Rozanski: Rider is a ‘marvelous place’

By Laura Sass
Executive Editor

The inauguration of Dr. Mandelchay Rozanski as Rider University’s sixteenth president is another step in fulfilling his parents’ dreams. Rozanski, the first person in his family to complete elementary school, is the son of Holocaust survivors. His family fled from Poland to Israel, lived in France and emigrated to Montreal in 1953. Rozanski was able to get the education his parents desired for him.

“I’m the first in my family to get an elementary education, let alone a university degree,” he said. “That education opened up doors and was a promise of the future. I want others to have that same opportunity.”

Rozanski received his bachelor’s degree from McGill University in 1968, graduating as a history major. He attended Columbia University in 1970 and New York College in Hong Kong from 1971-1972, majoring in Chinese language. He received his doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania in 1974, majoring in Chinese literature.

“I received my Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania where I met my wife,” he said. “Shortly after that, I began teaching there as a lecturer in American-East Asian relations.”

Since then, Rozanski has worked at Fairleigh Dickinson University as a dean of liberal arts, eventually becoming vice president of academic affairs. He also served as provost at Wagner College in Staten Island, N.Y., until he was chosen as the president of the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada.

During the time that Rozanski led Guelph, from 1993-2003, it was rated the best overall comprehensive university in Canada three times by Maclean’s, Canada’s national news magazine. Rozanski also raised over $100 million for the school.

“I am neither interested inoting on my laurels or overhearing my own words,” said Rozanski of his decision to leave the University of Guelph. “First class institutions deserve leadership renewals—as do presidents.”

Since his term began on Aug. 1, 2003, Rozanski has already made many changes to Rider, including the creation of a Strategic Initiative Fund, which established the Center for the Development of Leadership Skills and mentored undergraduate research fellowships.

“I want to see us being able to accommodate students,” he said. “We have some challenges right now. That’s why I’m hoping that we can make advances in the future.”

Rozanski has attended meetings of various clubs and organizations on campus, including Millhill and the Student Government Association, so that he could get to know students and speak to them. “I’m not going to promise that I’ll know all of your names but I can always wave,” he said. “I open to all kinds of opportunities. I want to stay connected to students and hear what they have to say.”

Rozanski said that he is proud of being president of Rider University.

“I think that it is a marvelous place and I’m going to be working with the community to bring it even greater prominence and stature,” he said. “I want more people to see what I see: that Rider is a fine draw institution.”

Additional reporting by Lacey Korevec and Dana Lynn Fancher