



From the Dean

I recently marked my 100th day as dean of the Rohrer College of Business (RCB). . . and what an action-packed and fulfilling 100 days it has been!

During this time I've gotten to know faculty, as well as many students, alumni and members of the business community. This process has reaffirmed many times over that I'm part of an amazingly dynamic and forward-looking institution — and a College that is equally vibrant and on the move.

As is critical to a fast-paced, mission-focused business school, RCB is engaged in an exciting and comprehensive strategic planning process that will set our direction and articulate measures of success for the next three to five years. I've been warmed by the hard work and wholehearted support of the faculty for this process and the extent to which they have involved a range of stakeholder groups in envisioning our future.

Soon, I look forward to focusing on our emerging vision and providing specifics on how the College will continue to evolve to better serve our students and the South Jersey business community.



Dr. Sue Lehrman
Dean

The Rohrer Review

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New fund drives Rowan innovations

Rowan University inventors and innovators now have a powerful new ally.

The Rowan Innovation Venture Fund LLC, a \$5 million private-equity fund established by the Rowan University Foundation in February 2014 to fuel innovation, recently awarded \$100,000 to its first two recipients. They are: Nick Dennis, '15, founder and CEO of fitDEGREE, a social media fitness app, and winner of Rowan's 2015 Business Plan Competition (see story on page 3), and Melissa Schipke, M'14, CEO and co-founder of Tassl, an app enhancing alumni engagement.

The Rowan University Foundation's Technology/New Venture Development Committee, which oversees the fund, made the awards after evaluating approximately 50 proposals.

Schipke looks forward to the opportunities this backing will bring. "We're excited to use the funding to bring on additional employees in the area, growing our team to take our business to the

next level," Schipke said.

"The fund creates an innovation driver and helps continue the process of building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in South Jersey," said Kimble Byrd, professor of management and entrepreneurship.

Established to support entrepreneurs, researchers, businesses and other initiatives in South Jersey, the fund also will support other promising ventures, selecting those that will provide the best return on investment, said Howard Lubert, managing director of the fund.

As well as offering financial support, the fund will help match entrepreneurs and inventors with essential resources, increasing awareness of what they need to be successful, he said.

Lubert continues to seek promising initiatives. "The fund is open for business," he said. "If you have an investment opportunity and are a Rowan student, alumnus, or faculty or staff member, I'm here to listen and will try to help you secure the funding you need."

Melissa Schipke, CEO and co-founder of Tassl, explains her innovative alumni engagement app, receiving \$100,000 from the Rowan Innovation Venture Fund.



Growing socially responsible business professionals

Daniel Ruotolo is deeply invested not only in teaching Rohrer College of Business (RCB) students to earn a living — but to create a better life for others.

During the last 12 years, he has hired more than 100 RCB students as interns through the nonprofit organization Student Working Professionals (www.swpstars.org), helping them to develop the business skills they need to succeed.

“We want to teach students about being social entrepreneurs — that it’s important to be active in the community and give back,” said Ruotolo, owner of Ruotolo, Spewak & Co., based in Mt. Laurel and Cherry Hill, and the Digital Accounting Institute in the South Jersey Technology Park in Mantua Township.

For his service to Rowan,



Daniel Ruotolo receives a Medal of Excellence for Distinguished Service from Rowan President **Ali Houshmand** (left) and **Dr. Daniel McFarland**, associate dean, during the College’s Commencement.

the South Jersey community and the accounting profession, RCB awarded Ruotolo a Medal of Excellence for Distinguished Service during the College’s Commencement in May.

To further his mission,

Ruotolo recently purchased a Glassboro location that will house the Student Working Professionals’ Student Empowered Business Campus, which he foresees eventually employing 100 to 150 employees, managed almost

entirely by student leaders.

Through this program, RCB students majoring in a variety of disciplines and students from Glassboro High School gain hands-on experience within companies in the NOW! Financial Network, including his accounting firm; earn income; and learn the value of rolling up their sleeves to serve others.

Witnessing the struggles of his nonprofit clients during the recent economic downturn, Ruotolo recognized that important services were lost at a time when they were vital. Moreover, he questioned why for-profit businesses couldn’t be more socially conscious.

Ruotolo sees a similar commitment to service in his Rowan students. “Every student in our program loves volunteering and getting involved in the community and our projects,” he said.

RCB Welcomes New Talent to Classrooms

Three new faculty members joined the Rohrer College of Business this fall, bringing a diverse array of talents and experiences to their classrooms.

Dr. Patrick Barbro, assistant professor of marketing and business information systems, earned his MBA from Saint Joseph’s University and his PhD from Temple University. His research focuses on consumer behavior, particularly consumer interaction with technology in marketing settings. Barbro previously worked in the financial services industry, primarily for The Vanguard Group.

Dr. Andrew Johnson, assistant professor of marketing and business



Rowan President **Ali Houshmand** (fourth from left); **Dr. Sue Lehman**, dean (third from left); and **Dr. Darren Nicholson** (right), meet with new faculty members (from left): **Dr. Patrick Barbro**, **Dr. Andrew Johnson**, and **Dr. LeeAnn Kung**.

information systems, is a 20-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He earned his doctorate in supply chain management and marketing

sciences from Rutgers University. His general research interests include supply chain management with a focus on transportation

planning, inventory control, military applications and the integration of supply chain management with project management.

Dr. LeeAnn Kung, assistant professor of marketing and business information systems, earned her Ph.D. in Management Information Systems from Auburn University. She also holds master’s degrees in education and information science and policy. She joins Rowan with more than 10 years of higher education teaching experience. Her research interests include information systems strategy, IT innovations, analytics and research methods. Her research has appeared in several top-tier journals.

Competition propels students to succeed

Since winning first place and \$7,500 in the College's Business Plan Competition in April, Nicholas Dennis's future has become brighter with each passing month.

As an employee of the Rowan Rec Center, Dennis, '15, conceived his winning idea, fitDEGREE, during a staff training meeting in August 2014. The app can help students find others on campus to hit the free weight room, take a morning yoga session or join a pickup basketball game.

"We believe in the power of numbers. Extensive research and our personal experience have shown that fitness has the potential to create a strong community on college campuses," he said.

A mathematics major, Dennis praised the preparation he received during the several-month University-wide competition, particularly from Stephen Kozachyn, executive director of external affairs of the Rohrer College of Business. "He helped me make the transition from a math major into an entrepreneur," Dennis said. "He gave me the guidance to understand how to develop a business plan to show investors that there is a problem, we have the solution and we can turn it into a successful business."

"What drives most entrepreneurs to move forward is the passion to do something, and Nick certainly has a passion to see this forward," Kozachyn said. "He is so excited about it. It's contagious."

fitDEGREE received a huge boost this fall when Dennis received \$100,000 in seed money from the new Rowan Innovation Venture Fund (more on page 1).

Dennis and his team were thrilled by the opportunity. "This next year will be even tougher than the last, but we are excited by the progress we have already achieved."

Nick Dennis presents his concept, fitDEGREE, during RCB's Business Plan Competition.



PwC Internships Open Doors to Future

Rohrer College of Business (RCB) students continue to shine during internships, leading to full-time positions with major firms.

Peter DeLeonibus, '16, an accounting major from Freehold, began an audit internship with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in January. Working with a PwC team, he gathered evidence while strengthening his audit and software skills. He also forged new relationships in a welcoming environment. "I did not feel like an intern," he said. "I felt like a first-year associate."



PricewaterhouseCoopers is just one of the many employers that recruit students at the College's Accounting Expo.

More than a year before his anticipated graduation, the firm offered him a full-time position. "That was literally the best moment of my life," DeLeonibus said.

Vince Gentile, '15, an accounting and management information systems major from Mullica Hill, interned with PwC during tax season. Working in the firm's Wealth Management Tax Services Group, he was hired shortly before his internship was completed.

He valued the experience. "If you're interested in working for any Big Four Firm, they don't do a lot of hiring outright from college. They like to hire from their internship program, which gives them a chance to test-drive prospective employees before they hire them," he said.

Given the College's growing reputation, this will be an increasing trend. "We're now a targeted school by PwC, so we will be recruited more heavily by them, which is fantastic," said Dr. George Romeo, professor of accounting.

To help busy accounting students fit internships into their schedules, RCB is offering more accounting courses in the summer and will begin providing eight-week courses in spring 2016. This will enable students to take an internship the first half of the semester and a course during the second half.

Internships offer students unmatched advantages. "Students have an avenue into that particular firm that others do not," Romeo said.



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Rohrer College of Business

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Celebrating the American Marketing Association’s Marketing Week in October, Rowan’s student chapter partnered with with Cumberland County Habitat for Humanity and the Boys and Girls Club of Vineland, pitching in to renovate a new building donated to the Boys and Girls Club.

RCB Launches New Graduate Programs

Rohrer College of Business (RCB) is keeping pace with the rising demand for financial education, offering new graduate business programs within the heart of South Jersey.

The new 12-credit certificate of graduate study in accounting launched this fall. “It helps students earn additional credits to apply toward the 150-credit requirement for certified public accountants,” said James Jordan, MBA director. In addition, the program serves as a pathway for students who choose to pursue an MBA.

The College also began recruiting students for its new 30-credit Master of Science in Finance (MSF) program, which will launch in the summer of 2016.

“It is designed for students who are specifically looking to become chartered financial analysts (CFAs) and certified financial planners (CFPs), preparing students for those exams,” Jordan said.

“The CFA and CFP designations have become the most sought-after designations in the financial field, and the number of students taking the CFA and CFP exams is increasing,” said Dr. Gulser Meric, professor of finance.

“Currently, residents of southern New Jersey must commute to Philadelphia or northern New Jersey in order to pursue an accredited MSF program,” she said. “Rowan University will be the only institution in southern New Jersey with an MSF program.”

Rowan is committed to providing access to programs that meet the needs of area businesses. “Employers in the region are looking for students with these specific skill sets, and based upon U.S. Department of Labor projections, this is where employment growth will be,” Jordan said.



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Dr. Sue Lehrman	Dean
Margaret Van Brunt	Assistant Dean
James Jordan	MBA Director
Stephen Kozachyn	Executive Director of External Affairs
Barbara Baals	Editor
Diane Donofrio Angelucci	Writer/Project Manager
Traci Belli Downing	Designer
Craig Terry	Photographer

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Please send comments and suggestions to:
Rohrer College of Business
c/o Editor — The Rohrer Review
Rowan University
201 Mullica Hill Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028-1701

Contact:
(856) 256-4025; (856) 256-4439 (fax)
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