College of Humanities & Social Sciences



ROWAN UNIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 2014



The compass has been used as a navigational tool since the eleventh century. By choosing the compass as its icon, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences acknowledges that its disciplines provide students with the knowledge, attitudes, ethics, and global outlook necessary for navigating successfully through life and exploring the paths presented by dynamic career and life circumstances. Building a solid foundation within the liberal arts allows students to seek individualized answers to an essential question:

"Where am I going?"

The College motto is "Leading the way to wisdom."



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Message From The Dean

College of Humanities & Social Sciences

As you read our 2013-14 Annual Report, I trust you will agree that the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is thriving at Rowan.

We have completed our second year as a separate entity, having been carved in 2012 from the much larger College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and during that time we have established a distinct identity. That identity is clear from the contents of this Annual Report: We value our distinguished faculty, we care deeply about our students, and we are taking active steps to ensure that our majors are successful in finding careers and that they remain connected with us. It takes a village to create an environment in which our students develop the skills and work ethic they will need to begin their career journey, and it takes a network to ensure that mentors and opportunities are abundant.

You may notice that several of the stories in this Annual Report involve Rowan families—two amazing sets of brothers, one of our first graduates from the General Studies program whose mother graduated from Glassboro State College in 1953, a young couple pursuing graduate studies together in Hawaii. A college education is about so much more than doing well in the classroom: our most successful students understand the value of making and preserving relationships with others, and contributing to the larger community as well. This understanding begins with family and grows from there to a variety of larger communities, often interconnected. We welcome all of our readers as members of the family and community known as the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Please stay connected with us!

Cindy Vitte



From Rowan to the UK:

Grussenmeyer brothers pursue advanced degrees in England

Their career paths will be very different.

But alumni Jon-Mark and Timothy Grussenmeyer are taking the same path educationally--and geographically—as they pursue their advanced degrees.

In September, the Grussenmeyers both boarded the same plane for England. There, the brothers, buoyed by their undergraduate education at Rowan, are pursuing degrees at prominent universities in the United Kingdom.

Thanks to a three-year, \$50,000-a-year scholarship, Jon-Mark, 27, is pursuing doctoral studies in medieval history and English at the University of Kent. A 2009 magna cum laude graduate of Rowan's History Department, Jon-Mark received his master's degree, also with a full scholarship, from the University of Kent in 2012.

His graduate work at Kent was eye-opening, said Jon-Mark, whose research interest focuses on chivalry.

"I received a much more rounded education at Rowan than my colleagues at University of



Kent," said the elder Grussenmeyer, who also earned a minor in French from Rowan.

Upon completion of his master's degree, Jon-Mark worked as an adjunct faculty member in English and history at Rowan and Cumberland County College. Last June, he organized a unique and successful two-day conference at Rowan that focused on chivalry. The conference brought scholars from as far away as Ukraine and Australia to Rowan's College of Humanities & Social Sciences.

"Chivalry is an ideology that includes honor, etiquette, and moral obligation. Grounded in Christianity, it defined an entire life style for the noble class--from how to behave in battle, to charity for widows and children to the treatment of women," explained Jon-Mark, who hopes to become a full professor in medieval studies, a highly competitive field.

Timothy, 24, is taking a different path as he pursues his master's degree in actuarial science from the University of Leicester, which is three hours south of the University of Kent. On multiple levels, he's relishing the opportunity to study abroad.

"It's cheaper and a master's degree in actuarial science in England takes only one year," said

Timothy, who earned his bachelor's degree in mathematics from Rowan in 2012.

Both brothers are musicians, speak fluent French to remain connected to their relatives in the Alsace region of Northern France, received their undergraduate degrees at deep discounts through the New Jersey STARS program, and are fearless about international travel.

They attribute their wanderlust to their parents, who orchestrated several European vacations.

Their mom, Shirley Grussenmeyer, graduated from Rowan in 1975 with a degree in education and a minor in French. Eight years later, she got her master's degree in elementary education from Rowan.

Mark Grussenmeyer, father of the clan, became certified to teach science and math at Rowan after graduating from Rutgers University. Both are retired teachers from Vineland public schools.

"Our parents exposed us to a lot at a young age," said Timothy, who spent last year teaching English in France. "We were very lucky."

Inquiring mind heads to NYU Law School on a scholarship

Michael Ramsey set a high bar for his kid brother.

The 2013 alumnus graduated with a philosophy degree in three years with a 3.92 average, aced the LSAT, and headed to New York University Law School this fall with a \$90,000 scholarship.

Rowan freshman Jake Ramsey plans to do the same. He, too, is majoring in philosophy. But he's eager to forge his own path at the University.

"I plan to be more active in school with clubs and things, enroll in the Honors curriculum, and push myself hard. Philosophy seems to be a solid

path to law school and I get that. But physics and science interest me the most," Jake said.

After scoring in the 99th percentile in the LSAT, Michael, 22, created a lucrative summer job for himself by tutoring future law school applicants.

Michael attributes his success to the critical thinking and verbal and written skills that are demanded of Rowan philosophy majors. He carefully chose professors known for using the Socratic Method in the classroom, which allows students to probe their own beliefs through questions rather than answers.

"That method of inquiry is most applicable to topics with lots of grey areas. The law is full of

> contradictions, and I love to debate," said the elder Ramsey.

The Ramseys grew up on a five-acre farm in rural Elk Township, graduated from Delsea Regional High School, delivered pizza for the same restaurant, and took public speaking classes to prepare for leadership careers that require thinking on their feet.

Like his brother, Jake, 18, is attending Rowan tuition-free because their mother, Diane Ramsey, is a full-time facilities worker at the university. Their great-grandmother, Hazel Ramsey, also worked at Rowan in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

"I'm very proud of my boys. I'm happy to see them in passing on campus," said Diane. "With the three of us here, Rowan feels like the family business."







Sociology alumni take graduate studies on the road

Omar Bird and Noreen Kohl find a slice of paradise—and intellectual challenges—at the University of Hawaii

How tough is it sweating out a master's degree on Waikiki beach?

"We work a lot," said Omar Bird, who is in the second year of a master's program in sociology at the University of Hawaii at Minoa. "But on any given day, we can take a 10-minute walk to the beach, or hike an amazing mountain ridge or jungle terrain. We even have a student bus pass that allows us to travel free all over the island."

Bird and Noreen Kohl, both 2013 Rowan graduates, headed to Hawaii and the same graduate program simply because they could. They settled in Honolulu.

"I absolutely love it here, but New Jersey will always be home," said Kohl, who majored in journalism and minored in sociology.

Both received \$3,500 scholarships in the first year of the graduate program and now have paid graduate assistantships. A political science professor recruited them to review literature and analyze data for the Hawaiian government. Their assignment is to construct a plan that has eluded the American health care industry for decades: How to make long-term-care insurance more affordable.

Once they complete their master's degrees in 2015, they plan to apply to doctoral programs in Hawaii and on the East Coast with the goal of teaching in a university.

The couple appreciates the cultural diversity and relaxed atmosphere of island life. On the other hand, they had to adjust to an "astronomical cost of living and a disturbing rate of homelessness," according to Bird.

"People are less concerned about material things here and I feel my head is clearer," said Bird, who majored in sociology at Rowan. "When I see all the tourists, I'm reminded of what a special place this is. It's been a marvelous experience."

English Department professors claim top University awards

Lee Talley, Cathy Parrish honored for teaching, scholarship, service

They received major Rowan University honors at the annual Celebrating Excellence Awards Ceremony.

But English professors Lee Talley and Catherine Parrish would rather talk about their colleagues' influence on their work than their individual accolades.

"When I walk into a classroom, I bring the best pedagogical practices that countless faculty have generously shared with me. Although the award is singular, my teaching represents the work of a lively and collaborative community of teacher-scholars here," said Talley, who received the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award, Rowan's highest teaching honor.

The Lindback Award, which carries a



Provost/Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Lee Talley, and President Ali Houshmand.

\$4,000 stipend, recognized Talley for her exceptional teaching, scholarship, accessibility, motivational prowess, and passion for her work.

During her 12-year tenure at Rowan, Talley has been named by students six times to the Wall of Fame for Excellence in Teaching and Advising by the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

She teaches everything from British survey courses to Victorian and children's literature. Additionally, Talley spearheaded the creation of a department-wide "writing lexicon" to improve and standardize assessment of student writing. Her thoughtful and comprehensive critiques of student work are legend among Rowan English majors.

Talley holds degrees from Princeton and

Cornell universities. Currently, she is working on a book about the 3.5 million British children who were evacuated from English cities into the countryside and overseas during World War II. For some, the separation from their families and life with foster parents lasted up to six years.

An ultimate team player, Parrish, an associate professor and ombudsman for Rowan faculty and staff, received the Joseph A. Barnes Award for Outstanding Service, which carries a \$3,000 stipend.

Known for her work ethic, selflessness, energy, managerial talents, and commitment to making Rowan a leader in higher education, Parrish's track record of extraordinary service dates back to 1992, when she joined the English Department.

Her contributions to the Diversity Task Force and as coordinator of



Multicultural/Global course development led to greater diversity in coursework and in the faculty and student population. The former English Department chair and chair of Rowan's Chairs' Council is now faculty advisor for the new Bachelor of General Studies degree.

"Winning this award was unexpected and very gratifying," said Parrish, who holds degrees from the University of Virginia and Chatham College.

"I'm honored that my colleagues nominated me. Rowan faculty, staff, and administrators have always worked together to improve the University and serve our students well. I know many have worked as hard—or harder—than I. It has been my privilege to work with and learn from them."

Exploring the role of Jewish women in political activism

History's Klapper claims national book prize



Seven years of research on her award-winning book, <u>Ballots</u>, Babies and Banners of Peace: American Jewish Women's Activism, 1890-1940, was a labor of love for History professor Melissa Klapper.

"I love research, teaching, reading, public speaking. And my areas of particular interest are Jewish studies, women's studies, and childhood," said Klapper, who is pleased that her 14-year career at Rowan teaching American history has allowed her to pursue her passions.

Klapper also has claimed some heavy-duty academic hardware for her work. *Ballots, Babies and Banners of Peace* was the recipient of the coveted 2013 National Jewish Book Award in Women's Studies, known as the Barbara Dobkin Award, at the 63rd annual National Jewish Book Awards gala at the Center for Jewish History in Manhattan. The awards constitute the longest-running North American awards program in the field of Jewish literature.

Klapper completed the book with the help of numerous grants and a residential fellowship in 2011 at the University of Michigan's Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies. Meticulously researched, the book focuses on Jewish women's participation in three major women's movements in U.S. history: women's suffrage, birth control, and peace.

"Jewish culture teaches women to be active as Jews and women both inside and outside the Jewish community," said Klapper, who grew up in Dallas and Baltimore and received her doctorate in American history and women's history from Rutgers University. "Their concern for righteousness, charity, and justice drove Jewish women in the first half of the 20th century to shape movements that shaped America."

Ballots, Babies and Banners of Peace grew out of research for two earlier books: Jewish Girls Coming of Age in America, 1860 to 1920, which began as her doctoral thesis at Rutgers University; and Small Strangers: The Experiences of Immigrant Children in the United States, 1880-1925.

Another book, *Ballet Class: An American History*, is in the works.

While ballet classes were all the rage for young girls and boys throughout the 20th century, Klapper posits that enrollments plummeted after passage of Title IX in the late 1970s, opening a new world of opportunity for females.

"I like to write about things that no one has ever written about before," Klapper said.

Active in a number of academic Jewish organizations as a member or consultant, Klapper is hopeful that a concentration in Jewish studies will begin next year on Rowan's campus. She has emerged as a national authority on Jewish history, a passion she shares with three other distinguished female scholars at Rowan.

CHSS professors lead scholarship on Jewish studies

• Dianne Ashton, a professor of philosophy and religion studies, has been writing about Jewish history for more than 20 years.

Her most recent book, *Hanukkah in America*, published last year (NYU Press) explores how American Jews have transformed an ancient minor festival into the most visible Jewish holiday.

"I like to bring out material on Jewish life in the United States that has not been looked at. Our goal as scholars should be to move the field forward," said Ashton.

Other books include *Rebecca Gratz: Women and Judaism in Antebellum America* (Wayne State University Press, 1998); *Jewish Life in Pennsylvania* (Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1998); and *Four Centuries of Jewish Women's Spirituality* (Beacon Press, 1992; revised 2009), co-edited with Ellen Umansky. She is currently the first female editor of *American Jewish History*, a scholarly journal that began 118 years ago.

In the pipeline is a book on the life and writing of an American Jewish woman during the fall of Richmond in 1864.

• Driven by her desire to advance Jewish culture on campus, **Harriet Hartman**, a sociology professor and editor of the book series *The Study of Jews in Society*, knew she first had to document the number of Jewish students. Last year she detailed seven methodologies to answer that question in a 15-page article for the *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*.

"Although Judaism is a religion and many Jews identify religiously as Jews, Jews may also identify ethnically as Jews without identifying with the religion," therefore leading to an underestimate, she wrote. In counting the number of Rowan students with "distinctive Jewish names," Hartman, who co-wrote *Gender and American Jews*, determined last year that approximately 12 percent of the University's student population is Jewish.

Between 2005 and 2012, Hartman was president of the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry, ASSJ and has been named as the editor of *Contemporary Jewry*.

• Mary Gallant, a 22-year veteran of Rowan and a distinguished scholar on the Holocaust, is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Her current research is focused on the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and the "problematics of collective memory."

Author of *Coming of Age in the Holocaust: the Last Survivors Remember* (University Press of America, 2002), she writes journal articles, reviews books, and frequently speaks publicly on the topic. \Box

A new career... thanks to the new General Studies Degree

Longtime community volunteer Martha Nealer used her experience—and her Rowan undergraduate degree—to land her dream job at the United Way



Martha Nealer explains her long and quirky route to a college degree with calm acceptance.

"Life happens," said the social worker about the 30-year gap between the day she enrolled at Rowan and graduation in May.

At 51, she was among the first class of students to receive bachelor of General Studies degrees in CHSS. She applauds the new interdisciplinary program for its flexibility and its recognition that all college students are not alike.

(continued)

Today, she holds her "dream job" as manager of community engagement for the United Way of Salem.

"I was way more marketable with a degree," said Nealer, who has a long history of involvement with non-profit organizations, including the Girl Scouts, the Ronald McDonald House of Southern New Jersey, and Family Promise, which focuses on the homeless.

In her twenties, Nealer dropped out of Rowan because she had a good job and wasn't ready to focus on a degree.

She returned in her 30s and was six courses shy of graduation when, she said, "life happened." She became legal guardian to her sister's adolescent children.

She explains, "The kids came first. I put my life on hold 10 years ago and dropped out of school. Then I hit 50. The kids were gone. I said, "This is my time."

About the same time, Nealer's job was eliminated

after a long and successful career in the telecom industry. The loss sent her to the New Jersey Unemployment Office. A staffer suggested she might qualify for a tuition waiver if she returned to college. In a discussion about financial aid at Rowan, she learned about the General Studies degree. The program allowed her to complete her degree, tuition-free, in a single semester.

"Losing my job was a blessing in disguise," said Nealer, "I am extremely thankful to Rowan for its creative approach to my needs."

"My family has always viewed education as a priority and privilege," said Nealer, citing her mother, Laurel Dirkes Nealer, who graduated from the University in 1953. "It was never a question if I would graduate—just when. Coming soon is my master's degree."

In her latest chapter at Rowan, Nealer was a standout. She was recognized by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences as a Senior of Distinction for her determination, academic record, and service to family, church, and community.



Making connections:

CHSS programs prepare humanities majors for careers

An English major who runs national reading programs and events for Scholastic—and wrote a best-selling book. A political science major who leads U.S. Senator Cory Booker's South Jersey Office. A sociology major who directs an in-home counseling program for parents to help them strengthen their families.

Kristen Alice Ozma Brozina Angelucci, Bill Moen, and Carolyn Gribbin have more in common than interesting careers in fields they love. Within the last decade, all three earned their degrees from Rowan's College of Humanities & Social Sciences. And all three attribute their Rowan liberal arts and social sciences studies, their superior writing and analytical skills, their networking talents, and their own nose-to-the-grindstone chutzpah with putting them on the path to career success.

Preparing students for career success is a key mission of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences, according to Dean Cindy Vitto.



"So many of our majors don't have what others may perceive as 'a clear path to a definite career," said Vitto. "Yet, our majors land really good jobs.

"Through their study of humanities, students develop critical thinking, conduct research, analyze material, problem solve, and work across multiple disciplines. Our students become lifelong earners and are creative people with superior oral and written capabilities. Employers value those credentials in their employees."

To assist CHSS students in their career aspirations, the college has created the CHSS Match Internship Program in concert with Rowan's Career Management Center. Utilizing the expertise of specially trained student staff members, the program is specifically designed to help humanities and social sciences majors find internships that interest them...and showcase their talents.



Since the program's inception in fall of 2013, 40 CHSS majors have landed internships in private companies and in the public sector. Fifteen companies and non-profit groups are partnering with the University to offer the for-credit internships.

CHSS alumni also are helping undergraduates prepare for careers. During the 2013-14 academic year, the college presented "CHSS Career Connections: Our Alumni Today," an evening panel discussion and networking event that brought six alumni—Angelucci, Moen, and Gribbin among them—back to campus to connect with underclassmen.

The group, which also included 2013 history alumna Alyson Dagen, 2001 Law & Justice Studies graduate Jyi Peterson, and 2009 English alumna Laura Neeld, talked about the role their studies played in their career success. The alumni shared their experiences and urged current students to develop solid writing, analytical, and relationship-building skills.

"If you find something you love, study it and you will find a purpose for it," Angelucci, 'ro, the author of *The Reading Promise: My Father and the Books We Shared*, told the group. "Writing well is probably the most important skill you can have. A well-written email can open so many doors." Added Moen, who earned his graduate degree at the University of Pennsylvania after graduating from Rowan in 2009: "While internships can seem menial, it's absolutely important to do as many internships as you can. The hidden value is there. They absolutely will help you down the line, especially if you make connections through them."

Gribbin, who earned her bachelor's degree in sociology in 2004 and now directs multi-systemic therapy at the Center for Family Services, Inc. in Camden, turned an undergraduate internship into her first job.

"I went from being an intern in my program to running it," Gribbin, a licensed social worker, said of her internship with Robins' Nest in Glassboro, a non-profit children's services organization. "Our skills as humanities and social sciences majors are so important. Plus, we're Rowan people. We get things done."

Clearly, said Vitto, liberal arts degrees have value in the workplace.

"We are making it clear to our students that they absolutely have a leg up on the job market," Vitto said.



of Humanities and Social Sciences in our mission to remain the core of liberal arts education and the foundation of professional preparation.



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