

The Rowan Report

The Rowan University Campus News Source

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Rowan welcomes new provost, Dr. Ali Houshmand

Rowan University's new provost, Dr. Ali A. Houshmand, is a lot of things: an educator and author, a husband and father, a soccer player and marathoner.

But, he said, "I'm a lousy poker player."

That self-assessment is not so much a comment about his ability to know when to fold as it is about his approach to serving as a university administrator.

Houshmand, who came to Rowan from Drexel University, said he's not a big fan of secrets.

"I tend to have an open-door policy," he noted. The Exton, Pa., resident said if faculty and deans have concerns or hear rumors that worry them he wants them to approach him to discuss them.

During the summer, he was proactive in attempting to learn just what those concerns might be. Prior to officially joining Rowan on August 1, he met with the deans in their colleges to review challenges and opportunities they and their faculty and staff face.

That's just one of the ways he's been educating himself about his new professional home. Houshmand also has gathered "tons of information" on the past five to 10 years of the University's life.

"It's fair to say I know Rowan now," he said.

While he feels he has a sense of the recent history of the institution, he also has a sense of where he would like to see it go. Rowan's potential is in large part what drew him to Glassboro.

"Of all the universities that I am familiar with in the Northeast region, I feel that Rowan has the greatest potential. This is a wonderful institution that can only get better. It has the infrastructure. It has a very dedicated faculty. And it is strategically located," he said.

The other major point that drew Houshmand to Rowan was the sense that he shared a philosophy with Rowan's president, Dr. Donald Farish.

"For me, the philosophy is you need to create an academic institution that is

inclusive, that respects the faculty as key stakeholders, that is financially viable, that is proactive rather than reactive, that has an infrastructure conducive to great learning and that offers programs that are responsive to today's economy," he said. "I'm very excited to be in a setting where I can be an agent for improvement."

"Of all the universities that I am familiar with in the Northeast region, I feel that Rowan has the greatest potential."

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Houshmand (continued)

Though Houshmand believes there is always room for improvement—in professional settings and in personal development—he's pleased with what he has seen at Rowan and in particular with the people he has met.

Houshmand, who earned bachelor's (with honors) and master's degrees in mathematics and mathematical statistics from the University of Essex, England, and master's and doctoral degrees in industrial and operations engineering from the University of Michigan, expects to invest in those Rowan people. He said he hopes to create a sense of empowerment for leaders, including deans and department chairs, and to work collaboratively with the University Senate and unions so that all can direct their collective energy toward the challenges the University faces.

The provost said he tends to be very hands-on but is not a micromanager. "I trust people. I respect people. I empower people. But I hold them accountable," he explained.

He hopes that trust will be reciprocated. "I want to earn the respect of people I work with, not because of my position but because of my deeds," he said.

At Drexel, Houshmand was associate provost for academic affairs (2000-01), dean of the Goodwin College of Professional Studies (2001-04) and interim provost and senior vice president for academic affairs (2004-06). During the 18 months he served

as provost, Houshmand oversaw 11 colleges and associated support services, managing a budget in excess of \$160 million, and supervised the implementation of Drexel's new five-year strategic plan.

He also was on the faculty of the University of Cincinnati, where he served as director of graduate

studies of the industrial engineering program, acting director of the industrial engineering program and director of student assessment for the College of Engineering, with emphasis on Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology and North Central Association: Commission of Accreditation and School Improvement accreditation. Prior to joining academia, he worked as a staff analyst for United Airlines developing large-scale optimization and forecasting models.

Houshmand has served as academic advisor to 38 master's and seven Ph.D. students; has secured in excess of \$2.6 million in grants and contracts; has published more than 40 papers; and has received several teaching awards, a research award and the first award given at the University of Cincinnati for creating a just community for students.

He and his wife, Farah, have two children: daughter Layla is a junior at Columbia University majoring in biomedical engineering, and son Kasra is a senior in the West Chester Area School District. The family plans to relocate to South Jersey after Kasra graduates from high school.



Dr. Ali Houshmand joined Rowan as provost on Aug. 1

Eckhardt and Mallory Church honored at Convocation

Between them, Ned Eckhardt and Julie Mallory Church have dedicated 50 years to serving Rowan University and its students, faculty and staff.

Eckhardt and Mallory Church were honored on September 11 for their contributions to Rowan during the University's annual Convocation ceremony, which marks the official beginning of the academic year.

Chair of the Radio/Television/Film Department in Rowan's College of Communication, Eckhardt received the

Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award, which recognizes excellence in the classroom. A Rowan professor since 1979, Eckhardt founded the college's television production program. In the classroom, he stresses both superior technical skills and robust storytelling.

Eckhardt's students have won more than 60 regional and national awards and have moved on to prominent positions with MSNBC, MTV, NFL Films and National Geographic.



Lindback Award recipient Ned Eckhardt

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Eckhardt and Mallory Church (continued)

The Lindback Award is funded through the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation.

Mallory Church, an assistant director of Rowan's Counseling and Psychological Services Center since 1983, received the Joseph A. Barnes Award in recognition of her service to the University.

In addition to working as a counselor and advocate for Rowan students, Mallory Church also is active throughout the University community. An elected member of the University Senate for more than a decade, Mallory Church currently serves as the Senate's secretary.



*Barnes Award recipient
Julie Mallory Church*

Additionally, she is secretary of Rowan's American Federation of Teachers (AFT) chapter.

Mallory Church has served as an advisor for a host of campus and student initiatives, including, among others, the Black Cultural League, African-American Studies, Women's Studies and the Ujima Female Mentors.

The Barnes Award was established by the University Senate, AFT and Friends of Campbell Library to honor a faculty member or professional staff member who has provided consistent, long-standing contributions to the University.

Rowan plans to increase enrollment, expand offerings

Rowan University President Dr. Donald Farish will announce at Wednesday's Board of Trustees meeting that the University plans to expand academic offerings and increase enrollment substantially starting next fall.

"There is a great demand for alternate means of pursuing degrees and certifications throughout the region," said Farish. "We have created an outreach arm, that we are for the moment calling 'university college,' that will oversee and develop programs targeted primarily at working professionals who may not be able to pursue their degrees on campus."

The creation of the college will allow Rowan to provide better management of outreach activities such as programs offered by its Education, Management and Liberal Arts & Sciences institutes. The college also will allow Rowan to pursue new initiatives such as online education and offer undergraduate and graduate programs throughout the region and beyond. Rowan currently comprises a graduate school and six colleges—Business, Communication, Education, Engineering, Fine & Performing Arts, and Liberal Arts & Sciences.

The Board is expected to name Dr. Horacio Sosa, senior associate dean for the Goodwin College of Professional Studies at Drexel University, as interim dean of the new college at the Board meeting. Sosa's responsibilities at Drexel mirror what he is expected to accomplish at Rowan, including overseeing the development of alternate delivery systems such as online courses and weekend classes, expand-

ing summer session, recruiting faculty and establishing partnerships with regional educational institutions.

Sosa joined Drexel as a professor of mechanical engineering in 1987. He was also an adjunct professor of mechanical engineering and applied mechanics at the University of Pennsylvania from 1992 to 1994. With an established international reputation in the area of advanced materials, he has authored more than 60 articles on the subject; has been a visiting professor at universities in Japan, Spain and Argentina, and has been the recipient of several prestigious awards, including a Fulbright fellowship.

Born and raised in Argentina, Sosa earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina; and a master's and doctorate in the same field from Stanford University. Sosa will assume his position at Rowan on October 2.

He joins Rowan three months after his former supervisor, Dr. Ali Houshmand, previously dean of Drexel University's Goodwin College of Professional Studies, joined Rowan. Together, Houshmand and Sosa are credited with making Goodwin College Drexel's most profitable enterprise. The college serves more than 2,000 students enrolled in more than a dozen full-time and degree completion programs and generates approximately \$22 million a year in profits for the internationally acclaimed institution.

New Jersey Technology Council honors Rowan

Rowan has captured yet another award for education excellence, this one from the New Jersey Technology Council for Excellence in Technology Education.

The Mt. Laurel-based organization recognized Rowan for its plans for the South Jersey Technology Park at Rowan University and for its achievements in technology education in its Colleges of Engineering, Liberal Arts & Sciences and Business.

"Rowan is honored to be recognized by the New Jersey Technology Council. The council works diligently to maintain our state's technology leadership role, and Rowan pursues the same goal," said Dr. Donald Farish.

NJTC will present the award to Rowan and

awards to technology business leaders in the state at the Tenth NJTC Awards Gala on November 16 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, in Newark.

Moorestown resident James Tarangelo, of Sorgenti Investment Partners, Philadelphia, and a member of the Technology Park Board of Directors, nominated Rowan for the honor.

According to its website, NJTC provides business support, networking opportunities, information, advocacy and recognition of technology companies and their leaders. Founded in 1996, NJTC has more than 1,200 member companies that work together to support their own enterprises while advancing New Jersey's status as a leading technology center in the United States.

Rowan Prof gets long-overdue makeover

The Rowan mascot, the Prof, received a long-deserved makeover this summer. A fiercer looking owl adorns t-shirts and hats across campus, but the life-sized mascot will not be unveiled until later this semester.

The "Professor Owl" was first introduced to campus in 1955 by cheerleaders who sold stuffed toy owls at games. The early mascot, a first for the then-30-year-old Glassboro State Teachers College, quickly gained popularity, so the

cheerleaders purchased a full-sized costume in November 1956. The Student Council unanimously adopted Professor Owl, the Prof, as mascot on February 9, 1957.

"The illustration we just retired is more than

10 years old," said Joy

Solomon, director of

Athletics. "Students, espe-

cially our athletes, wanted a

modern-looking mascot that clearly has a bit of an edge to it. I think we got it."



Rowan ranked 29th, Engineering 20th, by U.S. News

For the seventh straight year, *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked Rowan among the best institutions of higher learning in the nation in America's Best Colleges, the magazine's annual compilation of the nation's top colleges and universities.

Rowan is ranked in the first tier in the North Region—Master's category. The University is tied for 29th out of 165 colleges in the region—the third public university—in the category, which includes universities that provide comprehensive undergraduate and graduate programs. Last year Rowan was tied for 33rd.

The College of Engineering, which graduated its first class just six years ago, was ranked 20th (tied) among the nation's best undergraduate engineering programs whose highest degree is a bachelor's or master's degree. The college's chemical engineering,

mechanical engineering and civil engineering programs ranked third, 10th and 11th in the nation, respectively, in the same category.

In another area of note, *U.S. News* ranked Rowan second among North Region—Master's colleges in graduating students with the least amount of debt.

In recent years, Rowan has been recognized by other national organizations that evaluate colleges, including Kaplan, which included Rowan in "The Unofficial, Biased Insider's Guide to the 320 Most Interesting Colleges."

The University also has been recognized by Kiplinger's, which named Rowan as one of the "100 Best Buys in Public Colleges and Universities," and by the *Princeton Review*, which lists it among "The Best Northeastern Colleges."

Glassboro's Got It!: New website introduces students to 'Boro

It is hard enough for freshmen to find their way around campus, let alone find where to go shopping, get a haircut or even find a pharmacy. A new Rowan website, named Glassboro's Got It!, will help students discover what can be found just a few blocks from campus.

"We believe that just about anything a student could need can be found in Glassboro," said Thomas Gallia, vice president for University Relations. "The

new website will serve as a resource as well as gentle reminder to our students that their home away from home has much to offer."

Glassboro's Got It! provides a wealth of information for visitors, including links to the University's RowanCard partners, local stores, restaurants, hotels, salons and more. Visit Glassboro's Got It! at www.rowan.edu/glassboro.

Newest Profs arrive on campus prepared

Rowan welcomed almost 1,300 freshmen, including 1,050 residential students, to campus in August, and quite an impressive group it is. Their mean SAT score was 1168 (verbal and math), and their average GPA was 3.6. Gaining acceptance was no easy task. Rowan had 7,822 applications for admission into the Class of 2010, more than a 5 percent increase over last year.

(Right) President Farish and his wife, Maia, joined dozens of students, administrators and staff who volunteered to help move in first-year students to Chestnut, Evergreen, Magnolia, Mimosa and Mullica halls.



Faculty and staff photos needed for yearbook, websites and media

The yearbook photographer has agreed to take portraits of all full-time faculty and professional staff for general University use, including inclusion in the yearbook and on departmental websites and for distribution to the media when publicizing achievements and initiatives.

There is no charge for the sitting. The photographer will take faculty and staff portraits when he takes senior portraits.

If you did not have your photo taken last year or you are a new member of the University community, we would like to have your photo on file. The yearbook photographer, will be in the **Student Center, room 128**, on the following dates:

Sept. 18: 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 1:30-5 p.m.
Sept. 19: noon-3:30 p.m., 4:30-8 p.m.
Sept. 20: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 1:30-5 p.m.
Sept. 21: noon-3:30 p.m., 4:30-8 p.m.
Sept. 22: 9 a.m.-noon, 1-4 p.m.
Sept. 25: 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 1:30-5 p.m.
Sept. 26: noon-3:30 p.m., 4:30-8 p.m.
Sept. 27: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 1:30-5 p.m.
Sept. 28: noon-3:30 p.m., 4:30-8 p.m.
Sept. 29: 9 a.m.-noon, 1-4 p.m.
Oct. 2: 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 1:30-5 p.m.
Oct. 3: noon-3:30 p.m., 4:30-8 p.m.
Oct. 4: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 1:30-5 p.m.
Oct. 5: noon-3:30 p.m., 4:30-8 p.m.

Person of the Week

The "Person of the Week" is a member of the Rowan community whose recent accomplishments distinguish him/her and the University.

September 3 to 9

Rowan Student Volunteers

Some people just start things off right. In this

case, 19 freshmen (along with three upperclassmen) kicked off their college career by helping others during the four days prior to the official freshman Move-In Day. As participants in the Freshman Connection's Connect through Service effort coordinated by the Office of Service Learning and

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Person of the Week (continued)

Volunteerism, the students volunteered for such organizations as Together, the Glassboro Child Development Center and the Ronald McDonald House in Camden, among many others.

September 10 to 16

Ned Eckhardt, Julie Mallory Church and Andrew Hottle

Ned Eckhardt, Radio/TV/Film, and Julie Mallory Church, Counseling and Psychological Services Center, received the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award and the Joseph A. Barnes Award for Outstanding Service to Rowan, respectively, at Convocation on September 11. Kudos also go to Andrew Hottle, Art, who recently received Rowan's Junior Faculty Innovative Teaching Award.

September 17 to 23

Zenaida Otero Gephardt and Joshua Wyrick

Person of the Week honors go to Zenaida Otero Gephardt, Chemical Engineering, and Joshua Wyrick, Civil & Environmental Engineering, and students Carolyn Braun, Jared Krause, Dustin Kuzan, David Santino and Mary Wellspeak. The

College of Engineering team traveled in August and early September to El Salvador as part of an Engineers Without Borders™-USA project to help provide clean water for 118 homes in Caserío El Amatón.

September 24 to 30

Edward Smith

Edward Smith, Foreign Languages and Literatures and International Center, was elected executive director of the New Jersey State Consortium for International Studies. For two years, Smith has been a board member of the consortium, which was founded in the 1960s to provide study abroad opportunities for New Jersey college students. Currently the consortium offers study abroad programs in 200 universities in more than 50 countries, and about 100 Rowan students study abroad each year through the consortium.

An announcement of who has been selected for the week is aired daily at 4:40 p.m. on Rowan Radio, WGLS 89.7-FM. Nominations should be sent to Joe Cardona in Bole Hall or cardona@rowan.edu.

People in the News

The *Courier-Post* featured **Krishan Bhatia**, Mechanical Engineering, in its "Tip Du Jour" section. Bhatia suggested ways to alleviate the high cost of fueling vehicles. Tips included decreasing driving by combining trips and avoiding rush hour. (Aug. 24)

Zenola Blanding, Counseling & Psychological Services, was interviewed by the *Courier-Post* about the foiled British terrorist attacks. Blanding stated, "While a threat is real, the real possibility of you or someone you love being in an actual terrorist situation is very, very minimal." (Aug. 11)

Keith Johnson and **Steven Simmerman**, Physics & Astronomy, commented about Pluto's loss of planetary status in the *Gloucester County Times*. "I think there will be a lot of sympathy for Pluto, especially with the school kids," Simmerman said. "Grade school kids think of it as a Walt Disney character. It's been part of our scenario of nine planets for a long time now. To remove it kind of makes you feel like we've lost a little something," Johnson stated, "It's still Pluto. It's still worth going to and worth investigating, perhaps even more now that we know it's a member of a whole different class." (Aug. 25)

The *Gloucester County Times* interviewed **Jennifer Kadlowec**, Mechanical Engineering, about a two-day program designed to attract young women to engineering. "We try to get the girls interested by exposing them to engineering projects related to what they are learning in science even at this age," said Kadlowec. "Typically middle school girls tend to shy away from math and science." (July 26)

John Schmalzel, Electrical & Computer Engineering, was featured in the *Gloucester County Times* for advising Rowan's Katrina relief efforts in the Gulf Coast. The projects included helping rebuild a southern Mississippi school district and working with Habitat for Humanity in the New Orleans area. Schmalzel said the experience was "eye-opening for students on geographic and cultural lines." (Aug. 28)

Josh Wyrick, Civil & Environmental Engineering, was featured in the *Courier-Post* along with Rowan students who traveled to El Salvador for a project to provide clean water to 118 community homes. "It's just a really great way to give back," said Wyrick. "I'm looking forward to meeting the community and getting to know them." (Aug. 15)

Noteworthy Faculty and Staff Achievements

David Applebaum, History, presented at international conferences in June and July. His first presentation, "Class Struggles in Contemporary France," was part of the State University of New York—Stonybrook's meetings of the Working Class Studies Association. His second presentation, "Judges and Immigrants: The Shoulder Case," was part of the International Working Group for Comparative Studies of Legal Professions European Conference.

Ganesh Baliga and **Andrea Lobo**, Computer Science, recently won the "Best Paper Award" at the Eleventh Annual Consortium for Computing Sciences in Colleges: Northeast Conference. The paper titled "NP-Completeness for All Computer Science Undergraduates: A Novel Project Based Curriculum," also appeared in the Journal of Computing Sciences.

Shifei Chung, Accounting & Finance, presented her paper "Redesigning the Accounting Curriculum for Integration: A Model to Incorporate Concepts Across Courses" at the recent Emerging Issues in Accounting and Business Conference in Padova, Italy.

Robert Fleming, Management & MIS, recently coordinated the Chief's Leadership Workshop and presented two education sessions at the Firehouse Expo 2006 Conference held in Baltimore. The sessions were "Survival Skills for the New Fire Chief" and "Overcoming Resistance to Change Within Your Fire Department."

Bela Mukhoti, Economics, attended the Oxford Round Table at the University of Oxford, England, in the spring. An interdisciplinary forum to address important public policy issues from a scholarly per-

spective, the Round Table invites participants based on their academic expertise and potential to contribute significantly to the gathering's topic, which this year focused on women's rights.

John Myers, Sociology, recently presented "Collective Memory as Part of Racism: A Mnemonic Battle" at the American Sociological Association 2006 meeting in Easton, Md.

Terry O'Brien, Biological Sciences, recently published the chapter "The Phylogentic Distribution of Pleurocarpous Mosses: Evidence from cpDNA Sequences" in the book "Pleurocarpous Mosses: Systematics and Evolution." He presented his research for the chapter at a symposium on mosses in Cardiff, Wales.

Kathryn Quigley, Journalism and the Whit, published her first textbook, "Introduction to News Writing: Topics and Techniques," with Kendall/Hunt in September. Quigley also writes essays on a regular basis for the South Jersey Commentary section of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Her latest, on the sleep deprivation of new motherhood, ran in September.

Adrian Rusu, Computer Science, presented the paper "Automatic Generation of Sequence-Style Notes from Live Lecture" at the ninth International Conference on Engineering Education in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Rusu co-authored the conference paper with Gary Dainton.

Karen Sieftring, College of Business and American Federation of Teachers (AFT), was pictured in the AFT exhibit that debuted in July at the AFT Convention in Boston. The exhibit highlights the contributions made by individual AFT members across all constituency groups.