

Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum opens

The Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum represents a significant advancement in paleontological and climate science education for visitors of all ages. This museum offers a wondrous window to the past that will inspire tomorrow's scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs, artists and more.

Expected to become an international magnet to explorers of all ages, the Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University (EFM) opened to great fanfare in March.

The \$75 million project in Mantua Township takes visitors from the late Cretaceous period—the heyday of the dinosaurs—to the wonders and challenges of today.

Named by Smithsonian Magazine one of its top 10 most anticipated museums in the world, the museum was made possible in large part through a \$25 million gift from alumni Jean '81 & Ric '80 Edelman. The ribbon cutting ceremony drew a standing-room-only audience to celebrate with speakers including the Edelmans and Gov. Phil Murphy.

Rowan purchased the site, a longtime marl quarry, in 2015 from the Inversand Company, and in 2016 the Edelmans made their extraordinary gift.

Also funded by the University, and supported by Mantua Township, Gloucester County and the State of New Jersey,

EFM is the product of a vision shared by the Edelmans, Founding Executive Director Kenneth Lacovara and Rowan President Ali A. Houshmand.

"Our motto is 'discover the past, protect the future,'" said Lacovara, as he addressed the Edelmans. "The good you have done here is incalculable."

Greeted with cheers as she and Ric

entered the museum, Jean Edelman commented on the "miles of smiles" before her and the generations who will benefit from the couple's investment.

"For all the memories we're going to create, it just fills our hearts," she said.

Ric Edelman credited Lacovara's and Houshmand's vision in seeing the project through. "We provided some of the money, but you all are responsible for this," he said.

Located at 66 Million Mosasaur Way in Mantua, the museum rises above the former marl quarry where researchers and visitors have unearthed more than 100,000 fossils from some 100 different species.

EFM invites guests to dive deep into Earth's history, providing an extraordinary opportunity to hunt for fossils at the only place in the world to view a preserved fossil ecosystem from the moment of the asteroid's impact.

"Rowan is a Jersey gem, let there be no doubt," Murphy said. "This ceremony represents Rowan's enduring commitment to educating the people of New Jersey."

Houshmand noted that EFM is just the latest addition to the University over the last decade, a period in which Rowan doubled enrollment to more than 23,000 students and completed more than \$1.3 billion in university-related projects.

"What we've accomplished here will have tremendous impact," he said. "Soon enough, school buses full of children will experience this amazing facility."

The museum features immersive, world-class galleries that bring the age of the dinosaurs to life with stunning reconstructions of giant species and their environments and also offers a free-roaming virtual reality experience, museum store, café, theater, nature trails and paleontology-themed playground. A fossil dig experience is available from May to October. **RA**



Supporting student success

Generous donors provide financial assistance to promising students in need—helping them realize their dream of a Rowan degree. Below are a few of the many students who have benefitted from donor support this year.



Scholarships lift a weight of worry for those pursuing further education. I'm very grateful

to have received the Menon-Grand Scholarship and to have had such amazing guidance throughout my studies.

—Gavin Schweiger '25
Radio, Television & Film



For those of us pursuing life-changing careers, you have helped make our dreams come true. To those who

may not understand the power

of giving back, look at all the students here at this institution who are able to heal and change lives. Some of us are only able to do so after receiving financial help from those around us, especially our donors.

—Gabrielle Georges '25
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine



This scholarship provides me with freedom from my financial concerns and opens doors to a

focused academic career where I can confidently explore opportunities and pursue my goals.

—Evan Ridgway '27
Computer Science



As a first-generation college student, my journey has been filled with

firsts. Thanks to the support of Flying First, I was able to access campus resources I didn't even know existed and receive guidance that helped me succeed academically and feel supported every step of the way. None of this would have been possible without programs like Flying First and the donors who help make them possible.

—Dawly Hernandez '26
Psychology



Receiving this support allowed me to focus more on my studies and work, rather than stressing

about how to pay for school. It was also incredibly motivating; knowing my efforts were being recognized gave me the drive to keep pushing forward.

—Belany Fuentes '25
4+1 Master of Arts in Applied Behavior Analysis

You can help!

Your gift to support scholarships will provide resources to help ensure that a Rowan education remains accessible and affordable. To learn more, please call 856-256-4095 or visit: giving.rufoundation.org

From hardship to healing—scholarship memorializes twin bond

In the early 1970s, Jeannine LaRue arrived at Glassboro State College carrying more than books.

As a young, new mother, survivor of sexual violence and first-generation college student, she was trying to find her pathway to becoming an educator. LaRue accelerated her studies and, in just three years, graduated with a degree in English education and stepped into her first role as a teacher.

No matter where life took her, her twin brother, James, her other half, was never far from her story.

James Frisby left high school early and enlisted in the military, where he served two tours in Vietnam and one tour in Germany. Through this time he also battled addiction and, as part of a subsequent 12-step program, he self-identified that it was important for him to start college classes.

Twenty years after his sister graduated, James crossed the same stage at Glassboro State College/Rowan University and earned a degree in social work with honors. He became a drug counselor and social worker.

"He was brilliant and witty," Jeannine recalls. "A big NASCAR and Eagles fan who gave the best side-eye smirks. Many people didn't realize just how smart he really was."

When James passed away in 2024, Jeannine knew she wanted to honor him in a meaningful way and decided to do so at the place that changed the trajectory of both of their lives.

Though a personal circumstance prevented her from walking at her own college graduation decades earlier, Jeannine returned to campus for Rowan's Centennial Commencement celebration in 2024. This



time, she not only marched but also served as the keynote speaker for the College of Education's ceremony.

"Glassboro State College didn't just provide me with an education, it gave me hope and blessed me in my professional years," she said.

This year, in celebration of a milestone birthday, Jeannine established the James E. Frisby '95 and Jeannine E. Frisby LaRue '74 Scholarship Fund, which will support twins or siblings at Rowan University.

"I want students to know our story," she explains. "That a twin who survived abuse could graduate while raising two kids and become a successful public servant. That a twin who survived war and addiction could come back and graduate with honors. I want them to know that if we could do it: you can too."

Ultimately, Jeannine hopes students find strength in their story and encouragement from the scholarship.

"In their hardest days, I hope the recipients will remember the Frisby twins and know that they too can rise." RA

A bond beyond medicine

In the early 1990s two young physicians, Dr. Marc Feldman and Dr. Richard Kader, started their medical careers in southern New Jersey. Living just a block apart and working within the same community, the Feldman and Kader families quickly became close. What began as professional camaraderie grew into a deep, lasting friendship spanning three generations.

Dr. Feldman and Dr. Kader were more than colleagues, they were like brothers. They shared not only a passion for medicine but also a commitment to family, an unwavering work ethic and a rich cultural heritage. Together, they dedicated their lives to caring for others.

When Dr. Feldman passed away from pancreatic cancer, Dr. Kader, an alumnus of what is now Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine, knew he wanted to honor his friend's legacy in a meaningful way. He proposed creating an endowed

scholarship in Marc's name. For both families, Rowan was the natural choice.

"Marc was the kindest person I've ever met," his wife Anna Feldman said. "No one loved life more than he did. He had this belief of 'it can always be worse,' but it wasn't just optimism, it was a kind of generosity. He made everyone feel like they were the most important person in the room."

A proud physician and mentor, Dr. Feldman took special pride in his profession, especially when two of his children, Dr. Jenna Feldman and Dr. Jay Feldman, graduated from Rowan. He supported future doctors with the same dedication he showed to his patients.

"Through medicine, friendship, love and a heritage of giving, this endowment was created to provide financial assistance to future doctors," Anna said.

Rooted in shared values of friendship, compassion and service, the Feldman Kader Family Endowed Scholarship Fund

will provide two annual awards for future physicians in their final year at Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine—and will honor the families' ties for future surgeons and primary care physicians.

Awarded for the first time this academic year, the fund supports two annual awards for students in their final year of studies—one for a student who is participating in residency audition rotations and pursuing a specialty in surgery and one for a student pursuing a career in primary care medicine.

For recipient Harrison Patrizio, D.O. '25, the support and encouragement provided by the Feldman and Kader families eased the financial strain of applying to residency programs. "This award allowed me to focus fully on pursuing a career in orthopedic surgery. I'm incredibly grateful for the support as it brought me one step closer to making a meaningful difference in patients' lives."

Recipient Bijan Roghanchi, D.O. '25 was also deeply grateful, saying "The challenge and expense of studying medicine goes far beyond tuition. For many students, there's no safety net, just determination and a deep desire to serve. This scholarship helped me keep my car running, my lights on, and my fridge full as I took the final steps toward graduation." **RA**



Gift to Rowan's West Campus Farm tackles food insecurity

Supporting Rowan University's efforts to tackle food insecurity, Philadelphia Eagles legend Ron Jaworski recently donated \$5,000 to support operations on Rowan's West Campus Farm.

Jaworski, who as Eagles quarterback led the team to its first Super Bowl berth in 1980, passed the ceremonial check to President Ali Houshmand and Board of Trustees Member Joe Cosgrove during an impromptu meeting in Bunce Hall.

The funding will support Rowan's fresh produce distribution program. Last year, the program delivered more than 15 tons of produce to families in

need through area food pantries. The farm is maintained and managed by Rowan students and volunteers.

While on campus, Jaworski also spoke to students in Instructor Alex Yoh's Sports & Event Planning course, some of whom volunteered for the Ron Jaworski Celebrity Golf Challenge in June. A long-running fundraiser, the golf challenge supports at-risk youth by helping to fund playgrounds and ballfields, sports equipment and summer meals in underserved communities.

In February, seven students from Yoh's fall event planning course traveled to New Orleans ahead of Super Bowl LIX to support another Jaworski fundraiser, the 2025 Ditka & Jaws Cigars with the Stars party. His foundation, Jaws Youth Playbook, invests in at-risk youths and underserved communities.



President Houshmand, Ron Jaworski and Joe Cosgrove.

Scan to learn more about the Jaws Youth Playbook foundation



Celebrating the Class of 2025

Rowan University's weeklong Commencement celebration in May honored more than 5,500 members of the Class of 2025.

Highlights of the main ceremony included keynote speaker Chris Gheysens, chairman and CEO of Wawa, (shown below, with President Ali Houshmand and Chancellor Tony Lowman), recognition of Distinguished Alumnus of the Year Christopher DeMayo '02, M'04 and Dr. Nicholas Peppas, world-renowned engineer and researcher, accepting an honorary Doctor of Entrepreneurship degree.

Three lucky graduates chosen at random won cash giveaways sponsored by generous University partners. Nexus Properties sponsored \$10,000 in prizes—\$6,000 for a doctoral student and \$4,000 for a master's-level student. Winners were Sanaz Shahi, who earned a Ph.D. from the College of Education, and Sanjana Reddy Nimmala, who earned a master's degree in computer science. Ansh Patel, who earned his bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering, took home a \$2,500 check, courtesy of Gourmet Dining. **RA**



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A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a tax-savvy way to secure your financial future and make a meaningful impact on the next generation of Rowan students.

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Scan now to
learn more!



Going the distance for Rowan students

Ten years and running, the annual Run for Rowan 5K continues to bring together hundreds of participants, of all ages, racing toward a common goal—supporting Rowan students. Hosted by the Office of Alumni Engagement and Rowan Campus Recreation Center, proceeds from the race have provided over \$105,000 of support to date to help offset costs for tuition, housing, textbooks, meals, programming, graduation applications, caps & gowns, and more for Rowan students! Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for our 11th annual race on Saturday, April 25, 2026—with both in-person and virtual options. **RA**

\$105,000+

DOLLARS RAISED SINCE 2016

1,571

UNIQUE
PARTICIPANTS

\$40,550

SPONSORSHIP DOLLARS
RAISED FROM

31

UNIQUE
SPONSORS

2

AREAS OF
SUPPORT:

Flying First

Supporting first-generation college students at Rowan

Student Emergency Fund

Support for students in need due to unforeseen circumstances



Day of Giving shatters goals: 11-year total passes \$2.1M

DAY of GIVING

Our 11th annual Day of Giving raised a record-breaking \$431,475! Since its inception, the event has raised over \$2.1 million to strengthen opportunities for students at Rowan, Rowan-Virtua and CMSRU.

With 3,158 individual gifts tallied from alumni, students, faculty, staff, parents and friends, this year's total supported a wide range of academic programs, clubs, athletic teams, the Rowan Fund and the Rowan community at large.

As in years past, the day also featured special participation "challenges" that, when reached, unlocked additional funding for even more impact. **RA**

\$431,475

TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED FOR
DAY OF GIVING 2025

3,158

TOTAL
GIFTS

TOP DESIGNATIONS

\$30,911

RAISED FOR
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
& MATHEMATICS

\$26,059

RAISED FOR
FOOTBALL

384

MOST GIFTS:
WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY

AMBASSADOR STATS

\$79,356

TOTAL
RAISED

128

AMBASSADORS
PARTICIPATED

(DOUBLED FROM 2024!)

999

TOTAL GIFTS

SOCIAL MEDIA STATS

171K

IMPRESSIONS ACROSS
ALL PLATFORMS

12K

VIDEO
VIEWS

If you missed the opportunity to take part in this year's Day of Giving, it's not too late. Gifts of any amount make a lasting impact. Give today for a brighter tomorrow!



Scan or visit:
go.rowan.edu/supportrowan

Helping students build brighter futures

They lived simply and believed in education, and they wanted to give their children the best possible life.

Gerard Sweeney's parents, Robert and Mary Sweeney, were quintessential 60s and 70s parents who built a life rooted in their values—complete with home-cooked meals, hand-me-down wisdom and a commitment to family above all else.

Now, decades later, Gerry and his wife, Mary Jo, are honoring that legacy in the most meaningful way they know: by helping students build brighter futures through a new scholarship at his alma mater established in his parents' honor.

The Robert F. and Mary A. Sweeney Endowed Scholarship

in Business supports students with financial need and has been awarded to three recipients since the 2022-2023 academic year.

For Gerry Sweeney, education has always been a guiding force. Growing up, his parents instilled a clear philosophy: "You need to go to college because that's where opportunity lies."

Having juggled student loans and 25/30-hour work weeks as a student, he knew he wanted to help lessen the financial burden for future students.

"Beyond my upbringing and my parents, from a



career perspective, Glassboro State College (GSC) was the cradle of my career," he said. "I grew here both academically and socially."

"I've always been a bit of a dreamer, but

dreaming without a plan is just that. GSC guided my plan and gave me the tools and the knowledge to pursue those dreams."

Now, he sees giving back not only as a tribute to his parents but also as a way to pass on some of the wisdom he has earned through experience.

"One of the advantages of being my age is real-life

experience," Sweeney explained. "There's so much you learn just by playing the game of a career. If I can help hasten the learning curve for students, that's something I feel strongly about. This scholarship is one way to do that."

Through the creation of this scholarship and his return to campus to speak with current Rowan students, Sweeney continues to pave the pathway for students.

He and his wife continue to explore ways to give back and remain grounded in the values they've shared since the start of their journey together nearly 40 years ago. "She's my best friend and together we're happy to support Rowan University students," Sweeney concluded. **RA**



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Rowan Advances is produced three times a year by the Division of University Advancement to highlight the involvement and generosity of Rowan's alumni, friends and corporate partners.

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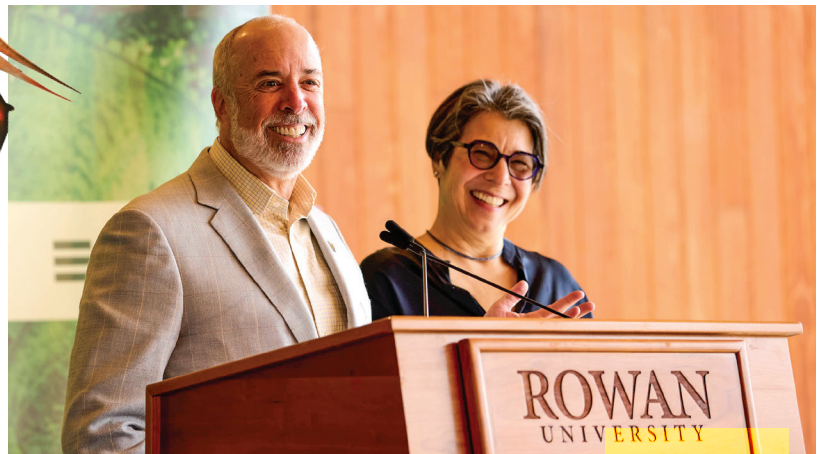
Gift supports Rowan-Virtua
SOM students and celebrates
enduring friendship

Scholarship memorializes
twin bond

Gift to West Campus Farm tackles
food insecurity

Record-breaking Day of Giving

plus more!

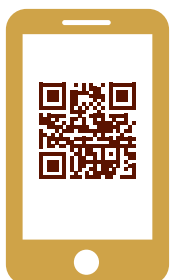


DISCOVER THE PAST. PROTECT THE FUTURE.

On March 20, alumni Ric '80 & Jean Edelman '81 were on hand to celebrate a milestone 66 million years in the making—the opening of the **Jean & Ric Edelman Fossil Park & Museum of Rowan University!** Thanks to the Edelmans' investment, thousands of visitors each year will experience science that educates, fascinates and inspires people to care for our planet.

Read more about this remarkable project inside and visit EFM.org to learn more!

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discover EFM
video and photo
highlights



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