Robert Morris University 90th Anniversary Highlights

- Robert Morris University was founded on Sept. 21, 1921, in downtown Pittsburgh as the Pittsburgh School of Accountancy. The school’s founder, educator, and accountant, Andrew Blass, rented classroom space in the Blackstone Building, 345 Fifth Ave., and welcomed his first class of 26 young men.

- Robert Morris University’s present core values are reflected in the founding mission of the Pittsburgh School of Accountancy, and this demonstrates an educational philosophy that has remained consistent throughout RMU’s evolution: to “maintain a small, distinctive professional school of advanced business practice. Appeal is made particularly to the student who prefers that personal attention, and that individual instruction, which is not always available in the larger institutions of learning.”

- In June 1925, the Pittsburgh School of Accountancy’s first graduating class of 25 students completed their degrees. May 2011, 819 students participated in RMU’s 86th commencement ceremonies. The university awarded 1,230 degrees during the 2010-11 academic year.

- In 1935, the Pittsburgh School of Accountancy, now owned by Richard Khuen III, changed its name to the Robert Morris School of Business in honor of the Founding Father popularly known as the financier of the American Revolution. The school added secretarial and applied business programs.

- Pittsburgh accountant J.R. McCartan Sr. purchased the Robert Morris School in 1948, and, in 1956, his son, Jack, became vice president and took over the day-to-day operations. Jack McCartan decided to expand Robert Morris’s customer base beyond adult students, and hired several former IBM salesmen to recruit recent high school graduates.

- After leasing space at several other Pittsburgh locations, including downtown’s famed William Penn Hotel, Robert Morris purchased a building of its own in 1959, the Rust Engineering Building at 600 Fifth Ave. The building was later dubbed the Pittsburgh Center, and was sold in 2010 as Robert Morris completed its transformation to a residential university in Moon Township.

- That transformation began in 1962 when, to meet an emerging demand for among students for residences, Robert Morris purchased the 230-acre Oliver Kaufmann estate in Moon Township. The first students on campus lived in the Kaufmann mansion, where today sits Massey Hall. In 2011, RMU opened Peter Salem Hall, its 13th residence hall. Today approximately 1,500 students live on campus.

- In 1962, Robert Morris became a nonprofit junior college to accommodate a new requirement in Pennsylvania that candidates for the CPA exam earn a college degree. In 1969, the school became Robert Morris College and began to offer four-year degrees.
• In 1977, Robert Morris joined NCAA Division I. Today, the university offers 23 Division I sports, more than Pitt or West Virginia. In 1984, the men’s basketball team made the first of seven NCAA tournament appearances, a Northeast Conference record.

• In 1994, RMU played its first football game, and in 2005, the university opened Joe Walton Stadium in honor of the football program’s founding and only coach.

• Robert Morris achieved university status in 2002. Today, the university includes five academic schools and offers 60 undergraduate and 20 graduate degree programs, enrolling 5,000 students.

• In 2005, Gregory G. Dell’Omo was named the seventh president of Robert Morris University. Under his leadership, in 2007 the university crafted a five-year strategic plan which spells out RMU’s core values. These values have guided Robert Morris as it has adapted its academic programs to meet the changing needs of the marketplace and tie together successive generations of RMU graduates:

For 90 years, RMU has delivered academic excellence with a professional focus. Today, we emphasize engaged learning and promote a global perspective. Above all, we believe that individuals matter. Because of all this, RMU is changing lives.

• The university portrayed these values in 2010 in its award-winning “Change A Life” advertising campaign. The campaign tells the story of real RMU students whose lives have been changed, and who have changed the lives of others, because of their education and experiences at Robert Morris. These experiences are captured in RMU’s Student Engagement Transcript, which formally documents students’ activities outside the classroom.

• In 2011, RMU opened a new 18,000-square-foot facility for its School of Business. The building includes the PNC Trading Center, the U.S. Steel Videoconferencing and Technology Resource Center, and the Allegheny Technologies Incorporated Global Business Library. The building is adjacent to Massey Hall and gives the original Robert Morris school its first official home at the Moon campus.