

Rowan University gets \$25M donation to expand fossil park

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Rowan University has received a \$25 million donation to preserve and expand the southern New Jersey school's fossil park.

University alums Ric and Jean Edelman made the gift, the school announced Monday. It's the second-largest donation in Rowan's history and the most given by alumni of the Glassboro school.

Rowan purchased the 65-acre Mantua Township quarry from Inversand Co. for \$1.95 million in September 2015. The site contains thousands of 65 million-year-old fossils from the Cretaceous period, and the school now uses it for research and education.

University officials said the Edelmanns' donation will help transform education and research.

"We want the [fossil](#) park to be a world-class destination for families on the same scale as the Smithsonian, Metropolitan Museum in New York and the Franklin Institute," Ric Edelman, a 1980 graduate, said in a statement. "We want our giving to have a measurable impact on people's lives."

Future plans for the Jean and Ric Edelman Fossil Park include a museum and visitor center, fossil preparation lab, nature trail, paleontology-themed playground and a space for special events.

Rowan President Ali Houshmand said the Edelmanns' "vision and

generosity will make it possible for tens of thousands of students, families and researchers to explore a range of hands-on sciences at a globally significant site."

Ric Edelman and Jean Edelman, a 1981 alumna, founded Edelman Financial Services in 1987. The couple donated \$1 million in 2002 for a planetarium on Rowan's campus that also bears their name.

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