Contents

1  President’s letter
2  Cooper Medical School
3  Rowan Blvd. and CGCE
4  EdD in Camden and co-gen
5  Urban education
6  Accolades for ChemE
7  Business and virtual reality
8  Getting ahead of Alzheimer’s
9  Tireless after hours
10 New Jersey’s story of sprawl
11 Long reading streak, big writing break
12 The year at a glance
As I write, it is nearly time for final exams this fall semester. Our students’ diligence, creativity and command of knowledge will be assessed throughout the academic departments. They have invested themselves in study and performance each day and now their work will be evaluated to ascertain if they are ready to move to the next step in their academic or professional careers.

This report is a final fiscal year project for our institution, a review of two semesters and the time intervening. Rather than an arbitrary, multiple choice-style exam, it’s something of a self-assessment in essay form. In some instances, we celebrate making progress toward an institutional goal. In others, we laud individuals and groups for innovation, resourcefulness and rigor.

We don’t have space or time to recount each notable success in this publication, so I encourage you to tour rowan.edu regularly and to stay current with the University throughout the year via visits for performances, lectures and other special events. Don’t wait for next year’s annual report to check our progress. Our students, educators and professionals cram a great deal into two semesters and summer. Read our newsletters and peruse department bulletins online and follow our coverage in the press. You will be impressed.

Thank you for your interest in and support of Rowan University. This time next year, we will have more opportunities to celebrate this exceptional university and the individuals who prove their merit and promise each day. I look forward to it.

Donald J. Farish
President
The first new medical school in the State of New Jersey in three decades is coming together—rapidly—in the City of Camden, thanks to a partnership between Rowan and Cooper University Hospital, two of the region’s most respected institutions.

More than 140 representatives from Rowan and Cooper have worked tirelessly to define every aspect of the new school. Their work includes setting standards for curriculum, faculty policy, admissions criteria, educational resources, affiliations with other health institutions and overall campus setting.

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the nation’s primary accrediting entity for medical education programs, must grant preliminary accreditation status to Cooper Medical School of Rowan University (CMSRU) before students can be accepted.

Dr. Paul Katz, formerly the founding vice dean of The Commonwealth Medical College in Scranton, Pa., has been appointed as founding dean of CMSRU. As the chief executive of the medical school, he will shepherd the school through the rigorous accreditation process, oversee completion of the medical school’s new home in Camden, build a faculty and staff, and expand and solidify the relationship between the two institutions.

The medical school building already is taking shape, with groundbreaking and construction under way for the six-story, $139 million facility set to open in summer 2012.
Rowan Boulevard revolution

The most visible sign of recycling in the borough of Glassboro might just be Rowan Boulevard, the ambitious, $300-million revitalization project that connects the borough’s historic downtown to the University.

Through no loss of farmland or open space, the Rowan Boulevard project has “repurposed” land to connect the borough more directly with Rowan. In the process, the project by SORA Holdings, in partnership with Rowan and the borough, is creating a new, 26-acre corridor of housing, retail and office space to establish “the quintessential college town.”

Rowan Boulevard includes an apartment complex housing 884 students; a new, 37,000-square-foot Barnes & Noble Collegiate Superstore that opened in late fall; the Whitney Center, a mixed-use building begun in the fall which includes retail and housing for 280 Rowan Honors students; a new Marriott Courtyard hotel and conference center, which will break ground in spring 2011; four additional mixed-use buildings; 97 townhouses; a parking garage; and a new Town Square.

When it is complete in 2012, Rowan Boulevard is expected to include 60 new retail stores, including a dozen restaurants, and is expected to boost the local economy by more than $48 million annually.

“Rowan Boulevard is urban redevelopment at its finest,” says Rowan President Donald Farish. “It’s recycling. We’re integrating the future of the town and the campus together. It’s a shared vision for the future.”

CGCE retools its programs

If indeed necessity is the mother of invention, then when it comes to Rowan University’s College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) the father must be anticipation.

Founded in 2006, CGCE is one of Rowan’s answers to the changing educational environment and the demands of traditional students as well as working professionals.

CGCE offers a wide range of programs—from master’s classes in numerous subjects that can be taken online or offsite (some in an accelerated format) to professional development courses to enrichment classes. Those programs are as diverse as a master’s in engineering management, a bachelor of science in nursing for RNs, a bilingual/bicultural education endorsement and a certificate of graduate study in educational technology.

“Rowan’s College of Graduate and Continuing Education has redesigned some of the University’s most in-demand undergraduate and graduate degree programs to fit today’s busy schedules,” says Ali Houshmand, provost. “By being proactive, we’ve broadened educational opportunities for the South Jersey community and beyond.”

CGCE has done more than that. Rowan, like other New Jersey state colleges, has faced eight years of no increases in its state appropriation and several years of substantial decreases. CGCE has boosted the University’s bottom line—this year it generated more than $3 million in net revenue through summer school, graduate and adult continuing education.

“That makes it vitally important to the future of Rowan University from a fiscal standpoint as well as from an educational standpoint,” Houshmand says. “All CGCE courses follow a business model and are self-supporting. CGCE has helped Rowan become more self-sufficient and less dependent on the state budget, which is especially important in difficult economic times.”
Leaders as learners
By day, many of them are teachers and administrators in urban schools. By night, they’re working diligently to earn their doctoral degrees in educational leadership.

But those two worlds aren’t incongruous for 42 Rowan students. A new program exclusively at Rowan at Camden is allowing them to focus their doctoral studies on issues and challenges facing urban educators.

"Students in the program come to class with real topics, concerns and issues that occur in their schools each day,” says Tyrone McCombs, assistant provost and dean of Rowan at Camden. “They have the opportunity to engage in research and to gain practical experience to develop the skills to empower them to be effective educational leaders in our urban school systems.”

The program began in fall 2009 and members of the first class of graduates are expected to earn their doctorates by 2012. Students’ dissertations will be centered on action research projects that will ultimately benefit the institutions where the students work, according to McCombs.

While doctoral students are busy earning their degrees, the College of Education and Rowan’s Camden campus are planning a new undergraduate degree program that also focuses on urban education. The program also will be offered entirely on the Camden campus.

Co-gen plant powers up
There’s a lot to be said for being environmentally sensitive:

- You conserve energy.
- You help preserve the Earth for your children and their children.
- You save money.

Rowan University has enjoyed all of those benefits from its green efforts in recent years, and 2009-10 was no exception.

The University commissioned its cogeneration plant in November 2009. A combined heat and power plant, the cogeneration facility uses the heat from burning fuel for electric power generation to create steam that is then used to heat and cool the buildings on campus.

The Rowan plant consists of two gas-turbine electric generators as well as two waste-heat recovery steam generators. The campus consumes both the electricity and steam generated by the plant.

During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the cogeneration plant generated 25.2 million kilowatt-hours of electricity.

The bottom line? Rowan avoided the purchase of $3.13 million of electricity from the electric grid and saved $881,615 from the operation of the cogeneration plant.
The road to a Rowan University teaching degree goes right through the City of Camden.

“Our teacher candidates need to have a lot of exposure to diverse children in diverse districts,” says College of Education Dean Carol Sharp. “They need to work with the children. They need to see that urban schools have talented, hard-working teachers and kids who are vibrant and hungry to learn.”

The College requires each student taking Teaching in Learning Communities I, a core course for all education majors, to complete the field assignment associated with the course in the Camden schools. Through the class, approximately 575 sophomores experience urban education firsthand early in their teacher preparation program.

But the College’s commitment to urban education doesn’t stop there. In 2009-10, the College founded the Rowan Urban Teacher Academy (RUTA), a two-week summer program for rising high school seniors. The program exposes the students to the idea of teaching in an urban school and to the idea of attending Rowan. Of the 27 students who attended the first RUTA program, six are now matriculated at the University.

Also in 2009-10, the College secured a $3.2-million grant to establish the Garden State Partnership for Teacher Quality Urban Teacher Residency Program. The highly competitive program is designed to provide aspiring urban teachers who are earning their master’s degrees in high-need areas with the skills and professional development they require to become highly trained, successful teachers.

The College also has longstanding Professional Development School (PDS) partnerships with three Camden elementary schools. The PDS partnerships provide professional preparation of teacher candidates, faculty development and enhanced student learning.

The end result for all of the initiatives is—most importantly—about children, Sharp says.

“We’re there to give something substantial back to the children,” she says. “It’s not rhetoric when we say we’re there for the children. It’s just not. It’s important work. And Rowan is always there.”

Opportunities in urban education

Sophomore math education major Melvin Monte works with Camden students as part of the coursework in his Teaching in Learning Communities class.
Perhaps Chemical Engineering professors and students have been reading some Aristotle between chapters of “Elementary Principles of Chemical Processes.”

“Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit,” the great philosopher is attributed with having said.

No doubt, the Chemical Engineering program has made a habit of being excellent.

Since 2002—just two years after Rowan graduated its first engineering students—U.S. News & World Report has ranked the Rowan program sixth or higher among those offering bachelor’s and master’s degrees, often first among public institutions.

And in 2010 and 2009, the publication’s “America’s Best Colleges” edition placed the program at No. 2 in the nation among master’s level public and private schools.

“We’re still one of the newest chemical engineering programs in the country,” said Robert Hesketh, chair, with more than a little pride.

Rankings, of course, are just a part of Chem E’s picture of excellence. The program, which has nine full-time professors and 125 students, is noted for outstanding research in such fields as green engineering, pharmaceutical engineering, drug delivery, food processing, biomedical engineering and alternative energy.

Students regularly receive awards for their work. Faculty count awards, papers, books and leadership roles in organizations such as the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and American Society for Engineering Education among their achievements.

Alumni have gone on to attend medical school and select graduate schools, such as Princeton, the University of Delaware and Penn State, and to land jobs with firms such as ExxonMobil, Sunoco, DuPont, Johnson Matthey, Merck, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Hershey Foods, General Mills and Campbell Soup.

“A signature feature of the Rowan Chemical Engineering program is our engagement of students with industry in our engineering clinics, resulting in significant benefits to the economic development of the region,” Hesketh said.

He added, “We are constantly improving teaching within the classrooms and labs. We then take it two steps further. We let people know what we are doing through our publications and then we hold workshops at national and international meetings to teach other faculty how we undertake these new innovations. Performing all of these activities with our stakeholders sets us apart from other programs in the country.”
The competition was steep, but the reward was sweet for Chelsea Freedman ’10 in this year’s Rohrer College of Business annual Business Plan Competition.

The management and marketing major from Sicklerville, along with a business partner, served up the winner with a recipe for Sweet Alternatives, a specialty frozen yogurt retailer that provides fresh, all-natural nutritious alternatives to dessert.

Freedman and company were up against four other teams that had been pared from 57 initial entries and had competed in preliminary rounds that included feasibility studies, written business plans and several workshops.

During the final round in March, the five teams presented their plans before an audience and panel of expert judges in the Chamberlain Student Center. The duo earned the $5,000 first prize, and other teams took home $2,500, $1,000 and $500 honorariums.

The fruits of the contest went well beyond money. “The Business Plan Competition gives students the structure they need to take a disciplined approach to business development,” says Linda Ross, a professor in the Department of Management/Entrepreneurship and a contest adviser. “The Business Plan Competition teaches students that along with a compelling vision, they need to pay exacting attention to detail. They learn to take knowledge from a variety of areas and weave them together so that the pieces fit as a coherent and workable business model. They apply theory to practice and must dig for the right slice of market data, figure out the real costs of opening a business, find someone to help them build a prototype or product model and determine a realistic channel of distribution for a young startup.”

Succeeding in business

Virtual world yields real results

When Shreekanth Mandayam, chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and his students leave the classroom for the CAVE®, they are not looking for a hermit-like existence—they are looking to make a difference in the world.

Mandayam oversees the Cave Automatic Virtual Environment, known as a CAVE®, a 100-cubic-foot, fully immersive, navigable and interactive virtual reality system based at the South Jersey Technology Park and funded in large part by a $392,000 Major Research Instrumentation Grant from the National Science Foundation.

Rowan Engineering teams have conducted research in the CAVE® for the United States Navy, NASA, the City of Camden and others.

Professors and students are able to input data and then get a virtual look at objects and physical environments—uncovering problems, finding solutions and exploring options that would cost more and present additional challenges in the real world. In a kaleidoscope of color, the CAVE® offers crystal-clear views from multiple angles of the areas the teams research, whether its rocket stands for NASA or sewer lines for Camden.

“The Rowan CAVE® is the only one in any university in the state of New Jersey. It provides opportunities to train our students on cutting-edge technology, to engage with local communities and to transition technology from the engineering labs to the marketplace,” Mandayam says.
Odds are Robi Polikar’s mind is almost always on the brain.

A nationally respected electrical and computer engineering educator and researcher, Polikar has conducted numerous projects related to the human brain.

Perhaps most notably, he has been working with Rowan engineering students and researchers from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and Drexel University for more than seven years to find a biomarker for early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease. Originally funded with $1.1 million from the National Institutes of Health with added support from the State of Pennsylvania in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania and later by Neuronetrix Inc. of Louisville, Ky., Polikar’s team has been exploring a noninvasive and cost-effective means to diagnose Alzheimer’s in its early stages using brain waves.

Polikar and his students have also been working on brain-computer interfaces (BCI), attempting to produce a mechanism that will enable individuals to control computers or devices using their thoughts only. Still in the early stages of their research, they hope one day to create new BCI applications that will improve our understanding of memory and learning as well as help people with limited movement and communication abilities.

Polikar’s work touches other areas, including computational intelligence, for which he has received a great deal of recognition, including a five-year, $400,000 Faculty Early Career (CAREER) Development Award from the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2003 to support his study of incremental learning from large volumes data.

Polikar’s CAREER Award — which the NSF gives to individuals it believes “most likely to become the academic leaders of the 21st century” — was the first and only one earned at Rowan. In 2009 Polikar and his collaborator at the University of Notre Dame received a follow-up, three-year $330,000 grant to expand this work.

Polikar is pleased with what Rowan has offered him and his students, especially what he calls a “unique nurturing environment that Rowan in general and the College of Engineering in particular provides to its faculty who are interested in a balanced academic career of research and teaching. Such an environment allowed me and my students not only to tackle but also get funding for and help solve problems that are traditionally the domain of large research universities.”
Somewhere, a Rowan University student has an uproariously funny, three-second video of Constantine Alexakos, assistant director of Student Activities, riding a mechanical bull in The Pit of the Chamberlain Student Center.

“Did I ride it? Yes!” Alexakos, 36, says with a laugh. “But I can tell you I didn’t last long.”

Alexakos’ ride on the bull didn’t have staying power. But his tireless work to develop Rowan After Hours (RAH) certainly does.

In just three years, Alexakos has built RAH into the place for Rowan students to be each Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. In spring 2008—and on a $50,000 shoe-string budget—Alexakos developed a Thursday night pilot program offering late-night programming.

Since then—and thanks in large part to a $600,000 budget funded through a $2.35-per-credit hour fee paid by students each semester—1,000 students each weekend attend RAH to enjoy everything from comedians, hypnotists, bands and dance clubs to the latest video games, game shows and activities such as inflatables, a mechanical bull and photo booths. All RAH events are free and each evening features a midnight buffet.

Alexakos has built RAH from a one-person staff with student volunteers into a program that now includes Tommy Balicky, assistant director of late-night programming and special events, a graduate assistant and 25 paid student workers.

RAH is successful, says Alexakos, because of the staunch support of Rowan’s administration, the funding it has received, and because it offers creative, fun, community-building programming.

One of RAH’s most important aspects is that it works to build connections for students—with each other and with the University. That’s one reason why Alexakos and his staff will occasionally jump on the mechanical bull, grab the karaoke microphone or “joust” with a student in an inflatable game.

“You’ve got to relate to students,” he says. “You have to let them know you’re here for them. They have to feel welcome. If they do, they’ll stay. They’ll enjoy themselves. And, hopefully, RAH will become a memorable part of their Rowan experience.”

Cos Alexakos has made Rowan After Hours the place for Rowan students to be each weekend.
John Hasse is working to tell New Jersey’s story.

“I feel like my mission, my role, is to be New Jersey’s storyteller in terms of what’s happening with our land use,” says Hasse, associate professor of geography and director of environmental studies in Rowan’s College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

With his research partner, Richard G. Lathrop Jr. of Rutgers University, Hasse has studied urban growth and land use change in the state since 1986. Their most recent findings published this year show that the state has just completed its “most sprawling decade in history.”

Since 1986, a massive 324,256 acres of land have been urbanized in New Jersey, Hasse’s data show. The state’s total urban footprint now accounts for more than 30 percent of its five million acres, according to Hasse.

The findings are important, both from a state standpoint and nationally, says Hasse. How policy is set to deal with New Jersey’s land use “build-out” will have implications both for Garden State residents and for how other states deal with their own urban growth challenges, he says.

“New Jersey has been successful at protecting wetlands and the Pinelands and is number one in the country in pinelands preservation and farmland preservation. Still, most of the state is only decades away from build out,” says Hasse. New Jersey is so densely populated that “we have to address our problems before other states do,” he adds. “We still have an opportunity to shift our land use policies—and to better manage land for the long term. The state is very much a microcosm. It reflects the country in many ways.”

Part of his work in telling the state’s “story” is to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy New Jersey—in all its complexities, says Hasse.

“New Jersey is the most fascinating state in the nation,” he says. “There’s kind of a race to see if we can move to more sustainable land use policies before we lose more than we’ve already lost.”
Around Father’s Day 2011, the bookshelves in every bookstore and library will include *The Reading Promise: A Father, A Daughter and the Books We Shared* by Alice Ozma.

But make no mistake: The author is none other than 2010 Rowan University alumna Kristen Brozina.

Last spring, the Sunday *New York Times* ran an article on the remarkable 3,218-night reading streak Brozina shared with her father, Jim. Two weeks later, after frantic phone calls from a bevy of high-powered book publishers, the self-described “little English major” landed a book deal with Grand Central Publishing, formerly Warner Books, to tell her own story of the reading streak.

When the book debuts, there will be tours and promotional appearances, including one at Rowan, where, Brozina says, she found her voice as a writer under the tutelage of University professors who pushed, challenged—and respected—her.

“I remember a couple of teachers, especially (English Professor) Cindy Vitto saying something like, ‘I feel like I should correct this, but it’s your voice. It’s your style.’ Something might have been technically frowned upon in my writing, but I had a few teachers who harbored that and let me stray in a ‘technically incorrect’ direction for the sake of voice.”

“I had a lot of time to hammer out my voice at Rowan and one word that professors always used about my writing was ‘energy,’” Brozina continues. “I think this book has a lot of energy.”

Upon graduating from Rowan, Brozina spent most of the summer writing the poignant story of the 15 minutes she spent each night reading with her dad. The streak ran from when she was nine until the night she left for college. Together, the Brozinas read everything from L. Frank Baum to Shakespeare to J.K. Rowling.

Jim Brozina gave Kristen the middle names of Alice and Ozma to pay tribute to the strong female characters of Alice from *Alice in Wonderland* and Ozma from the Baum series. Using those names as pen names for the book is fitting, Brozina says. “I’ve always liked those names better,” says Brozina. “And since they are literary, I thought they tied in nicely.”
JULY
Electrical & computer engineering major David Lester and other students win annual Walt Disney Imagineering 18th ImagInations Design Competition.

ALSO: Businesses of alumni Stephen Masapollo, Anthony Mongeluzo and Jack Zoblin are recognized as three of the 25 fastest-growing private companies in South Jersey.

AUGUST
International technology advancement organization honors engineering student Kevin McGarvey as “Exceptional Student Humanitarian.”

ALSO: Former coach Oscar Moore elected to U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame. Rowan welcomes 1,700 freshmen, its largest new class ever.

SEPTEMBER
With the purchase of 44 pianos, Rowan joins the elite group of approximately 100 All-Steinway Schools.

ALSO: Alumnus Stephen Gill’s company SocialReach becomes the first business to “graduate” from the Rohrer College of Business Incubator. Rowan’s Gamma Tau Sigma chapter wins Golden Torch Award at national conference in Chicago for exceptional scholarship, leadership and service.

OCTOBER
Rowan and Cooper University Hospital celebrate the partnership that is creating the new Cooper Medical School of Rowan University with speeches from Governor Corzine and Rowan University President Farish.

ALSO: Biology/education major Patricia Bodak receives an American Society for Microbiology Undergraduate Teaching Fellowship.

NOVEMBER
Radio/TV/film students’ projects win first-place College Broadcasters, Inc. awards.

ALSO: David Galos, Chris Lewark and Idris Hayward place second in Consortium for Computing Sciences in the Colleges Student Programming Contest at Villanova University.

DECEMBER
Professor Jess Everett and Engineers Without Borders students travel to The Gambia, Africa, to improve the quality of roads.

ALSO: New online Rowan Radio archive catalogues broadcasts from Rowan Radio 89.7 WGLS-FM as far back as the early 1990s.
JanuARy
Mission Solutions Engineering awards $100,000 contract to Rowan for project that includes modifying existing software and developing new software for the company’s Advanced Display Infrastructure.
Also: Professor Jay Chaskes starts Wheelchairs for Haiti project after earthquake.

FEBRUARY
Rowan University Astronomical Observatory and Edelman Planetarium host first Rowan Astronomy Day, a free public event consisting of planetarium presentations.
Also: Piano performance major Oleksiy Ultin prepares to represent entire eastern division at Music Teachers National Association competition. Ultin is piano professor Veda Zuponcic’s fifth student in five years to win the Eastern Division and progress to the national competition.

MARCH
New Jersey Society of Certified Public Accountants awards junior accounting majors Tina Carbone, Matthew Kienholz and Joseph Ward with scholarships.

APril
Prominent math scholars visit Rowan to present at conference held in honor of Rowan mathematics professor Tom Osler.
Also: Prestigious Fulbright awards send Chanelle Wilson to South Africa and Jonathan McGuire to Mongolia, both to teach English. Rowan’s environmental efforts earn U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Princeton Review recognition as champion of 2009-2010 EPA Green Power Challenge.

MAY
Education professor Patrick Westcott wins Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award.
Also: Chemistry major Phong Trinh earns full scholarship for doctoral program at University of Southern California.

JUNE
Geographic information system support specialist and instructor John Reiser works with National Guard students to document every detail of the National Guard Readiness Center to create complex “maps.”
Also: 16th International Communicator Awards competition and annual Philadelphia Press Association honor segments on Rowan Radio 89.7 WGLS-FM.
Rowan University Mission

A leading public institution, Rowan University combines liberal education with professional preparation from the baccalaureate through the doctorate. Rowan provides a collaborative, learning-centered environment in which highly qualified and diverse faculty, staff and students integrate teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity and community service. Through intellectual, social and cultural contributions, the University enriches the lives of those in the campus community and surrounding region.