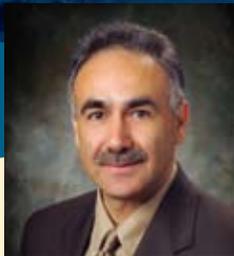


The newsletter for the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences



Message from Dean Parviz Ansari

This spring, we are celebrating the inaugural year of the Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series, a sequence of lectures by accomplished, external speakers. The College also is continuing its strategic planning initiative, with our efforts focused on supporting undergraduate and graduate education; enhancing development of faculty and staff; strengthening our financial base; and developing partnerships at local, national, and global levels.

We have many accomplishments to celebrate as well.

For example, in April our College celebrated "Oslerfest," an event to honor Math professor Tom Osler, who has taught at Rowan for 38 years and has an impressive record of collaborative research with students; Glenn Odom, assistant professor of English, received a Fulbright grant to allow him to spend a year in Nigeria continuing his research in folk and theatre performance; Zachary Moore, assistant professor of Geography, brought the state finals of the National Geographic Bee to the Rowan campus for the first time; and Hong Ling, professor of Physics, will work with the College's first postdoctoral research assistant.

This is an exciting time as we continue to build—and celebrate—our College.

Through software development, students aid military tacticians

Rowan Computer Science students are getting real-world experience developing software that could ultimately help members of the military gain tactical information.

Through a one-year, \$100,000 contract from Mission Solutions Engineering (MSE) of Arlington, Va. and Moorestown, Rowan students are helping the firm improve the capabilities of a software system called Advanced Display Infrastructure (ADI).

Working with Adrian Rusu, associate professor of Computer Science, four undergraduate and graduate students are working as a team on the project, titled "Visualization and Software Engineering Strategies for Tactical Decisions Advances."

ADI is an application that provides situational awareness to military users and others through a display of the Earth, using the World Geodetic System 1984, in part to show the location of military units. ADI allows users to navigate a globe to view those units and potential targets.

The work done by Rusu and his students will focus in part on developing software for new decision aids, tools that will help ADI users more quickly determine and act upon courses of action. Students are developing features that will help improve the navigation around the globe and calculations that help determine potential collisions between two objects.

Students are treating MSE as a client. They must deliver a product, hold meetings and present a final report to MSE management. Ultimately, MSE will use the Rowan work to promote its ADI product and to cultivate more business from military service branches.

"Students are being exposed to the software engineering life cycle. They have to gather requirements, design the system, develop the code, test their application and deliver it to the customer," says Robert Russell, a senior who is the student leader of the Rowan team.

The team also includes seniors Spence DiNicolantonio, Michael Liguori and Jonathan Palka.



Teaming up: Professor **Adrian Rusu** (left) listens in as **Tim Caswell**, CEO of Mission Solutions Engineering, speaks with Rowan students (from left) **Spence DiNicolantonio** and **Robert Russell**.

Dean's Lecture Series hosts distinguished speakers

In an effort to raise the profile of CLAS to external publics, Dean Parviz Ansari has initiated the "Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series," which kicked off this semester, bringing well-known dignitaries from both private industry and academia to campus.

'This series is designed to encourage discussions in a variety of disciplines, with distinguished speakers from outside the college community'

- Dean Parviz Ansari

The discussions focused on new drug discoveries; the impact of methane on Mars; reasons for the presumed underdevelopment of science in imperial China and Ramanujan—one of the century's most influential mathematicians.

"This series is designed to encourage discussions in a variety of disciplines, with distinguished speakers from outside the college community," says Ansari. "Our hope is that we will attract faculty, students, alumni and the public to these events."

Bristol Myers Squibb's Dr. Carl Decicco was on the roster, as was NASA's Dr. Geronimo Villanueva, Asian Studies Professor Dr. Benjamin Elman of Princeton University and Mathematics Professor Dr. Bruce C. Berndt of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

All lectures were free and open to the University community, alumni and the general public. To stay abreast of future lectures, visit <http://www.rowan.edu/las>.

Seniors gain acceptance to graduate school at Penn

They chose to pursue different fields of study and different campus activities, but CLAS seniors Jessica Prach, Liz Palmer and Kristen Brozina all achieved the same goal. All three used the knowledge they gained through their CLAS coursework—and the leadership skills they developed in varied on-campus activities—to gain acceptance to the graduate school of the University of Pennsylvania.

Prach, a Psychology major with concentrations in African-American Studies and Leadership Studies (College of Education), has been accepted to Penn's Graduate School of Education, where she'll pursue her master's degree in higher education administration. While at Rowan, among other activities, she served as the Admissions Ambassador coordinator for two years, managing and overseeing a staff of 70 students who provide tours to prospective students and their families.

"I definitely want to work in student affairs at a university," says Prach. "I value helping students to be engaged at the college level, trying to make their college experience better."

Palmer, a Political Science major with a concentration in Women's and Gender Studies, is the reigning president of Rowan's Student Government Association. For two years, she served as the student representative on Rowan's Board of Trustees and also served on the Rowan Foundation's Board of Directors. A resident assistant, Palmer will attend Penn in the fall to pursue her master's degree in social policy from the University's School of Social Policy and Practice.

"I hope to continue my education either through law school or a doctoral program after receiving my master's from Penn," says Palmer. "Ultimately, I would like to pursue a career in the public sector serving as an advocate for women on the national level."

Also a resident assistant, Brozina, an English major and Theater minor with concentrations in Women's and Gender Studies and African-American Studies, was accepted to Penn's Master of Liberal Arts Program. But Brozina, who also was involved in a host of campus organizations—and served as director of the student production of "The Vagina Monologues" for three straight years—is taking a different path to University City. Before heading to grad school, she's spending the next year writing a book on the remarkable 3,218-night reading streak she shared with her father. Brozina recently sold the book to Grand Central Publishing of New York City, part of the Hachette Book Group USA.

"My fantasy would be for my dad and me to travel giving lectures about how literature can unite people," Brozina says. "Ultimately, I'd like to work in arts education."

Rowan seniors (from left) **Liz Palmer, Kristen Brozina** and **Jessica Prach** each excelled in their CLAS studies and gained leadership experience on campus en route to gaining admission to Penn's graduate school.



Driven by empathy: Chaskes organizes 'Wheelchairs for Haiti'

The past six years have been a real eye-opener for Sociology Professor Jay Chaskes. In 2004, suddenly stricken with a staph infection, his organs quickly shut down one by one.

"I wasn't supposed to survive," he says.

A Rowan professor for 41 years and the University's first Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award winner, he now relies on a wheelchair, knowing only too well how essential it is to his well-being. That's why he was particularly taken aback by the January earthquake in Haiti.

"A couple days after the quake, I was listening to NPR and heard about all the amputations in Haiti," he says. "It popped in my head: people are going to need wheelchairs."

A spare in his garage would be the first of a collection bound for Haiti until further research showed that there are not many places with paved roads or sidewalks

there, let alone ramps or curb cuts. That led him to Ralf Hotchkiss—engineer and founder of Whirlwind Wheelchair International. Hotchkiss developed a wheelchair for rough terrain, and designed a factory to build them in developing countries, thereby employing disabled adults there.

"Forty-five such factories now exist around the world," said Chaskes, who has raised over \$6,000 in just a few months for his "Wheelchairs for Haiti" project. He plans to gather 250 of the specialized chairs, which are \$220 apiece, for shipment after the end of this semester. Rowan's Student Government Association stepped up to help raise funds for the campaign.

What's next for Chaskes, who also heads up Rowan's Exploratory Studies program?

"I want to raise money to build one of these factories in Haiti," he says. "I've never met Ralf, but I'd like to someday... and give him a hug."



Helping Haiti: Dr. Jay Chaskes and the "RoughRider" wheelchair. He plans to send 250 of them to Haiti soon.

You can help!

To support "Wheelchairs for Haiti," make checks payable to the Rowan University Foundation, 201 Mullica Hill Road, Glassboro, N.J. 08028. Please put "Wheelchairs for Haiti" in the check's memo section.

Yale conference helps LAS physics students gain real-world networking opportunities

Five College of Liberal Arts & Sciences students went to the Ivy League recently to attend The Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics at Yale University. The conference was one of four held simultaneously in the West, Midwest, Northeast and Southeast.

The Rowan students—Katie Booth (junior, Physics and Math major), Emma Cortes (junior, Physics and Pre-med), Rachel Spreng (senior, Physics and Math), Erin Pospergh (senior, Physics and Education), and Christina Branson (senior, Math) attended the Northeast conference.

For three days in January, they were engaged in research talks ranging from biophysics to particle physics and tours of Science Hill and the particle accelerator. Speakers such as Young-Kee Kim, deputy director of the Fermilab, and astronaut Linda Godwin shared their experiences, research interests, and encouragement.

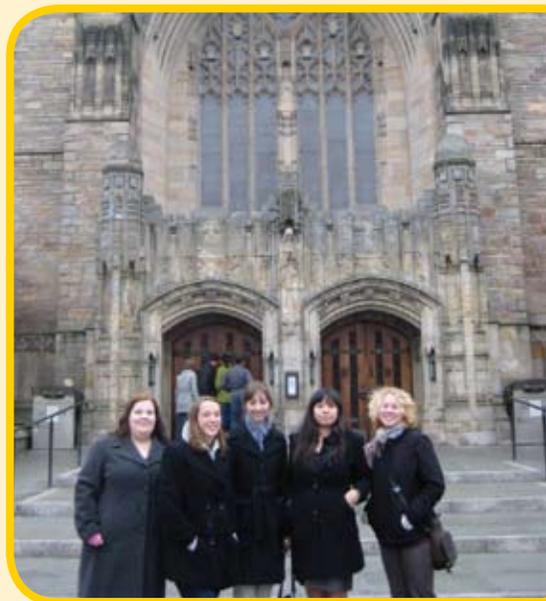
"The conference was a fantastic networking and career-building opportunity,"

Booth says.

Adds Cortes, "It was a great chance to share research and gain feedback. I really felt motivated to continue my physics studies."

Although increasing, the number of women in the sciences, particularly physics, still remains dismal in the United States. According to a 2005 American Institute of Physics report, "Women in Physics and Astronomy," only 22 percent of physics bachelor's degrees and 18 percent of physics PhDs were awarded to women in the United States. With these statistics in mind, the overall goal of the conference was to encourage female undergraduates to pursue graduate studies and careers in physics, according to Booth.

Career and graduate studies panels provided attendees with a chance to meet both professional female physicists and graduate students. In turn, LAS students were also able to meet physics faculty and students from Yale, MIT, Princeton and many other universities.



Future physicists: Rowan students (from left) **Rachel Spreng, Erin Pospergh, Emma Cortes, Katie Booth, and Christina Branson** enjoy their time at Yale.



Photo credit: Margaux Gonzalez

Stepping Up:

CLAS alumnus **Dr. Marque Allen**, who earned his bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences in 1991, recently donated \$100,000 to create a scholarship fund for a student attending Cooper Medical School of Rowan University. Allen and his wife, Yvette, made the donation to establish the Dr. Richard Meagher Medical Scholarship to assist first-year medical school students who earn a bachelor's degree from Rowan. Meagher was a Rowan professor for 38 years, retiring in 2007. Allen serves as the foot and ankle consultant/team physician for the NBA's San Antonio Spurs and the WNBA's San Antonio Silver Stars. For more on the new medical school, visit www.rowan.edu/coopermedicalschoo.

Greenspan adds movement to Discovery Channel Telescope

You might think Dan Greenspan is an astronomer, but he's actually a software engineer at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in Maryland. That didn't stop him from reaching for the stars when he stumbled upon an opportunity to help construct the Discovery Channel Telescope (DCT) at the Lowell Observatory in Arizona.

"I came across the want ad by accident while searching for some technical information. I wasn't looking for another job, but I knew about the observatory and recognized right away that this telescope would contribute to mankind's knowledge of the universe," says Greenspan, who graduated from LAS in 1997 with his bachelor's degree in Computer Science and a special concentration in Biology.

Greenspan is temporarily bi-coastal these days, focusing more on the scope in Arizona until its completion sometime in 2011.

"The DCT will be one of the largest and most modern on the planet. It will be used for world-class research and will involve the general public in an unprecedented manner. The Discovery Channel is documenting the process, and plans a multi-part special on its assembly and use," he says.

As one of DCT's software engineers, Greenspan's role is to add movement to the scope.

"My work will enable this giant robot—what a modern telescope really is—to precisely rotate and swivel so that it can observe different parts of the sky."



Reaching for the stars: Dan Greenspan, shown here in the cockpit of a U.S. Navy P-3 Orion aircraft, performs oceanographic research for Johns Hopkins University.

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