

Rowan University

# The Rohrer Review

A Publication of the William G. Rohrer College of Business



## Message from the Dean

The diversity and growth of South Jersey's commercial enterprise are well worth noting. From tourism to agriculture, from high tech to health care, the region is home to a vibrant business community.

Playing a central role in these efforts is the Rohrer College of Business. As this issue of the *Rohrer Review* reports, our students, faculty and administration not only research, teach and learn business principles, they also apply those principles daily in the service of economic development.

One of the very visible examples of this commitment to service, as you'll read on Page 3, is our partnership with the *Philadelphia Business Journal* in support of the South Jersey 25, which highlights the region's fastest-growing firms. We serve the business community as a resource in numerous other ways as well: Through consulting projects that send students to assist firms and organizations with real-world business issues, for example, and by producing well-rounded graduates ready to hit the ground running.

One of the College's most accomplished alumni, Tony Galvin, talks on Page 2 about the importance of giving back. We couldn't agree more. That's why we place such a high priority on serving South Jersey's businesspeople and entrepreneurs.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Schoen  
Dean

## Rowan Students' Consulting Effort a Harmonious Pitch

Orchestras are all about what you hear, but when The Haddonfield Symphony changed its focus and name last fall, visibility became its chief concern.

Now called Symphony in C, the organization had recast itself from a community ensemble to a professional training orchestra for future orchestral musicians and needed help in raising awareness of its concert offerings for young audiences. A mutual contact brought the Symphony to Rowan, where seniors in Rohrer College of Business' Entrepreneurship Program take a capstone course that places them as consultants with organizations and companies throughout the region.

Capstone students Jaelyn Ilacqua '07 and Allison Nocella '07 spent last semester developing a comprehensive marketing plan to increase awareness of Symphony in C's educational programs. The plan they presented to the Symphony's senior leadership included a regional competitive analysis and new outreach strategies for the organization to pursue.

"It gave us many new opportunities that

we didn't think of," said symphony president Trevor Orthmann. "It gave us some very good research and knowledge that we didn't have the time to gather and will allow us to gain more success with our education programs."

Professor of management Kimble Byrd, who helps coordinate the program, cited three areas where actual consulting is especially eye-opening for students.

"One is the pace — the speed with which problems arise and have to be addressed before you move on to the next thing," he said. "The second is the difficulty of implementation. The third is the degree to which many actions are resource-dependent."

A new team is working with Symphony in C now to draw up a strategic plan to complement Nocella and Ilacqua's marketing plan.

"This project was helpful for the real world because it stressed the importance of advertising and marketing an organization," Nocella said. "Symphony in C is a very skilled group; however, if people are unaware of its existence, they will not attend its concerts."



From left, Symphony in C's **Trevor Orthmann** and **Pamela Brant** and Rowan students **Lauren Benyola** and **Bob Wear**, who are consulting with the organization this semester.

## An Accomplished Alumnus Gives Back

**T**ony Galvin refers to the personal struggles that pushed back his Rowan graduation from 1981 to 1989 as “demons,” but believes that they gave him “a greater appreciation for working hard and for what you get in return for working hard.”

“I had the opportunities, but I didn’t take advantage of them,” he said. “By not taking full advantage of my scholastic opportunities, when I did finally get on my path, I worked hard and took full advantage of the opportunities that were given to me.”

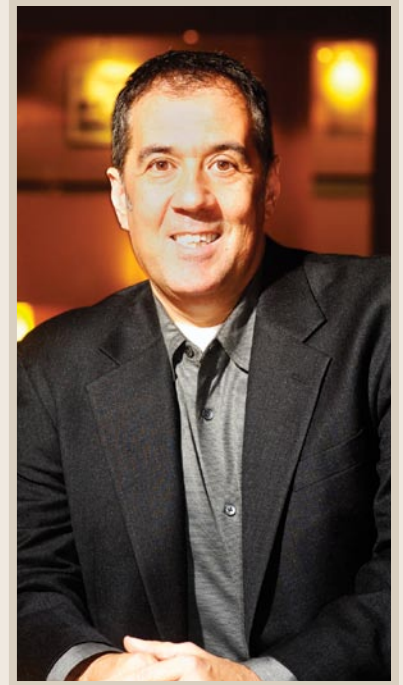
Did he ever. After earning his bachelor’s in business administration, Galvin embarked on a commercial real estate career that has landed him in the New York headquarters of Coach, the leather goods manufacturer and retailer, as vice president of real estate, store planning and construction. In that capacity he identifies the company’s growth strategy with respect to store locations, negotiates real estate deals and

oversees Coach’s leasing and construction teams.

Galvin had served as Coach’s director of real estate in the 1990s before taking a job with Chelsea Property Group in North Jersey, and he jumped at the chance to return in 2004. “I wanted to do what I thought would be more fun for me at that point in my career, and that’s why I came back to Coach,” he recalled.

Despite his now lofty perch, Galvin hasn’t forgotten where he came from or the challenges he faced along the way. He is on the dean’s advisory board for the Rohrer College of Business and, recalling the assistance he received during his time as a student, he funds a scholarship that provides four students with \$1,000 apiece per semester.

“It’s just a core principle for me, giving back,” Galvin said. “I’ve been very fortunate in my life. The College was one of the places where there were a lot of people who influenced my path to success, and it’s just a logical place for me to give back.”



**Tony Galvin**

## A Teacher’s Teacher, a Scholar’s Scholar and a Giving Colleague

**A**fter having her doctoral dissertation accepted by the faculty committee evaluating her work, Dr. Gulser Meric was leaving the room with her newly minted doctorate when one of her professors called her back and warned her, “After five years, you are going to lose your Ph.D.”

**“When I am teaching, I am seeing my students’ faces, and they get so excited. That is the best part.”**

“It was a shock for me,” Meric recalled. “How am I going to lose my Ph.D.? They told me, ‘If you don’t do research, if you learn no more’ — because I’m in an area that’s evolving continuously — ‘five years later what you know is going to be meaningless. You must keep doing research and improving yourself.’”

Ever mindful of that advice, Meric threw herself into scholarship. A 21-year member of Rowan’s Department of Accounting and Finance, she has published dozens of articles in the top peer-reviewed journals in her field; presented numerous papers at national and international conferences; and served as a conference programmer, book editor, and journal editor and reviewer.

A scholar’s scholar, Meric also believes

deeply in challenging and mentoring her students. Of particular concern is that they leave her class with a far broader focus, nationally and internationally, than when they walked in.

“I don’t think that my job in the classroom is short term. I think in long term,”

she said. “My students need to be competent and confident in the market, so I try to make every effort in my classroom to make them competent and confident for the future.”

As if that weren’t enough, Meric has taken leadership roles in the Rohrer College of Business, serving as director of the M.B.A. program in the mid-1990s, founding and advising the student chapter of the Financial Management Association, initiating the finance students-alumni mentorship program and shepherding the College’s successful drive to land prestigious AACSB accreditation.

“I bring all those experience to the classroom,” Meric said. “When I am teaching, I am seeing my students’ faces, and they get so excited. That is the best part.”



**Dr. Gulser Meric**

## South Jersey's Fastest Growing Look to Rohrer

Among the missions of the Rohrer College of Business is to serve as “an important resource for the business and economic development community in South Jersey.”

An important facet of that role is the College's partnership with the *Philadelphia Business Journal* for the annual “South Jersey 25,” which recognizes the region's fastest-growing firms.

“We have the same mission here, which is to help small business owners grow their business and attract better employees,” said Lyn Kremer, publisher of the *Business Journal*.

For eight years the College and the paper have joined forces for the South Jersey 25. *The Business Journal* issues a call for nominations, and nominated companies send their applications to Margaret Van Brunt, assistant dean of the College. Van Brunt verifies each entrant's eligibility and calls on her status as a certified public accountant to crunch the revenue numbers and come up with the top 25.

“It has a good reputation,” Kremer said of the College. “The business school has been growing. We have a lot of respect for that. It brings some marketing muscle to the project and has been great in helping us beat the bushes to find those small businesses. The research piece is huge. The College takes it so seriously and is so thorough. We have a lot of faith in what it does.”

The *Business Journal* isn't alone in benefiting from the partnership. The College has used the South Jersey 25 project to raise its visibility among the region's up-and-coming firms and demonstrate the services it can provide to them.

“We want to be a resource to the business community, so we're always looking for ways to reach out to area firms,” said Van Brunt. “I think this provides a terrific way to do that. Companies see the Rowan name, they see the Rohrer College of Business, they know that we're looking for these fast-growing companies. And throughout the whole process of the contest, in our discussions with the companies, we make them aware of the resources that we have.”



## Rowan's AMA Chapter Offers Students a Network of Help

Marketing is a discipline with many angles, so perhaps it's no surprise that Rowan's chapter of the American Marketing Association (AMA) immerses itself in so many different, varied activities.

From networking to fundraising events, from community service to participation in national competitions, the chapter is among Rohrer College of Business' most active and successful student groups.

“The main purpose is to help students to develop professionally,” said faculty adviser Dr. Berrin Guner, associate professor of marketing. “Our AMA chapter always organizes well-attended and exciting meetings. Our events and meetings are designed in a way that will sharpen students' leadership and marketing skills, for members and nonmembers alike.”

The chapter's focus on professional development has led it to invite marketers from a variety of fields to campus so that Rowan students can get a sense of the many options available to them. The chapter also sponsors numerous off-campus trips, such

as one last fall to the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa in Atlantic City to learn about the hospitality and gaming industries.

“The marketing professors are really a great asset that we have right at our fingertips,” added senior Tara Russo, the chapter's president. “They have all really helped us. If they have any contacts, they are willing to give them to us, or they are willing to contact them to see if they want to come and speak to AMA or lend a helping hand in any way. That's really beneficial to all of us, because, with their help, we're expanding our networking opportunities every day.”

In the chapter's nearly 20 years of existence, it has won awards from the AMA for communications, community service, performance and planning. With an active executive board and a committed faculty, it's easy to see why it has been so honored — and why students find it so valuable.

“Membership in this chapter is a great professional development tool that each of us can use to help prepare for what's to come after graduation,” Russo said.



Chapter president **Tara Russo** (left) and faculty adviser **Dr. Berrin Guner**

# Students Lend Taxpayers a Helping Hand with Uncle Sam

Filing one's tax return is a chore at best, and the complexity of the task often compels people to pay an accountant to take care of it. For South Jersey residents without the resources to obtain such assistance, free help is available thanks to Rowan students participating in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Sponsored by the IRS and administered by Margaret Van Brunt, assistant dean of the Rohrer College of Business, VITA uses student volunteers to prepare and review tax returns of individuals with annual income of less than \$40,000.

Quality control is a priority, said Van Brunt, so the volunteers must pass an IRS test to participate. Additionally, they work in teams, and she herself reviews all returns before they're filed electronically.

The program is a popular one, with more than 200 filers visiting Rowan's campus last year to work with the student volunteers.

"A lot of the returns we do are from individuals we've assisted in the past, and the same people come back year after year," said Van Brunt. "They're very appreciative, and that makes the students feel good. Plus, they are learning something, and it really gives them additional self-confidence. A number of them are currently enrolled in the tax classes this semester, and if they are not, they will be. This gives them a leg up on the tax law, while helping them in their coursework."

## The Rohrer Review

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Certified etiquette trainer **Gail Madison** offered Rowan MBA students and alumni business dining tips during a networking event held in February at Adelphia in Deptford.

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