MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

At the Robert Morris University School of Communications and Information Systems, students learn to deliver information effectively, through the confluence of modern technology and traditional methods of presenting ideas and images.

Our student body is extraordinarily diverse, ranging from busy executives building their professional credentials through our low-residency doctoral program to IT workers, visual artists, and future directors. All benefit from the school’s strong focus on practical learning and communications skills, faculty who value personal relationships and mentoring students, and internships for career preparation.

Undergraduate degrees in computer information systems are ABET-accredited, and new programs in cyber forensics, information security, and data analytics are preparing RMU students for careers in those high-demand fields. Many students take advantage of our integrated 5-year B.S./M.S. degree programs.

Undergraduate and graduate students with an eye toward professional advancement learn strategies for success in our organizational leadership programs. In media arts, students build their skills in the TV and audio studios and control room and fully equipped graphic design and photography suites. Communication and English majors craft the messages we consume and the stories we enjoy. Visiting artists-in-residence share their experiences and help to broaden perspectives and understanding.

Take a look at some of the stories in this magazine that demonstrate the success our graduates have enjoyed in a variety of professional fields. I am proud of their achievements and eager to see what our students do next.

ERIN STOUGHTON

ERIN STOUGHTON used her education at RMU to rise from serving tables at an Eat’n Park restaurant to shaping the public face of the beloved Pittsburgh company. Working as a server while earning her bachelor’s degree in communication, she landed an internship in the company’s marketing department shortly before graduating in 2004. The company extended her internship until they could find a permanent place on their team.

Once inside, Erin found that RMU’s holistic approach to teaching a broad range of communications skills began to pay off. She credits her training in putting together strong presentations, as well as the public speaking experience she gained, for setting her apart from her contemporaries when looking for career options. In the years that followed, her portfolio of projects grew from developing the company’s emerging brand ambassador program to her current role as director of guest engagement and insight for Eat’n Park Hospitality Group.

Teaching people to be effective communicators is a hallmark of RMU’s approach to its students. And it’s a specialty of the School of Communications and Information Systems.

RMU’s communications skills program sets them apart. That was one of the things that gave me an immediate leg up when I got out into the workforce.”
If you’re going into broadcast journalism, it helps to have an Emmy under your belt before you even get your degree. Eddie Sheehy won one right before he graduated, one of two taken home his senior year by RMU students at the regional TV awards competition that pitted them against production and broadcast crews from the University of Pittsburgh, Penn State, and others.

Eddie, who earned a bachelor’s degree in media arts, began his RMU education before he even started classes. He attended a media retreat two weeks before the term started, getting acquainted with the school’s substantial student media operations. During his senior year, he worked at WPXI-TV, beginning as a teleprompter operator and moving up to part-time assignment editor. He beat out 145 other applicants to land a job reporting for WITN-TV in North Carolina, something he credits to both what he learned at RMU and the deep connections he credits to both what he learned at RMU and the deep connections he

“I came to RMU for data analytics because it’s a field that can transform every industry.”

The world of big data is quickly growing into a universe, and Alana Hiner has already helped it along. First attracted to the field because of the seemingly limitless possibilities it offered, Alana has used what she learned as a data analytics major to help change how her school operates. Alana collected data on freshman orientation to help RMU administrators better match the events they plan to the students they serve, tracking participation rates and correlating them with students’ other interests. Her work was so informative that the provost asked Alana to present her findings at the quarterly meeting of the university’s Board of Trustees. Now working as a data analyst at the drug company Mylan, Alana prepared for her career with three internships — enterprise analytics at UPMC, sales analytics at Black Box, and business intelligence at ServiceLink. Each position brought Hiner into contact with a different aspect of the collection, analysis, and use of vast amounts of data.

The talent of computer science and information technology faculty, as well as students like Alana, enables RMU to push its data analytics expertise outside the classroom walls. The benefits go beyond the School of Communications and Information Systems to the entire university.

“So many students come from the school’s substantial student media operation...”

The professors gave us guidance, but they let us run. They’re smart. They’ve worked in the industry, so they know how to help us get to where we are going.”
"Completing my master’s was something I had always wanted to do."

Winning two Super Bowl rings, co-founding a tech start-up, making regular appearances as an on-air sports analyst for television and radio programs, and starting a foundation to help kids in his hometown apparently wasn’t enough for Charlie Batch. So he went back to school.

The former Steelers quarterback finished RMU’s 10-month online master’s in organizational leadership recently, fulfilling his longstanding goal of adding a graduate degree to what was already a long list of accomplishments. The program’s flexibility allowed him to mold it into a schedule that sometimes included postgame radio shows that didn’t finish until well after 2 a.m. Its focus on adults allowed him to incorporate his real-world experience into the first classes he had attended since earning his undergraduate degree almost 20 years earlier. Though those months definitely forced him to push himself, in the end he was able to realize yet another dream.

RMU’s online graduate degree programs help mid-career professionals make the leap to the next job, the next promotion, or the next level in life — and you don’t have to be an NFL quarterback to do it.

From the more than 270 U.S. diplomatic outposts around the world, information and data about water, gas, electricity, and other energy uses is collected and whisked back to Washington on a minute-by-minute basis. When the State Department was looking for a senior IT project manager to manage this new and expanding system, three-time RMU graduate Chris Morsey jumped to the top of their list.

Chris, a Navy veteran, earned two master’s degrees in information systems and cyber security: “Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Systems and Cyber Security: Best Practices to Secure Critical Infrastructure,” and handed him the job without an interview. Chris’s portfolio also includes a partnership with Microsoft to shift vast amounts of data out of a central location and into the cloud while keeping that information safe.

RMU is a leader in cyber security education, with the Center for Cyber Research and Training helping corporations secure their computer systems. Virginia cyber security firm Paraben Corp. named RMU “Cyber School of the Future” and picked the university to host its 2017 Innovation Symposium.

“My dissertation literally paid off. I hadn’t even finished writing it when I was called and they asked if I wanted the job.”

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UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS
- Advertising
- Communication
- Computer Information Systems
- Corporate Communication
- Cyber Forensics and Information Security
- Data Analytics
- Digital Cinema and TV
- English
- Graphic Design
- Information Sciences
- Interaction Design
- Journalism
- Media Arts
- Organizational Leadership
- Photography
- Public Relations

GRADUATE PROGRAMS
- Cyber Forensics and Information Assurance
- Data Analytics
- IT Project Management
- Information Systems Management
- Internet Information Systems
- Organizational Leadership
- Organizational Leadership – Nonprofit
- Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) in Information Systems and Communications