

College of Humanities & Social Sciences

2023-24 Annual Report





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Dean’s message

What an incredible year it’s been! As we wrapped up Rowan University’s Centennial celebrations, I found myself reflecting on how far we’ve come as a college and how much further we’re ready to go. Moments like these remind me why I’m so proud to be a part of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences (CHSS) family.

Reflecting on the year, it’s hard not to be inspired by CHSS’s transformative impact on our students and our community and the world at large.

This year, our college continued its tradition of fostering meaningful conversations around global issues with guest lectures and interdisciplinary events. From discussing climate change and humanitarian efforts to collaborating with NASA on space exploration, we saw the power of interdisciplinary scholarship firsthand.

These moments were complemented by faculty and student research initiatives addressing critical societal challenges and by the expansion of our summer programs that engaged students in hands-on learning.

Our Centennial celebration brought with it a wave of historical reflection, student-driven exploration, and faculty excellence—all showcasing the essential role the humanities and social sciences play in shaping our world. It was a year of hard work from everyone—students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Our students didn’t just listen. They took action! Whether they were conducting original research alongside faculty, digging into history in our summer field schools, or attending the Model

United Nations in New York City and Model African Union in Washington D.C., their drive to learn and make a difference was tangible. I was especially excited to see how Project 100—our oral history project—came to life. It was a true labor of love that connected us with alumni and faculty from across the decades, capturing the heart and soul of our shared journey through Rowan’s history.

We also had some big wins on the faculty side. Faculty research and fellowships continued to shine a spotlight on the fantastic work being done within our departments. From awards recognizing excellence in teaching and service to groundbreaking projects like the Red Bank Battlefield archaeology project, CHSS faculty members are pushing boundaries and creating new knowledge every day. Their commitment to exploring the complex issues of our time—from social justice to sustainability—keeps us on the cutting edge.

We are also immensely proud of our alumni who continue to make strides in education, public service, leadership and scholarship. This year’s stories of alumni giving and student achievements highlight the lasting impact of a CHSS education—one that is grounded in using critical thinking to deal with societal problems, community engagement and global citizenship.

As we look to the future, CHSS remains committed to creating knowledge that serves our local and global communities. Whether it’s through innovative research, inspiring teaching, or community partnerships, our college is leading the way in preparing the next generation of leaders and thinkers.

Thank you for joining us on this incredible journey. I can’t wait to see what we’ll accomplish in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Nawal H. Ammar

Nawal H. Ammar, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Humanities & Social Sciences



Centennial lectures presented by CHSS focus on global issues—and solutions

In a year in which Rowan University marked its Centennial, the College of Humanities & Social Sciences contributed to the landmark celebration with a host of prominent guest speakers.

Last October, alumnus David Tarr '65, former lead economist for the World Bank, presented “How to Save the Planet,” a lecture on ways to implement economic-based proposals for combatting climate change.

In February, historian Tim Borstelmann of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln presented “John F. Kennedy and Africa: When Colonialism Met the Cold War.” Borstelmann’s talk, held on Presidents Day, was part of both the Centennial Lecture Series and the University’s Celebrating Operation Uganda Lecture and Event Series. Borstelmann addressed how Kennedy’s leadership helped inspire Operation Uganda, an ambitious student-led humanitarian effort in the 1960s at then-Glassboro State College.

The March lecture, “Conversations with a Geologist and a Historian—NASA’s OSIRIS-REx Mission,” brought together School of Earth & Environment Professor Harold C. Connolly Jr. and History Professor William D. Carrigan for a lively discussion on NASA’s OSIRIS-REx Mission. Connolly is the mission sample scientist for the OSIRIS-REx.



History Professor William Carrigan (top left) and School of Earth and Environment professor Harold Connolly Jr. discuss NASA’s OSIRIS-REx mission as part of Rowan’s Centennial celebration. Above: Tim Borstelmann presents a talk on Presidents Day.

“These three very different events—an economic-based plan for how we can incentivize countries to reduce fossil fuel emissions, a look back at the inspiration behind Operation Uganda and a conversation-format discussion with the chief scientist on a NASA mission—cut across the campus and its colleges,” said Carrigan, organizer of the lectures.

“Our college has an important role to play not just in regard to literature about climate change, humanitarian efforts and space exploration, but through a proactive perspective that explores how we can change things now.”

Celebrating a century with 100 memories

Students, alumni, faculty and staff shared their favorite memories and most poignant experiences of the institution as part of Project 100—an oral history project organized for Rowan’s Centennial.

Over nine months, History Professor William Carrigan researched, conducted and edited interviews with members of the Rowan community—past and present. He published his in-depth interviews daily for the 100 days leading up to a fall reunion for social studies and history alumni. But the project, a labor of love for Carrigan, continued to grow as many more alumni and faculty sought to share their memories. Published on the CHSS website and promoted via social media, the project continues today as Project 100+.

Recapturing the social history of the college holds valuable lessons for the University’s future, according to Carrigan.

“These interviews have helped us understand how we can maintain the best of the past while moving forward and continuing to progress,” he said.



From Left: Alumni Tessa Knight Belluscio, Tony Belluscio, Alfred Beaver, Itea Bell Tanner and Cara Flodmand attended a History Department reunion as part of the university’s larger Centennial celebration.



History Professor Emily Blanck’s “History of Now” class featured a tour of campus that included stops at Hollybush (at left) and the foyer of Bunce Hall.

The ‘History of Now’ course focuses on 100 years of Rowan

For students taking History Associate Professor Emily Blanck’s ‘The History of Now’ course last fall, Rowan’s Centennial was more than a celebration. It was an area of scholarship and a lens through which they could explore the importance of history in today’s world.

This hands-on course encouraged students to analyze and interpret artifacts and documents to gain a deeper understanding of history.

The Centennial-inspired theme challenged students to delve into the historic Hollybush Summit and the Operation Uganda humanitarian effort.

Students had a unique opportunity to study and make meaning of how the University came to be—from the original 107 Glassboro residents who purchased the land that would become the site of Glassboro Normal School to Henry Rowan’s transformative \$100 million gift to the extraordinary growth and change Rowan has undergone since.

Alumna's \$500K gift supports annual lecture on humanitarianism in Africa

Six decades after its end, Operation Uganda, the student-led humanitarian effort to celebrate and support Ugandan independence, remained in Betty Bowe Castor's heart and on her mind.

Last October, the 1963 Glassboro State College alumna made a \$500,000 pledge that will continue to impart a global impact on Rowan University.

"Operation Uganda became my life," Castor said. She even flew on Air Force One to Uganda in October 1962 to celebrate the country's independence in person.

"It was a lifechanging event...and the beginning of my deep understanding of the world," Castor said of the humanitarian project. "Nothing connected me in life as much as Operation Uganda."

The effort also served as the college's inaugural global connection, leading to the school's first international students and its initial teachings of African history, according to History Professor William D. Carrigan.

"One of the big legacies of Operation Uganda was not on Uganda, but on Glassboro State," Carrigan said. "It transformed the region and the college."

Castor's recent gift established the Betty Bowe Castor Endowed History Fund. This fund will support an annual lecture that will bring nationally and internationally renowned scholars in African history and humanitarianism to Rowan.



Betty Bowe Castor '63 (opposite page and above) used her involvement as an organizer of Project Uganda as a springboard for a life in education and service. Her gift will help bring prominent scholars in African history and humanitarianism to Rowan.

The gift will also help preserve the legacy of the College's 1962 humanitarian efforts by supporting the establishment of the Operation Uganda Digital Collection & Exhibit, a project overseen by Jessica Mack, an assistant professor of history and specialist in digital humanities. This online archive of historic records will serve as a resource for middle school and high school teachers throughout South Jersey.

"What makes Betty Bowe Castor's gift so great for our future is what it's going to do to inspire others," said Carrigan.

Project 100 recollections inspire gift

The legacy Operation Uganda left on Rowan University lives on, most notably through Operation Uganda Renewed. This project brings the spirit of the original 1962 humanitarian efforts to a modern audience with efforts to create new connections with Africa and support international students.

Operation Uganda Renewed developed out of the passion for the cause that alumna Betty Bowe Castor reignited through her interview for History Professor William Carrigan's Project 100. Castor had been deeply involved in Operation Uganda, which aimed to prove the commitment of U.S. students to support independence and education in the developing world against the rhetoric of the Soviet Union.

"As a college of teachers, we decided that we would support Uganda by helping to create a library, building a schoolhouse, and staff that school with trained teachers from Glassboro State," Castor said.

Upon hearing Castor's firsthand memories of the original humanitarian effort, Carrigan and his colleagues "got super excited about Operation Uganda," he said. "We thought it was a tragedy that it had been forgotten, so we organized a series of events celebrating Operation Uganda."

Working alongside faculty members, Rowan students are intimately involved in Operation Uganda Renewed.

Through lectures and student training opportunities, RIPPAC provides workforce development for democracy

The Rowan Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship (RIPPAC) introduced senior political science major Miranda Toner '24 to elected officials and policy experts on the local, state and federal levels.

“As an intern at the State House, I connected with countless lobbyists, advocates and leaders—all because I recognized them from RIPPAC events,” Toner said. “This has been instrumental in developing my professional network and broadening my understanding of government.”

Through the support of a more formalized affiliation with CHSS, RIPPAC expanded its 2023-2024 programming for Rowan students, faculty and the public. Events included a public lecture series, numerous student training opportunities, the annual Mid-Atlantic Political Intern Summit and the annual “Turkey and Eagle Debate” featuring some CHSS-connected debaters, English Professor Bill Freind and liberal studies major Lauren Sorrento.

Through the student-only “A Late Late Lunch with...” speaker series, undergraduates learned about political and policy professionals’ career paths. Speakers included Jacquelyn Suarez, commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs; Mark Duffy, executive director of the New Jersey Assembly Republican Office; Taryn Boland, chief of staff of the state Board of Public Utilities; Sam Crane, former state treasurer; Aaron Groce '18, legislative director for U.S. Representative Sean Casten; and Alexandra Wilkes, director of communications for the New Jersey Republican Party.

RIPPAC’s public “An Evening with...” series included lectures by confirmed or potential state gubernatorial



Above and below: Students engage with prominent speakers during RIPPAC’s “An Evening with...” Series. Bottom left: Hon. Craig Coughlin, Speaker of the NJ General Assembly, shows off his RIPPAC pride beside Ben Dworkin, RIPPAC founding director

candidates Steve Sweeney, Steve Fulop, Josh Gottheimer, Ras Baraka, Mikie Sherrill and Craig Coughlin. In addition, Patrick Harker, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, and Anthony Bucco, Senate minority leader, provided lectures.

“We took another step forward in establishing Rowan University as a must-stop destination for any person who is running for statewide office in New Jersey,” said RIPPAC Founding Director Benjamin Dworkin. “Further, our work at RIPPAC focusing on internships continues to augment CHSS’s efforts in experiential learning.”



Rachel S. Gross (left) and Alex Alvarez were among the scholars addressing global issues in the author series.



Guest speakers in Hollybush Author Series address global issues

The Hollybush Institute for Global Peace & Security’s Hollybush Author Series brings distinguished authors to campus to introduce issues in global affairs to the Rowan community and beyond. Rowan Sociology Professor Jared (Jake) Keyel spoke about his book, “Resettled Iraqi Refugees in the United States: War, Refuge, Belonging, Participation, and Protest.”

“U.S. militarism has caused millions of people to become refugees,” Keyel said. “Americans have a specific responsibility to assist those displaced.”

Additional authors featured in the ’23-’24 programming included:

- > Rowan History Professor Mikkel Dack, author of “Everyday Denazification in Postwar Germany: The Fragebogen and Political Screening During the Allied Occupation”;

- > Rowan History Professor Debbie Sharnak, author of “Uruguay in Transnational Perspective”;
- > Northern Arizona University Professor Alex Alvarez, who discussed “Climate Change, Authoritarianism and the Future of Genocide”;
- > University of Kansas Professor Sheyda Jahanbani, author of “The Poverty of the World”;
- > And University of Colorado Denver Professor Rachel S. Gross, author of “Shopping All the Way to the Woods: How the Outdoor Industry Sold Nature to America.”

“The Hollybush Author Series highlights CHSS’s contribution to making Rowan a more global community,” said Stephen Hague, director of the Hollybush Institute and associate professor of history.

International scholars convene at Rowan to evaluate genocide education

Despite genocide education efforts, “mass atrocities are taking place all over the world,” according to Sociology Professor Jennifer Rich, executive director of Rowan’s Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights (RCHGHR).

Last fall, RCHGHR partnered with Genocide Studies International, of which Rich is a co-editor, and the Zoryan Institute, of which Rich is a member of the Academic Board of Directors, to host the international symposium “Where Do WE Go From Here?: Genocide Education in the 21st Century.” The symposium featured nine speakers from across the United States and Canada who presented to an audience of 30 Rowan faculty and graduate students. The event culminated in a special issue of Genocide Studies International.

“The symposium was held at Rowan because of our one-of-a-kind Master of Arts program in Holocaust and genocide education, where our students investigate very similar questions,” said Rich.



Undergraduates gain valuable research experience alongside faculty members

In disciplines across the college, CHSS undergraduate students’ ventures into research support meaningful scholarly discoveries.

“Putting their learning into action and seeing things from a faculty and professional side as research assistants is a wonderful way for students to take everything that they’ve studied with us and put it to use,” said English Associate Professor and Department Chair Cathy Wilcoxson.

Junior English and secondary education major Nicholas Frampton provided pedagogical support for Lecturer Christina Solomon’s literature class, while senior English and journalism major Victoria McGivern annotated works for Lecturer Yvonne Hammond’s scholarly project on Jewish trans women in contemporary American society. Meanwhile, junior English major Kelly Hilaire assisted Wilcoxson with event planning and grants, and junior English major Mercedes C. Willis helped develop an annotated bibliography for Associate Professor Kate Slater’s book chapter on queer migration.

“From this experience, I gained knowledge of research techniques and how to annotate on my own,” Willis said.

In Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (DPEM), senior Jared McCallion contributed to the development of the New Jersey Energy Security Plan, while DPEM major Colin Sullo ’24 investigated major cyber vulnerabilities within the United States’ critical infrastructure as a research assistant.

“The students in DPEM participate in a range of research projects that reflect CHSS’s enduring commitment to advancing impactful scholarship,” said Sociology Professor DeMond Miller, director of Disaster Science & Emergency Management.

Undergraduate students’ valuable contributions to scholarship are occurring across disciplines.

They include:

Red Bank Battlefield Park
Abbie Ealer
Emily Schmidt

Juneteenth Project
Fran Lombardo
Isabel Alexander
Quiyana Goodman

Amistad Project
Ciera Thomas

Operation Uganda
Graham Dudlick
Oju Odsuanya

Mexico Digital Mapping Project
Graham Luther

History Department Undergraduate Research
Alyson Schafer

Physical Anthropology Lab
Nicole Abbott
Joseph Piper
Nina Weyland
Esmeralda Santiago-Ramirez
Amanda Baliban
Nicholas Torres

Museum of Anthropology at Rowan University
William Schneider
Isabella Pilla

Qualitative Study of Communication and Care Between Primary Care Providers and Trans Patients
Emerson Woody

Research on Pre-Congressional Experience, Genre and Congressional Floor Speeches
Emily Soobryan
Miranda Toner

Millville PD/Inspira Health Network/Cumberland County Prosecutor’s Office
Nia McCombs

Textbook on Consciousness
Clifford Phillips
Abdur Rahaman Shafin

New Edition of N.R. Hanson’s Constellations and Conjectures
Clifford Phillips

Research assistant
Clifford Phillips



Kelly Hilaire (right) supported English Professor Cathy Wilcoxson with a college readiness workshop for Camden Charter Prep School students.

Opportunities for students abound during CHSS summer field schools

Summer field schools offer CHSS students a chance to dig in—literally, in some cases—to studies in the humanities and social sciences.

>> Red Bank Battlefield Field School

Through a hands-on course with Public History Professor Jen Janofsky and adjunct history professor and archaeologist Wade Catts, students explored public history and archeological methods at an active archeological site at Red Bank Battlefield Park. Working by hand, students in the class learned to excavate, screen and process artifacts.

Since the summer 2022 discovery of Hessian remains at Red Bank, Janofsky and Catts have taught two multidisciplinary summer field school experiences. One highlight of the 2023 field school was Veterans Archaeology Day in June. Field School students organized the event and worked side by side with 40 veterans and their families, providing attendees the opportunities to dig, screen and identify artifacts.

“Veterans experience battlefields differently from the general public,” Janofsky said. “Students appreciated learning of the veterans’ service experiences and how archaeology provides them with a sense of community.”

>> College Readiness Workshop

Through the College Readiness Workshop, a joint effort between CHSS’s English Department and Camden Charter Preparatory School, 28 BIPOC and primarily first-generation rising high school seniors visited campus for a two-day workshop in August.

The inspiration behind the workshop was to support students in writing their college admissions essays.

“We talked about the importance of using specific detail in writing, and students chose essay prompts and wrote samples,” said English Professor and Department Chair Cathy Wilcoxson.

“Not only did students have a chance to work on their college admission essays, but for some of them, the workshop was their first trip to a college campus.”

Students toured Rowan’s campus and engaged with speakers representing admissions, academic advising and financial aid.

Accepted Student Preview Days give new CHSS majors a taste of the Rowan experience

Accepted Student Preview Days at the Rowan University Welcome Center last spring offered accepted CHSS students an intimate experience to gain information about the college in a format much different than an open house or campus tour.

Admitted students met their academic advisor and chair or program coordinator, sat in on a class and joined Associate Dean Stephen Fleming and current students for a meal in the Holly Pointe Commons dining hall.

“The students enjoyed meeting folks they would engage with regularly should they choose to attend,” Fleming said.

Ultimately, about 73 percent of the students chose Rowan, according to Fleming.

“The events were very successful,” Fleming said. “We look forward to providing similar experiences in the coming academic year.”



Prospective CHSS students gained an intimate perspective of the college during Accepted Student Preview Days.



Left: CHSS Dean Nawal Ammar joins the 2023-2024 college Excellence Award winners: (Foremost row from left) Ellen Miller, Youru Wang, Sara Reina-Nieves, and Seran Schug. In rear row: Marquita Smith and Emily Blanck.



Right: CHSS Dean Nawal Ammar (center), Senior Associate Dean Corinne Blake (left) and Associate Dean Stephen Fleming (right) congratulate faculty and staff who were recognized at the University's annual Celebrating Excellence Awards ceremony. Joining them are (from left) Nathan Bauer, William Carrigan, Jen Janofsky and Patrick Massaro.

Faculty recognized with CHSS, University-wide awards for service, teaching and research

CHSS faculty and staff members recently have been recognized for upholding the University’s tenets through their teaching, service, engagement, research and commitment to students.

Awardees for University-wide awards, presented at the annual Celebrating Excellence Awards Ceremony, included:

- Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award**
 - > William D. Carrigan, professor, History
- Joseph A. Barnes Award for Outstanding Service**
 - > Christine Larsen-Britt, program advisor (2023)
 - > Nathan Bauer, assistant professor and department chair, Philosophy & World Religions (2024)
- Employee Recognition Awards**
 - > **Engagement:** History Professor Jen Janofsky, the Megan Giordano Fellow in Public History
 - > **Student-Centeredness:** Patrick Massaro, assistant director of career development and experiential learning, Center for Professional Success

Awards of excellence, presented by CHSS to honor faculty contributions to teaching, research and service, include:

- CHSS Excellence in Teaching Awards**
 - > Ellen Miller, associate professor, Philosophy & World Religions
 - > Sara Reina-Nieves, adjunct instructor, World Languages
- CHSS Excellence in Research Awards**
 - > Youru (Charlie) Wang, professor, Philosophy & World Religions
 - > Marquita Smith, assistant professor, English
- CHSS Excellence in Service Awards**
 - > Emily Blanck, associate professor, History
 - > Seran Schug, lecturer, Sociology & Anthropology
- Inaugural CHSS Career Champion Award**
 - > Seran Schug, lecturer, Sociology & Anthropology

New faculty members join CHSS

CHSS has welcomed four new faculty members in Sociology & Anthropology and Political Science & Economics. Additionally, a part-time faculty member in history accepted a full-time position. New faculty include:

>> **Sociology & Anthropology**

Jared (Jake) Keyel
Keyel, whose background combines sociology, international relations and Middle Eastern affairs, has studied migration and refugee issues since 2010. His book, “Resettled Iraqi Refugees in the United States: War, Refuge, Belonging, Participation, and Protest,” published in 2023, was featured in the 2023-24 Hollybush Author Series. He earned his doctorate from Virginia Tech.

Michelle Estes
Estes’s research on the inequalities in the criminal legal system combines scholarship in criminology, inequality, and social justice, with a focus on wrongful convictions, conditions of confinement, community reentry after incarceration and qualitative methodology. She earned her Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University.

Elizabeth Rantuccio
A lecturer, Rantuccio earned her M.A. in sociology at Temple University and is pursuing an Ed.D. in Education Leadership and a Certificate of Graduate Study in Holocaust and Genocide Education from Rowan. She gained experience conducting quantitative research in medical sociology as a research associate in the planning department at The Cooper Health System. Rantuccio teaches courses in social statistics and social research methods, social problems and the sociology of the family.

>> **Political Science & Economics**

Robin Bayes
Bayes earned her Ph.D. from Northwestern University and joined Rowan through the Catalysts for Sustainability initiative. Her research exploring how politics affects the beliefs and attitudes that everyday Americans have about science, climate change and the environment is closely connected to sustainability.

>> **History**

Jen Janofsky
The Megan Giordano Fellow in Public History and Professor of Public History, Janofsky has served the Rowan community in a part-time capacity for 11 years, including in her role as director of Red Bank Battlefield Park. In her new full-time role, she will carry an increased teaching load, allowing her to share her passion for the importance of studying public history with more students.



New faculty include (from left) Elizabeth Rantuccio, Michelle Estes, Jen Janofsky, Jared (Jake) Keyel and Robin Bayes.

Exposing the traumatic impact of executions on witnesses

Sociology Professor and Department Chair Sandra Joy witnessed her first execution in 2005.

“I remember looking at the people present and wondering how it was affecting them,” she said. “It’s been in the back of my mind for years.”

Over the past two years, Joy traveled across the country to interview witnesses to executions from the early 1980s through the present day. She racked up nearly 50,000 miles capturing the experiences of 111 department of corrections workers, defense attorneys, journalists, spiritual advisors, family members of the condemned, family members of victims and former death row inmates.

“The majority of people who witnessed executions have been traumatized in one form or another,” said Joy, who calls this experience “vicarious trauma.”

Several interviewees told Joy they think about the execution every day. Others cried remembering the experience.

“Witnessing executions has a long-lasting impact, regardless of the role they played,” said Joy, a staunch opponent of the death penalty. “We cannot have the death penalty without witnesses. They need to be there. But do we need to be traumatizing them by executing people in the first place?”

Some interviewees had witnessed an execution only hours before Joy interviewed them. Others vividly



For a future book project, Sandra Joy traveled thousands of miles in her RV to interview people who have witnessed executions. She was accompanied by her dog, Nova.

remembered the experience decades later. Interviewees who witnessed executions in a professional capacity often witnessed a total number of executions in the double digits. One Texas journalist witnessed as many as 450 executions.

Joy’s interviewees had witnessed all forms of American capital punishment. In many cases, attending an execution changed the minds of people who were previously pro-death penalty.

Her interviews add more data on how vicarious trauma impacts people over the long term but also contribute further evidence to the national conversation focused on whether the death penalty should be abolished.

“Whether or not we’re actually seeing it happen with our eyes, we’re all bearing witness to this happening in our nation, and we are complicit in supporting it,” Joy said.

CHSS professors awarded prestigious fellowships abroad

With the award of a fellowship from the prestigious Institute for Advanced Study, Assistant Professor of English Sierra Lomuto joins the ranks of J. Robert Oppenheimer and Albert Einstein, as well as dozens of Nobel Laureates, Abel Prize Laureates, Fields Medalists, Wolf Prize winners and MacArthur Fellows.

Since its founding in 1930, the Institute for Advanced Study has been among the world’s leading centers for curiosity-driven basic research. Lomuto’s research explores racial formations in medieval literature, particularly as they pertain to the geopolitics of European-Mongol relations. The institute’s fellowships, such as The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship for Assistant Professors that Lomuto was awarded, are extremely competitive.

Additionally, Carla Lewandowski, associate professor of Law & Justice Studies, was one of 16 professors nationwide selected to participate in the Fiscal Year 2023 Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program to Mexico. Lewandowski spent a month during summer 2023 immersed in Mexican culture, exploring shared history, visiting landmarks and engaging with Mexican scholars on key issues. Through her participation in this seminar abroad, Lewandowski enhanced her ability to create educational initiatives for her students and community. In January, Lewandowski will be one of five Fulbright-Garcia Robles U.S. Studies Chairs to spend a semester teaching in Mexico. Lewandowski will teach two courses at Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa. She also will focus on building relationships with Mexican scholars to gain insights into communication among law enforcement agencies at the border.

CHSS Faculty Grants and Fellowships

- > **Corinne Blake, Edward Smith and Tarek Mousa**, CHSS Dean’s Office and World Languages, “Discover Cairo, Learn Arabic through World Languages STARTALK” (National Security Agency).
- > **Emily Blanck and Jessica Mack**, History, “Juneteenth Archive NJ Prototype” (New Jersey Council for the Humanities).
- > **Whitney Cox**, Philosophy & World Religions, “American Gay and Lesbian Atheists Manuscript Project” (Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion).
- > **Mikkel Dack**, History, “Fighting Fascism: Eliminating and Preventing Violent Extremism Since WWII” (Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Distinguished Scholars Award).
- > **Jen Janofsky**, History, “Red Bank Battlefield Program” to develop digital engagement for the Red Bank Battlefield archaeology project (NJ Department of Community Affairs).
- > **Kul Kapri and Yupeng Li**, Political Science & Economics, “Factors Influencing Asthma Self-Management and Disparities in Asthma Control among Adolescents from Low-Income Minority Families” (South Jersey Institute of Population Health).
- > **Melissa Klapper**, History, “At Home in the World: American Jewish Women Abroad, 1860-1920” (Sherry Levy-Reiner Fellowship, American Jewish Archives).
- > **Lawrence Markowitz**, Political Science, continuing grant: “Global Security and International Studies: Integrating Health, Environment, and Emergency Response” (Undergraduate International Studies Foreign Language Grant, U.S. Department of Education).
- > **Jeanna Mastroncinque**, Law & Justice Studies, “Compassion Disparities in Primary Care: A Mixed Methods Pilot Study,” Investigator, with Stephen Trzeciak, CMSRU Clinical Faculty, Lead PI (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality), and continuing grant: “Utilization of a Hospital-Linked Violence Intervention Program to Provide Resources to Victims of Crime at a Level 1 Trauma Center” (U.S. Department of Justice).
- > **DeMond Miller**, Sociology, “Proposal In Response to The New Jersey State Energy Security Plan,” PI, with Jie Li, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Lead PI (New Jersey Board of Public Utilities).
- > **Chanelle Rose**, History, continuing grant, “Black Humanities in Education Initiative Through History and Culture at Rowan University” (National Endowment for the Humanities).
- > **Chrissy Saum**, Law & Justice Studies, continuing grant, “Process and outcome evaluation of the Police Athletic League Program in El Salvador” (Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs).
- > **Debbie Sharnak**, History, “Strengthening Humanistic Literacy in the Study of Sport: Developing a Minor and Certificate in Sports and Society” (NEH Humanities Connections), and research travel grant, “Jewish Internationalism and the Southern Cone Dictatorships” (University of Illinois).
- > **John Shjarback**, Law and Justice Studies, continuing grant, “An Evaluation of Co- and Alternative-Responding Models for those Experiencing Mental/Emotional Health Crises in Millville” (New Jersey Institute of Population Health).
- > **Edward Wang**, History, “The Sweet Potato and its Global Spread in the Modern World” (Research Fellowship, East Asian Studies, University of Göttingen, Germany).

Research by the numbers

9	Monographs and edited volumes	129	Conference and academic presentations at other universities	21	Press editorials and commentaries
58	Refereed articles and book chapters	74	Lectures, talks, and/or panel discussions at Rowan	24	Faculty editing or service on editorial boards of academic journals
23	Book reviews and encyclopedia articles	72	Community talks	56	Peer review of monographs, academic papers, grants and textbooks

Alumna works to rebuild post-conflict communities and to introduce student interns to international relations

Working for the United Nations for more than a decade, Claudia Abate '93 saw destruction in post-conflict countries firsthand.

“Even after the U.N. leaves, there’s a lot of work to do,” she said. “In the post-conflict setting, the problems are compounded, and communities are fragile.”

Abate’s desire to help these communities transition out of fragility inspired her to launch the Foundation for Post Conflict Development (FPCD) in 2005 with the support of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco. Since then, the growing foundation has made efforts worldwide to promote sustainable development and the empowerment of mothers, families and youth.

“Who wouldn’t want to help mothers give birth in a facility that is clean and safe?” Abate said. “Who wouldn’t want to help young people have better opportunities? We all want those things for our families.”

As a U.N.-associated nonprofit organization, the FPCD has the privilege of sending a delegation to U.N. headquarters to observe meetings. In the spring, Alyssa Morgen and Joshua Maron became the first Rowan

students to join the FPCD delegation as interns and learn about international diplomacy firsthand through engagement with the U.N.

“The experience helps shape their understanding of the world around them and what contribution they could make through their future careers,” Abate said.

As a student, Abate majored in Spanish and minored in political science and international relations with a specific goal.

“I always had my heart set on working for the U.N.,” she said.

Abate was the 2024 CHSS Commencement speaker, an opportunity that was “the honor of a lifetime,” she said.

“I wanted to share a success formula the graduates could take with them and make their own. I believe wholeheartedly that each individual is the key to their own success,” Abate said.



Claudia Abate (at right) recalled how her experiences in CHSS helped prepare her for her global work as she addressed the CHSS Class of 2024 at Commencement.



Left: Janet Hamill (right) attends Rowan’s University Commencement ceremony as the Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient alongside singer and songwriter Patti Smith—a longtime friend.



Right: Honorees at the College of Education’s Centennial Soiree included (from left) Alvin Herron, Keisha Stephenson-Taylor and Rowan Trustee Thomas Gallia.

Award-winning alumni make CHSS proud

A number of CHSS alumni have earned recognition regionally and nationally for their extraordinary professional accomplishments.

> **New Jersey State Teacher of the Year**

History and secondary education alumnus Joseph Nappi '05, a social studies teacher at Monmouth Regional High School, was named the 2023-2024 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year last fall. He was one of four finalists for the National Teacher of the Year.

> **Milken Educator Award**

English and elementary education alumna Taylor Trost '15, a fourth-grade teacher in the East Windsor Regional School District, became the first ever Milken Educator honoree in her district last October. The Milken Educator Award, which recognizes excellence both inside and outside the classroom, was awarded to just 75 teachers nationwide and is known as the “Oscars of Teaching.”

> **Rowan University Distinguished Alumnus Award**

English alumna Janet Hamill '67, an award-winning poet, author and spoken word artist, was honored during the University-wide Commencement in May. Hamill’s publications include nine books of poetry and “Tales from the Eternal Café,” a volume of fiction that Publisher’s Weekly named one of the Best Books of 2014.

> **College of Education Awards**

Two alumni were recognized by the College of Education during its Centennial Soiree in the spring. The celebration recognized the College’s 100th anniversary and paid tribute to two CHSS and education graduates.

They included:

• **Award for Outstanding Achievement**

English Education alumna Keisha Stephenson-Taylor, Ed.D.,’98, M’00 was recognized for her remarkable success in the field of education, her professional excellence and her work bringing notable recognition to Rowan, the region and beyond. Stephenson-Taylor is the senior director of alumni and postsecondary engagement at NAF, a national network of education, business and community leaders who ensure high school students are college, career and future ready.

• **Award for Community Service**

History alumnus Alvin Herron '08, M’17 was honored in recognition for his impactful contributions that have brought about positive change within the community. Herron is the head teacher at the South Woods State Prison, the largest penitentiary in the state. He also taught with the Juvenile Justice Commission and previously worked for the Navy as a Hospital Corpsman First Class.



The 2024 Seniors of Distinction were celebrated for their academic achievements and for their impact beyond the classroom.

Celebrating exceptional CHSS students: standout seniors

Each year, CHSS recognizes outstanding graduating students in each major with the Seniors of Distinction Award. This year’s awardees included:

Africana Studies Brianna Reagan	Economics Anthony Chay	International Studies James Sharkey	Political Science Emily Soobryan
American Studies Steven Henderson	English Victoria McGivern	Law and Justice Studies Jacqueline Accardi	Sociology Anna Green
Anthropology Justin Bender	General Studies Issac Burton	Liberal Studies Grace Mulligan	Spanish Jennifer Méndez
Area Studies Andromahi Karapalides	History Francesca Lombardo	Modern Languages & Linguistics Victoria Lapinson	World Religions Andromahi Karapalides
Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Management James Kincaid Cohen II	Human Services Dimirra Brown	Philosophy Clifford Phillips	

Recognizing courage in adversity and next-generation scholarship

Additional standout awards recognized CHSS students’ courage to overcome adversity and commitment to next-generation scholarship.

Senior political science and economics major Patsy Watkins received the James M. Lynch, Jr. Courage in Adversity Award. Named for former Dean of Students and a 22-year education faculty member James M. Lynch, the award “celebrates a student who has overcome extreme hardship to achieve educational success.”

Meanwhile, junior sociology and leadership and social innovation major Emerson Woody received The Next Generation of Scholars in Population Research (NextGenPop) undergraduate fellowship at Duke University.



Honoring those who served CHSS with distinction

Retiree: History alumna Denise Williams ’93 served the Rowan community for more than 35 years before retiring in 2024, including many years as administrative assistant in the Department of History. Her contributions included serving as president of the University chapter of the Communication Workers of America, the largest union on campus. Advising students was a particular passion of Williams, who enjoyed being involved with the Harley Flack Mentoring program. She co-chaired the annual Rosa Parks Luncheon, which supports student scholarships.



In Memoriam: Tony Sommo: A strong advocate for people with disabilities, Sociology Professor Anthony J. Sommo was a teacher, mentor and valued member of the Rowan community for 30 years.

He passed away last August. Last November a memorial service and celebration of his life on campus was filled to capacity with family, colleagues, students, professional staff, security personnel and student center staff.

Together, Denise Williams (above) and Tony Sommo devoted more than 65 years to Rowan University.

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 - + Retained life estate
 - + Charitable lead trust

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