

NCAA Champ 'Never Quit'

A Search for Justice

Going Big on Big Data

RUTGERS CAMDEN

MAGAZINE

FALL 2021

A portrait of Antonio D. Tillis, the new Chancellor of Rutgers-Camden. He is a middle-aged Black man with a goatee, smiling warmly at the camera. He is wearing a grey plaid suit jacket over a white dress shirt and a red striped tie. A small red Rutgers logo pin is on his lapel, and a pink pocket square is in his breast pocket. He is standing outdoors with a blurred background of people and greenery. A black metal railing is visible in the lower right corner.

**An Educator
at *Heart***

Once a first-generation college student, new Chancellor Antonio D. Tillis feels right at home at Rutgers-Camden

RUTGERS CAMDEN

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Almost all Rutgers-Camden students were vaccinated against COVID-19 before the beginning of the fall semester, enabling the university to return to in-person classes with indoor mask mandates.





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We welcome your feedback on this issue of Rutgers-Camden Magazine. If you have questions or comments regarding the content of the magazine, please contact Sam Starnes at [sstarnes@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:ssstarnes@camden.rutgers.edu) or 856-225-6857. For alumni address changes, please visit ralumni.com/mynews or call 848-932-7260.

CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings, Rutgers University–Camden alumni and supporters! I am honored and elated to be your chancellor. Since my arrival on July 1, I have deepened my already considerable appreciation for the energy and commitment of the Rutgers–Camden community. Our campus is sustained by faculty, staff, and more than 55,000 proud alumni who support our students in myriad ways. I am very fortunate to be part of this impressive community and to be given the opportunity to lead an institution as engaged, diverse, and student-centered as Rutgers University–Camden. This is an outstanding university that clearly demonstrates its commitment to public values and to building upon its tradition as a place of access for first-generation college students seeking a world-class Rutgers degree.

As someone who was a first-generation student, I am particularly attuned to the extraordinary opportunities that Rutgers–Camden provides, as well as the challenges that our students face as they seek to complete their degrees and achieve their goals. I am committed to working with our students, our faculty, our alumni, and our academic and administrative units to create new learning experiences and academic programs that provide Rutgers–Camden students with the critical thinking skills they need to succeed in their careers, in their communities, and throughout their lives. It is especially important that Rutgers–Camden students learn with, and are mentored by, a truly impressive faculty who consistently are at the vanguard of generating new ideas to improve our society. I am very excited to work with the academic enterprise to cultivate the support it needs to thrive as a research institution, which will provide our students with unparalleled learning opportunity while firmly defining both Camden and southern New Jersey as a nexus for innovation.

Together, we are emerging from the health, psychological, and economic stress caused by the pandemic. These have been tremendous strains, but I know with great certainty that Rutgers–Camden is a place where we will help each other and our entire region stand up and move forward stronger than ever before.

I am confident that Rutgers University–Camden has a brilliant future ahead. Our amazing campus embraces values that I hold dear—the daily transformation of lives through our research, our teaching, and our commitment to civic engagement. I feel privileged to join you at this auspicious moment in Rutgers–Camden's history.

ONLINE UPDATES

Please visit the following for frequent updates:

Universitywide COVID-19 information: coronavirus.rutgers.edu.

Rutgers–Camden COVID-19 information: camden.rutgers.edu/about/responses-covid-19-rutgers-university-camden.

Updates on Rutgers–Camden events: camden.rutgers.edu/calendar.

Alumni activity: alumni.rutgers.edu.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antonio D. Tillis".

Antonio D. Tillis, Ph.D.
Chancellor

A RISE IN THE RANKINGS

Rutgers University–Camden once again has been recognized nationally as a research university that provides great value and opportunity for its students.

Rutgers–Camden rose from the previous year in five *U.S. News and World Report* categories: Top Performers on Social Mobility (18, up from 26); Top Public Universities (67, up from 71); Best Colleges for Veterans (86, up from 108); and Overall (148, up from 153).

Washington Monthly magazine ranked Rutgers–Camden among the top 25 “Best Bang for the Buck” universities in the Northeast, and 22nd nationally in terms of providing social mobility opportunities for its students.

ON CAMPUS

PHOTO BY RON DOWNES JR.



A Return to Campus

In-person classes resumed with the beginning of the fall semester at Rutgers University–Camden. Nearly 100 percent of Rutgers–Camden students, and the overwhelming majority of faculty and staff, indicated that they were vaccinated, allowing the university to offer almost all courses in

person. Residence halls, the library, offices, study areas, the dining hall—which includes a newly renovated Starbucks—and other spaces are active within the context of public health requirements set forth by Rutgers in accordance with CDC and state guidelines. For details and updates on the university’s response to the pandemic, visit coronavirus.rutgers.edu.

NEW LEADERS NAMED

New Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice Chancellor Begin Tenures

A longtime Rutgers University–Camden faculty member and administrator has been named provost and executive vice chancellor.

Daniel Hart, a distinguished professor of psychology who previously served as senior vice chancellor and has held the role of interim provost, joined the Rutgers–Camden faculty as an assistant professor of psychology in 1984. “Many members of our campus community recognize Dr. Hart as a thoughtful colleague with keen insights into realizing the full extent of opportunity



that Rutgers University–Camden can offer as a global center for research and teaching,” Chancellor Antonio D. Tillis said in announcing the appointment, which took effect August 1.

Hart, who holds master’s and doctoral degrees from Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education, is Rutgers–Camden’s chief academic officer. In addition to working with the deans, who report to him, he will seek to expand Rutgers–Camden’s profile as a research university. He will provide strategic oversight for the Office of Research, the Office of Instructional Design and Technology, and the Honors College.

Hart succeeds former provost and executive vice chancellor Michael Palis, who stepped down to return to the computer science faculty. “Since 2015, Dr. Palis has led our institution in its efforts to elevate its national profile as a research university,” Tillis said. “His tenure as provost and executive vice chancellor can best be described as transformational.”

In addition, Tillis named Jimmy Jung as senior vice chancellor. Jung’s

responsibilities include leading efforts to develop intra-university partnerships; deepening the integration of enrollment management, student success, and experiential learning into the core academic missions of teaching and research; and improving the assessment



and development of instruction. He oversees the Divisions of Enrollment Management and Student Academic Success, the academic integrity function, and the Office of Campus Events.

Jung previously has served as vice president for student affairs at New Jersey City University, vice president for enrollment management at the University of Maine, and, most recently, vice president for strategic enrollment management at Rowan University.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Fighting the Virus through Vaccination Efforts

Multiple initiatives launched by Rutgers University–Camden have increased COVID-19 vaccination rates among South Jersey residents, as well as the rates of students, faculty, and staff on campus.

Off campus, a variety of programs helped city and area residents to get shots. “To get out of this pandemic and return to fully functioning life, we have to think creatively about how to vaccinate our hard-to-reach and vulnerable residents,” said

Bob Atkins, an associate professor at the Rutgers School of Nursing–Camden who directs the New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI), a statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

NJHI funded Community Connectors, an innovative awareness campaign led by Rutgers University–Camden and the Center for Family Services in Camden. It leveraged the trust and relationships of a team of Camden residents to recruit local barbers, who in turn used their position as influential community members to amplify the merits and accessibility of getting vaccinated.

Rutgers–Camden psychology researchers Kristin August and Charlotte Markey worked with their students to develop evidence-based messaging



and materials for the campaign, which included the slogan “Stay Camden strong. Don’t wait. Vaccinate.” They then helped to translate the information into Spanish and create flyers. “It’s rewarding for us researchers and our students to be a part of a project that is helping people in the community,” said August, an associate professor of psychology.

The Rutgers–Camden nursing school, which has been at the forefront of efforts to vaccinate South Jersey residents, continued its significant vaccination contributions through an outreach program that sent nursing students, faculty, and other health care professionals door-to-door to offer vaccinations in communities where vaccination rates are low. Team members also held vaccination events at churches, playgrounds, parks, and schools where



At left, nursing student Camila Llosa delivers a vaccine shot. Above, Rutgers–Camden team members at a community vaccination event. Rutgers–Camden efforts led to more than 1,000 vaccine shots delivered in communities and on campus.

Rutgers–Camden nursing students administered vaccine shots. Students addressed fears and uncertainties about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine. “The more accurate the information we can communicate, the more we can help improve public health,” said Kevin Emmons, a School of Nursing associate dean and clinical associate professor, who noted that more than 600 were vaccinated in this program.

On campus, Rutgers–Camden opened a vaccination clinic in the Campus Center that served anyone who wanted to get a shot. Powered by the Student Wellness Center team and supported by the School of Nursing and campus volunteers, the vaccine clinic helped to lift the vaccine rates of students to almost 100 percent, as of September 1. In total, more than 400 vaccine shots were administered in the on-campus clinic since it began in May.

ATHLETICS



Rutgers-Camden hammer thrower's commitment to overcoming challenges resulted in a 2021 national championship

By Sam Starnes

When the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of the 2020 track and field season, Jude Misko, a Rutgers–Camden standout in the obscure and ancient sport known as the hammer throw, didn't miss a beat. "I kept telling myself that eventually it's going to be over and I'll have a season at some point," said Misko, a graduate student in criminal justice who earned his bachelor's degree at Rutgers–Camden in 2020. Misko continued practicing four days a week, persevering through lone practice sessions

in freezing cold, darkness, rain, and heat. "I told myself that nobody else is doing this. People are going to be home, playing video games, relaxing. Nobody is going to spend their days training for the hammer for a season that may or may not happen."

Except Misko, who knows how to overcome challenges. Standing five-foot-nine, he is shorter than almost all the other accomplished hammer throwers. It was a detail he contemplated in May 2021 after he threw the 16-pound ball, which is connected to a four-foot wire with a handle, more than 60 meters—longer than

two NBA-length basketball courts put together—to win the NCAA Division III national championship. "Before we got onto the podium, I was looking around and thinking, 'Wow I'm the shortest guy here.' I take pride in that, being the shortest guy. Everybody is taller than me, and I beat them all."

Misko also has overcome serious injury challenges. In 2017, after he won the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division III championship at Rowan College of Gloucester County, he suffered a bulging

“PEOPLE DOUBTING ME—THAT MOTIVATES ME TO KEEP TRAINING.”

- Jude Misko

disk in his lower back. A doctor told him he should quit, but after a few months of physical therapy, he was back in the hammer throw circle with a new appreciation for stretching and managing practices to take care of his body. “People doubting me—that motivates me to keep training.”

The hammer throw is a sport with ancient origins, which, according to Celtic legend, dates back approximately 4,000 years in Ireland. It became an Olympic sport in 1900, but remains somewhat obscure in the United States and is not offered at high school track and field events in New Jersey.

Misko, who was a high school standout at throwing the shot put, picked up the hammer for the first time after graduating from Cherry Hill East High School in 2015. He took to it quickly, winning the NJCAA championship two years later. In 2018, he enrolled as an undergraduate at Rutgers–Camden (where his mother, Pauline Misko CCAS’07, is an alumna) and plans to earn his graduate degree in criminal

justice in 2022. His career goal is to work for a federal law enforcement agency.

While proving his doubters wrong is one of Misko’s motivations for throwing the hammer, he also has a Zen-like relationship to its technique. “It is like a dance almost,” he said. “There’s a rhythm and a timing to it. The hammer has its own sort of life. People who don’t do it won’t understand, but you’ve got to listen to the ball.”

Misko, who now lives in Pine Hill, New Jersey, hopes to defend his championship in 2022, and will train diligently through the 2021-2022 season. His 2021 championship marks Rutgers–Camden’s fourth national championship in its history: Tim Van Liew CCAS’12 won NCAA Division III championships in the javelin in 2012 and 2013, and the softball team won the 2006 championship.

In the long term, Misko, who is 24, doesn’t know what his plans in the sport will be. His throws now, although tops in Division III, are far from Olympic length. He said he wouldn’t rule out trying to make the Olympic team if he keeps getting better and his throws are far enough to give him a chance, but for now, he enjoys practicing. “I’d much rather train for three years than compete in a track meet. I like being out here by myself in the heat or the cold and just training.”

His motto, which is tattooed on his back with an image of a hammer thrower in action, is “Never quit.”

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For a video about Misko and an expanded version of this story, visit magazine.camden.rutgers.edu.

In-Person Arts, Events, and Athletics

Arts, events, and athletic competitions on the Rutgers–Camden campus are once again open to the public with precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The Stedman Gallery welcomes visitors to view the exhibition *A New View—Camden*, which runs through December 11. The weekly Mallery Series of classical music performances, as well as student theatrical and musical performances, have resumed with in-person audiences, as have literary readings hosted by the Rutgers–Camden Writers House. Rutgers–Camden theater productions include William Shakespeare’s *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* from December 9–12. Student musical performances will include a big band concert on November 18, and a choral concert on December 5.

Visitors must wear face coverings indoors and maintain a safe distance from others, and entrance may require proof of vaccination. Please note that schedules are subject to change due to pandemic protocols. For more information on all arts and events, visit arts.camden.rutgers.edu.

Athletic events also welcome attendees. Indoor competitions require masks and social distancing. For athletic schedules, visit scarletraptors.com.

An Educator at *Heart*

Once a first-generation college student, new Chancellor Antonio D. Tillis feels right at home at Rutgers-Camden

By Sam Starnes

When Antonio D. Tillis earned his Ph.D., an esteemed faculty member at the commencement reception asked his Aunt Shirley, “Are you shocked that Antonio will now be a college professor?”

“No,” she said.

“No?” said the professor, who had been Tillis’s adviser. “What do you mean?”

“When he was a little boy,” she said, “we used to call him the Little Professor because he would come home and teach his little cousins everything he had learned in school.”

The first in his large, but close-knit family in Memphis, Tennessee, to go to college, it wasn’t until late in Tillis’s twenties that the lightbulb went off for him that education should be his career. When his plans to go to law school after finishing his undergraduate degree at Vanderbilt University didn’t work out—he had been inspired to become an attorney by the TV courtroom drama *Perry Mason* he watched regularly while growing up—he worked several business jobs, including a sales position for Merck. After five years on that path, he changed course and moved to the Dominican Republic to teach Spanish and mathematics in a Christian orphanage

known as Cry of the Caribbean.

There he met an 11-year-old boy named Justin, who had never been to school. Justin looked as if he could be a member of Tillis’s family back in Memphis. Tillis created a curriculum he called “Teaching Justin How to Read,” and worked with him sounding out words phonetically. “I’ll never forget the smile on his face when he sounded out the word *habichuela*, which means bean. I can still see him sounding it out.

“That’s the moment,” Tillis said. “That’s when I was bitten. And that’s when I knew teaching was going to be my life’s calling.”

After returning to the states, Tillis earned a master’s in Spanish literature at Howard University and taught high school for a year before earning a Ph.D. in Latin American literature with an Afro-Hispanic emphasis from the University of Missouri at Columbia. His college teaching and administrative career includes stints at Purdue University, Dartmouth University, the College of Charleston in South Carolina, the University of Houston, and most recently, the University of Houston–Downtown, where he served as interim president until he took the helm at Rutgers University–Camden in July.

Through more than two decades of faculty and administrative roles, educating students remains his deepest love. “I’m a teacher by nature, a teacher by heart. My heart is in teaching and the acquisition of knowledge.”

Memphis Roots

Born in 1965, Tillis’s first name was inspired by a Mexican family. His parents’ friend Pedro had a younger brother, Antonio, who died young, so they named their child after him. “My mom loved the name, and so that’s how I became Antonio.”

Tillis’s parents, who had separated, moved away to Detroit when he was very young, but he stayed in Tennessee and was raised by his maternal grandparents in South Memphis, an inner-city neighborhood near the Arkansas and Mississippi borders that is populated by the working poor. His grandparents, who had educations that went only through the sixth and ninth grades, had 12 children. He was their first grandchild, and they doted on him. “I was not allowed to work, and Lord knows we could have used the income,” Tillis said. “My grandfather always used to say, ‘Your job is to study.’”



When his Aunt Shelia was in high school and he was a little boy, she taught him how to count to ten in Spanish. “And I never forgot it,” he said. He went on to study Spanish at Memphis Central High School, and had a proclivity for the language in which he became fluent. “I’ve always been interested in Spanish culture, from literature to music to Latin American art,” he said. “It has become part of who I am.”

Tillis, who later in life became fluent in Portuguese, said he looks forward to speaking Spanish with native Spanish-speaking students, their families, and others in Camden, a city where Spanish is the primary language of about 40 percent of residents. “Being able to talk to students’ uncles, their aunts, their parents, and their grandparents in Spanish builds a level of trust and knowledge,” he said. “They see me as an example of what their child can be. I think that’s very important.”

A First-Generation Student

In his first year at Vanderbilt, an elite institution founded by the tycoon Cornelius Vanderbilt, Tillis was one of fewer than 40 Black students in the incoming first-year class. He strived to fit in without the benefit of knowledge about the ways of college. “I did not know you could drop a class,” he said. “I had no knowledge of it.”

An English minor, Tillis also enrolled in classes in African American literature at Fisk University, which partnered with Vanderbilt, and he made friends at Tennessee State University—both historically Black universities in Nashville.

“I had the best of both worlds,” he said.

He said his undergraduate experience among many wealthy students informs his role today as chancellor at a university where almost 55 percent of students are the first in their families to go college. “It gives me a level of understanding relative to the needs of students,” he said.

He said issues of financial aid, registration, Learning Abroad programs, and even the fundamental question of why one should earn a college degree can be confusing for first-generation students. “All of these types of questions most students deal with, but first-generation students deal with these differently,” he said, adding that they don’t have family members to consult about college decisions.

Tillis, who describes himself as a “proud product of the Memphis public school system,” said his choices of leadership positions have been motivated by the desire to support students in public institutions who do not come from privilege. He left Dartmouth, a private and prestigious Ivy League university, for the College of Charleston in South Carolina, which is an urban public school, and later moved to the University of Houston, and subsequently the University of Houston–Downtown, which share many similarities to Rutgers–Camden. “I wanted to be at an institution that served, for the most part, Pell Grant-eligible students who were first generation,” he said. “I purposefully went to the College of Charleston and the University of Houston, and now here because of those similarities.”

He said helping underprivileged students to find their way to college and earn degrees is vastly rewarding. “It makes the job not feel like a job,” he said. “It makes it feel as you are operative in purpose. That’s what gets us through in difficult and challenging moments. On the other end of the challenge is a transformative opportunity.”

Lessons Learned

Tillis said the compound difficulties of 2020—both the COVID-19 pandemic and the reckoning following the killing of George Floyd at the hands of the police—have resulted in lessons that will benefit the university and society at large going forward. “We gained an understanding that our students have so many hidden needs that the pandemic revealed,” he said, noting that mental health issues were at the top of that list. “When we talk about this notion of wanting to educate the entire student, mental health has to be a part of that conversation to make sure we are attending to the needs of our students.”

He said universities with a high population of first-generation students also need to be cognizant of other concerns, such as students who are parents, caregivers to older family members, and breadwinners in households. “We have to rethink the notion of who or what constitutes a student,” he said.

Regarding the heightened awareness of systemic racism in the aftermath of outrage over George Floyd’s death, Tillis, who edited *The Trayvon Martin in ‘US’: An American Tragedy*, a book published in 2015, said it is important to educate



“WE WE WILL MAKE CERTAIN THAT THIS CAMPUS REMAINS ONE WHERE STUDENTS HAVE EQUAL ACCESS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.”

- Chancellor Antonio D. Tillis

students on the historic systems on which racism is built and understand why racism is a learned behavior. “This is what scares me about the notion of not being able to talk about systemic racism and causes—historical causes of why we are still grappling with some of the things we grappled with in the 18th century.”

On campus, Tillis said the university is fully committed to supporting all students and continuing to champion equality. “We have a nice smorgasbord

of cultural representation, and also representation of people whose backgrounds are roots and routes outside of the United States,” Tillis said. “This whole notion of reckoning, and this notion of the beloved community, which is a community that will embrace and love and celebrate difference, will make certain there is equal access, and there is equal opportunity. Students will know that the expectation of being a member of such a community is that you

thrive irrespective of social economics, irrespective of race, and irrespective of orientation.”

Significant Scholarship

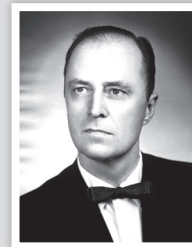
In addition to his leadership roles, Tillis has produced an impressive portfolio of scholarship, authoring, editing, or translating seven books, including *The Afro-Hispanic Reader and Anthology*, published in 2018, and a translation of *Caribbean-African upon Awakening*,



poetry by Blas Jiménez, published in 2010. The book of poetry by Jiménez resonated deeply with him. “Blas was taking on the poetic voice of the ancestral history of people of African ancestry, not just in the Dominican Republic, but talking about roots and routes of migration of people, of bodies, throughout the region,” Tillis said.

Tillis and a Brazilian scholar recently finished a translation of a volume of poetry by Conceição Evaristo, a Brazilian poet, which he hopes will be published soon. “She is probably the Rita Dove of Brazil right now,” he said, comparing Evaristo to the highly regarded poet who is a former United States poet laureate.

A Long Line of Leadership



1950-70

W. Layton Hall,
Dean



2014-20

Phoebe A. Haddon,
Chancellor

A Love for Art and Music

Tillis's love for Spanish and Latin American culture is exhibited in his personal collection of art, which includes paintings by Cuban artist Reynier Llanes and Menelaw Sete, a Brazilian painter often compared to Picasso. One of the favorite pieces in his collection is *The Messenger* by Llanes, a large painting which brings to life Cuban folklore. "Many of those stories are not written, but he uses the canvas to tell them."

Being a native of Memphis, famous for blues music and its iconic Beale Street, he grew up playing the alto saxophone, played in jazz bands, and still has a saxophone today. He also

sang in church choirs as a child and at Vanderbilt. In his twenties, while living in Washington, he further developed his singing in the choir at Metropolitan Baptist Church and has become an accomplished lyric baritone. He started as a tenor, but "found my love in the land of the baritones."

Priorities at Rutgers-Camden

As for plans for Rutgers-Camden, Tillis said he is in an introductory listening period, but that there are several areas on which he wants to focus: creating more internships for students; building pipelines for students to move on to graduate and professional educations;

and ensuring that research faculty have the resources they need to advance research agendas. He also wants to "make certain that this campus remains one where students have access and opportunity."

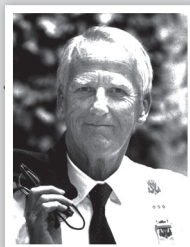
He said he is deeply impressed with the campus commitment to community engagement, and wants to further that cause. "To hear the passion with which colleagues speak about this type of work is definitely great, because I am one who shares that passion. It's going to be a wonderful collegial partnership to really push for the next level of engagement out of colleagues who are engaged in the work." **R**

Rutgers University-Camden, since its founding in 1950, has been led by deans, provosts, and most recently, chancellors, a position which began in 2008.



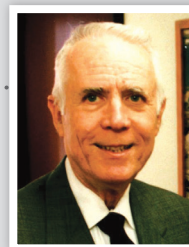
1971-73

James E. Young,
Dean



1974-81

Russell N. Fairbanks,
Provost



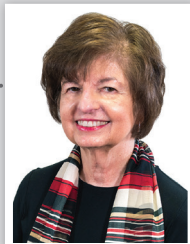
1982-96

Walter K. Gordon,
Provost



2009-14

Wendell Pritchett,
Chancellor



2007-09

Margaret Marsh,
Interim Provost/
Interim Chancellor
(Also interim
chancellor 2020-2021)



1997-2007

Roger J. Dennis,
Provost

IN SEARCH OF JUSTICE

The New Jersey Innocence Project, established recently at Rutgers–Camden, brings together various disciplines to support those wrongfully convicted



Mariel Delacruz GSC'18, left, and Nakea Barksdale RLAW'20 volunteer for the Rutgers–Camden-based New Jersey Innocence Project.

By Sam Starnes and Jeanne Leong

Rutgers University–Camden alumnae Nakea Barksdale and Mariel Delacruz work in roles that could be considered diametrically opposed: Barksdale, a 2020 graduate of Rutgers Law School in Camden, is a public defender; Delacruz, a 2018 graduate of the master's in criminal justice program, works for a prosecutor. But as volunteers for the New Jersey Innocence Project, a recently launched initiative championed by and based at Rutgers–Camden, they are on the same team with the same goal: Exonerating those wrongfully convicted of crimes and advocating against future wrongful

convictions. “Innocence work is important,” said Delacruz, a research policy specialist for the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office. “Historically, we’ve noticed a lot of disparities in people who are sentenced and wrongfully convicted. It’s important because we want to make sure we are being just and that we are discussing those disparities.”

Barksdale, an assistant deputy public defender with the appellate division of the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender, agreed. “When you look at the people who are impacted, not just by the criminal justice system, but by wrongful convictions, it’s people who look like me,” she said. “It’s brown and Black

people who come from disadvantaged communities. It’s people who lack resources, and sometimes they were at the wrong place or the wrong time. It’s important to have an organization that helps people who fell victim to that system and who are stuck behind bars for something they didn’t commit.”

Barksdale and Delacruz both became involved in efforts to establish the New Jersey Innocence Project at Rutgers–Camden when they were students and have remained involved as alumni working in criminal justice. With the support of a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, the project combines the expertise of Rutgers faculty and students

in law, forensic science, criminal justice, and social work.

Until the launch of this Rutgers initiative, New Jersey had been the only state that did not have an organization associated with the national Innocence Network. “It’s long overdue,” said Jane Siegel, a Rutgers-Camden professor of criminal justice and co-founder of the New Jersey Innocence Project.

The breadth of Rutgers faculty expertise along with assistance from students will allow the Innocence Project, which plans to have an office based in the Rutgers Law School in Camden, to offer an array of services, including reviewing requests from prisoners; gathering and examining trial information and investigative records; dealing with forensic issues; assisting in re-entry into the general population; and advocating for better practices and criminal justice reforms.



Emiliano Alquezada, a 2021 graduate of Rutgers-Camden’s graphic design program, designed this logo for the New Jersey Innocence Project.

Estimates are that up to 5 percent of those incarcerated in America are wrongly convicted, according to the National Innocence Project, and the National Registry of Exonerations cites 42 wrongly convicted people in New Jersey who have been exonerated since 1989. “Any person who is in prison wrongly because he or she actually didn’t do the crime—that’s a horrible injustice,” said Jill Friedman, a co-founder of the New Jersey Innocence Project, and

associate dean for pro bono and public interest at Rutgers Law School in Camden.

“ANY PERSON WHO IS IN PRISON WRONGLY BECAUSE HE OR SHE ACTUALLY DIDN’T DO THE CRIME—THAT’S A HORRIBLE INJUSTICE.”

- Jill Friedman, Rutgers Law associate dean

In addition to work by law faculty and students, faculty and students in forensic sciences will provide assistance to exoneration cases. Kimberlee Moran, an associate teaching professor and director of forensics at Rutgers-Camden who has provided forensic services to legal professionals and led training workshops for law enforcement professionals nationally and internationally, is building a Rutgers Crime Lab Unit that will be intertwined with the Innocence Project. (For more about the Crime Lab Unit, see page 16.)

In addition to working on select cases, Rutgers-Camden researchers will seek to understand how and why wrongful convictions happen and use their findings to support efforts to reform the criminal justice system and

prevent future injustices. “There are patterns that can be discerned in cases where there is wrongful conviction, and patterns that we might be able to point to, and point out where there might be room for improvement,” Siegel said.

A unique feature of the program is that social work students will connect clients with resources to assist with transitioning back to living in the general population. “Exonerees receive zero services when they leave prison,” said Sara Plummer, an assistant teaching professor in the School of Social Work. “They are not able to obtain the services and resources offered to people who have been found guilty and have completed their prison sentence and get released on parole.”

Ultimately, the multidisciplinary approach will benefit the wrongfully convicted in various ways. “The magic of what we are doing here at Rutgers is that everything is in house,” Moran said. “We are able to take it to the next level.”



From left, Kimberlee Moran, director of forensics; Barksdale; Jane Siegel, professor of criminal justice; and Delacruz.



BIG IDEAS

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Science Serving Justice

The Rutgers University Crime Lab Unit will provide forensic science technology and training to ensure justice is served

By Sam Starnes

Whether training police professionals in fingerprinting techniques or aiding defense attorneys in a criminal case, the Crime Lab Unit on the Rutgers University–Camden campus will focus strictly on the facts. “We are intent on making the forensic laboratory a neutral space,” said Kimberlee Moran, associate teaching professor and director of forensics at Rutgers–Camden. “We are here about the science—science serving justice.”

Moran—who led the creation of a master in forensic science program in 2019, which made Rutgers the first institution of higher education in New Jersey to offer a master’s degree in the discipline—is the champion of the Crime Lab Unit, a Rutgers Big Idea. As a one-stop shop of forensic services, the Crime Lab Unit is building a state-of-the-art facility that will provide real-time testing in the areas of fingerprinting, firearms identification, forensic toxicology and

chemistry, trace evidence, DNA identification, and forensic anthropology. By engaging researchers from multiple public agencies and the private sector, the Crime Lab Unit has the potential to influence areas beyond forensic science, informing public policy, social justice, and public health.

Not only will the Crime Lab Unit serve the citizens of New Jersey, it will also fuel research, inform public policy, and provide opportunities for students to learn in a real-world environment—thereby establishing Rutgers as a national leader in forensic science and criminal justice.

The Crime Lab Unit held training sessions in August for law enforcement officers from around the state in subjects such as fingerprinting, aquatic death and homicidal drowning investigations, and handling human remains. “This was the first time that these law enforcement agencies have partnered on training not only with the Rutgers University Crime Lab Unit, but with an institution of higher education,” she says. “There is a move in our region toward the concept of public safety professionals, and professional development is a component of that.”

The lab also will serve the New Jersey Innocence Project, recently established on campus with the purpose of exonerating those who were wrongfully convicted and advocating against wrongful convictions. (See pages 14-15 for more on the Innocence Project). “One of the big criticisms of forensic science in our country is that defense attorneys do not have equal access to science,” Moran said. “We have the ability to meet that need.”

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To learn how you can get involved with the Rutgers Crime Lab Unit, please contact Akua Asiamah Andrade, director of development, at andradea@camden.rutgers.edu or 856-225-6322.



Forensic science graduate student Sherifat Alaka measures the caliber of a cartridge casing with guidance from Kimberlee Moran, director of the program.

Rutgers Big Ideas are multidisciplinary, forward-thinking projects that have the potential to elevate Rutgers' standing on the national stage and advance the university's aim of improving the human condition. Three of the Big Ideas center on Rutgers-Camden projects: The Rutgers Crime Lab Unit and the Rutgers-Camden Innovation Community Hub are featured here; Dreams Fulfilled, which supports first-generation students and their families, was featured in the spring 2021 issue of *Rutgers-Camden Magazine*. To bring each Big Idea to life, Rutgers will partner with donors and the community.

For more on the campaign, visit bigideas.rutgers.edu.

A COLLABORATIVE COMMITMENT TO CAMDEN

The Rutgers-Camden Innovation Community Hub (RICH) will be a center of social and economic enterprise in the heart of Camden



Rutgers Innovation Community Hub champions Gloria Bonilla-Santiago, center, and Donna Nickitas, far right, with students from the LEAP Academy University Charter School.

The mission of the Rutgers University-Camden Innovation Community Hub (RICH), a Rutgers Big Idea, is to help transform the city into a center of social and economic enterprise that aligns private, public, government, and nonprofit agencies to create social-economic opportunities. “We will strive to bridge opportunity gaps,” said Donna Nickitas, dean of the Rutgers School of Nursing-Camden and a co-champion of the project. “We also will work to better understand the impact that generations of inequity associated with racism, discrimination, and implicit bias have had on socioeconomic status, health

disparities, poverty, lack of access to good jobs, education, health care, and affordable housing in Camden.”

Gloria Bonilla-Santiago, a Board of Governors distinguished service professor in public policy and administration who is co-championing the effort with Nickitas, said the goal of the RICH initiative is to build a pipeline of educational, employment, and

entrepreneurial programs on Cooper Street. “RICH will become an ecosystem of innovative activity where creative and talented residents, leaders, and entrepreneurs will come together in the heart of Camden to learn, share, grow, and develop connections to create community economic development,” she said.

Bonilla-Santiago and Nickitas said the RICH initiative will leverage Rutgers-Camden as an anchor institution and champion of civic and social responsibility, providing numerous opportunities for residents to do the following:

- Learn in-demand skills necessary for jobs in local industries;

- Develop small businesses and become social entrepreneurs;
- Collaborate with Rutgers faculty, staff, students, and community agency partners to identify and develop innovative solutions to the city's social and economic challenges, and develop new ideas to advance greater equity and access.

Nickitas, a noted health policy scholar and an energetic visionary regarding the future of health care and nursing education in America, is deeply committed to ensuring that everyone—no matter where they live—has the opportunity to live a healthy life. Bonilla-Santiago, known as the “Patron Saint of Cooper Street,” has worked for decades to transform Camden's Cooper Street educational corridor where in 1997, she founded the LEAP Academy University Charter School, which serves children and their families from cradle to college in a holistic and innovative environment that provides a jumping-off point for the new community hub. “A vital component of RICH will be researching and disseminating the lessons learned that can inform policymaking and kick-start a lasting change in Camden and beyond,” Bonilla-Santiago said.

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To learn how you can get involved, please contact Kathleen Brennan, senior director of development, at katecb@camden.rutgers.edu or 856-225-6577.

GOING **BIG** ON BIG DATA

The Rutgers School of Business-Camden offers robust graduate and undergraduate programs in business analytics, including a master's degree focused on big data



By Sam Starnes

When Jeffrey Cuartero wanted to grow in his job at Intuit, a global technology company providing financial services such as TurboTax, he turned to a name he knew. “The M.S. in business analytics program at Rutgers-Camden seemed like the perfect fit for my interests and work schedule,” said Cuartero, a senior program manager for Intuit who at the time held a bachelor’s degree from Rutgers-New Brunswick and Rutgers master’s degrees in supply chain management, public administration, and government accounting.

A native of Somerdale, New Jersey, who graduated from Paul VI High School in Haddonfield, he enrolled in the new all-online program that launched in fall 2020. He had moved from a job in

New York to the San Francisco area in 2019 when he started with Intuit, but the online access to the master’s program in business analytics allowed him to earn his fourth master’s degree from Rutgers in spring 2021. The program paid off in a project he directed for the TurboTax Live service, which matches tax experts with clients who need assistance. “I was able to leverage my analytical skills on



this project to build a predictive model that identified which tax experts were the most and least efficient within their first month of processing tax returns,” Cuartero said.

The kind of big data Cuartero relied

upon in his project is everywhere, from analyzing baseball statistics to scanning resumes for hiring decisions to marketing, fundraising, sales, and beyond. In addition to the graduate program, undergraduates can focus on learning about big data in the business analytics concentration and through a variety of classes.

The term is thrown around often, but what exactly is big data? “Big data is data that grows at a scale that requires special database handling and algorithms tailored to specific big data use cases,” said Ram Gopalan, a clinical associate professor at Rutgers-Camden who teaches business analytics courses.

School of Business-Camden Dean Monica Adya said the integration of business analytics into the undergraduate

te in
s Analytics



Mimi Morrin, director of the M.S. in business analytics, at left, and Monica Adya, dean of the School of Business-Camden.

curriculum and the introduction of the master's program serves to fulfill one of the school's key goals. "A big mission of ours is to have students ready for the careers that lie in front of them," Adya said. "If you look at our curricula in the business analytic space, we cover the range of topics from fundamentals of statistics all the way to advanced machine learning and big data analysis."

Mimi Morrin, the Henry Rutgers professor of marketing and director of the master's and certificate program in business analytics, said big data skills combined with business savvy are important in today's business world. "A lot of firms and government organizations and nonprofits are collecting lots and lots of data, but these organizations are not always sure of

how to exploit the data, how to analyze it, and how to use it," she said. "There is a lot of demand in the marketplace for individuals who can help organizations figure out what to do with their data."

David Howarth, a Cinnaminson, New Jersey, resident who is an administrative analyst at the Internal Audit unit of the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Office of the Inspector General, is one of more than 70 students from 11 states currently enrolled. He said he values the Rutgers-Camden training in using software programs that are commonly employed on big data projects. "One of the greatest strengths of the program that I've enjoyed so far is having the ability to gain hands-on experience with these programs using real-world data and scenarios," Howarth said.

A Full Menu of Graduate Degrees and Certificates

The Rutgers School of Business-Camden has enhanced its graduate programs to offer a wide range of in-person and online graduate degrees, as well as certificate programs that can be completed and applied toward a master's degree.

Graduate degree programs include a traditional on-campus M.B.A., an online M.B.A., and a professional M.B.A.; an online master in accounting; and an online master of science in business analytics.

Certificate programs, one of the fastest-growing professional credentials, are offered in seven areas: accounting analytics, business analytics, digital marketing, forensic accounting, investment and private wealth management, modern financial technologies (fintech), and strategic leadership. These require 12 credits and can be completed in nine to 12 months, and can be earned within a graduate-degree program or as stand-alone academic credential.

For more information on these programs, visit business.camden.rutgers.edu/graduate.

Unlike statistics or computer science-based programs, often called data science, the Rutgers-Camden master's in business analytics program focuses on how to implement the information in practical ways. "Students learn that analytics projects must ultimately serve business goals," Gopalan said. **R**

SCARLET PROFILES



Rutgers University-Camden played a key role in the life and career of Camden City School District superintendent



Katrina McCombs GSC'03 oversaw the opening of the new Camden High School campus, at right. Photo above by Ron Downes Jr.; school photo by Sheena Yera.

By Sam Starnes

The nurturing Katrina McCombs received from her family and teachers in Camden public schools remains a critical influence in her role as superintendent of the Camden City School District. “It taught me the value of making sure that we do whatever possible to surround our children and young people with experiences that are going to catapult them into their destiny,” said McCombs, who has served in the school district’s top role since 2018.

Through a partnership with Rutgers University-Camden and Camden High School, McCombs spent much time studying in the university’s Paul Robeson Library when she was in high school. After graduation, she attended Lehigh University with plans to go onto a premed track and ultimately become a doctor, but during her undergraduate years she realized she wanted to teach. After earning a degree in behavioral and neurosciences in 1991, she returned to Camden to teach kindergarten. “I found it very, very gratifying to give back to the young people

of the future generation,” McCombs said.

After teaching kindergarten for three years, McCombs realized she wanted to be more prepared to deal with the emotional and social needs of children, so she enrolled at Columbia University in New York and earned two master’s degrees in psychological counseling. She returned to Camden to work as a child therapist for a private agency, but after a year returned to teaching in the city’s schools in 1997 as a literacy teacher in the middle school where she also held group therapy sessions to support students. She moved on into roles of increasing responsibility that included serving as a principal, director of early childhood development, and deputy superintendent. In 2003, she earned a master’s in public administration through a university partnership with the school district. “The experience at Rutgers-Camden was really critical in shifting me to be on a path to serve in the role of superintendent,” she said.

Rutgers-Camden, she said, continues to benefit Camden students

through numerous programs, including Rutgers Future Scholars, Camden Ignite, and the Hill Family Center for College Access. “There has always been a rich heritage of partnership between the educational community in Camden and Rutgers,” she said, adding that she hopes the school district and the university collaborations continue to grow.

McCombs said she relishes the challenges of leading the Camden City School District, which is striving to become independent from state control. One difficult step was closing schools, including some she attended, to make the school system more fiscally sound. “The biggest challenge for me was saying to the community that I love that we are going to have to close these schools, but that it is going to set us up for sustainability in the future.”

An accomplishment of McCombs’ administration is the opening this fall of the new Camden High School, which replaced the previous building that had stood for more than one hundred years. “Having students in this new state-of-the-art building is absolutely amazing,” McCombs said. “It has been a long journey, a difficult journey, but if we keep students first and at the center of decision-making, we see that this new school is best for them.”

Alumna Gives Back

Retired nurse who found several job leads through Rutgers University–Camden continues to support the university in numerous ways

By Sam Starnes

An index card on a bulletin board in Armitage Hall caught Linda Wray’s attention when she was a Rutgers–Camden student in the early 1970s. It advertised a part-time job at the PATCO Speed Line’s Lindenwold station, which was not far from her home in Magnolia, New Jersey. She applied and got the job. “I would go in at six o’clock in the morning to one of the stations and do revenue work—putting coins in the counting machine, and selling tickets,” she said. “I would work until eight or nine in the morning and then I would get a free train ride into Camden.”

Wray, a first-generation college student who worked two or more part-time jobs at a time while enrolled, earned an English degree in 1974. She continued as a student in the nursing program, earning a nursing degree in 1976, which was the first class of nursing graduates from Rutgers–Camden. “For my first nursing job, once again, I found an index card in Armitage Hall,” she said.

That index card led to an entry-level job at the Philadelphia General Hospital, which led to a position at Graduate Hospital. From there she went



to work in the intensive care unit at Albert Einstein Medical Center, where she was promoted to a management role, and then to Hahnemann University/Allegheny Hospital, where she held a series of positions of increasing responsibility, culminating as clinical director of medical cardiology nursing. In 1998, she took a part-time consulting job for Independence Blue Cross. And after reconnecting with fellow nurse and Rutgers–Camden alumna Linda Diekmann CCAS’73 at an alumni networking event, she also began consulting for Premier Prizm Solutions, a company Diekmann founded. “She was telling me what her company was and I said, ‘I can do that,’” she said. “She hired me as an independent contractor.”

Wray, who retired in 2015, has lived in Haddon Township for more than 30 years, and has been an avid supporter of Rutgers over the past two decades, giving back to the university by volunteering for various roles and supporting the university with financial gifts. She served as a member of the Rutgers University–Camden Alumni Association Board of Directors and was the inaugural president of the Rutgers University–Camden Alumni Rowing Team,



Linda Wray CCAS’74, SNC’76, pictured in the black Rutgers cap, has been involved in numerous alumni activities, including this day of service at Cathedral Kitchen in Camden.

participating as the team’s coxswain.

Wray continues to volunteer, serving as co-president of the Rutgers School of Nursing–Camden Alumni Association, which was chartered in 2020. She said she is very impressed with the students and young alumni of the program, and thrilled to see the new clinics and facilities devoted to the nursing program. “It has been very enjoyable to stay connected with the nursing program,” she said.

Wray continues to work with the RUAA on various projects, and recently was working on a grant application to hold a conference on the Rutgers–Camden campus. She also has served as a giving ambassador, and has made a generous bequest intention in her will. “I feel a deep connection with Rutgers–Camden,” she said. “I try to help out wherever I can.”

A BARRIER-BREAKING BARRISTER

Rutgers Law in Camden alumna, the first woman to lead a major law firm in Philadelphia, has long been a champion of Rutgers Law students and alumni

By Sam Starnes

When Patricia Santelle, a native of Little Silver, New Jersey, graduated from Boston College in 1982, she knew she wanted to return to practice law in her home state. “It was a pretty easy decision,” she said. “If you want to practice law in New Jersey, why wouldn’t you go to Rutgers?”

She enrolled at Rutgers Law in Camden and began developing litigation and leadership skills that would set her on a path as a successful attorney in the field of complex insurance coverage. “I knew I was going to get the best legal education, which I got, but what I didn’t expect was all the practical experience,” she said.

That experience included participating in moot court competitions. She and a partner won the Hunter Advanced Moot Court Competition in her second year, and in her third year, she competed in the National Moot Court Competition. Her moot court participation led to her being chosen for clerkship with New Jersey Supreme Court Justice Daniel O’Hern after graduation.

She also served as president of the Student Bar Association while at Rutgers Law in Camden. “That gave me my first experience in a leadership role, which was really

valuable—leading students, and dealing with the faculty and the administration,” she said.

Santelle, who earned her law degree in 1985, is chair emerita of Philadelphia-based White and Williams, where she served for seven years as managing partner and chair of the executive committee. When she took the top position in 2013, she became the first woman to lead a major law firm in Philadelphia. After she stepped down in 2020, the firm had grown to more than 200 attorneys and had 10 offices in six states.

Santelle has long been involved as an alumni leader and student mentor, and strongly encourages other alumni to get involved. Earlier this year, she received the Arthur E. Armitage Sr. Distinguished Alumni Award from Rutgers Law in Camden, and in 2010, she received the Scarlet Oak Meritorious Service Award from Rutgers for her contributions. She is now co-chair of the executive

committee of the newly established Rutgers Law Alumnae Network, which supports women alumni and students. “I like to call it the Women of Rutgers Law,” she said. “Any opportunity to give back to the law school is meaningful to me. This one is a great fit, because of my experience as a law alumni leader and female leader in the law.”

Santelle often mentors women attorneys and shares with them her experience as a leader. “I don’t try to fit a mold that is a male-centric one,” she said. “I act like myself. I think that’s helped me maintain a positive attitude, consistency, and to have confidence in what I do.”

Santelle takes great pleasure in serving the community, supporting charitable projects, and doing pro bono legal work. This year she has handled cases for seniors, homeless people, and others in need. “It’s so important to take the talent that we have been given to provide access to justice for all people,” she said.



SANTELE



Patricia Santelle RLaw’85 is involved in many pro bono and charitable endeavors, including her firm’s support of Philadelphia schools.

Seeds of Inspiration



By Christina Hernandez Sherwood

Brennah Lambert turned to a vegan diet when she was in high school as a last-ditch effort to combat health issues. Eschewing animal products made Lambert feel better, and she knew she was a convert to veganism after a few months when she wasn't tempted by the chicken at her favorite wing night.

Her family was supportive, but unfamiliar with plant-based cooking, so Lambert began experimenting in the kitchen. Before long, Lambert's "meat-and-potatoes" grandfather was taking a second helping of her tofu scramble on Christmas morning. "Cooking is my creative outlet," Lambert said. "It just happens organically. I feel like I can taste with my mind. You know that some flavors are going to taste good together."

In 2018, after an aunt shared Lambert's dishes with health-conscious friends at the gym, they became the first

customers of Lambert's meal prep and delivery service. For her new business, she quickly settled on the name LesbiVeggies, which gives a nod to her lesbian and vegan identities.

A year or so later, Lambert enrolled in Raising Capital, a course taught by Rutgers–Camden business school professor David Vance. In his course, she learned how to dig into her business's finances, using formulas and crunching numbers to ensure the venture had enough money to sustain itself. "It made me start to think of things from a business perspective, rather than a consumer," Lambert said. "I feel like that gave me a leg up in owning my business."

Just weeks before her spring 2020 graduation, Lambert decided to turn LesbiVeggies into a brick-and-mortar restaurant. Between classes, Lambert, a Lindenwold native who now lives in Marlton, scouted locations and finally

Brennah Lambert, a self-taught vegan chef and a 2020 graduate of the Rutgers School of Business–Camden, followed her taste buds to launch LesbiVeggies, a popular café in Audubon, New Jersey.

spotted a listing for a storefront in downtown Audubon.

After eight months of prep work, which included buying restaurant-grade equipment and developing brunch and dinner menus from scratch, LesbiVeggies opened its doors in February 2021. Restrictions on indoor dining as a result of the pandemic meant that the new LesbiVeggies—like the original—was primarily catering to takeout customers for the first several months. "People were super excited about what I was doing," Lambert said. "When the first tickets started rolling in, I was kind of in shock. I wasn't prepared for that type of response."

By a weekday brunch in late June 2021, when dining restrictions had eased, the café was so busy that Lambert didn't need to draw on her business school training to know that business was good. Indoor diners were savoring the blackened Cajun cauliflower sandwich and the BBQ chickpea salad. Outdoor tables on Merchant Street were laden with sweet breakfast dishes like the strawberry cheesecake waffle made with cashew cream. And other customers popped in to pick up takeout orders and smoothies.

As for Lambert? She was at the stove behind the frosted glass doors of her kitchen, putting her passion—and her business degree—to good use.

ALUMNI NEWS

A LANDMARK CELEBRATION

The Tau Beta chapter of Omega Psi Phi, the first African American fraternity on campus, was established in 1971

By Christina Hernandez Sherwood

Members of the first chapter of an African American fraternity at Rutgers University–Camden celebrated the group’s 50th anniversary with a weekend of events in August. “It was like a homecoming,” said Larry Jones UCC’74, a retired banker from Estero, Florida.

“The experience was one you would get when you hadn’t seen family for decades.”

After a tour of campus and a reception on the Camden waterfront, the reunion culminated with a dinner, which included a moving tribute to five original brothers who have passed away.

The Tau Beta chapter of Omega Psi Phi, which was very involved in the 1970s in hosting a food drive and supporting East Camden children during summer break, folded about a decade after its



1972
Omega Psi Phi members on the Paul Robeson Library steps, from left: Charles Payne CCAS’74; Anthony Lingo CCAS’74; Elbert Saddler CCAS’75; Eugene Alston SBC’76; Paul McNair CCAS’74; William Spencer; Walter Green; Billy Blunt SBC’74; Ben Calaf CCAS’74; and Ector Quiles CCAS’74, GSC’02. Seated, from left: Horace Worthington III CCAS’74; Mel Glenn, and Jorge Rodriguez CCAS’74.

founding. However, the original members kept in touch, wishing each other “happy anniversary” every May 8, which is the date in 1971 when 11 brothers were inducted. Elbert Saddler CCAS’75, a retired university psychologist who lives in Schwenksville, Pennsylvania, said he is proud of the organization’s history. “It’s something I can look back on and say, ‘I made a contribution on campus to Rutgers–Camden,’” he said. “It’s very important that we go through life and we’re making a contribution.”



2021
At the 50th anniversary reception, top row, from left: Payne; Blunt; Jonathan Muse RC’78, GSC’94; Calaf; Alston; Rodriquez; Oscar Spencer; Lawrence Jones UCC’74; and Andre Robinson CCAS’74. Bottom row, from left: Anthony Ross, Mel McDonald, and Lingo.

Although the Omega Psi Phi chapter is no longer active at Rutgers–Camden, there are six Greek organizations with active charters on campus that belong to the National Pan-Hellenic Council, an association of African American fraternities and sororities. These include the fraternities Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, and Phi Beta Sigma. For more information, visit greeks.camden.rutgers.edu.



BUSINESS SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHARTERED

Marketing professional Suzy Swartz SBC’85 has helped students at Rutgers School of Business–Camden land internships at WXPB, the Philadelphia-based public radio station where she works, for more than a decade. “I love Rutgers–Camden,” she said. “It’s part of who I am, and it helped shape who I’ve become as a professional.”

As president of the new Rutgers School of Business–Camden Alumni Association,

which was chartered in June, Swartz hopes the association will help to foster more alumni mentorship of students, and encourage alumni to network, stay informed about the school, and explore the many programs their alma mater has to offer.

All alumni are members, and there are no dues. Perks of membership include news from the School of Business and the opportunity to provide input. Dean Monica Adya said she looks forward to hearing from

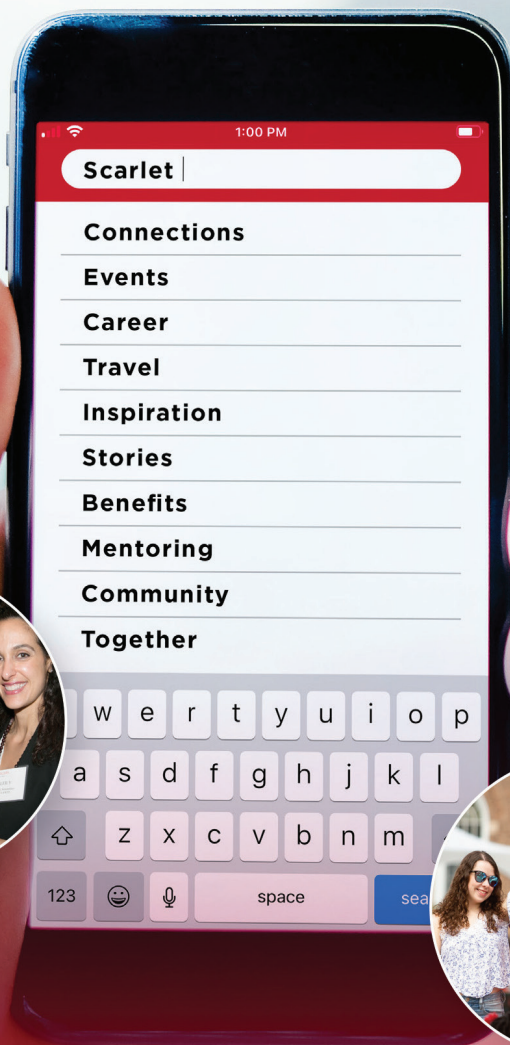


RUTGERS
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School of Business
Alumni Association

alumni. “This is great timing for us to say to our alumni, ‘How can we pull the right activities together that might be rewarding experiences for alumni and students?’”

To get involved, visit business.camden.rutgers.edu/alumni.

Q THE SEARCH IS OVER



Looking for ways to connect with the more than 550,000-strong community of Rutgers graduates?

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- Stories of Rutgers alumni shaping our world
- Topical videos and other content from Rutgers experts and community members



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BIG IDEAS

LIVE AT RUTGERS

From the discovery of streptomycin, the first antibiotic used to treat tuberculosis, to the COVID-19 saliva test, the university has a history of pioneering bold projects that make the world a better place.

The Big Ideas initiative extends this legacy forward through **12 bold projects with global implications**. Driven by faculty and researchers across disciplines, divisions, and locations, each project has the capacity to improve the human condition.

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Support Big Ideas and help Rutgers continue to make discoveries, strengthen communities, and shape our society over the coming decades.

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