

Celebrating 100 Years!

Fall 2023

RETIREES  
American Federation  
of Teachers

AFTerwords  
NEWSLETTER • LOCAL 2373  
ROWAN UNIVERSITY  
201 Mullica Hill Rd., Glassboro, N.J., 08028

### Marking the Centenary:

## Welcome Back Reception Celebrates the Centennial and Sings the Alma Mater

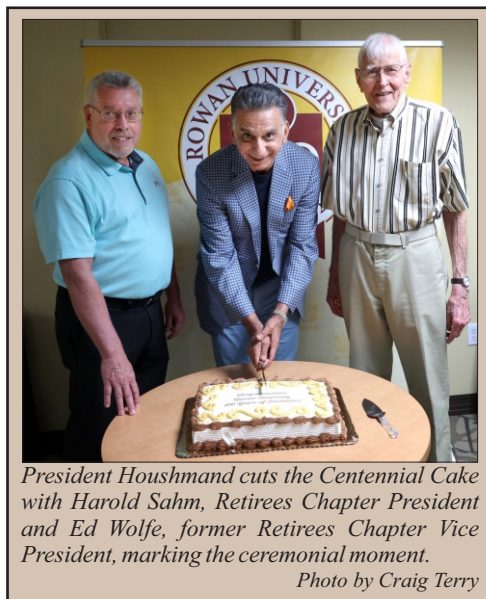
The Welcome Back Reception for Fall 2023 celebrated the Centenary of Rowan University in fine style on September 6, 2023 in Shpeen Hall. Retirees Chapter President Harold Sahn, our Master of Ceremonies, organized the exuberant proceedings like a ringmaster, directing everyone into formation for our Centennial Group Photo before our Luncheon program, taken by Craig Terry, the official photographer of Rowan University.

Slipping in to speak while the group was assembling, in accordance with Craig Terry's requests, was Dr. Gerald Hough, Associate Professor of Biological & Biomedical Sciences, representing the Local, who made a few inspiring remarks about the value of our contribution to the University and the importance of maintaining our relationships with each other and the school.

Following the photograph and while still in group photo formation, Dr. Houshmand delivered an enthusiastic update regarding the current state of the University. Citing its dynamic growth and ever-increasing national prestige, Dr. Houshmand mentioned the *U.S. News & World Report 2024 Best Colleges* issue, which boosted Rowan's ranking in numerous categories, and overall, cited a 30-place change to 163 from 193 last year for National Universities rankings, with significant gains also in the categories of Top Public Schools, Best Value Schools, and Social Mobility.

In addition, the Chronicle of Higher Education ranked Rowan as the nation's 4th fastest-growing research university among public doctoral institutions. Indeed, enrollment has grown from from 11,000 students in 2012 to 23,000 students in fall 2021, making Rowan the fourth fastest-

growing research university in the United States three years in a row. As always, Dr. Houshmand thanked the retirees for their important contributions to the good of the school, which he declared helped make Rowan the outstanding institution it is today. After comments by President Houshmand and Dr. Hough, the group dispersed back to tables.



President Houshmand cuts the Centennial Cake with Harold Sahn, Retirees Chapter President and Ed Wolfe, former Retirees Chapter Vice President, marking the ceremonial moment.

Photo by Craig Terry

At this point M.C. Harold Sahn picked up the program by presenting Chuck Linderman, Executive VP of the chapter, whose opening address, "An Amazing Story to Tell," presented an historical overview of the institution. Dr. Anthony Lowman, Provost, also spoke briefly about the many outstanding accomplishments of Rowan University, including the newest addition—the Schreiber School of Veterinary Medicine, the first of its kind in New Jersey.

Following these remarks from the head table, Toni Libro, Communications Coordinator for the Chapter, read a poignant excerpt from *More Than Cold Stone*, which described the very first day the Glassboro Normal School opened—September 4, 1923—when 236 students arrived on campus to begin their initial journey as future teachers. *More Than Cold Stone*, by Dean Robert Bole, describes the history of the first fifty years of the school, and is now reissued in a brand-new centennial edition. Libro's reading was followed by the assembled singing "Alma Mater, we Greet Thee," acapella, all two verses, led by Larry DePasquale, Corresponding Secretary for the Chapter and our resident musician, for a very moving moment.

Lori Marshall, Assistant Vice President of University Relations, delivered the Keynote address, "What's Past is Prologue." Lori presented a fascinating series of slides that captured the heart of Glassboro State/Rowan University history, while describing the many exciting centennial events taking place across the campus, an awesome array of celebrations in honor of the past, present and future of this institution.

This year we were pleased to recognize four recent retirees who have joined the Chapter: Ted Colanduno, Academic Technology; Diane Hughes, J. D., MBA, Accounting & Finance; Annette McCully, Assistant Director, Residential Learning & University Housing; and Robert Scarpa, MBA, Accounting & Finance. Two of the four were able to be present, Annette McCully and Robert Scarpa. Both received Certificates of Welcome and Commendations from Chapter President, Harold Sahn.

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## Chuck Linderman Opens our Centennial Program: “Lifted Up and Borne Aloft”

Welcome to our AFT Retirees Chapter Centennial Luncheon of 2023. What an amazing story we have to tell. Looking back, here is a brief overview.

1923 - The college began with 236 students as Glassboro Normal School, dedicated to training teachers, of which 226 were women and 10 were men.

1958 - As its curriculum expanded over the years, we became Glassboro State College.

1972-74 - Glassboro State employees become represented by the AFT 2373, under the visionary leadership of Al Taylor and Rose Glassberg. When you get a chance, you can watch Rose Glassberg’s YouTube video marking 100 years, “Telling Our Stories,” as well as other Chapter members

who were interviewed for “Telling Our Stories.

1992 - Henry and Betty Rowan donated 100 million dollars to Glassboro State College which became Rowan College, then Rowan University.

2023 - 23,000 students attend Rowan University, which now has 14 colleges.

None of this could have happened without the dedication of the Faculty, Professional Staff, and Administrators who came before those of us who are here today, as well as those who, unfortunately, were unable to join us today—and each and every one of you.

Upon thinking of the many times I heard the saying, ‘on the shoulders of those who came before us’ I decided to look up its history, and here is what I found.

John of Salisbury, in 1159, wrote in his *Metalogician*: “Bernard of Chartres used to compare us to dwarfs perched on the shoulders of giants. He pointed out that we see more and farther than our predecessors, not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their gigantic stature.”

According to medieval historian Richard William Southern, Bernard was comparing contemporary 12th century scholars to the ancient scholars of Greece and Rome.

So, what is our future now that it is September 6, 2023, as we stand upon the shoulders of those who came before us? Let the next 100 years begin today!

## Julie Mallory Closes our Centennial Program: “For Such a Time as This”

Today, I’ll close out this momentous occasion of our 100th Anniversary Celebration by sharing with you a significant connection between a young Jewish woman, a black male Trinidadian who grew up in Harlem, and a group of dedicated seniors who, being full of their expensive lunch and fancy cake, are about ready to go home.

First, I’ll introduce our Jewish woman, Esther, whose story is traditionally celebrated as Purim. In the story Esther, hiding her identity as a Jew, found favor with Persian King Ahasuerus, becoming his queen. When Haman, the king’s advisor, tried to have the Jews destroyed, her cousin Mordecai pulled Esther aside and said something like this: “Don’t think that just because you live in the king’s house, you’re the one Jew who will get out of this alive. If you persist in staying silent at a time like this, help and deliverance will arrive for the Jews from someplace else; but you and your family will be wiped out. Who knows? Maybe you were made queen *for just such a time as this.*” Taking Mordecai’s advice, Esther spoke to her husband, risking her life and saving her people.

On the eve of my November 1983 birthday, I hurriedly flew out of Chicago to begin work at Glassboro State College’s Counseling Center, a college I barely knew, located minutes from my home. There were two things I learned quickly: one, it was home to a close-knit group of black employees, the Black Professional Organization (BPO), who seemed eager to meet me. And two, unlike my two previous jobs, Rowan had a strong union, the AFT, very supportive of its faculty and NTPs, or Non-teaching Professionals as we were called back then. Members of both

organizations reached out warmly to welcome me and mentor me on the politics of achieving permanent work status at Rowan. From the BPO, Julie Peterson, Bill Myers, Corann Okorodudu, and Herb Douglas were among many who were instrumental in educating me to the institutional structures and practices contributing to racial discrimination at various levels, showing me group strategies and resources to combat such problems. Similarly, within the Center for Counseling and Career Development, my colleagues Dan Dougherty and Nick Schmeltz, strong AFT members, kept me well informed on the

nuances of our jobs, such as the very rare promotions and merit awards.

I arrived at a historic period when Dr. Herman James was making history by becoming GSC’s first and only black president, leading us from 1984 through 1998. The rarity and uniqueness of his leadership at a predominantly white college of his era, and his major contributions to shaping the present and future of Rowan University are a tribute to the vision shown by our Rowan community. Notably, on Dr. James’ watch, there were several key firsts accomplished:

Rowan acquired the 100 million dollar gift of Henry and Betty Rowan, pivotal to Rowan’s financial stability, growth and success.

Rowan established its first doctoral program, Educational Leadership, paving the way to university status.

Rowan established the Colleges of Engineering and Communication, noteworthy achievements among similar colleges nationwide.

Campbell Library, the Student Recreation Center, and Rowan Hall, home to the College of Engineering, were built.

However, what you may not know is that although history credits the National Science Foundation with initiating STEM, originally called SMET, in 2001, our own Dr. James implemented a personal vision for a pipeline to STEM long before it became a buzzword in Higher Ed. PACE, (or Precollege Academic and Career Enrichment). A 1984 GSC grant-funded program was Dr. James’ way of laying the groundwork of Access and Affordability for these underrepresented groups: women, students of color, low-income, and first-generation students – to build bridges from



Julie Mallory, Vice President for Political Affairs, delivers her reflective closing remarks, “For Such a Time as This.”

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# Welcome Back Reception Program Celebrates the Centennial Photo Montage



Lori Marshall, VP University Relations, delivers the Keynote Address, "The Past is Prologue," for the Centennial themed program.



Bob Scarpa receives his Retirees Chapter Certificate and Welcome from Harold Sahn.



Annette McCulley receives her Retirees Chapter Certificate and Welcome from Harold Sahn.



Harold Sahn, Master of Ceremonies, makes an emphatic point during the Welcome Back Reception.



Julie Mallory, Chuck Linderman, and Provost Tony Lowman at the Head Table during Chuck's Opening Remarks for the Welcome Back Centennial program.

## Mallory Closing Remarks

(Continued from page 2)

county college through medical school. Through a consortium that I directed of Rowan, Camden County College, Rutgers Camden, and UMDNJ we provided career and academic skills for students at Camden and Woodrow Wilson High schools. This was his vision for this South Jersey college that became Rowan University.

Consequently, it can be said that, like Esther, Dr. James was created with a vision "for such a time as that!"

Finally, I leave us to consider how we Rowan retirees, with relatively less energy, but definitely more wisdom and experiences, can best contribute. I believe that, like Esther, through speaking up, our voices are the most important resource we have to support ourselves and the future of Rowan. We are Rowan' past, present and future. For, as Poet June Jordan once said, "We are the ones we are waiting for...for such a time as this!"

## Retirees Chapter

(Continued from page 1)

Julie Mallory, VP for Political Affairs, presented Reflective Closing Remarks, "For a Such a Time as This," with an enlightening account of the significant moments in the evolution of the school. Julie's thoughtful remarks, along with inspiring Biblical references, provided a perfect conclusion to the program.

Another significant moment that took place earlier was the cutting of our Centennial Cake, with President Houshmand doing the honors, flanked by Harold Sahn and Ed Wolfe, Professor Emeritus, English, and former Executive Vice President of the Chapter. President Houshmand said that ours was the first centennial cake he had cut as the celebration of the Centenary officially

begins. The Centennial themed program was among the most enjoyable that we have ever had, with many touching moments and a palpable affection for the institution.

If you were unable to attend, you can catch the program, available as a podcast, thanks to Rowan Radio and station manager Derek Jones, who recorded most of it for us and posterity. Go to the link for 'Rowan Radio on Demand' and click on the 'AFT Retirees Chapter Centennial Reception 9/6/23' and the link: [www.podbean.com](http://www.podbean.com) Our thanks to Derek Jones and our award-winning WGLS-FM Radio Station for making the highlights of our centennial program available.

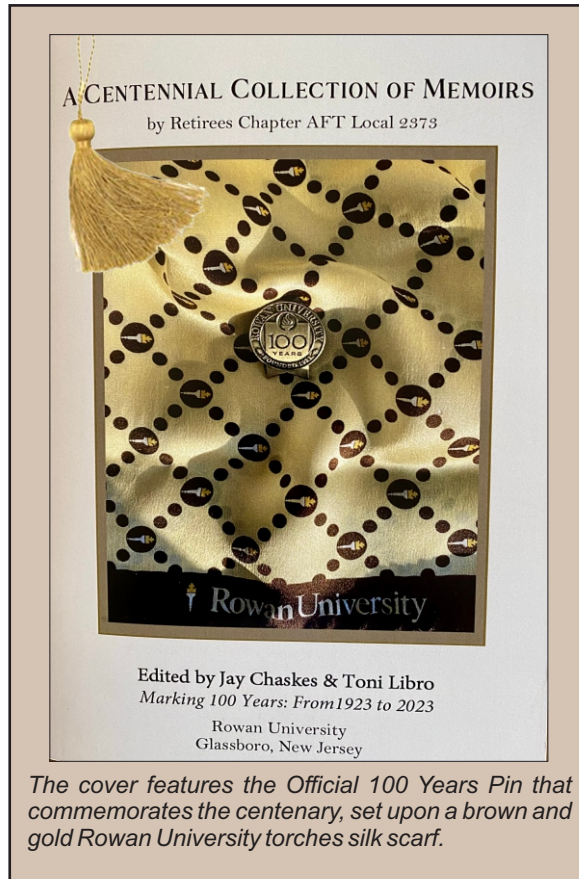
## Centennial Collection of Memoirs Sees Publication in September 2023

**A** *Centennial Collection of Memoirs: Marking 100 Years* saw daylight September 23, 2023 when officially issued as part of Rowan University's Centennial Celebration.

The book presents the personal perspectives and experiences by members of the AFT Retirees Chapter who submitted their manuscripts to Harold Sahm, Retirees Chapter president, and editors Jay Chaskes and Toni Libro. The memoirs illuminate approximately five decades, comprising nearly half the life of Rowan University.

The collection presents precious glimpses into various facets of the institution—the 'pool culture,' 'friends of the library,' 'opera world,' and 'first strike,' along with poetic tributes, reminiscences, diversity issues, outreach programming, and acknowledgements of special guests, running approximately 100 pages.

The collections sets the tone with a Foreword by editors Jay Chaskes and Toni Libro, which provides an overview of the years covered,



*The cover features the Official 100 Years Pin that commemorates the centenary, set upon a brown and gold Rowan University torches silk scarf.*

from the late 1960s to the early 2000s. As Jay Chaskes put it so succinctly: "We built the bridge that carried GSC into the 21st Century as Rowan University." Indeed, in this publication you will see a variety of perspectives regarding building of that 'bridge' with a healthy dose of humor, wisdom, and fortitude.

The Centennial Collection has received a warm welcome along with many accolades and has sparked interest in the possible publication of another edition, so if you missed the call for submissions this time around, watch for another call in the future!

The editors wish to thank all those who submitted their work for this publication, along with the photographs to illustrate their contributions. We would also like to acknowledge the support of the University Centennial Committee, particularly Joseph Cardona, Centennial Chair and VP University Relations; and Lori Marshall, Assistant VP University Relations and Director, University Publications.



## Reception Honors the Publication of 100 Years Forward: The History of Rowan University

**A**s part of the University's Centennial Celebration, a Reception was held on October 12 in the Eynon Ballroom to celebrate the publication of *100 Years Forward: The History of Rowan University*, "the exceptional work accomplished by Rowan's award-winning creative professionals," with Lori Marshall, Assoc. VP of University Relations, at the helm, as Editor, over the course of more than 10 years.

According to the University website, the beautifully designed and deeply researched coffee table book tells the extraordinary story of our institution in 352 pages, with more than 1,000 vintage photos and illustrations—many of them not seen publicly for decades.

The book begins in the early 1900s and follows the institution with each step into the future. It recounts in words and images the story of thousands of individuals and their daily commitment to make the world a better place through education."

Available online at the Centennial Shop of Rowan University, and at Barnes & Noble on Rowan Boulevard. Books are \$50, plus tax, and all proceeds from book sales will support the Centennial Scholarship Fund and help provide small grants to students facing emergencies.

You can also purchase centennial items including books, hats, tote bags, T-shirts, pins, and more at the University Centennial Store. Take advantage of the opportunity!



*All those responsible for the creation of 100 Years Forward: The History of Rowan University, at the Pre-Release Reception celebration, from the Division of University Relations, with Lori Marshall, VP of University Relations, at the helm.*



## AFTerthoughts from Harold

by Harold Sahn

It was my plan to contact you individually but my available time dictates that I write a “Holiday Letter” instead. Georgette and I are both relatively healthy, as is all of our extended family. Our two kids and their spouses are both comfortable and successful in their professions and have developed some very interesting hobbies. We are still helping the grandkids with college. The twins are 20 and the youngest and both are Juniors at Pennsylvania universities.

When I retired from Rowan University, I decided not to teach graduate classes or accept a long-term consultant position so my calendar could be free to have adventures in exploring the world. Cruising was going to be my venue and as of Thanksgiving 2023, I have 626 days at sea. Even with my travel plans, I wanted to maintain a link to Rowan University. I had spent too much of my life (34 years), developed so many relationships, just to walk completely away from an integral part of my life. So, I maintained my membership in the Recreation Center and joined the AFT Retirees Chapter.

Rowan University has the only higher education AFT retiree’s chapter in New Jersey and on my

## Enjoying the Gifts of Retirement **A Holiday Letter from Your President**

joining in 2010 was led by one of the most recognized unionist in the state, Dr. Rose Glassberg. Rose helped to create the AFT as Rowan’s bargaining union in 1973, served as its president for ten years and upon retirement served as the retiree’s president for 28 years.

With one luncheon meeting a month, eight times/year, it kept me involved. I had the opportunity to meet and get to know people I knew by name but had no idea about their unique personalities or talents. Since I have always been a responsible person, I accepted roles like chairing committees and supervising elections.

As a favor to Rose, I served as the Chapter’s newly created position of Executive Vice President and now as President. These roles were not part of my retirement plan, but fit my acceptance of the “next man (person) up” concept. I can still go on eight or more cruises/year because the other Executive Committee members fulfill their roles as expected.

Besides looking out for the welfare of each other, AFT retirees are concerned for all people our age and for the current students at Rowan. By collecting donations from our members, we can offer five scholarships each year. These scholarships and the deserving students they help are our Chapter’s legacy.

Right now, I am having fun on my adventures and still doing something socially significant. Let us know what you’re doing and hopefully our paths will cross again.



### Mark Your Calendars

**University Holiday Party: December 21,**  
11 to 2 p.m. Chamberlain Student Center

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**Retirees Chapter Meetings Spring 2024**  
**February 14** – 12 Noon – Successful Aging  
**March 13** – 12 Noon – Scholarship Recipients  
**April 10** – 12 Noon – Nutrition and Food Addiction  
**May 3** – End of Academic Year Luncheon



**Retiree Members Attending the 2023 Centennial Reception.** Back Row, left to right: John Gallagher, Robert Scarpa, Ed Wolfe, Stewart Slater, Don Stoll, Behrooz Nazer, Ron Czocho, Larry DePasquale. Middle Row: Esther Mummert, Mike Miller, Nick DiObilda, Gloria DiObilda, Chuck Linderman, Harold Sahn, Annette McCully, Laurie Hohwald, Gail Chaskes, Tom Monahan, George Neff. Front Row Seated: Aimee Burgin, Stan Urban, Pat Alexy Stoll, Faye Robinson, Marianne Cinaglia, Julie Mallory, Antoinette Libro, Jay Chaskes, Ann Neff, and Holly Willett.

Photo by Craig Terry, Official College Photographer

## Andrew A. Prieto

Andrew (Andy) A. Prieto, 80, of Glassboro, died September 4, 2023, while vacationing in Prague, where he contracted a sudden illness. He and his wife Karol had been enjoying a River Cruise on the Rhine at the time.

Dr. Prieto served as a faculty member in the department of Biological Sciences from 1971 to 2008, when he retired as Professor Emeritus of Biological Sciences after 37 years of service.

He held a B.A. from Rutgers University; an M.S. from New

Mexico State University; and Ph.D. from University of Missouri.

He is survived by his wife, Karol S. Prieto, son Scott Prieto, and daughter Kristine Michelle Carter, (James) and extended family members.

Dr. Prieto's life will be honored and remembered privately by his family and close friends. Arrangements by Egizi Funeral Home, where condolences and memories may be shared.

## Donna Hathaway Cook

Donna Sue Hathaway Cook, (nee Jenkins) 73, of Sewell, N.J., passed away on October 3, 2023, with her family by her side.

Donna was a dedicated faculty member in the department of Special Education. She trained her students to be the best special needs teachers that they could be, while serving as a teacher, mentor, and advisor, and eventually retiring as Professor.

She held B.A. and M.A. degrees from Glassboro State College and her Ed.D. from Lehigh University. After retirement Donna and her husband divided their time between their homes in St. Augustine, Florida, and Sewell, New Jersey.

Donna is survived by her husband, Charles Andrew (Andy)

Cook; her son, Joshua Hathaway, (Lisa); siblings Eileen and Timothy; three grandchildren and many extended family members.

A celebration of her life was held on her 74th birthday, October 14, at Living Faith Alliance Church in Vineland, N.J.

Those wishing to honor Donna's memory and her lifelong concern for special needs children may make a memorial contribution to Tanalian Bible Camp in Port Alsworth, Alaska. Her great nephew and niece work at this camp in the Alaskan bush, where an urgent need to become handicapped accessible exists. Arrangements by Adams Funeral Home.

## Anthony J. Sommo

Anthony (Tony) J. Sommo, 75, of Glassboro, N. J., died suddenly on August 12, 2023.

As a faculty member in the department of Sociology and Anthropology, Dr. Sommo served Glassboro State/Rowan University for 30 years, from 1992 until his retirement as associate professor emeritus in 2022.

Dr. Sommo held a B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut, and an M.S.W. from Syracuse University. He taught courses in social inequality, minority relations, and disability studies, among other sociology classes. He also served as departmental advising coordinator, developmental academic advisor, and mentor to his students.

A dedicated advocate for students with disabilities, Dr. Sommo founded the Rowan Chapter of Delta Alpha Pi, an international honor society for high achieving students with disability. He also founded a faculty/staff mentoring program for students with disability. He received a Dedicated Faculty Award for Services to Students with Disabilities.

A strong advocate of disability and human rights, Dr. Sommo rose above his own challenges as a visually impaired person and set an admirable example in coping with disability for his students and the institution. A memorial service in honor of Dr. Sommo was held on the Rowan University campus in the Chamberlain Student Center on November 15, 2023.

## Recent Rally of the Local Dramatizes the Presence of the Union on Campus

**N**egotiations for a successor contract between the Union and the State were finalized after months of negotiations and settlement of sister union's CWA contract.

To this end, an informational demonstration, without picketing, was held

at Robinson circle on November 2, 2023. Union officers and members staffed three tables which distributed tee shirts, drinks, other union paraphernalia, and signs about the failure to attain a fair contract.

At one table, students and other participants picked up a ticket which could

be exchanged for a meal from one of three food trucks parked in the circle, assuring the continued presence of hundreds of students.



Joe Basso, Local 2373 President, and former presidents, Karen Siefring and Nick DiObilda, support the Rally.

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Fall/Winter 2023

AFTerwords is a publication of the AFT Retirees Chapter Local #2373, Rowan University - 201 Mullica Hill Road - Glassboro, New Jersey 08028

Harold Sahn, *President*

Chuck Linderman, *Executive Vice President*

Julie Mallory, *Vice President Political Affairs*

Mike Miller, *Treasurer*

Laurie Hohwald, *Recording Secretary*

Larry DiPasquale, *Corresponding Secretary*

### SPECIAL THANKS

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Julie Mallory, Lori Marshall, Harold Sahn, Toni Libro

Photos courtesy of Terry Craig

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Dr. Ali A. Houshmand, President

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