



**2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

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On the cover (from left): Alexandria Santos, Ashanti Munns, Kerri Walsh and James Miceli are extending their global perspective on education through travel programs.

On this page: Fulbright Scholar Nicole Wyglendowski broadens her experience and perspective while teaching students in Taiwan.

# Message From the Dean

**T**his year's annual report showcases the outcomes of projects we have been working on for the last few years, as we continue to deepen our commitment to community engagement.

We have increased opportunities for students to engage in meaningful research. Thanks to the Thomas and Carol Morgan Fellowship, we can recruit students throughout the country who are dedicated to studying issues related to autism spectrum disorders.

We highlight ways that the College is providing opportunities for students to travel internationally, aligning with our vision to prepare and support reflective practitioners who use education to transform our global society.

This year our Ed.D. program celebrated its 20th anniversary. While this program continues to expand and strengthen our community engagement, it also was the foundation for our new Ph.D. program.

Our innovative pathways provide two powerful mechanisms for preparing educators — the Professional Development Schools Network and our year-long teacher residency, which is a central component of all of our teacher preparation programs, including our B.A./M.A. pathway.

Rowan's teacher preparation program aligns with best practices and research as it responds to the needs of our districts. Area school districts tell us they need content

specialists in math, science, foreign languages and other areas and provide feedback on the best methods to prepare teachers. Ensuring we have high-quality educators in classrooms for clinical residencies is important to our program and our candidates, but also to the districts as well, so they can socialize candidates into their school and the profession.

We also continue to address the lack of diversity in our workforce. This report features Taviaus Wilson, an education major who has received scholarships and is involved in Project IMPACT (Increasing Male Practitioners and Classroom Teachers), a recruitment and retention program for young men from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Our programs and initiatives underscore the College's dedication to taking on national issues locally and providing support for students to be part of that transformation.

I hope you'll enjoy meeting our students and faculty in this report as you learn more about how Rowan University is changing the face of education.



**Dr. Monika Williams Shealey**  
Dean





Thomas and Carol Morgan (left and right), who established the Thomas and Carol Morgan Fellowship in Special Education and Autism Spectrum Disorder, meet with Estyr Bomgardner, recipient of the award.

# Unlocking Understanding in Autism Research

When their son was diagnosed with autism in the 1980s, Thomas and Carol Morgan didn't know a lot about it. Neither did anyone else.

"The idea that there is a spectrum of autism developed as he grew up," said Carol, whose son went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Rowan University with honors and a master's degree from Temple University. He is now an actuary. "The programs that developed have been helpful, but the more people learn about it and educators study it and publish articles, people will be more aware."

To help advance knowledge in this area, they established the Thomas and Carol Morgan Fellowship in Special Education and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

"It was clear to us that there was an absence of understanding of the condition and there were challenges in helping students with a different learning style even in the best public schools," said Thomas, a retired general civil litigator who is a former member of Rowan's Board of Trustees, serving as its chairman from 2008 to 2010.

Estyr Bomgardner, a Ph.D. student from Haddon Heights

with a special education concentration, was ecstatic to receive the fellowship, which provides funding during her studies while she assists professors with their research on autism.

Having worked in early intervention in numerous public and private school settings, Bomgardner explained the quest to help students with autism becomes personal. "I worked closely with a lot of families and saw their struggles," she said.

"I really would like to contribute to the field," she said. "There is a vocal set of adult self-advocates with autism who are examining their own autism through a lens of neurodiversity. This involves examining autism as a neurological difference and a culture that may require support.

"I'd like to focus my time and energy on contributing to examining that neurodiversity paradigm and how we can start to incorporate that lens coming from adults into K-12 educational settings," Bomgardner said.



From left: Dr. Zalphia Wilson-Hill, John Quinesso, Dr. Hector Rios, Dr. Sarah Ferguson and Dr. Midge Madden are opening new doors for students through travel programs. (Not pictured: Dr. Brent Elder and Dr. Stephanie Abraham)

## Expanding Global Perspectives

**B**oarding their flight for the TEACH and Discover INDIA! program, students envision how they will work with children once they arrive. But their plans take a slight detour after they land.

“They go there thinking they will prepare elaborate lesson plans and students will be sitting in desks with books and pencils,” said John Quinesso, trip advisor and instructor, Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education, who has also planned a credit-bearing student trip to Cambodia.

But there are no windows or doors, let alone desks or books, in the schools they visit.

“They have to brainstorm and plan with the supplies they bring as to what they will do for the two full days they’re at this school,” Quinesso said. “They have to be creative and think of games they can play with the students.”

For the last three years, Rowan students have worked with students in India, donated books and raised funds for school improvements. Their initiatives included bringing running water and girls’ and boys’ lavatory facilities to the school. But they have gained much more.

“One of the most important things I discovered from working with people in different areas is a new perspective on

learning and how we learn,” said James Miceli, ‘19, an elementary education and English major from Edison who traveled to India in January.

Dr. Midge Madden, associate professor, Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education, has worked with teachers in Guatemala for two decades on literacy and professional development initiatives. Since 2009,

*(continued on page 9)*



Rowan students meet children throughout the world, such as this student from Guatemala.



Rowan students have accompanied her, presenting at international literacy conferences and interacting with students and teachers across the country.

"I learned a lot about education in other cultures and about how lucky we are to have so many resources in education here," said Kerri Walsh, '18, an early childhood and literacy studies major from Moorestown who traveled with Madden in February 2017.

These experiences help students understand diverse populations and their needs. "Some students are very interested in working in bilingual situations, learning how to teach a child to read whose first language isn't English. They see the flip side on these trips. Many times in Guatemala, the children's home language is a Mayan dialect, yet they're taught to read in Spanish," Madden said. "They're listening to teachers who struggle with the same situations that we have in the United States."



From left: Students Mackenzie Tyler, Hannah Webb and Kerri Walsh traveled with Dr. Midge Madden (second from right) to Guatemala.

## Teachable Travels

### Education students bring their talents to additional destinations:

- Five graduate students traveling with Dr. Hector Rios and Dr. Zalphia Wilson-Hill to Puerto Rico during the summer of 2017 were immersed in the Latino/Caribbean culture and experienced concepts discussed in the course "Multicultural Counseling and Advocacy."
- Students will accompany Dr. Brent Elder and Dr. Sarah Ferguson to the Dominican Republic in August to study issues related to identity, language, culture and disability with people who have disabilities and their families.
- Through the Fulbright Hayes Small Group Projects Abroad program, 12 pre-service and in-service teachers will travel with Dr. Stephanie Abraham to Oaxaca, Mexico, in June for a month-long study of Spanish and Oaxacan culture.





Faculty, alumni and students gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Ed.D. program. Participants included (from left): back row, Dr. Cecile Sam, Dr. Burt Sisco, David Hesse, Dr. Hajime Mitani, Dr. Monica Kerrigan, Dr. James Coaxum, Dr. Christine Johnston and Dr. MaryBeth Walpole; front row, Dr. Carol Sharp, Dr. Carol Thompson, Dr. Virginia Doolittle, Dr. Ane Turner Johnson, Dr. Sarah Ferguson and Dr. JoAnn Manning.

# Toasting 20 Years

In October, the College of Education marked the 20th anniversary of its Ed.D. program — the University’s first doctoral program. Approximately 100 alumni and students gathered in the atrium of James Hall with faculty and staff to applaud the program’s accomplishments and bright future.

“Alumni talked about the power of the program and how it changed their thinking and opened new career opportunities,” said Dr. MaryBeth Walpole, professor and chair, Educational Services and Leadership. “They spoke about working with specific faculty and how instrumental they had been in their success.”

Since graduating from the program, alumni have become university vice presidents and deans and school superintendents, and they have reached new levels of knowledge that they bring into their classrooms.

“It was a great night,” said Dr. Monica Reid Kerrigan, associate professor, Educational Services and Leadership. “One of the most satisfying things to hear was the number of students and alumni who shared that they were first-generation college students and that this program helped them achieve educational goals that they are very proud of and that their families are very proud of.”

The Ed.D. program is designed to help educators lead organizational change.

“Educational institutions across the spectrum — universities, community colleges, K-12 institutions — are all being asked to increase their student achievement, their student outcomes,” Walpole said. “Leaders have to know how to create change in successful and socially just ways for organizations.”

As it commemorated its 20th year, the program was accepted into the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate, a consortium promoting excellence for the educational doctorate.

“This is an exciting year for the Ed.D. program,” Kerrigan said. “It was a celebration, but also an opportunity to embark on a new journey and bring our current and former students and faculty into that transition in the ongoing development of the program.”



From left: Dr. Yesenia Madas, dean, Freehold Campus, Brookdale Community College, speaks to faculty, alumni and students at the Ed.D. program’s 20th anniversary celebration, as well as Alan Guenther, communications, policy and planning professional; Dean Monika Williams Shealey; and David Hespe, Of Counsel, Porzio, Bromberg & Newman P.C., and former New Jersey Commissioner of Education.

Like the combination degree programs, the year-long residency programs in Rowan's professional development schools enable students to build their experience and knowledge base. West Deptford Middle School Principal Christine Trampé, professor-in-residence Natoya Coleman and teacher candidate Jasmine Burgos collaborate at one of Rowan's newest professional development schools.



# Combination Degree Programs Accelerating Success

Junior Kathleen Samuel has big plans for the future. One of the College's new combination degree programs, which are available in a range of disciplines, will help her get there more quickly.

Originally a chemical engineering major, the Beachwood resident discovered that she was drawn to education. She flipped her major to secondary education and enrolled in the new combination degree program. Through the program, she will earn a bachelor's degree in chemistry and master's degree in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education within five years. "I looked into the STEM program, and it offers many classes focused on leading research, leading labs, and I think that's very important," she said.

The program will help the College increase the number of science and math teacher candidates and enables students to begin earning graduate credits at an undergraduate tuition level during their senior year, said Dr. Issam Abi-El-Mona, associate professor of science education in the department of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math Education.

"In the master's in STEM education program, 100 percent of our graduates are employed because of the foundations they are getting and the coursework within the program," he said.

Combination degree programs provide an effective structure to include the yearlong teacher residency now mandated by the state for teacher certification.

"Students complete their content area studies, and then they have the year to focus specifically on their education courses in conjunction with their field work," said Dr. Beth Wassell, professor and chair of the Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education, which also began offering combination degrees in English, Social Studies, Theatre and World Languages education.

Not only will the program produce exceptional practitioners but also address social justice and diversity, she said.

"This model enables our students to work more with our partners in the field for a longer time and with a much more diverse group of students than in the past," Wassell said.

## Noyce Fellowship

With a \$1.2 million grant through the National Science Foundation's Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, faculty from the College of Education and Rowan's College of Science & Mathematics will recruit students into the master's in STEM program. Recipients will receive \$30,000 one-year scholarships and be required to teach in high-needs districts for two years after graduation.

"The Noyce scholarship affords a grand opportunity for students from low socioeconomic areas to ensure a path toward teaching as a profession," Abi-El-Mona said.

## Forging Ahead as an Agent for Change

**T**aviaus Wilson, '22, understands the power of a good teacher.

"I want to help impact the lives of children and youth," he said. "I figured the best and fastest way would be to become a teacher."

The history and education major from Bridgeton has been fortunate to have good teachers as role models. "Every year I had at least one teacher who influenced my decision," he said.

Daniel Simmons, a teacher during his senior year, sealed the deal. "He didn't just teach me about the curriculum. He also taught me life lessons and made the classroom comfortable," he said.

"It felt like a second home to all of us. We all enjoyed him and could talk to him about issues in our lives."

To support his educational goals, Wilson received a scholarship funded by Give Something Back, a nonprofit organization founded by philanthropist Robert Carr. "I was excited to receive it, and it will help me get a step closer to fulfilling my goals," he said.

Wilson also is a member of Project IMPACT (Increasing Male Practitioners and Classroom Teachers), a program designed to increase the number of male teachers of color.



Valuing the guidance he received from his Bridgeton High School teachers, such as Daniel Simmons (right), Taviaus Wilson hopes to positively influence his future students.

"It is one of the best programs that I could be a part of," he said. "There are a lot of networking resources and many ways for me to get a job after college. I'm meeting great people and will get hands-on experience before I become a teacher."

Wilson eagerly anticipates helping his future students become the best they can be. "I want to teach in a way that students from all different backgrounds will be able to learn," he said. When students are taught in only one way, he explained, they may give up.

"I want to be able to evaluate my students and know my students well enough to help them the best way I can," he said.



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# College of Education by the Numbers

1,854 undergraduate students

933 graduate students

434 school partners worked with Rowan students in 2017

9 professional development schools in 2017

100% of graduates passed state-required certification examinations

560 educators certified in 2017

\$1,217,585 in grant funding received in 2017

95 full-time and three-quarter faculty members and professional advisors dedicated to students

38,881 College of Education alumni



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