superintendent of Wanaque School District and as assistant superintendent of curriculum and staff development for Sparta Township School District.

Kate DeStefano-Torres M'01 opened a third Gloucester County location of The Artemis Center for Guidance. She is a national certified counselor and a licensed professional counselor in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Dianna Eberl '01 is the head women's lacrosse coach at Delaware State University. She has coached club lacrosse, worked with Division I athletes and most recently was women's lacrosse portfolio manager for Legacy Global Sports. In that



Engineering alumni honored

The Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering hosted its second annual Alumni Circle of Distinction Breakfast, celebrating its 2024 inductees (above) during Homecoming.

Matthew DeNafo, '06, M'07, Keicha Muriel-Barreto '09, Michael Muhlbaier '04, M'06, Amol Shah '00, Nicholas Jankowski '00, Catherine "Cat" Ni '00, Krystal Wrigley '05, Dean Giuseppe Palmese.

role, she oversaw national and international events, including the National Lacrosse Classic.

Chanel Schwenck '01 was named "best faculty" by voters in the "Best of" survey by The Murray State News, the student newspaper at Murray State University in Oklahoma. She is interim department chair of the early

education program in the College of Education and Human Services.

Shaun "Shaun T" Thompson Blokner '01 is a professional bodybuilder and is training for the Masters Men's Physique division at the 2025 Masters Olympia in Tokyo, Japan, in August 2025.

Matthew Mazzoni '02, EdD'17 was named

superintendent of schools in Millville. He previously served as assistant superintendent. He was superintendent of the Folsom School District for four years and was an elementary school principal in Mullica Township for eight years.

Carla Veneé Bass '02 is associate director of product quality and operations stability at Iovance Biotherapeutics, Inc., in Philadelphia.

Donald Polo '02, M'12 was elected to serve on the Upper Township Board of Education. He is a math teacher at Lower Cape May Regional High School and a real estate agent in Ocean City.

Casey Connor '03 teaches the inaugural Non-Scripted Television Production course at Montclair State University. Her students worked to produce an original, on-campus reality show during the spring 2025 semester.



NJEA roll call for Rowan and GSC grads

Alumni educators reconnected at the 2024 NJEA Convention in Atlantic City. Visitors at the Rowan booth learned about options for continuing education and took home GSC and Rowan merch.

1. David Pincus '62, Mildred Bethmann Pincus '62.
2. Allison Betts '22, Christina Brandl '22, Jessica Hartman '22.
3. Stephanie Hill '08.



Sharing the treasure of America's trail

On the Appalachian Trail, a lifetime of possibilities for everyone, one step at a time

When Sandi Marra '81 was an English major at then-Glassboro State College, she knew she wanted a liberal arts degree but had no idea what she wanted to do once she finished.

"Most of my fellow English majors were destined to become teachers, but I knew that wasn't what I wanted to do; I just loved the liberal arts. It offered so many skills that I thought I could use in any field I chose," said Marra. "Critical thinking, analytical skills, writing and communication skills and problem-solving are just a few things I gained from my liberal arts degree and have aided me in my leadership roles. I wish all students could have that experience during their education."

Indeed, Marra used what she learned at GSC, applying it as a successful professional and devoted volunteer. Both paths converged years later to land her as president and CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), the nonprofit organization that oversees the legendary trail's maintenance, promotion and funding.

It was not what she expected when she left GSC, but she was well-prepared for the role.

Finding a voice and discovering the AT
At GSC, Marra met esteemed English professor Nathan Carb, who mentored and influenced her throughout her educational career. "He was the first adult I met to give me a voice, acknowledge that voice and accept my opinion. It's what led me to a life of activism and service," Marra said.

Armed with her degree and determined to make a difference, Marra accepted a position with a nonprofit organization in Washington, D.C., where she met a woman who invited her to volunteer for their Potomac Appalachian Trail Club.

Marra hadn't heard of the Appalachian Trail (AT), a protected national treasure spanning 2,197.4 miles through 14 states, including the Delaware Water Gap. Going to the Jersey Shore with her family was about as close to nature as she had been.

However, that first volunteer experience more than four decades ago captivated her. Since then, the Appalachian Trail helped shape Marra's life as she developed professionally, eventually establishing her own consulting firm focused on nonprofits.

More than a place to hike

After becoming an avid hiker and serving in many volunteer roles, Marra in 2019 accepted leadership of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

To date, she has hiked over 1,200 miles of the trail. She met her husband, Chris Brunton, as an AT volunteer decades ago, and they still maintain a three-mile section together. Later this year, she plans to retire from leadership, but stay active as an AT volunteer in what she fondly calls "the family business."

Working with 30 AT volunteer trail clubs along the East Coast, as well as federal and state park services, the ATC ensures the trail's accessibility, protection and future. "This year we're commemorating the trail's centennial with a number of celebrations that focus on increasing awareness, as well as expanding and protecting the trail for the next 100 years," said Marra.

The trail is so much more than just a place to hike, said Marra. "I want young people to understand that the trail is directly tied to the quality of life in this country by providing clean air, land and



Sandi Marra became a hiker and advocate for the Appalachian Trail after being invited to volunteer.

wildlife protection. But beyond that, it's a place to maintain one's physical and mental health."

The trail's healing nature is something that Marra feels every time she steps on it. "I like the fact that I came to know the trail as an adult. I think I appreciate it more. Being a part of this natural wonder has even shifted my thoughts about what it means to age. There is such a diversity of body shapes and age groups; everyone can enjoy and be active on the trail. It redefines your idea of fitness and aging," Marra said.

Peace and possibilities

With years of perspective, Marra sees hiking and being on the trail not just as a test of physical endurance, but as a source of peace. "It allows me to discover my abilities and possibilities," she said. "I learned just how strong I can be on my own two feet. I learned how to be alone with my thoughts as well as physically alone for miles on end and still feel safe and capable. And it's taught me that pretty much anything is possible to achieve as long as you steadily put one foot in front of the other."

class notes

Crystal Hines '04 is a poet and storyteller, who leads tours at the Harriet Tubman Museum in Cape May and gives performances of "The Harriet Tubman Experience." Hines also is a physical education teacher in the Middle Township school district.

Joseph Nappi '04 is one of five educators nationwide chosen for the 2025 Horace Mann Awards for Teaching Excellence. Sponsored by the NEA Foundation, the award is one of the highest honors in public education. He teaches at Monmouth Regional High School.

Gopika Banker DO'05 has been named medical staff president for Jefferson Health–New Jersey. Elected to a two-year term, Banker is a board-certified nephrologist and serves as acute dialysis medical director and section head for nephrology at Jefferson.

Kelly (McIntyre) Whitaker '05 is vice president of sustainability and communications for Hanwha Philly Shipyard.



Weddings & Engagements

1. Donald Brasco '19, M'24 and Bridgette Drahm; note, p. 58.
2. Kara Natoli '21 and Drew Kulis '20; note, p. 59.
3. Daniel Di Mond '08 and Jennifer Stead; note, this page.
4. Kelly Barb '13, M'18 and Marc Izquierdo '14; note, p. 54.
5. Dara (Law) Mattern '21 and Dave Mattern; note, p. 59.

Michael Orihel '06 and his colleagues are among the Forbes 2025 Best-in-State Wealth Management Teams for New Jersey. He is vice president of Peak Wealth Partners in Mount Laurel.



Joseph "Joe" Lizza M'07, EdD '17 was honored as the outgoing Chair for Campus Safety and Violence Prevention

for NASPA, a leading higher education association. He is director of Chamberlain Student Center & Campus Activities at Rowan University.

Daniel Di Mond '08 married Jennifer Stead, a graduate of Marist College and Pace University School of Law, on September 17, 2022. **Craig Haas '07** served as a groomsman.

Sunny Dublick '08 is an award-winning marketing specialist and founder of Sunny Dublick Marketing, a full-service marketing company in Charleston, South Carolina.

Cleo Greene '08 co-hosts "Texas Today," a lifestyle show produced by NBC 5 KXAS Dallas-Fort Worth. Greene is the former weekend morning anchor at

WFAA 8, the ABC affiliate for the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

Sherri Parmenter EdD '08 is the Democratic candidate for Atlantic County surrogate. She is serving her third term on the Galloway Township Board of Education.



Alexandra "Alli" Hunt '09 was named a 2024 PRWeek's 40

Under 40 honoree for her impact in digital communications. As executive vice president of digital and social influence for MSL, she oversees digital, artificial intelligence and influencer strategies across the company's consumer brands portfolio.

Amanda Winslow '09, M'19 is assistant principal of Jordan Road School, a middle school in Somers Point. She joined the Somers Point School district four years ago after a decade as a math teacher at Bridgeton High School.



Student Government leaders come back to the 'boro

The Student Government Association welcomed its alumni back to campus during Homecoming 2024. The Saturday morning mixer hosted decades of student leaders and featured Jean Edelman '81 (the institution's first female SGA president) as the keynote speaker.

Joe Chen '15, Paige Bathurst '24, Anthony Wohlrab '16, Brittany Murro '09, Jon Vogel '11, John Mazzei '69, Paul Kelly '84, Zackary Brown '25, Brianna Reagan '24, Keith Forrest '88, R'brey Singleton '19, Jean Edelman '81, Joe Cardona '89, M'96, EdD'07.



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10s



Lisa Nail '10
earned her
postdoctoral
master's

degree in clinical
psychopharmacology
and opened a private
practice, Attune &
Bloom Psychology, PLLC.
The practice provides
telehealth services in
more than 40 states
through PsyPact mobility.

Brittany Stiles Vazquez '10
welcomed her second
child, Miles Vazquez,
in December 2023.
Miles joined his sibling,
Avery, who is 7 years old.
Photo, p.51.

Steven DeStefano '11 is
the author of "Tomorrow
After Tomorrow"

Engineering fun and fundraising

Grads and friends
golfed at the annual
Nine & Dine last fall to
support scholarships.

1. Yashwant Sinha, Vincent Milano, Mario Milano '10, David Burgin '82, M'02.
2. Rob McClernan '18, M'21, Ian Sennstrom '12, Aaron Nolan '06, Justin Elko '22.
3. Brad Summerville '01, M'02, Christina Bowen '01, Lew Phillippi '99, Kristin Phillippi '01.
4. Rocco Marino, Anthony Marino '94, Rob Patterson '21, Stephen Sonnta '02.



Saturday, July 12
Lake Como

Join us for a mini reunion hosted by the Class of 2000 especially for alumni who graduated at the turn of the millennium. Registration includes a BBQ buffet, drink specials and an exclusive Rowan t-shirt for Y2K attendees. This addition to our annual event is a great chance to reconnect, reminisce and relive your college days with fellow Profs!



Scan here or visit
go.rowan.edu/y2k
to register

Exclusive Rowan Alumni
t-shirt with registration!





Rowan kids

1. Zuri, grandchild of Jerelda "Jerri" Carter '18. Note, p. 58.
2. Miles and Avery, children of Brittany (Stiles) Vazquez '10 and Michael. Note, p. 50.
3. Eve, daughter of Waldy Diez-Baldwin '13 and Max Baldwin. Note, p. 54.
4. Delaney, daughter of Marisa (Schoepflin) Brisk '14 and Samuel Brisk '13. Note, p. 55.
5. Hallie, daughter of Felix Wurmbach '14 and Maria Brasco Wurmbach '15. Note, p. 55.
6. Olivia, Anthony and Dominic, children of Jordan '13 and Danielle Brasco DiPinto '13. Note, p. 54.



DAY of GIVING

Rowan University's 11th annual Day of Giving raised the most dollars from the most donors yet!

\$431,475

Total amount raised for Day of Giving 2025

Raising over \$2 million since 2015, this 24-hour fundraising initiative provides opportunities for students today and helps pave the way for a brighter tomorrow.



3,158
TOTAL GIFTS



128
AMBASSADORS
\$80K raised!



Varsity Athletics
MOST DOLLARS RAISED
Over \$88K raised!



Thanks to our friends at AAA South Jersey, the Football program won **\$2,500** for having the most student donors.



It's never too late to support what you love at Rowan. Scan here or visit go.rowan.edu/25mag to make a gift today!

BEYOND THE BROWN & GOLD

PULLED FROM THE PODCAST:

Snips of stories worth sharing

Beyond the Brown & Gold podcast delivers a dose of nostalgia and alma mater pride by highlighting the lives and memories of Glassboro State College and Rowan University alumni.

Produced by Rowan University's own award-winning radio station, Rowan Radio 89.7 WGLS-FM, the podcast recently won a 2024 Platinum Hermes Creative Award and a 2025 Broadcast Education Association "Best of" Award.

What saved my life

No one knew how important it was to me, to lead in the Centennial class, the 2024 class, it was almost like I was marching for my own commencement 50 years later. ...After such a devastating high school year my senior year..., the family kept saying to me, there's no way now you can go to college. And I said, now I have a real reason. And Glassboro State College is what saved my life.

Jeannine Frisby LaRue '74

On being invited to be the College of Education commencement speaker

Optimism and action

It was a very interesting period of time. President Kennedy had been elected. There was a lot of hope and optimism in the country. It was a time when the Peace Corps was founded and you could really draw the differences between communism and democracy. And I got into that all as a student where I was active in the international relations club and I was very influenced by faculty members.

Betty Bowe Castor '63

On her life in education, politics and global outreach

Secret identity

A lot of my friends didn't know this when I was in college, but I was also the Rowan mascot when I was at the University. I always wondered if it's like something you keep secret so only a couple of my close friends



knew and everyone else would be like “why are you never at the football games?”—not realizing that I was dancing on the field at halftime.

Julia Lechner '09

Back behind the mic

The doctors told me it might take a year with all the rehab and healing that was necessary. So they invited me to come down to the ballpark and reaccustom myself to the booth, the sound system and everything. In a way, it was like another audition. I think they wanted to see if I still had it. ...A number of co-workers from the front office came out and sat in the stands to hear me and I did my traditional welcomes and a few lineups and they had tears in their eyes because I could still talk well. I was elated, of course, and they were, too.

Dan Baker '68

On recovery from more than 20 surgeries and returning to the Phillies

The best place for me

My mom went to Rowan. She was a teacher and so it was kind of like, ‘I am not going to go to school in New Jersey. I grew up in New Jersey!’ But I have to say it was the best place for me. I learned so much about me and kind of where my brain worked and... what my strengths were. There were just so many cool things that came about from my experience at Rowan.

Juliet Williams Hahn '97

On discovering as a college student she was dyslexic

Someone told me I can't

I remember it was like a career day in kindergarten. From my memory, there were different stations you know that you could go, and one was a teacher station. There was a medical station, and so I remember there being a nurse's cap and a stethoscope. So, I ran over to the table and grabbed the stethoscope and my teacher stopped me and said “no you can't grab that, that's for the boys.” I came home and told my mother, “I'm going to be a doctor. Someone told me I can't be one.”

Kay Yoon-Flannery DO'11

The one that got away

The next play they snap the ball. The quarterback kind of runs to the right, scrambles to the left, sets up and makes a great throw for how muddy the ball was at that time. Throws it, and we tackle the guy, and they stop the clock with one second. So instead of it going 3, 2, 1, 0, game over, the scorekeeper... their scorekeeper, stopped the clock on 1! [Leading to Bridgewater scoring to win on the final play].

Tony Racioppi '04

Discussing the football team's controversial, headline-making loss to Bridgewater College in the 2001 NCAA Division III semi-finals

Interested in sharing your story?
To be a guest on the show, please visit
go.rowan.edu/BTBGguest



Join *Beyond the Brown & Gold* hosts Rob Lightfoot '00, M'01 and Jessica Kanady '08, M'15 as they sit down with graduates spanning the decades and learn more about their unique college experiences, career paths, life lessons and more! Available now on your favorite streaming service including Apple Podcasts, iHeart and Podbean.



Listen directly on Spotify by visiting
go.rowan.edu/listen

or scan the QR code with your smart phone:



class notes

(Palmetto Publishing, August 2024), a children's picture book designed to nurture kids' creativity. The book is available online at Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

Erica Holck '11 is the principal of Hurffville Elementary School in Washington Township. Formerly an assistant principal in Lumberton, she began her career as an art teacher in Logan Township schools.



Travis Warker '11 is senior business development director for Saddle

Creek Logistic Services in Charleston, South Carolina. He is responsible for driving growth and expanding the company's customer base. He previously worked as director of sales for OSM Worldwide and has held sales management positions with Radial and DHL eCommerce.

Samuel Guerrero '12 has been promoted to art director at Newsday's presentation desk. His illustrations and print designs have run in several Newsday sections. Previously, he was senior

design editor at New York Daily News and The Trentonian. He was also a freelance art director at Engine 9 Studios.

Joeigh Perella '12 was chosen by the LGBTQ+ Victory Institute as one of its Victory Empowerment Fellows. Fellows are LGBTQ+ leaders of color and/or transgender leaders who are working to expand their campaign skills and policymaking power. She is a practicing dentist in Cumberland County.

Ryan Read '12 has been promoted to assistant vice president, assistant

BSA officer for Magyar Bank, where he works to detect and prevent money laundering.

Kelly Barb '13, M'18 and **Marc Izquierdo '14** were married in Philadelphia on January 11. Photo, p. 48.

Hilary Chebra '13 is director of governmental affairs for the Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey. She joined the chamber in 2020. She formerly served as cabinet liaison in the Office of Governor Phil Murphy and was chief of staff to state Sen. **Troy Singleton '05**.



More Rowan family
Melanie Lisitski '95 returned to Rowan with a new generation. Note, p. 43.

Waldy Diez-Baldwin '13 and her husband, Max, had their first child, Eve Ember Baldwin, on July 18. Photo, p. 51.

Jordan DiPinto '13 and **Danielle Brasco DiPinto '13** welcomed their son, Anthony, on January 30, 2024. He joins siblings Olivia, 4, and Dominic, 3. Photo, p. 51.



Justine Fafara '13 is director of the public library in Malvern, Pennsylvania.

Peter Fishman M'13 has been appointed as chief financial officer for Amarin Corporation, a biopharmaceutical company with headquarters in Bridgewater and Dublin, Ireland. He previously served as Amarin's global controller and principal financial and accounting officer.

Annabel Hernandez-Ortega '13 has been promoted to supervisor of the Victim/Witness Unit at the Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office. Hernandez-Ortega has been with the office for seven years.

Operation Uganda Renewed

Recognizing value in international education

More than 60 years ago, Glassboro State College students led Operation Uganda, a huge humanitarian effort to support the independence and education of the citizens of Uganda. Thanks to the generous support of Betty Bowe Castor '63 and dedicated faculty and students, the initiative has a new life—and purpose, restarted with the inaugural Betty Bowe Castor '63 Lecture and Banquet last fall. Proceeds from the event and other donations will support the educational journey of an

international student at Rowan University. The first recipient, Denis Abaine, an aspiring history professor from Uganda, began his studies at Rowan in September. Castor and five other original Operation Uganda participants—Margaret Jackson and Barbara Kyritsis, both '63 and Carole Leporati, Su Bittel and Ronald Weisberger, all '65—attended the banquet and received service awards named for the late Marius Livingston, the faculty leader of the project.



FROM LEFT: Kate Sullivan '15, M'19, Ron Weisberger '65, Sean French '22, Justin Abate '13, Tammy Loncto '22, Nardin Salib '23, M'25, Marge Jackson '63, Edward Purcell '07 (back), Barbara Kyritsis '63, Jamar Green '22 (back), Jeffrey Christo '98, M'00, Betty Bowe Castor '63, Sean Fischer '05, Kayla Maharaj '23, M'24, Bradley Trinkner '06, M'14, Su Bittel '65, Claire Exantus '23, M'25, Carole Leporati '65.

Ashley Hyman '13 is an award-winning writer and photographer based in Belgium. Her photographs are featured in the new book, "Hidden Beers of Belgium" (Uitgeverij Luster, November 2024). She uses the name Ashley Joanna professionally.

Siddharth Bhimani DO'13 has been appointed as medical staff treasurer at Jefferson Health–New Jersey. Bhimani is medical director of the Jefferson Cherry Hill Hospitalist Program, where he is board-certified in internal medicine. He's been with Jefferson since 2016.

Charles Purcell '13 was named Teacher of the Year for 2024-2025 at Franklin Township Elementary School. He

is a physical education and health teacher at the school in Warren County.

Thomas Schoendorf '13 has taken a leadership position at Goldberg Segalla, a law firm with 23 offices across the nation. He joined the firm's product liability and civil litigation and practice groups in Princeton.

Kenneth Berardis M'14 is principal of his childhood elementary school, Jordan Road School in Somers Point. Previously, he was assistant principal at Smithville Elementary School in Galloway. He started his career as a physical education teacher at Mainland Regional High School in Linwood.



SOM grads celebrate decades of pride

In November, SOM alumni gathered at the Westin Mount Laurel along with friends, students, faculty and school leaders. The event marked the 40th-anniversary reunion of 1983 and 1984 classes. Above, some of the guests.

FRONT: Nathan Carroll, DO'21, Andrea Iannuzzelli, DO'95, Ashgan Elshinawy DO'99, Todd Schachter DO'84, Alissa Brotman-O'Neill DO'02. MIDDLE: Filomena Scavina-Baldi DO'89, Rebecca Moore DO'03, John Bertagnolli DO'83. BACK: Adrienne Rigueur, DO'06, Jay Darji DO'19, Jennifer Khelil DO'95, Ira Monka DO'84.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Check your email this summer to access the 2025 Rowan Alumni Survey and help shape future alumni programming, events and initiatives.

Your input is valuable so don't miss the opportunity to share your thoughts with us!



Scan here or visit go.rowan.edu/alumniupdate to update your email before the survey hits inboxes.

class notes

Marisa (Schoepflin) Brisk '14 and **Samuel Brisk '13** welcomed their baby girl, Delaney Brisk, on January 17. They met during their sophomore year when they lived across the hall from each other on Rowan Boulevard.

Ahmed Hussein M'14 successfully defended his dissertation at Grand Canyon University's College of Doctoral Studies. He earned a doctorate in education.



Patrick Malone '14 has been named assistant coach of the Rutgers University women's swimming and diving program.

Felix Wurmbach '14 and **Maria Brasco Wurmbach '15** welcomed their daughter, Hallie, on January 26. Photo, p. 51.

Rob DePersia '15 is director of basketball operations for the men's team at Villanova University.

Josh Popper '15 made his professional boxing debut in October in Nashville, Tennessee. A heavyweight, he was a standout amateur in New York City, where he won the New York Ring Masters Championship and the New York Boxing Tournament title in 2023. He owns Bredwinners Boxing, a boxing gym in New York City.

Sena Pottackal '15 was invited to the White

House to celebrate the 34th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Disability Pride Month in September. There, she and fellow disability inclusion champions discussed how to cultivate a more equitable world for people of all abilities.

Matt Reilly '15 works as product line engineering coach with Northrop Grumman. He presented in May on managing

product lines at a cross-industry conference alongside companies like Lamborghini and Whirlpool.

Olivia Fiebig '16 is an assistant professor of chemistry at Smith College. She earned a doctorate in chemistry at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was an Eberly postdoctoral research fellow at Penn State. She teaches courses in chemistry and biochemistry.



Sara Mazzone EdD'16 was named Teacher of the Year for Monmouth County by the New Jersey Department of Education. Mazzone has taught English at Red Bank Regional High School in Little Silver since 2010.

Tara Gaston Moncman DO'16 joined Holy Cross Medical Group in Broward County, Florida. The orthopedic surgeon specializes in foot and ankle surgery.

Erin Bernat '17 is the new head field hockey coach at Kingsway Regional High School. Bernat, who played for the Profs, joined the Kingsway staff as a health and physical education teacher in 2019. She was previously an assistant coach and helped lead the squad to three consecutive state titles.

Teresa Mahler '17 passed her clinical social work exam and is a licensed clinical social worker. She is a therapist at Virtua's Children Achieving Success Through Therapeutic Life Experiences (CASTLE) partial hospitalization program in Berlin. She is

Chamberlain Student Center: celebrating 50 years at the heart of community life

November 2024 marked the 50th anniversary of Chamberlain Student Center's official opening. The milestone offered a special opportunity for the campus community to celebrate the Center's decades-long dedication to serving students, faculty, staff and alumni and providing opportunities for student leaders to flourish.

1. Brendan Rahl '16, Maria Spannos '16, Brittany Bird '16, Tyler Bird, Samantha Barrett '16, John Vittozzi.
2. Victoria McClendon '22, Demi James '21, Vincent Pham '19, Heidi Cancalosi '19, Ryan Nichols '19.
3. Bob Zazzali '72, M'74, Vicky Zazzali '73.
4. Katherine Valle '25, Ren Szeto '26, Julie Tursi '18.
5. Aspen McMillan '19, Katiana Defendre '20.
6. Kristin Peters '16, Rebecca Trotman '18, Teyonna Reyes '17.
7. Linda Pollock '83, Jeff Pollock '83.
8. Geoffrey Kelly '16, MD'21, Jennifer Lazo-Pacheco, Tina Pinocci.



Sixty years of the music that matters and the people who put it on the air

Since 1964, WGLS-FM has been the voice of Glassboro State College/Rowan University, and recently earned its third College Radio Station of the Year award. Nearly 200 gathered to honor its legacy and the students and alumni who've shaped its tradition of excellence. The event featured remarks honoring Michael Donovan and a display of items from the University Archives.

1. FRONT: PJ Bielavitz '01, Stephanie Vazquez '01. BACK: Gary D'Aiutolo '00, Elizabeth Van Etten '01, Jake Nisenfeld '02, Brian Wilkinson '02, Derek Jones '01, M'02, Rob Lightfoot '00, M'01, Bruce Hummer '01, M'02, Christina Hill Helder '00, Jason Helder '00, M'01, Sam Rosetti '01, Brian Sappio '01.
2. Ed Benkin '91, M'22, Denis Mercier, Ken Simmons '93.
3. Joshua Ayers '24, Justin Lock '24.
4. FRONT: Ken Kopakowski '79, Larry DiBona, Karen Maser '79, Marie Melchionne Krips Thacker '79, Patty Anne Hartofil Hart '78, Larry Salva '77, Neva Rae Fox '76. BACK: Bill Spence '77, Jeff "Jeffrey Jay" Weber '75, Al Mortka '78, Allan Dauber '78, Bob Wass '77, Bob Fox '76.
5. FRONT: Samantha Mongiello '20, Laurie Senior '16, Alyssa Compa Ficcaglia '17, Christian Oberly '15, Julia Kantner '18, Melissa Friend-Waters '14, Gianna Gugliuzza DeCerio '14, Sarah Kalvaitis Schuh '17, Alyssa Sansone Keith '16. MIDDLE: Taylor Henry '18, M'21, Melanie Zawodniak '17, Geneva Gerwitz '17, Chet Green '16, Matteo Iadonisi '18, John Campbell '19, Sam Arcaini '17, Khiry Bey '17, Ahmad Austin '18. BACK: Jonathan Kohut '15, Jackson Baird '15, Derek Jones '01, M'02, Ellen Hardy Krebs '14, Ricky Schuh '16.
6. Jeff "Jeffrey Jay" Weber '75, Gavin Schweiger '25, Alison Angeles '25, Alexis Morris '25, Larry Salva '77.
7. BACK: William Huggins '08, Kevin Phelan, Beth Burnston Phelan '08, Derek Jones '01, M'02, Brian Kanady '08, Joe Staudenmayer, Kate Staudenmayer, Charles Pusloski '07, FRONT: Omarey Williams '07, Kayla Cheely, Ashley Smith Huggins '08, Rob Lightfoot '00, M'01, Jessica Ortuso Kanady '08, M'15, Gary D'Aiutolo '00, Kellie Maiorana, Stephen Maiorana '08, Gina Lemanowicz Pusloski '03.

class notes

engaged to be married in October 2025.

Anthony Oliveira '17 was promoted to sergeant with the Kearny Police Department. Oliveira, who was Policeman of the Year in 2020, joined the department in 2017.

Yaritza Santana-Orozco '17, MD'20 is director of the pediatric department at CAMcare Health Corporation in Camden.

Zahf Shaikh DO'17 joined the staff of Lane Gastroenterology in Zachary, Louisiana. He specializes in diagnosis and management of the digestive tract, inflammatory bowel diseases, and liver and pancreatic diseases.

Kyle Sullender '17 is director of government and external relations for HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, a trade association for biopharmaceutical and medical technology companies. He formerly was director of economic policy research for the New Jersey Business & Industry Association and executive director of Focus NJ, an independent research nonprofit.

Anna Turner M'17 is president of Playmakers Theater, a Covington, Louisiana-based theater group marking its 70th season this year. Playmakers is one of the nation's oldest

continuously operating amateur community theaters.

Jerelda "Jerri" Carter '18 is a new great-grandparent. Her family welcomed a baby girl named Zuri on July 31, 2024. Photo, p. 51.

Caitlyn Czajkowski '18 is executive director of the Florida-based National Aquaculture Association, an association dedicated to ensuring the industry's sustainability, protecting its profitability and encouraging its development in an environmentally responsible manner.

Kyle England '18 is director of environmental and utility operations

for the Utility and Transportation Contractors Association. He previously worked as an associate with CLB Partners, a government affairs firm in New Jersey.

Nicholas Nocco '18 was inducted into the Southern Regional School District's Athletics Hall of Fame. Nocco competed in cross country and indoor and outdoor track at Southern and was a standout track athlete at Rowan, earning status as an All-American. Today, he works as an engineer.

Leon Purvis '18 is a reporter at Fox 9 KMSP in Minneapolis. Prior to joining Fox 9,

he was the weekend anchor at KAKE News in Wichita, Kansas.



Steven Spirn '18 obtained his professional engineering license in New Jersey after passing the licensure exam in 2024.

Victor E. Bell '19 is the Spring 2025 Anne Reeves Artist-in-Residence for the Arts Council of Princeton. His ceramic "dogoyles" celebrate rescue dogs.

Donald Brasco '19, M'24 is engaged to be married to Bridgette Draham. He proposed at the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro. Both are law enforcement professionals. Photo, p. 48.



Alumni Uncorked: An afternoon of wine education

Rowan College of Business hosted alumni and friends for a few hours of networking and tasting some of South Jersey's best wines, guided by certified sommeliers.

1. DeAndre Burke '20, Xzavier Montgomery '20, Billy Sikora '20.
2. Kathy Quagliero '89, Steve Quagliero '88
3. Heather Patterson '99, Patrick McAuley '98, M'20, Pauline McAuley '99.
4. Sarah Moschini '22, Sydney Holt '22.
5. Irany Cano '24, Megan Steckler '24, Lucy Burgoyne '24, Edward Hernandez '24, Berrin Guner.
6. Margaret Gensel '84, William Gensel '82.
7. Michael Viola '19, Justin Toldt '12, Brian Eachus M'15, John Campbell '08, M'15.



20s

Gregory Balzano '20

is an officer with the West Caldwell Police Department.

Moirá Cunnigham '20 is an English and language arts teacher at West Orange High School, her alma mater.

James Grauel '20

competed in the 2024 Ironman World Championship, a 140.6-mile triathlon in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii.

Drew Kulis '20 and **Kara Natoli '21** are engaged to be married in September 2026. They met at Rowan volunteering for Unified Sports and decided to take their engagement photos on campus and in Glassboro, where it all began. Their first date was at Angelo's Diner. Photo, p. 48

Kyle Smith '20 is an officer with Evesham Township Police Department. He previously worked as an officer in Collingswood. He began his law enforcement career in Beach Haven.

Kevin Ackerman '21 is an account representative in ticket sales for the Hudson Valley Renegades, the High-A affiliate of the New York Yankees, located in Wappingers Falls, New York. Ackerman previously was a group sales account representative for the Trenton Thunder.

Matthew Marchese '21 joined Duane Morris Tax Accounting Group as a senior accountant. He is

primarily responsible for tax planning, consulting and compliance activities, including tax minimization strategies, for a diverse U.S. and international client base.

Dara Law Mattern '21

and Dave Mattern were married on Dec. 27, 2024. Photo, p. 48

Luis Ozoria '21 is an award-winning trumpeter, composer and educator. He is a staff member at the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, as well as a faculty member at Peabody Preparatory, a premier community school for the performing arts.

Michael Springer MD'21 joined the medical care team at Maine's Presque Isle Health Center as a primary care physician.

Hayley Bricker '22 is a producer for "Rohna Classified," a documentary chronicling the story of the HMT Rohna, a World War II transport ship that experienced the largest loss of life at sea in all of America's wars. More than 1,000 American service members died, including Bricker's uncle.

Noah Raine '22 has been promoted to senior accountant for Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, where he serves in the accounting firm's Government Audit Practice Group. He is pursuing his license as a certified public accountant.

Spencer Wattenberg '22

played Snoopy in the Algonquin Arts Theatre production of "You're a Good Man, Charlie

Brown" in Manasquan. His other credits include "Seussical," "Footloose," "Little Shop of Horrors" and "The Addams Family," among other productions.

Kristen Clarke M'23 was appointed to a one-year term on the Asbury Park Board of Education. She is a high school math teacher in Long Branch and president of the Long Branch Employees Association.

Ashley Kulikowski '23 runs Fearless Movement, a mental health nonprofit. The organization collaborated with Art for Hope Studio, LLC, to present the third annual, five-day Mental Health Art Camp for Kids in Gloucester County.

Justice Lateef '23 is an AmeriCorps tutoring fellow at Great Oaks Legacy Charter School in Newark. He is one of 94 AmeriCorps tutoring fellows stationed across three middle schools in the city where he grew up. The federal agency trains tutors to serve in high-need school districts.

Brianna Mac Kay '23 is a sports reporter for The Columbus Dispatch, where she covers Ohio State women's basketball and the Columbus Crew in Major League Soccer. She formerly worked for Yankees Magazine.

Andrew Park '23 is director of governmental affairs for Advocacy & Management Group, a government relations and association management firm in Trenton. He formerly was project manager for The Aubrey Group and also was a

constituent advocate in the Fifth Legislative District of New Jersey.

Vanessa Poggioli M'23

was named 2024-2025 Gloucester County Teacher of the Year by the state Department of Education. She teaches mathematics at Glassboro's Thomas E. Bowe Middle School and received a Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms Award.

Ryan Sheard '23 is a partner at Aspyre Agency, a direct marketing and sales agency.

Heather Doerr '24 is food access coordinator for the New Jersey YMCA State Alliance, a nonprofit coalition of 30 YMCAs working to improve the lives of New Jersey residents. She works to address food equity issues in underserved communities.

Our sympathies

Betty Hoover Garwood '47	Mark Kolibas '79
Marion Johnson White '50	Alice Kraus '79
Ann Nannini Rizzi '52	Tracie Brennan '82
Meredith Dobbs '57	Robert Armstrong D'83
Margaret Casazza	Daryl Gager '83, M'90
Maggioncalda '59	Ronald McKowen '83
Bradley Kaplan '60, M'72	Joseph Genovay '84
James Schafer '62, M'71	Steven Grube '84
Carl Calliari '64, M'66	Carol Gilbert Brown '85
John Hitchner '64	Vincent Goan '86
C. Richard Miller '64, M'71	Robert Goodwin D'87
Donna Dowden '65	Patrick McGrath '87
Joyce Benson '66	Mabel Staton M'87
Joyce Gralewicz Kenney '66	Raymond Wylie '90
David Maloney '66	Derek Hunsberger '93
Marcia Possenti LaForest '67	Melodey Kleva-
Antonia Ingemi Flitcraft '68	Forchic '93, M'05
James Haley '68	Annmari Mackway-
Eleanor Jessup	Girardi D'95
Stevenson '69	Sylvia Schelhammer '98
Sandra Ferrogari Wells '69	David Quinn '01
John Butterfield '70	William Osler '03, M'07
Charles Duffy '70	Dante Muoio '07
Nancy Irion Leiser '70	Peter Pino '09
Arthur Coughlin '71	Alexander Grennor '11
Conrad Delia '71	Anthony Morolda '14
Joan Batory M'72	Eugene Neglia D'16
Beverly Startt Genetta M'72	Chelsea Haines M'17
Fern Bliss-Morgan M'73	Alexander Mitchum '18
Augustus Harmon '73	
Mary Asbrand '75	
Erika Rittenhouse Bittle '75	Faculty and friends
Sharon Litchko Boyle '75	Barbara Convery
James Cardy '75, M'98	Pat Dease
Rodger Carney M'75	Diane Hughes
Christopher Roberts '74	James Tracey
Rachel Gautier Santana '75	Keiko Stoeckig
Patricia Tryba '75	Erin Herberg
John Sacca M'76	Joe Robinette
Mary Doherty '77	Helen Robinette
Milton Fineman '77	Edward Wolfe
Janice Pollock '78, M'95	

Oh, the places you'll go!

Take a look back at life's surprises, make time to capture and share the journey.

by Michele Weiner (Bernstein) Klausner '69

Michele Weiner (Bernstein) Klausner's motto is "Make art every day"—even if it's just a two-minute sketch or a doodle on the back of an envelope. She began teaching art journaling long before many had heard of it or knew there was such a thing. Her art includes Chinese brush painting on silk, mixed media and bookmaking. After decades practicing and teaching about journaling, the Monmouth County resident continues to share art and help people start their own art habit. "I have a 90-year-old friend doing collage," she said. "It's a wonderful thing to have creative projects."

My yearbook statement should have been, "Oh, the places you'll go!"

The Dr. Seuss classic was published long after I graduated, but its wonderful theme still applies to my story.

I never became the high school art teacher I'd hoped and studied to be. In fact, the places my education took me were nowhere near where I expected.

In 1969, the suburbs of Philadelphia had an overabundance of teachers, never mind art teachers. I subbed for a bit and then moved back to New Jersey and became the recreation director for a nursing home. I loved bringing art and pizza to folks who had never tasted either. I left there after becoming pregnant and was fortunate enough to be a stay-at-home mom until my daughter started school.

I began keeping a journal then and that is where my story takes me. I wasn't looking for a job when a small, classified ad in the local paper offered a part-time position that described everything I wrote about hoping to do in my journal. I got the job.

"Oh, the places you'll go!"

I wrote a weekly advertising column, some humor pieces and even had a couple published in The New York Times. My journal brought me back to my art. Years after graduation, I began painting again, taking classes and exhibiting my work.

"I should teach journaling to other artists," I wrote. And so I did. I began teaching journaling at the Center for Visual Arts in Summit, the Newark Museum in Newark, and The Open Center in New York City. I also taught art at an adult day care center and a domestic violence shelter.

My art and writing took me places I never could have imagined. I studied journaling and became a certified journal facilitator. I taught journaling and art at The Women's Project at Christ Hospital in Jersey City and became the program supervisor, offering workshops from anger management to Zen meditation and everything in between. That led me to pursue a master's degree in psychoanalysis from Centenary University.

"Oh, the places you'll go!"

Now in my retirement, a six-week journaling class I started for a local museum has been ongoing for 10 years. I'm enjoying my art more than ever, making my own journals and, as a result, reconnected with my college roommate, Lorraine Gavel Kirkpatrick '69, now retired from a lifelong career as an art teacher.

Today, many miles apart, we collaborate on a shared art journal, like pen pals. I think we're on our 14th volume. We share our art, our memories of GSC and photos, old and new. We've reconnected in a most enjoyable way, motivating and cheering each other on, just as we did way back in the 1960s.

I thank my well-rounded GSC education for much of my success in art, design, writing and creative thinking.

Take a moment and reflect in your own journal: "Where have I gone and where do I want to go?" ■

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Immersive learning, in reality

Settle behind a desk in Rowan University's new Dreamscape Learn Center, don a headset and get ready to take a ride in virtual space.

Created through a collaboration with Dreamscape Learn and Arizona State University, the center allows faculty to send students on academic missions anywhere: trekking through

an alien animal sanctuary, exploring an art museum across the globe or picking through the aftermath of a simulated disaster.

Equipped with virtual reality (VR) and haptic technology, the center at Campbell Library features two classrooms or "pods," outfitted with:

- VR headsets and sensors
- motion-capture cameras to map the movements of the instructor
- tactile feedback technology, including joysticks, fans and mechanisms that gently shake users' chairs.

Rowan leads the first group of universities to license the new

technology and Dreamscape Learn curriculum. The first students to use the space are enrolled in a general biology course for non-STEM majors. Projects are underway to design Rowan-made immersive courses in other disciplines, particularly the humanities—wherever the imagination leads.