



Testimony
of
Dr. Ali A. Houshmand
President of Rowan University
before the
Assembly Budget Committee

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me here today. It is my honor to provide you with an update about the continuing growth and success of Rowan University. Specifically, I want to thank you on behalf of the faculty, administration and especially, the students of Rowan University.

In the midst of fiscal uncertainty and change at the State and federal levels, I am happy to report that the State's investment in Rowan University continues to produce amazing results and opportunity for the students of our State.

Rowan's faculty and student profile has grown stronger, larger and more competitive. The student body has grown from 10,091 to 17,300 in the last six years helping to keep New Jersey's best and brightest students in our State.

We have recently completed construction on a new School of Business, and a new College of Engineering Building needed to accommodate the increase in engineering students and the accompanying required research facilities. Thanks to the State for providing Building Our Future Bond dollars for these projects.

Rowan University's research designation continues to be the catalyst that is attracting companies who want to collaborate with the University on research in a wide variety of disciplines including virtual reality, transportation and infrastructure materials, biomedical devices and groundbreaking medical research that may soon help find a treatment for Alzheimers. We just announced that a major Spanish pharmaceutical company will be building its US headquarters at our Tech Park.

Rowan's research funding has grown from \$6 to \$35 million while private and federal investment is helping to build the economy and the workforce for the entire region, which

includes several of the poorest counties in New Jersey. Rowan's economic impact is now at \$1.2Billion per year.

Public Private partnerships have renewed downtown Glassboro with new student housing, restaurants, bookstores, retail and cafes. On the west campus the South Jersey Tech Park is growing, and plans are progressing for a new sports complex, a health care complex, and the development of the Rowan Fossil Quarry into a world-class research site with a STEM Center which will inspire the next generation of researchers, scientists and engineers. It is already attracting visitors from around the world to dig for 65 million year old fossils.

I should also mention that the entire Legislature, staff and your families have been invited to tour the Quarry this weekend.

Rowan has been successful in a large part because we have been unconventional in our approach. As a new research university we can be nimble in developing creative curriculum with our business and industry partners that is meeting the demands of today's workforce.

That, somewhat controversial thinking, has carried over to our mission and has inspired faculty and administrators to develop affordable and accessible pathways to higher education. Our partnerships with Rowan College at Gloucester County and Rowan College at Burlington County are offering hope to students who never dreamed that they could afford a college education.

And attracting students is only part of the equation. We have hired 30 advisors to ensure that the students stay in school and graduate on time.

Affordability

At Rowan University we pride ourselves at making college as affordable as possible so students can get a four year degree and graduate on time at a reasonable cost. Rowan is committed to keeping tuition increases at or below the rate of inflation to help ensure access to a college education for more students. Rowan cut tuition increases from 8% in 2007 to 0% in 2014 and 1.92% in 2017.

Recognition

- The State's designation has spurred our sponsored research from \$6Million to over \$35Million and we have just been recognized with a Carnegie Research designation.
- Rowan University is 1 of only 2 universities in the U.S with M.D and D.O granting medical schools. Rowan received over 8,000 applications for the 300 available medical student spaces at the Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine and the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University.
- U.S News ranks Rowan #5 in North among public master's level universities and #20 among all regional universities north.

- Princeton Review ranks William G. Rohrer College of Business in the nation's best 295 Business schools
- U.S News ranks RowanSOM #15 for geriatric medical education
- CollegeNet ranked Rowan #3 nationally for social mobility

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, please know that we at Rowan look forward to working with you to enhance New Jersey's nationally respected higher education system and to make higher education affordable and accessible to every student in New Jersey.