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AN ANALYSIS OF ROWAN UNIVERSITY  
FUND RAISING AND COMMUNICATION  
PRACTICES

BY

KAREN D. DUNNINGTON

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS,  
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION, ROWAN UNIVERSITY  
JUNE 2001

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DATE APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

*June 30, 2001*

## ABSTRACT

Karen D. Dunnington  
"An Analysis of Rowan University  
Fund Raising and Communication  
Practices"

Anthony J. Fulginiti, Thesis Advisor  
College of Communication, Public Relations Program

Public colleges and universities need more income than government can provide. States now typically provide less than half the funding for public universities, like Rowan University. Alumni fund raising and other gifts bridge this gap. This study describes variables that affect donor motivation in other schools, and measures those variables among Rowan University subjects. The author applied a 16-question protocol to a purposive sample of 31. The sample was comprised of key fund raising personnel and target study subjects from students to college presidents in seven groups. Extensive individual commentary supplements the sample's small size. The major findings support clearly support the university's promotion of its 10-year building plan, as well as its successful academic and sports programs. Fund raising and other respondents prefer directed giving and specification of gift use.

MINI-ABSTRACT

Karen D. Dunnington  
"An Analysis of Rowan University  
Fund Raising and Communication  
Practices"

2001

Anthony J. Fulginiti, Thesis Advisor  
College of Communication, Public Relations Program

A public university faces the dilemma of decreased state funding and increased expenses. Study participants identified and evaluated characteristics associated with fund raising success at other schools. Respondents in this study asked for more information about Rowan's successes. This study found that this public university should promote its successful building, academic and sports program successes more vigorously to raise sufficient funds to compensate for decreased government funding for public universities.

## Chapter One

### ***Background and Problem***

Colleges and universities now need more income than tuition and government support can provide. Increasingly, they depend upon alumni fund raising campaigns to bridge the gap between student tuition payments and state and federal funding.

Fund raising, as a fact of academic life, has been extensively documented in the United States. John Harvard, for example, donated a 1,600-volume library and £500 to support his namesake college. All universities - public and private - now rely on fund raising to supplement the declining portion of their budgets provided from public sources.<sup>1</sup>

States now typically supply less than half the funding for public universities. In 1995, state funding fell to 11 percent of the budget at the University of California.<sup>2</sup>

Fund raising has also become more sophisticated, in both scope and methods. The University of Virginia's president, John Casteen, said, "They (the board of trustees) wanted me outside selling."<sup>3</sup>

While colleges have long wooed young alumni, it was mainly to get them in the habit of giving. Stanford University, surrounded by newly minted millionaires, uses a "soft touch,"

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<sup>1</sup> "Successful Fund Raising for Higher Education," Frank H. T. Rhodes, ed., Oryx Press, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> "BMOC: Big Money on Campus: How Private Funding Undercuts Public Education," by Nancy Brucker, *The Washington Post*, Feb. 22, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> "Making the Ask," Michael Winerip, *The New York Times*, Aug. 1, 1999.

like a quiet dinner with a senior university official, where money often goes unmentioned.<sup>4</sup> Stanford, with its links to Silicon Valley, became a natural place for 1990s alumni to venture into philanthropy. Jerry Yang, cofounder of Yahoo! Inc., and a member of Stanford's class of 1990, had agreed early in the decade to match all donations from his class, to the dollar.<sup>5</sup>

Michael House describes how the University of Florida solicits gifts, thanks donors, and compiles reports 'in perpetuity' -- in one integrated program. The University of Florida Foundation keeps track of donors, especially large donors, well beyond the thank-yous extended after a gift has been made. Letters go out within two months, in duplicate, to donors and to the University of Florida Foundation Office. The result: happier donors, more repeat gifts and clearer goals for fundraisers. House's study illustrates perfectly the business side of solicitations to alumni and others. He even refers to donors as 'charitable investors' who like to see how their money is being spent. His goal: give donors a personal financial statement on their investment in the university -- the equivalent of an investment report from Merrill Lynch.<sup>6</sup>

Brucker argues that educational priorities are no longer the subject of public debate, but of private bargaining. Often

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<sup>4</sup> "Generation X Turns Out To Be Generous: Under-40 Alumni Shape Up To Be Major Donors, by David L. Marcus, *U.S. News & World Report*, Feb. 21, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> "Stanford's 1990 Graduates Didn't Wait Long to Give Back in a Big Way," by Sarah Carr, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Oct. 2000.

<sup>6</sup> "Structured Stewardship," by Michael House, *Case Currents*, April 1996.

money from individuals is spent for what private donors want, not necessarily what the public and school administrators might have chosen.

Brucker also cites another distressing trend: Universities often accept money for programs without assessing the additional costs required to implement these programs. She cites lavish alumni centers and athletic facilities. Corporations often pay a routine, yearly fee or dues to state-supported engineering or business schools. They do so with the understanding that they will get early access to research findings and may recruit from academic programs.<sup>7</sup>

Hornbaker studied the likelihood that declining enrollments, increasing costs and competition for private sector funds threaten to close many colleges and universities in the United States. Institutional survival, he argued, will continue to require more effective institutional advancement activities. He found that 84 qualitative and quantitative factors typified effective fund raising in both public and private California universities.<sup>8</sup>

In 1995 Stevens examined the increased emphasis on philanthropy as a source of revenue as state and federal budget allocations become less certain.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Op. cit. Brucker

<sup>8</sup> "Effectiveness of institutional advancement programs in representative California public and private colleges and universities," Lawrence Hornbaker, dissertation, Pepperdine University, 1986.

<sup>9</sup> "A study of capital fund-raising campaigns at peer institutions of Northern Arizona University," Frederick Stevens, dissertation, Northern Arizona University, 1995.

In the UK, where alumni donations have received almost no research attention, researchers looked at alumni generosity as a potential source of income. The UK study is interesting to this researcher for another reason: Aside from demographic findings, this study attempts to determine possible psychological factors affecting giving.<sup>10</sup> The author explores this study more thoroughly in Chapter Two.

### **Rowan University**

Rowan University administrators illustrate the dilemma caused by diminished state aid and increased pressure to reposition their institution in the eyes of key business leaders, legislators and potential students. In accepting \$100 million from industrialist Henry Rowan, the university also incurred new expenses inherent in its journey from respected state college to regional university of prominence.<sup>11</sup>

The factors outlined above lead the author to ask three questions about alumni giving:

- What psychological and attitudinal factors typify successful alumni development programs?
- How do memories of one's college experience enhance or detract from an individual's inclination toward giving?

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<sup>10</sup> "What Determines Alumni Generosity? Evidence for the UK," by C. R. Belfield and A. P. Beney, *Education Economics*, April 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit. Rhodes



- Could a school's current stature as an academic or sports powerhouse affect this inclination?

This study looks at data from Rowan University alumni, coaches and athletes, faculty and administrators, and certain persons outside the university, including Foundation Board members and administrators from other educational institutions.

Rowan is a mid-sized university located in Glassboro, NJ, a community featuring a mix of fruit orchards, light industry and residential development located in the southern part of the state, 18 miles from Philadelphia. Rowan University, the former Glassboro State College, first became Rowan College in 1993 after accepting Henry Rowan's gift in 1992. In 1996 it became a university.

As a direct result of Rowan's gift, the university established a new engineering college. Building has commenced on a new science building at this writing. In October 2000, Rowan's President Donald Farish unveiled a \$240 million spending plan for the next decade, including new buildings and more full-time faculty.

### ***The Problem Facing Rowan***

Return on alumni solicitations has traditionally been poor at Rowan University.<sup>12</sup> To compound this problem, many disaffected alumni cite Rowan University's name change as a reason for non-support. The *New York Times* called the university a "meat and

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<sup>12</sup> James Spencer, Rowan Alumni Coordinator, in an interview, September 2000.

potatoes" school when it announced the 1992 Rowan gift.<sup>13</sup> In 1995-96, the Rowan Foundation articulated a new vision to keep fund raising efforts and university growth moving apace. Would the university's continued growth outstrip alumni memories of the former Glassboro State College, and change donation levels?

A second set of questions occurs:

- Can the author isolate and identify existing institutional knowledge, attitudes and behaviors among the study groups? The author looked at diverse areas of experience among respondents that reflect knowledge and perception of university matters beyond fundraising.
- Do change factors, such as new building and the university's name change, foster attitudes among Rowan respondents that are similar to attitudes identified by other fund raising researchers?

For the past 10 years, Rowan fund raisers have kept alumni informed of proposed campus changes and alumni happenings by distributing a slick, quarterly magazine. Administrators also arrange alumni social events at football games and sponsor an autumn dinner event.

But alumni often first hear about major changes through local news media. This research attempts to quantify alumni attitudes about their university's plans and accomplishments with respect to fund raising. Recent research draws a limited

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<sup>13</sup> Op. cit. Rhodes

correlation between the name change and alumni donor refusals.<sup>14</sup> Thirteen percent of those surveyed said the name change left bad memories; 24 percent said parking problems left unpleasant memories. Philip Tumminia, vice-president for institutional advancement, however, discounts the importance of the name-change, saying that it was "the most handy" excuse for not giving.<sup>15</sup> Most construction remains in the planning stage, as laid out in President Farish's 10-year plan.<sup>16</sup>

Do Rowan fund raisers effectively measure the attitudes of alumni? Evaluating Rowan's fund raising requires techniques, including research, comparing it to successful fund raising at other universities. In the review of literature, the author presents conclusions reached by researchers and investigative journalists on athletic success, target marketing, donor motivations and alumni generosity. Her research presented here, including these comparisons, suggests that some alumni attitudes have yet to be identified and nurtured.

Rowan University's annual campaign solicits financial contributions from a list of over 10,000 living former students. Last year, the university hired a new alumni activities coordinator and hired an alumni gifts coordinator in 1999.

The Rowan Foundation solicits large gifts, from alumni and others, and its offices are next to the university president's

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<sup>14</sup> "A study to determine why some Rowan University alumni give and others do not," Kamau Kanyi, Rowan University master's thesis, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Philip Tumminia, vice-president for institutional advancement, Rowan University, in a conversation, September 2000.

<sup>16</sup> [www.rowan.edu](http://www.rowan.edu)

suite. Alumni affairs staff occupies a separate building. James Spencer, coordinator, said, "We are in charge of the small gifts over here (in this office)."<sup>17</sup> He was referring to the \$25-\$50 donations representative of alumni gifts.<sup>17</sup> The average gift from alumni donors in 1998 was \$37.<sup>18</sup>

Here, another question arises: What knowledge of the alumni do fund raisers need to maintain sufficient gift levels? This question carries more than a passing interest to fund raisers, considering the expansion plans President Farish has laid out. Does Rowan University require the same high level of knowledge about its alumni and other donors that allows a Duke University such success?<sup>19</sup> Or, can Rowan administrators continue to grow their assets by keeping to current solicitation practices and hoping for the odd major gift?

The author answers these questions within the scope of this purposive study's findings. Trends were tentatively identified, however, in emergent alumni and others' interests and attitudes concerning Rowan University.

Are Rowan fund raisers making an impression with letter and telephone solicitations? What about personal solicitations? Space for commentary was built into this researcher's methodology and responses are reported in Chapter Four.

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<sup>17</sup> Op. cit. Spencer

<sup>18</sup> Op. cit. Kanyi

<sup>19</sup> "Duke fundraising draws big bucks, big rankings," Steven Wright, *The Chronicle Online*, Duke University, May 2000.

Higher education circles generally acknowledge that government funding for public higher education has deteriorated to the extent that state public institutions are now viewed as "state-assisted," "state-affiliated," or simply "state-located." Public institutions are increasing their financial dependence upon private sources by greater reliance on fee-payers and on private donors.<sup>20</sup> Rowan University became an autonomous, state-assisted institution 10 years ago.

The university's administration accordingly made plans to deal with cuts in state aid and to increase its commitment to attracting private giving.<sup>21</sup> Higher education continues to be in the business of generating funds and assistance. Unpaid volunteer effort coupled with successful alumni fund raising has become central to the financial health of American higher education.

Fund raising consistently plays a major role in higher education, from the support of already solid and vital institutions to extending the value of those institutions to new students. After studying donor predictability in a school of education, Pearson said, "Alumni giving remains a largely underdeveloped source of financial support."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> "Higher education means business," John Levin, *Journal of Higher Education*, The Ohio State University, July/August 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony Fulginiti, Professor of Public Relations, Rowan University, in a conversation, January 2001.

<sup>22</sup> "A study of donor predictability among graduates of a school of education within a 'Research I' public university," William Pearson, dissertation, University of Virginia, 1996.

In a study of donors and nondonors at a large, state research university, Burgess-Getts did identify some broad-stroke, discriminating donor variables including household income, attendance of family members, planned visits and gifts designated for the library.<sup>23</sup>

Scott Nichols, Harvard University Law School dean of development, said, "While universities used to get 80 percent of their donations from 20 percent of donors, they now receive 95 percent of their donations from 5 percent of donors." This development forces an even more personalized approach to relatively few individuals.

It is worth noting, however, that Harvard Law School, with the rest of Harvard University, does accept on-line donations. Harvard and other top fund raising schools make it very easy to donate on line. Harvard and others also offer diverse options for making long-term commitments to very specific areas where the donor might want to direct a gift.<sup>24</sup> Cornell University offers 16 designated areas for directed gifts.<sup>25</sup> Duke University offers the donor a choice of 10 programs for targeted donations.<sup>26</sup>

As mentioned, this author looked at related studies to isolate common characteristics associated with successful fund raising programs. What channels are schools employing to approach

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<sup>23</sup> "Alumni as givers: An analysis of donor-nondonor behavior at a Comprehensive I institution," Linda F. Burgess-Getts, dissertation, College of William and Mary, 1992.

<sup>24</sup> "Consultant says web is future of fund raising," by Martin Van Der Werf, The Chronicle of Higher Education, August 1999.

<sup>25</sup> [www.cornellalumni.com](http://www.cornellalumni.com)

<sup>26</sup> [www.thefundforduke.com](http://www.thefundforduke.com)

their alumni? How well do these approaches work? Which approaches have historically yielded success?

The author attempted to measure attitudes, opinions and behaviors typifying the groups studied. This approach asked questions about the school's name change, about building plans and about respondents' student experiences at Rowan University and other colleges and universities.

### ***Hypothesis***

The author expects to find the study groups eager to know more about the university's plans for growth and about its other accomplishments. She also expects respondents to offer strongly worded opinions which reflect attitudes identified by other researchers, which are associated with successful fund raising programs.

This study concentrates on isolating donor attitudes, giving minimal attention to demographic data. Chapter Three describes participant categories and query items.

Enlisting alumni as part of the fund raising process has become an important part of the solicitation process. Emerson College successfully enlisted former anti-war campus radicals in fund raising efforts. The same people who staged a 1975 sit in now wear suits and ties at their Wall Street jobs.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "Raising funds from alumni who raised hell," John Pulley, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 2000.

Attitudinal factors, to the extent they can be measured in this purposive sample, can add at least one extra data field in the ongoing attempt to improve fund raising efficacy.

### **Summary**

University fund raising makes an important contribution to the quality of educational and student life in the United States. Since the first private universities opened in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in New England, contributions from individuals have added value to the students' university experiences.

In this century, public and private institutions alike have benefited from successful private fund raising efforts.

University administrators and fund raisers continue to research donor and nondonor attitudes. At the same time, their demands increase for more refined and sophisticated information about potential donors. This study offers new information for Rowan University's fund raising efforts.

Specifically the author has isolated attitudes, opinions and behaviors held by a diverse group of persons knowledgeable about the university. These groups offered opinions about school pride, growth, name change, athletics and the larger Glassboro community. Within these opinions certain common themes emerged - themes identified in the same manner by representatives from each group.



In isolating what the respondents deem important and unique about Rowan University, the author hopes Rowan University fund raising administrators apply the research when they conduct future fund raising campaigns.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

#### *Introduction*

The review of literature relevant to this study falls into three broad categories. This chapter offers a brief synopsis of findings for each study, journal article or magazine article. These reviews attempt to provide a historical perspective and to make a strong case for continued research into higher education institutions' fund raising efforts.

The first group of studies represents doctoral dissertations whose authors locate fund raising campaigns among the country's colleges and universities. They have, with varying degrees of success, isolated and defined success characteristics those institutions share. This group also includes a 1999 study of nondonor attitudes by a Rowan University graduate student.

Another source of research comes from scholarly journals and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) studies and articles. These documents offer current thinking among Institutional Advancement Program (IAP) personnel on what works and doesn't work in academic fund raising. CASE leans toward individual cases and was often cited by institutional advancement personnel interviewed by the author.

Popular media including newspapers of record, news magazines and university web sites also provided statistics and identified trends in institutional advancement efforts.

***University Studies Identifying Characteristics Associated with Fund Raising Success.***

Lawrence Hornbaker<sup>1</sup> identified both qualitative and quantitative IAP characteristics that appeared most effective in raising funds from the private sector by public and private colleges in California. After establishing a case for private fund raising among institutions of higher learning, he set forth several research questions.

For the purposes of her study, the author looked at two of these questions: "What qualitative and quantitative IAP characteristics are most likely to produce effective institutional advancement programs?" and "What institutional factors best correlate with the level of private sector funds raised?"

For the first question Hornbaker used a panel of fundraisers and foundation personnel to reach consensus on the relative value of IAP characteristics. This panel of experts, using the Delphi process, determined the relevancy of the largest number of IAP characteristics ever evaluated by California institutions. Characteristics were judged to be effective or non-effective within public or private institutions.

His results showed that 75 of 84 characteristics had a similar degree of use in effective and ineffective fund raising

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<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. Hornbaker

institutions. (The researcher's characteristics were adapted from an earlier study of California post-secondary institutions.)

Hornbaker found that eight characteristics separated effective and ineffective fund raising programs:

- Chief IAP officer served on the campus CEO's cabinet
- IAP had an adequate operating budget (not defined)
- Chief IAP officer provided an atmosphere of excellence
- IAP maintained updated prospect mailing list
- IAP activities are closely related to positive perceptions held by prospects about the institution
- IAP conducted fund raising efforts among those outside the institution
- Professional IAP staff was 6.6 times larger in effective programs than in ineffective programs
- Total IAP expenditures were 7 times greater on effective programs.

For the second question, Hornbaker located six institutional factors that significantly correlated with actual funds raised by the sample institutions.

- Current market value of endowment funds
- Dollars spent on academic factors, including scholarships
- Library holdings
- Number of alumni
- Percentage of freshman applications rejected
- Percentage of faculty holding earned doctoral degrees

Cost of attending the school, SAT scores and alumni who attend graduate school were not significantly correlated with actual funds raised.

Linda Burgess-Getts<sup>2</sup>, College of William and Mary, made a systematic attempt to identify a theoretical component to donor/nondonor behavior. Specifically, she attempted to identify certain personal, academic, behavioral, and attitudinal variables related to fund raising.

After establishing certain demographic consistencies among her subjects, Burgess-Getts located certain attitudinal and emotional characteristics that correlate positively with fund raising success.

Attitude and "emotional attachment to the institution" were measured. The degree of identification, value of education received, motivation to make a contribution or not, and a ranking of areas deserving of financial support were components of attitude as defined by Burgess-Getts.

She concluded that donors were likely (68 percent of sample) to hold very positive attitudes toward the institution. In addition, donors were likely to believe that the institution prepared them well for life (62 percent).

Other measures of attitudes she deemed significant follow:

- Participation in extra-curricular activities
- Postgraduate/alumni involvement with the institution

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<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. Burgess-Getts

Parental education was inversely related: Those with parents holding baccalaureate degrees donated at the 55 percent level. Those with parents without degrees donated at the 57 percent level. Burgess-Getts reported these similar percentages because she had anticipated that the percentages would be reversed, i.e. she expected more well-educated parents would give more than less well-educated parents.

Attitudes about the institution, according to Burgess-Getts, can predict donor activity on the following discriminating variables:

- Planned visits
- Designation of funds to the library
- Identification with the institution
- Attendance of family members

Emotional attachment, she concluded, is a "strong discriminator between donors and nondonors." This suggests to Burgess-Getts that indices of emotional attachment are highly situational and cannot be generalized.

To ascertain perceived success characteristics of capital fund raising campaigns, Stevens<sup>3</sup> of Northern Arizona University studied 11 peer institutions of that system. Using a questionnaire survey as his primary research instrument, he measured attitudes and knowledge among development directors and vice-presidents, alumni directors and chief campaign volunteers.

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<sup>3</sup>Op. cit. Stevens

Much as Hornbeck and Burgess-Getts above, Stevens prefaces his study by making a case for the universal need for U.S. colleges and universities to raise private funds. He also clearly defines the differences between capital campaigns and annual campaigns - the latter is ongoing, the former, one-time for a specific purpose.

Stevens's study provided useful information to this researcher because he measured characteristics "perceived by fund raising professionals to be relevant to campaign success." This compilation of attitudes and knowledge speaks to the issue of defining fund raising success in words rather than in dollars. Stevens's findings pointed to several major areas where institutional characteristics are directly related to fund raising success:

- Reputation of the university was perceived to be the most important preexisting characteristic.
- Commitment and involvement of the university's president, especially if he or she were actively involved in the fund raising campaign.
- Mission and case statements were not considered essential building blocks of capital campaigns.
- Number and fund raising experience level of university staff devoted to the capital campaign were viewed as quite important to success.
- Sufficient allocation of funds and planning were viewed as similarly important.

- Economic climate was deemed quite important, i.e. the state's economy should not be in recession when a capital campaign is undertaken.

Stevens recommended an internal audit for any institution contemplating a capital campaign. Among the factors fundraisers should isolate and measure is a five-year history of fund raising results at the institution. If such an audit shows that the institution compares unfavorably (to the success characteristics identified above) then he recommends postponing the campaign.

This researcher questioned whether a survey using three persons in 11 universities could yield data sufficient to justify the above prescription. The author has included this study as relevant, however, because Stevens has targeted specific and appropriate university and volunteer fund raising personnel - the same kinds of interviewees this author sought.

Stevens goes further than his research findings might warrant by stating his belief that "a successful capital campaign fund raising effort will raise the level of exposure of the university, create a sense of pride among its various constituencies and positively impact future donations."

Kamau Kanyi's<sup>4</sup> findings reflect alumni sentiment at Rowan University. He attempted to identify and measure nondonor attitudes. While his study only applied to Rowan University, some of his data support other researchers' findings.

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<sup>4</sup> Op. cit. Kanyi



Particularly interesting to this researcher are statistics on the relatively high percentage of students who never lived on campus (58 percent) or who were commuters at one time or another (74 percent) while they were students at this university.

These findings appear to jibe with the above studies' conclusions, as well as many of the articles cited below. The research cited suggests that a positive identification with one's alma mater - and a commensurate inclination to make donations - is associated with extracurricular activities and interests on the campus.

Rowan University has steadily moved away from the days described by football Coach K.C. Keeler upon his arrival at Rowan University. He said, "By Thursday afternoon the parking lots were empty. Everybody had left campus for home."<sup>5</sup> [Author's note: until 1995 the university scheduled few Friday classes.]

Kanyi also discusses the perceived importance, among nondonors, of campus visits, including homecoming and class reunions, in attracting alumni donors. A healthy percentage of nondonors (77 percent) had returned to campus for events but only five percent of those had returned for homecoming or alumni-related events.

Again, research cited elsewhere in this author's study points to the importance of alumni connectedness in maintaining alumni interest in supporting their alma mater.

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<sup>5</sup>K.C. Keeler in an interview, March 2001

Lawrence Daughtrey<sup>6</sup> studied Division III schools, among others, in seeking to determine if winning football championships helped schools' overall fund raising effort. His conclusions demonstrated a significant increase in donations for Division III universities. The study covered football championships earned between 1987 and 1996.

### ***Scholarly Journals***

In an earlier study reported in *Social Behavior and Personality*,<sup>7</sup> Gaski and Etzel failed to locate an empirical connection between athletic success and alumni generosity. Even they, however, acknowledge the possibility of "a more complex relationship between collegiate athletics and benefactor donations that would be revealed by the type of analyses reported in the literature so far."

In *Fund Raising Management*,<sup>8</sup> researchers Utter, Noble and Brady examined Boston College's attempts to transform current students into alumni donors. Their "Attitudes Towards Giving" study attempted to gauge students' attitudes toward giving in general. It also sought to identify those factors that were influencing them during their college experiences that were likely to impact their future giving.

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<sup>6</sup> "An assessment of the financial and academic benefits associated with winning NCAA Divisions I-AA, II, and III football championships," Clayton Daughtrey, dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 1998.

<sup>7</sup> "Collegiate athletic success and alumni generosity: Dispelling the myth," John Gaski and Michael Etzel, *Social Behavior and Personality*, 1984.

<sup>8</sup> "Investing in the future: Transforming current students into generous alumni," by Deborah Utter, Charles Noble and Michael Brady, *Fund Raising Management*, November 1999.

One of the strongest themes emerging from this study was students' need to be a part of the campus community. Termed "ownership" here, building this sense of community is a challenge for university IAPs.

Successful athletic teams and academic prestige are acknowledged factors in establishing this feeling of ownership. For Boston College, academic prestige carried a double meaning. The school had been a first choice among students seeking entrance to state-supported or relatively less prestigious institutions until about 10 years before this study.

Since that time, however, Boston College increased in status and has become a second or third choice among students seeking admission to the most prestigious Ivies. While a step up for the College in overall status, it might pose new challenges for fundraisers.

Membership in campus clubs did not affect students' sense of ownership or intention to give. Campus communications -- to the extent that they contributed to the students' perceived value for their tuition dollars -- were determined to be helpful.

Communications between administrators and students were needed to explain away building delays and other campus improvements. When students at Boston College did not receive this information, many of them decided the delays were the result of poor planning or fiscal mismanagement.

The Boston College findings also found that while parents resented receiving solicitations while they were paying tuition,

students themselves needed to be cultivated throughout their college years. Although not a source of contributions while in school, this gives students time to think about class gifts and individual gifts before they leave the campus.

Summarizing their findings, these authors suggest that creating a good "value proposition" - i.e. the ratio between cost/investment and benefits received - is critical to creating alumni donors.

In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*,<sup>9</sup> Pulley describes the steps taken by Emerson College to reconnect with alumni from the "tune in, turn on, drop out" era of late 60s through the mid-70s. The writer asserts that giving rates remain lower for alumni from that era. He describes the fund raising problems faced by schools as diverse as Kent State and Princeton Universities: Kent State has yet to launch a capital campaign (over 30 years) since protesting students were accidentally shot on the Ohio campus.

Princeton official Van Williams contends, however, that it is difficult to pin fund raising woes on the single variable of year of graduation. He says, "You wouldn't be able to correlate the 60s to any permanent condition."

Finally, the author looked at a study undertaken in the U.K., which examines scale and determinants of alumni giving using two public-sector universities. This study is interesting because the authors acknowledge borrowing heavily from existing

9 Op. cit. Pulley

U.S. studies into donor attitudes and behavior. The authors draw some demographic conclusions about donors and nondonors. More interesting, however, is their discussion of the role gratitude and educational ideals may play in determining giving. This becomes an attempt to quantify intangibles and makes it valuable to this researcher.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Newspapers and Magazines***

Michael Winerip, writing in the *New York Times*, describes the important role university presidents now command when it comes to raising money. He follows John Casteen, president of the University of Virginia, as he spends four of every five days on the road fund raising. Casteen observed, "They were upset I was spending three days a week on campus."<sup>11</sup>

In *U.S. News & World Report*, David Marcus differentiates between the newly rich and generous dot.com millionaires and seasoned donors. Younger millionaires are more likely to think of their alma maters before buying a second house or jet, Marcus contends. He also suggests that younger donors prefer donating to personal projects rather than bricks and mortar and "naming" opportunities.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Op. cit. Belfield and Beney

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit. Winerip

<sup>12</sup> Op. cit. Marcus

Nancy Brucker offers an overview of how small a portion of public education is currently paid for by the state. She writes in the *Washington Post* that the University of California receives 11 percent of its funding from the state - the remainder must be made up from private donations. She quotes an official as saying, "We've gone from being state-supported to state-assisted to state-located."

On a darker note, her discussion turns to predicting that private monies will often mean private priorities are catered to rather than the overall needs of the university. The large sums tend to come from large donors, often corporate sponsors or major gifts drawn from a few alumni. She also offers a stark picture of the importance university personnel are asked to attach to fund raising duties. Often this requires 25-50 percent of their time.<sup>13</sup>

### **Conclusions**

The author concludes this literature search with two broad observations:

- Researchers have produced a large body of information about university fund raising.

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<sup>13</sup> Op. cit. Brucker

- Universities will continue to require more knowledge about their potential donors if they are to meet the growing demand for private funds. University fund raisers will need to know what potential donors like and don't like about the way their university uses donations. They will also want to learn what motivates donors to give to one institution rather than to another. Fund raisers need knowledge beyond demographics - they need to know what attitudes are associated with a desire to give.

The remainder of this study describes the author's survey, conclusions drawn from that study, and her observations for future fund raising efforts at Rowan University.

## Chapter Three

### Methodology

#### **Introduction**

These studies identify and isolate institutional knowledge and personal attitudes among Rowan alumni, faculty, and others inside and outside Rowan University. Those interviewed from outside the university included three persons with 20 or more years of administrative experience within higher education. The author included these experts in an effort to enrich an otherwise homogeneous sample.

The author required all interviewees to meet one simple criterion: they must have demonstrated a better-than-average-knowledge of the university. Dr. Herman James, Rowan University president from 1984 to 1998, provided access to three interviews with outside experts. Dr. Philip Tumminia, Rowan University's vice-president for university advancement, provided the author with Foundation and Alumni Board names. The author also surveyed current and retired faculty, alumni, coaches, athletes and administrators.

The author conducted personal interviews with approximately two-thirds of the participants. The remaining questionnaire responses came by e-mail.

She wanted to determine if certain characteristics associated with successful university advancement programs appeared in significant numbers in her Rowan sample.



### **Study Characteristics**

These qualitative studies used a small, purposive sample and results apply only to Rowan University. The author used the same protocol for both studies.

- **Personal interviews** accounted for 19 responses. The author conducted most of the interviews in person or by telephone. Personal interviews offered the opportunity for follow-up questions and to record participants' editorial comments. Chapter Five explores these comments.
- **E-mail and written responses** came from the remaining 12 respondents. Ten of these were e-mail. For each of these 12 respondents, the author sent a personal e-mail or written explanation of her study and request for added comments beyond question answers.

These studies offer the following improvements upon recent research into Rowan University fund raising, as outlined in Chapter Two.

- **Independent survey.** The university's College of Communication Prof. Anthony Fulginiti, the author's thesis advisor, oversaw protocol development and approved sample selection. Although the author requested and received names from university officials, her survey questionnaire items, methods of interview and final selection of interviewees, remained independent. The author asked no questions related to Rowan University fund raising practices or goals.

- **Insider/Outsider comparisons.** The author asked the same questions of respondents from inside and outside the university. Differences in respective perceptions -- about how well the university promotes its successful academic and sports programs, for example -- should be important to fund raisers. One big reason: This university has a history of receiving its largest gifts from outside benefactors, rather than from its own alumni or employees.<sup>1</sup> She measured differences between these groups' responses and reports these differences in Chapter Four.

The author presented data in Chapter Two supporting the need for further research into attitudinal and knowledge characteristics associated with successful institutional advancement programs. She summarized studies undertaken by university scholars in the United States and one study from the U.K. She also cited studies performed by newspapers of record, scholarly journals and national newsmagazines.

### **Methods**

The same questionnaire served as a framework for all research participants and both studies. It consisted of 16 multi-part questions, and is shown at the end of this chapter.

Significant white space allowed the interviewer to record commentary and encouraged e-mail respondents to write more than yes/no answers. In addition, all participants received written or

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<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. Spencer

oral requests to answer only questions applicable to their experience and to explain their answers in detail.<sup>2</sup>

Protocol questions fell into four broad categories:

- Attitudes
- School image and sports
- Environment
- Fund raising

All questions were framed to allow dichotomous answers. In all cases 'yes/no,' 'better/worse' or 'positive/negative' answers accommodated unmotivated or hurried respondents.

The value of personal interviews asserted itself quickly. The author had originally planned to survey a larger, randomly selected, alumni sample. After the first three in-depth interviews, however, she decided that personal and e-mail interviews offered superior results. Her interview time with each of those selected offered an opportunity for elaborated answers to protocol questions as well as direct-quote opportunities.

The author conducted all interviews herself. She encouraged elaboration, but did not suggest answers or help respondents in any way. At the end of all personal interviews she asked respondents to comment on any university-related matters that were suggested, but not covered, in the questionnaire.

She tallied answers in a one-page *Excel* spreadsheet expressing all seven categories of respondents and all 16 multi-part survey items in one grid.

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<sup>2</sup>Addendum

Totals across each item demonstrated numerically that each question item had a noted response. In addition to those answers, 'NA' indicated that the respondent could not, or would not answer.

The author considered breaking down the 'NA' responses into two categories. The first would have represented questions inappropriate for certain respondents. The second would have included questions about experiences beyond the ken of certain respondents. She rejected this. Chapter Four includes a list and explanation of such questions.

Respondent categories included:

- Alumni 1923-1974
- Alumni 1975-2000
- Foundation Board
- Alumni Board
- Faculty
- Coaches/Athletes
- Outsiders

Answers were expressed using a grid of x-axis 'Items' and y-axis 'Categories of Persons.' From this grid, the author reports results and apparent trends in Chapters Four and Five.

#### ***Data Analysis Methods***

- ***Responses from the 31 interviewees*** were recorded as frequencies only using Excel software. Not Applicable (NA) answers in the majority of cases indicated that the respondent could not, of his or her own experience, answer

that question. In instances where the respondent wavered between polar answers, the interviewer encouraged the respondent to make a firm decision.

Certain respondent categories quickly offered visual correlation to certain items. For example, questions about school pride directed to athletic personnel or athletes elicited different responses than did the same questions directed to faculty. These relationships, and their implications, are explored in detail in Chapter Five.

- **An informal analysis** enabled the author to discern if any terms or statements consistently appeared in elaborated responses, i.e. answers beyond yes/no, better/worse or good/bad. The relatively small sample size seemed to preclude a formal content analysis.

These qualitative studies depended heavily on in-depth answers to the questionnaire. A very high percentage of respondents offered such answers. These deeper responses appear as narrative comments in Chapter Four.

In Chapter Five the author includes typical statements, statements repeated almost word for word by different respondents to the same item.

QUESTIONS FOR DIRECTED INTERVIEWS DESIGNED  
TO DETERMINE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES  
CONCERNING ROWAN UNIVERSITY  
2001

**Questions measuring attitudes:**

1. How does Rowan compare with other universities you have attended or worked for?
  - 1.1 keeping in touch with alumni
  - 1.2 school pride issues
2. Continuing with school pride, what one event during the school year stirs the most pride in you?
  - 2.1 homecoming
  - 2.2 graduation ceremony
  - 2.3 other
3. How do you describe Rowan when you're talking to persons outside southern New Jersey
  - 3.1 discuss name change
  - 3.2 discuss size of Henry Rowan's gift
  - 3.3. sports
4. What is your opinion of Rowan's building expansion?
  - 4.1 engineering bldg.
  - 4.2 new science bldg.
  - 4.3 Pres. Farish's 10-year plan

**Questions about image and sports:**

5. Would you like to read more about Rowan sports in local and Philadelphia newspapers?
  - 5.1 TV
  - 5.2 radio
    - 5.2.1 Rowan radio or
    - 5.2.2 Phila. Radio
6. For athletic personnel, including coaches, players, alumni:
  - 6.1 when you attend other schools for athletic events,
    - 6.1.1 facilities better or worse than Rowan's
    - 6.1.2 news coverage better or worse
    - 6.1.3 athlete recognition better or worse
7. Have you seen any special privileges afforded athletes here?
8. As an athlete, have you received special privileges?

**Environmental questions:**

9. Do you think the larger Glassboro community has improved during the past 5 years?
10. Is campus growth benefiting the rest of Glassboro?
11. Do you like the name change?
12. If you didn't like it at first, do you accept it now?

**Fund raising questions:**

13. Have you been approached for donations to Rowan?
14. Are you familiar with the term "directed gifts?"
15. Would you be more inclined to give to specific areas rather than to a general fund?
16. Put aside any personal choices for expenditures.
  - 16.1 do you favor academic gifts?
  - 16.2 do you favor campus improvements?
  - 16.3 do you favor co-curricular gifts?
  - 16.4 do you favor gifts to endow faculty chairs?



## **Chapter Four**

### **Study Results**

#### ***Study Purpose***

The author undertook this fund raising research because she wanted to measure certain attitudes and behaviors likely to occur among persons associated with Rowan University. She isolated campus events and certain informed opinions which evoked a sense of school pride in each respondent.

She then compared her findings with those of researchers who had studied factors associated with fund raising success at other colleges and universities.

#### ***Methodology***

This qualitative study used a diverse, purposive sample of persons representing Rowan University insiders and outsiders. All participants had a higher level of knowledge and a longer association with this university than a randomly selected group might be expected to have. To achieve this, the author requested and received names from the university's foundation and alumni boards. She is grateful to Dr. Tumminia for his help in arranging these interviews. Dr. James helped arrange interviews with outsiders who have knowledge of the university.

The author conducted 19 in-depth personal interviews, visiting or telephoning respondents. The remaining 12 responses came by e-mail or mail. In each of the 31 interview requests, the author gave the respondent a choice of response method.

### **Data Analysis**

Responses to the questionnaire's 16 multi-part questions were logged into an *Excel* spreadsheet using analog response sets. All answers were recorded as either 'yes or no,' 'better or worse,' or 'positive or negative.'

After designing a spreadsheet -- and logging in all responses -- the author concluded that commentary responses should be recorded separately. Interviews yielded commentary about experiences, events and attitudes not readily reduced to analog coding as described in the preceding paragraph. The author analyzed the 19 personal interviews.

The author hypothesized the following:

- Respondents would offer opinions on several items, especially about the university's name change and its relationship with Glassboro.
- Respondents would express an interest in the university's recently announced growth plans.
- Respondent attitudes associated with successful fund raising in other universities would be present among Rowan respondents.

The accompanying Table 4.1 and this discussion illustrate the responses. Frequencies for each item were listed for all respondents from each of seven categories. Table 4.1 follows Chapter Four.

From the seven categories of respondents the author selected four or five persons for interviews. Respondents were

asked to respond to all questions they found relevant. Usually they elaborated on their responses.

Limitations on question appropriateness for certain respondent categories include:

- *Question 1* did not apply to those few respondents who had no collegiate experience beyond Rowan University/Glassboro State College.
- *Question 3* elicited fill-in answers in some cases, most notably when respondents discussed academics beyond the three offered choices.
- *Questions 6 and 8* applied only to coaching staff and former collegiate athletes.
- *Question 12* applied only to those who had originally opposed the institution's name change. Only two respondents admitted to this.
- *Question 16* proved difficult for respondents, all of whom requested elaboration.

The wording is clear: "Put aside any personal choices for expenditures." Respondents were offered four possible categories for expenditures. The problem arose because, even though the question asked for an objective selection, respondents took it to mean their (subjective) favorite selection.

**Findings -- Preface**

The author first tallied the responses for each item and each category. Because the sample size was small, cells contained at most five answers and had a corresponding lack of statistical significance.

'NA' answers indicated that the respondent was not certain, had reservations about answering, or was uncomfortable with the interviewer's explanation of a question. In several cases, after careful review of interview transcripts the author placed the response in a 'yes/no' category.

The remaining 'NA' answers meant that the question was not applicable to the respondent because he or she had no collegiate exposure aside from Rowan University.

**Findings -- Data****Agreement with University Plan**

Rowan University's growth, and respondents' knowledge of this growth, elicited strongly worded statements of pride. Question Four illustrates that none of those answering the questionnaire had concerns about the cost or propriety of this former state teachers' college taking on President Farish's \$270 million plans.

However, Henry Rowan's \$100 million gift won't cover the university's 10-year plan that calls for increased faculty spending, new buildings and parking garages and a greater commitment to the Glassboro community.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.rowan.edu](http://www.rowan.edu) (University Assembled speech by Pres. Farish, October 2000.)

### Agreement with Rowan Optimism

How are Rowan's gift and school pride connected?

Respondents said they agreed with Mr. Rowan's optimism and that they wanted to be associated with the university that attracted such a gift.

Responses to Questions One, Three and Four demonstrate the same kind, if not the same degree, of support that Mr. Rowan held when he made his large gift. Mr. Rowan believed that this university was on its way up and respondents agreed with him.

### Willingness to Accept Growth

Chapter Five will speculate about the connection between his large gift and smaller gifts from others. Chapter Four results, however, establish a relationship between respondents' willingness to accept university growth and Rowan's historic financial commitment to the university.

Responses to Questions Four were cited above and show strong support for university growth. Answers to Questions Nine and Ten, however, demonstrate respondents' ambivalence as to what effect such growth has on the surrounding community.

### Agreement with Facility Expansion

None of respondents said anything against the new buildings planned or already started, like the new science building. Campbell Library and Rowan Hall received 100 percent positive ratings. One respondent -- a business school graduate -- agreed that a new B-school building was long overdue. Even he, however, said he thought that would happen 'when the time is right.'

Another Foundation Board respondent said, "I'm proud to bring my (children) to see the campus and to consider applying here."

### Name Change a Non-Issue

A professor who has been teaching at Rowan for more than 30 years described this name change (from Glassboro State College to Rowan University) as being 'the best thing that ever happened to the school.'<sup>2</sup> The author had expected lingering negative sentiments but didn't find them. Several alumni and foundation board members reported that, while they had been asked about the name change in the past, they have been asked about it less in the last two years.

University officials helped this writer put the name change into historical perspective. They recounted that they traveled up and down the east coast making presentations to explain the change. Now they agree that the name Rowan University is widely accepted. One official pointed out that some people merely use this name change as an "excuse to withhold alumni fund raising contributions."<sup>3</sup> This study confirms that the name change matters little to those interviewed; however, anecdotal evidence from the alumni fund raisers seem to support Dr. Tumminia's statement.<sup>4</sup>

Responses to Question Three support the non-issue status of the name change. Responses to Questions Eleven and Twelve strongly support the notion that the change has been accepted at this time.

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Richard Meagher interview, April 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit. Tumminia

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit. Spencer

### Agreement with University Communication

University communication generally meets the expectations of alumni. Although the questionnaire did not list university publications, all respondents except outsiders category expressed familiarity with publications, as well as radio and TV coverage of university events. Most said they enjoyed reading *Rowan Magazine*, and all of those thought it had improved in the last two years. Respondents were also not offended by written fund raising solicitations. The questionnaire asked only general fund raising questions. It did not ask respondents if they gave to Rowan (or anywhere else.)

Questions One and Five measured university success in informing respondents of university business, including sports news. Responses indicate mild agreement that the university communicates well regarding school matters, especially those covered in the *Rowan Magazine*. Several respondents praised it and thought it had improved in recent years.

Sports coverage, however, received less support. Respondents strongly favored more coverage in more media.

### Disagreement with telephone solicitation

Several respondents volunteered fund raising information. They expressed a dislike for telephone solicitations. Although Question 13 required 'yes/no' answers, most respondents volunteered that they disliked being called on the telephone. But James Spencer, Rowan's Director of Alumni Affairs, confirmed that

telephone solicitation remains the most effective vehicle for Rowan annual fund raising drives.

Questions 13 through 16 measured knowledge and opinion about fund raising practices in general and about specific areas where funds were needed. Respondents were heavily in favor of directed gifts, including planned giving, over general fund giving.

### School Pride Ambiguous

School pride proved to be somewhat harder to gauge. When respondents chose events (Questions One and Two) that brought them back to the campus, graduation was the clear leader. Homecoming received about half as much support. A third choice, 'Other,' received only one vote. The author included this because she was determined to get a vote from everybody for a specific event. The one 'Other' choice reflected a respondent's participation in the university's annual 'Cooking School.'

Later in the survey, however, school pride surfaced again when respondents discussed the university's image among people not familiar with the school. Question Three answers and comments demonstrate the value of improved campus aesthetics and other changes set in motion by Mr. Rowan's gift.

Study participants reported that they were routinely asked two specific questions about Rowan University:

- How did the university get Henry Rowan's attention -- and his large gift?



- What can you tell me about your winning football and basketball programs?

### **Insufficient Media Coverage**

All respondents stated that they felt the university received insufficient media coverage, especially among Philadelphia newspapers and TV. Local southern New Jersey newspaper coverage was also rated insufficient. Question Five answers support this statement with regard to sports with a 76 to nine ratio of 'yes/no' answers for more media coverage.

Rowan radio received praise from those who received its signal. Several respondents from Cumberland, Salem, Burlington, Camden and northern New Jersey said that they could not receive Rowan's signal.

### **Sports Connected to School Pride**

Several respondents reported that sports successes -- especially football, soccer and basketball -- accounted for the highest occurrence of Rowan University's name recognition among strangers. Both alumni categories said that sports were what most people from outside southern New Jersey asked about (Question Three.) Chapter Five will offer an opportunity for the author to speculate why this is so, and to suggest ways this knowledge might be useful to university fund raisers.

### **Mixed Messages Regarding Campus-Community**

The larger Glassboro community's relationship with the Rowan campus proved difficult to quantify. Respondents said they believe university growth benefits Glassboro. Question Nine

answers (11-yes, 15-no) indicated that Glassboro had not improved in the last five years. Question 10 answers (28-yes, 3-no) more strongly support the idea that campus growth will benefit the community.

Are these responses contradictory, or do they reflect hope tempered by realism? The author will examine this question in Chapter Five.

### **Agreement with Directed Gifts**

Almost all respondents favored *directed gifts* and said they would respond more favorably when asked to donate to a specific program or capital project. Two respondents said they funded scholarships each year. Several others responded favorably to money requests that came from classmates or graduates of their program or college, rather than requests for general fund donations. These findings comply with research expressed in Chapters One and Two.

### ***Summary***

Table 4.1 shows responses to 16 multi-part questions. Each of the seven groups of respondents is a row; each item is a column header, identified with an abbreviated form of the question.

Given the small sample size, study results cannot be generalized to other universities. However, Chapter Five will report some of the educated opinions that often accompanied analog responses to study questions.

### 4.1 Frequencies for Responses Among Seven Selected Groups

	Keep in Touch with Alumni	School Pride	Homecoming	Graduation	Another	Discuss	Discuss Mr.	Discuss	Opinion of	Opinion of	Opinion of
		Issues	Stirs Pride	Ceremony	Event Stirs	Name	Rowan's Gift	Sports	Engineering	Science	President's
	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.1	4.2	4.3
	B, W, NA	B, W, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA
Alumni '23-'74	3, 1, 0	3, 1, 0	1, 3, 0	4, 0, 0	1, 3, 0	2, 2, 0	2, 2, 0	3, 1, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0
Alumni '75-'01	3, 1, 1	2, 1, 2	1, 4, 0	3, 2, 0	1, 4, 0	4, 1, 0	2, 3, 0	2, 3, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0
Foundation Board	1, 3, 0	1, 1, 2	1, 3, 0	4, 0, 0	1, 1, 2	3, 1, 0	0, 4, 0	3, 1, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0
Alumni Board	3, 0, 2	4, 0, 1	4, 1, 0	4, 1, 0	1, 4, 0	2, 3, 0	1, 4, 0	4, 1, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0
Faculty	3, 2, 0	1, 3, 1	1, 4, 0	3, 1, 1	2, 3, 0	5, 0, 0	4, 1, 0	4, 1, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0
Coaches/Athletes	1, 1, 2	1, 1, 2	0, 4, 0	3, 1, 0	3, 1, 0	2, 2, 0	1, 3, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0
Outsiders	1, 1, 2	0, 2, 2	2, 0, 2	2, 1, 1	1, 1, 2	3, 1, 0	2, 2, 0	2, 2, 0	3, 1, 0	4, 0, 0	3, 0, 1

Table above shows "Better/Worse/Not Applicable" and "Yes/No/Not Applicable" answers to study protocol. Each column shows number of responses to each question, or part of a question, (briefly identified question number.) Each row contains one of seven categories of respondents.

### 4.1 Frequencies for Responses Among Seven Selected Groups

	Like More RU Sports in Papers	Like More RU sports on TV	Like More RU Sports on Rowan Radio	Like More RU Sports on Phila. Radio	Like More RU Sports on RU	Athletic Facilities Compared to RU*	Sports Coverage Compared to RU*	Athletic Recognition Compared to RU*	Special Privileges Afforded Athletes	Received Special Privileges as Athlete	Glassboro Improved in Last 5 Years	Campus Growth Benefit to Glassboro
	5	5.1	5.2.1	5.2.2	6.1.1	6.1.2	6.1.3	7	8	9	10	
	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	B, W, NA	B, W, NA	B, W, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA
Alumni '23-'74	3, 1, 0	3, 1, 0	3, 1, 0	1, 3, 0	0, 2, 2	0, 1, 3	0, 1, 3	0, 4, 0	0, 2, 2	1, 1, 2	4, 0, 0	
Alumni '75-'01	5, 0, 0	4, 1, 0	3, 2, 0	4, 1, 0	1, 1, 3	1, 1, 3	1, 1, 3	3, 1, 1	0, 0, 5	0, 3, 2	5, 0, 0	
Foundation Board	3, 1, 0	4, 0, 0	1, 3, 0	3, 1, 0	0, 1, 3	3, 1, 0	1, 0, 3	1, 1, 2	0, 1, 3	3, 0, 1	4, 0, 0	
Alumni Board	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	2, 0, 3	1, 0, 4	0, 1, 4	3, 1, 1	0, 0, 5	4, 1, 0	3, 2, 0	
Faculty	4, 1, 0	4, 1, 0	2, 2, 1	4, 1, 0	2, 3, 0	2, 2, 1	4, 1, 0	1, 0, 4	1, 1, 3	0, 5, 0	5, 0, 0	
Coaches/Athletes	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	2, 2, 0	4, 0, 0	2, 2, 0	3, 1, 0	1, 1, 2	2, 2, 0	0, 3, 1	2, 2, 0	4, 0, 0	
Outsiders	3, 0, 1	3, 0, 1	1, 0, 3	1, 0, 3	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1	1, 2, 1	0, 2, 2	0, 2, 2	1, 3, 0	3, 1, 0	

Table above shows "Better/Worse/Not Applicable" and "Yes/No/Not Applicable" answers to study protocol.  
 Each column shows number of responses to each question, or part of a question, (briefly identified question number.)  
 Each row contains one of seven categories of respondents.

\*Athletic personnel includes athletes and coaches

### 4.1 Frequencies for Responses Among Seven Selected Groups

	Like Name Change	If No at First, Like It Now	Contacted for Donations to RU	Familiar with "Directed Gifts"	General Fund vs. Specific Area Gifts	Favor Academic Gifts	Favor Campus Improvements	Favor Co-curricular Gifts	Favor Endow Faculty Chairs
	11	12	13	14	15	16.1	16.2	16.3	16.4
	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA	Y, N, NA
Alumni '23-'74	1, 3, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	3, 1, 0	2, 2, 0	3, 1, 0	2, 2, 0	2, 2, 0
Alumni "75-'01	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	3, 2, 0	5, 0, 0	4, 1, 0	4, 1, 0	1, 2, 2,	1, 2, 2
Foundation Board	4, 0, 0	0, 0, 4	4, 0, 0	4, 0, 0	2, 0, 2	2, 1, 1	4, 0, 0	0, 3, 1	0, 3, 1
Alumni Board	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	4, 1, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	3, 2, 0	0, 4, 1
Faculty	5, 0, 0	0, 1, 4	2, 2, 1	4, 0, 1	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	5, 0, 0	3, 0, 2,	1, 0, 4
Coaches/Athletes	3, 1, 0	2, 0, 2	3, 0, 1	3, 1, 0	4, 0, 0	3, 1, 0	3, 1, 0	2, 2, 0	1, 1, 2
Outsiders	4, 0, 0	2, 1, 1	3, 1, 0	3, 1, 0	4, 0, 0	3, 0, 1	2, 1, 1	2, 1, 1	1, 2, 1

Table above shows "Better/Worse/Not Applicable" and "Yes/No/Not Applicable" answers to study protocol. Each column shows number of responses to each question, or part of a question, (briefly identified question number.) Each row contains one of seven categories of respondents.

## Chapter Five

### **Background**

The author expected to find the persons interviewed eager to know more about the university's plans for growth. She also expected to identify those opinions and behaviors described in other collegiate fund raising research.

Her questionnaire reflected her intent to record 'yes/no' kinds of answers as well as to encourage comments illuminating those answers. Such comments form the basis for this chapter and support her answers to the following:

- Do Rowan University alumni, faculty, and others knowledgeable about this school, express approval of Rowan's planned growth, and its relationship with Glassboro and its public relations efforts in general?
- Did respondents express fear the university was losing its small-town teachers' college roots?
- Has the name change from Glassboro State College to Rowan University gained acceptance?

### **Study Limitations**

The author reminds the reader that this study represents attitudes, opinions and behaviors of persons selected on the basis of their extensive knowledge and association with Rowan University. Findings may be useful to fund raising and alumni personnel at this university but cannot be generalized to other schools.

Although anonymity was offered to all respondents, it was claimed in only two instances. This fact alone makes a strong argument for the following discussion to be judged subjective. Rowan's unique public university status as recipient of a \$100 million gift clearly sets it apart from similar sized institutions. The university's method of recruiting for sports teams also differs from other similar-sized institutions.

### ***Discussion***

Can Rowan University grow in a vacuum? The most surprising answers to this survey yielded an apparent inconsistency between support for the university's growth and pessimism about the surrounding Glassboro community.

Respondents overwhelmingly expressed the opinion that Rowan's growth is in the process of benefiting the surrounding Glassboro community. One faculty member pointed out that expanded campus housing for students is one way the university could get students out of sub-standard rental housing in Glassboro and at the same time reduce friction between noisy students and residents.

Most respondents were undecided as to whether Glassboro had shown any improvement during the past five years. More respondents said it had improved than said it had not. The author suggests two possible reasons for this:

- The questionnaire did not offer specific areas such as cleaner streets, fewer boarded up buildings, less crime, on which to peg answers.

- Little effort has been invested in reviewing past improvements. Hence, knowledge is low. Instead, the university's administration has put forth a 10-year plan full of specific objectives for the campus and community. Respondents displayed a great deal of familiarity with this plan.

In personal interviews (20 of 31) respondents were encouraged to elaborate on their answers. However, the interviewer was unsuccessful in getting any substantive answers to this question. Respondents expressed a desire to be positive but couldn't identify what had improved.

It appears to be in the hands of the university's communicators to educate both town and gown about Rowan's growth and how Glassboro can benefit from this growth.

When asked about new buildings (Rowan Hall, Campbell Library completed; ground broken for new science building), respondents expressed nearly complete approval.

A university coach who routinely takes visitors to the library and engineering building, said, "I took a recruit to Rowan Hall and the young man, who intended to major in engineering, told me that this sealed his decision to attend -- and play for -- Rowan."

President Farish's 10-year plan garnered almost unanimous approval as well. Several respondents voiced the notion that these new buildings and related campus improvements signaled a university moving ahead and "demonstrated that Henry Rowan made a



good choice in choosing this school for his gift." A single dissenter feared that the campus might lose "it's small town atmosphere."

These same respondents, however, were less vocal about proposed academic changes. Most said had yet to "read the fine print," but were supportive in principle to the President's proposals.

Do these responses warrant any valid conclusions beyond the obvious one that says people like to see beautiful new buildings go up? The author believes the answer is yes for the following reasons:

- It becomes a visible sign of Henry Rowan's financial commitment.
- The campus becomes a visual magnet for think tanks and related business and research facilities.
- An attractive campus serves as a point of pride for students and faculty.

#### ***Summary of Conclusions Suggested by the Studies***

Among the **Alumni '23-'74** respondents, graduation ceremonies drew the most praise of campus activities they attended. This group also expressed greater interest in sports talk with outsiders than did younger alumni. Two interviewees (of four) were members of Rowan sports teams. Even though these men bemoaned certain unnamed Rowan athletic practices, they said they talked up the programs with outsiders. When asked about the name change, three of four respondents acknowledged they disliked it

at first, but do like it now. This group alone admitted to such initial displeasure.

**Alumni '75-'01** also said they discussed the name change with outsiders and favored graduation as a campus event to attend.

Comments from this group indicate that they are more provincial than older alumni. "I hope it (Rowan University) doesn't become elitist and quits taking the average, striving B students," said one alumni board member. Another said, "I would hate to see Glassboro lose its small town charm," when asked about Rowan's growth and its effect on Glassboro.

Two female respondents said they frequently talked about sports to outsiders and were eager to read more about sports in the Philadelphia Inquirer and Delaware press. "This (sports) is the single thing that gives the university name recognition," said one woman, describing her experiences at national conferences and job travels. Another respondent said, "Although the (Rowan) gift was outstanding, I try to focus on the school's athletic success."

These quotes pose a question -- Why not tout the academic successes (like increased SAT scores for every class entering since 1984 instead of sports? The author suggests that people, including this respondent have too little knowledge of Rowan's academic successes. Of course, the author's sample included persons more knowledgeable than average. So, if respondents don't have academic success figures at hand to use in conversation,

most of the rest of us are in an even lesser position to use them.

The **Foundation Board** interviewees voiced less approval of Rowan's success keeping in touch with alumni than other groups. One explanation: These respondents all had extensive experience with other schools, and received communications from all of them. Their answers reflected knowledge of diverse fund raising practices. One woman described her experiences with an Eastern liberal arts school by saying, "I am able to fund specific events for students there." These respondents all said that they did not discuss Henry Rowan's gift with outsiders.

They, with the **Alumni Board**, believed the Glassboro community had improved in the last five years. These two groups alone supported this notion. One alumni board member said, "I believe the campus changes will convince the town to make some changes as well." Other respondents offered tepid 'yes' answers, one saying, "I think it (campus growth) must be helping the community, but I can't say how without research."

**Faculty** answered more questions with pessimistic comments. These longtime employees occupy a unique position to know all sides of university workings. The author includes several comments here:

- *On the community* -- "Glassboro doesn't appreciate how much money the university brings to its businesses."

- *On sports* - "People outside Jersey express interest in our sports teams, period. Nobody (outside of Division III purists) cares whether we have transfers playing or not."
- *On giving* - "Rowan never developed the concept of giving."
- *On event promotion* - "More advertising is essential. Cultural events aren't promoted and our sports successes remain anonymous in our own backyard."
- *On name change* - "The best thing we ever did."

While faculty joined others in approval of the new campus buildings, they unanimously believed the community had not improved in the last five years. They did, however, believe that improvement was coming.

**Coaches and athletes** believed homecoming at Rowan suffered in comparison to other schools they had attended, played or coached for. They also believed news coverage of teams elsewhere ranked better than at Rowan. Two of four respondents had participated in championship football games in Ohio and both expressed admiration at the level of interest in Ohio for Division III football. A former athlete (not at Rowan) said, "Rowan remains unsophisticated about its (sports) promotional possibilities. This seems to be a South Jersey mind set."

**Outsider answers** generally reflect those among the other six categories. One respondent said that he would never give to an institution unless that institution kept in touch beyond asking for donations. The same man pointed out the tendency of

those who have to get more. He believes that Henry Rowan's gift can be a catalyst for future gifts.

### **Summary**

How well did the author's research answer the three questions posed on page one? Rowan University's approval rating among those surveyed was consistently high. No one in these groups expressed distaste for the new buildings or for President Farish's academic plans. While respondents exhibited some optimism regarding Glassboro, even they failed to say if, or how, it had changed for the better in the last five years. (N.B. The survey did not ask respondents for specifics, it simply asked for 'better/worse.') Respondents did not blurt out that public relations efforts were wanting, but they did say that university communication, especially *Rowan Magazine*, appealed to them. One said, "If I'm going to give a substantial financial gift to Rowan, I'd like to see an individualized thank-you note and specifics about how the gift was used.

Only two persons voiced concerns that the university might lose its small town character.

The name change appears to be a non-issue. An argument can be made that this study relied on persons already very interested in this university. Most of these respondents suggested that the name change fits in with other university changes, i.e. becoming a regional university with new buildings and academic programs.

This study offered largely anecdotal evidence in answer to the survey's questions. The well-informed attitudes, opinions and

behaviors recorded in this study, however, should enliven fund raising and communication discussion at this university.

Rowan's present fund raising practice of not encouraging directed gifts is not consistent with the research expressed in Chapters One and Two and this study, nor with the author's findings. The university does offer donors opportunities for directed gifts, but suffers in comparison to the nation's highly successful programs. In fairness to Rowan, staffing limitations rather than the university's philanthropic philosophy, surely explain these differences.

Researchers might revisit this study using a larger sample and drawing comparisons with a university more like Rowan in size and student profile. Such a study might shed light on Rowan's degree of fund raising successes compared to its academic cohort.

To meet the fund raising needs of the future, however, success factors - whether identified in a study of Boston College or of the California state system - are what count in any size university. Further research is needed into what attitudes, opinions and knowledge resides in the minds of potential donors and how those factors might lead a donor to give.

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## Glossary of Terms

**Alumni** are graduates of a college or university.

**Fund raising** refers to both capital and annual campaigns through which institutions raise money.

**Capital campaign** is fund raising campaign for specific projects, often building projects, but including scholarships and other endowments. Capital campaigns usually run for a set period of time or until a financial goal is realized.

**Annual fund** campaigns run each year and usually focus on alumni gifts pledged on a yearly basis.

**IAP** - Institutional Advancement Programs - administrative function covering all university fund raising.

**CASE** - Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Organization supports and publishes higher education research.