



**Testimony**  
of  
**Dr. Ali A. Houshmand**  
**President of Rowan University**  
before the  
**Assembly Budget Committee**  
on the  
**FY2019 Higher Education Services Budget**

Chairwoman Pintor Marin, Vice-Chairman Burzichelli, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to this committee as you consider the FY2019 Budget for Higher Education. I am pleased to report that Rowan University is on the rise and is achieving its goal of increasing access and affordability for all New Jersey students.

Rowan University is now the fourth largest university in New Jersey. The State's investment in Rowan and its designation as a comprehensive research university has produced visible benefits. The campus is flourishing, and more New Jersey students have access to an affordable higher education than ever before. For example, the "Building Our Future Bond Act" has allowed Rowan University to construct the buildings for the Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering and the William G. Rohrer College of Business, and also renovate and expand our Camden academic buildings. It is investment like this that has allowed Rowan to increase enrollment by 7,000 students since 2013 while holding tuition increases to below the expected rate of inflation.

Since the enactment of the "New Jersey Medical and Health Science Restructuring Act," Rowan's two medical schools – the Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine (RSOM) and the Cooper Medical School of Rowan

University (CMSRU) – have continued to attract high quality medical students. Applications for both medical schools total over 11,000 for only 230 spaces.

The State's support has turned Rowan into a catalyst for increased economic development not only in Glassboro but in all of southern New Jersey. On an annualized basis Rowan University produces \$1.23 billion in statewide economic impact, supports 9,200 jobs and generates \$19 million in State tax revenues. Rowan University is now the educational and economic development center for the southern region of the State.

Many of you have seen Rowan Boulevard – the mixed-use development that links the main campus to Glassboro's downtown. This \$400 million project includes 2,100 student beds in five apartment complexes, a Barnes & Noble Superstore, a Marriott hotel, restaurants and retail space, and classroom and administrative space. Rowan Boulevard has substantially increased municipal tax revenues and created a vibrant new extension of our campus for our students and their families.

Most significantly, however, Rowan remains committed to its mission and its Four Pillars: Access to Education, Quality of Education, Affordability, and Being an Economic Engine in Southern New Jersey. These are just a few examples:

- Because of your efforts, quality higher education is once again within the reach of New Jersey's families, reversing the tide of students who leave our state to pursue college degrees. Those students are now choosing to remain in-State, becoming part of a better educated workforce that entices businesses to launch or relocate in New Jersey.
- Rowan College at Gloucester County (RCGC) and Rowan College at Burlington County (RCBC) are proving to be models for the country. The innovative partnerships with Gloucester County College and Burlington County College are already increasing access and providing affordable education to our most underserved counties by

providing a new route to a 4 year degree at savings of over \$20,000 to students.

Higher college costs hurt students and families, especially those with low and moderate incomes. Rowan, in collaboration with our partner colleges, has developed innovative programs to address the disparity. Partnerships between 2 and 4 year institutions create real opportunity for a college education for students from all backgrounds by ensuring seamless pathways to an Associate's degree on through to a Bachelor's degree.

- To address the projected critical shortage of doctors and nurses, Rowan is educating and training quality health care professionals to care for the residents of our State - through the growth of Rowan's two medical schools, the RSOM and the CMSRU and the establishment of the Rowan-Rutgers-Camden College of Health Sciences.
- The "Restructuring Act" partnered Rowan with Rutgers-Camden in a unique collaborative effort to develop health sciences programs in Camden. This initiative will address the region's critical health care needs by educating professionals and fostering research in a variety of health disciplines.
- We continue to attract outside investment in the South Jersey Tech Park with patents pending and international companies wanting to conduct research there with the University. Public-Private partnerships also continue to attract business and industry to the region.

Rowan is focused on developing greater capacity that will enable the University to provide broader access to higher education at an affordable price while continuing to find innovative solutions to develop a better skilled workforce for New Jersey's business community.

In the next 10 years, Rowan's strategic plan includes increasing enrollment to 25,000 students, improving diversity, increasing research funding to \$100 million annually, increasing Rowan's endowment to \$500 million, expanding academic offerings for in-demand areas such as science, technology, business, engineering and medicine. These are all efforts that will positively impact the State's economy.

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, each of you has a standing invitation to visit the Glassboro campus and Rowan's medical schools and the campuses in Camden and Stratford so that you can see firsthand the fruits of your labor. I look forward to working with you to develop innovative solutions that will offer an affordable and accessible education to every student in New Jersey, and that will lead to the development of the most highly skilled workforce in the nation.

Thank you for your leadership and continued support of Rowan University.