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**RMU Receives More than \$7.5 Million in Recent Gifts**  
***Money from four foundations and corporations will support far-reaching university and community initiatives***

**Pittsburgh, April 24, 2018** –Robert Morris University recently received more than \$7.5 million in gifts from four Pittsburgh-area foundations and corporations -- money that will fund new science and engineering labs, a leading-edge student retention initiative, and community engagement for nonprofits and corporate employees.

Each of the four recent grants will help to underwrite initiatives under the university's [RMU 100 strategic plan](#), which the university launched January 1, 2018. The four recent gifts include:

- \$5 million from the Richard King Mellon Foundation to help fund renovations to the John Jay Center at RMU's Moon Township campus for the School of Engineering, Mathematics and Science.
- \$2 million for "Thrive RMU," from the Henry L. Hillman Foundation to support an initiative to increase retention and graduation rates through predictive data analytics and highly customized academic interventions.
- \$400,000 from Covestro to create the RMU Covestro Center for Community Engagement, which will provide social purpose training programs to corporations and nonprofits throughout southwestern Pennsylvania.
- \$150,000 from the Bayer USA Foundation to support the RMU Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management, which provides education consulting, coaching, and research to nonprofit organizations throughout the Greater Pittsburgh region.

"We are grateful for the generous support of each of these organizations, and we are humbled by the confidence they have shown in Robert Morris," said RMU President Chris Howard. "The university will invest these dollars in our students, in our campus, and in our communities."

Thanks to the gift from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, the university will be able to expand and renovate John Jay Center for the School of Engineering, Mathematics and Science. The school has grown from 22 students in 1999 to

nearly 1,000 students today, and engineering is the university's largest undergraduate major. The John Jay renovations will allow the school to increase enrollment further and expand its work in areas including additive manufacturing, robotics, and material science.

"This project will position Robert Morris as a leader in STEM education and workforce development, and allow us to enhance research and outreach opportunities for students," said Maria Kalevitch, dean of the RMU School of Engineering, Mathematics and Science.

The Henry L. Hillman Foundation gift will support an initiative that RMU launched last summer in partnership with the Education Advisory Board (EAB) to boost retention and graduation rates. RMU utilizes [EAB's Student Success Collaborative technology suite](#), which includes a free mobile app for students, *Guide*, and a predictive analytics dashboard, *Campus*, for faculty and advisors.

*Guide* provides students with study tips, reminders of important deadlines, and other information to help them thrive at Robert Morris. *Campus* helps faculty and advisors track students' progress and anticipate when a student may need additional help. The dashboard leverages historical and real-time data to identify at-risk students, track retention rates by academic program, and assess the difficulty of completing individual courses.

"The technology augments the human touch. We're still going to be meeting with our students, and guiding them, and helping them succeed," said John Michalenko, vice president for student life at RMU.

Covestro's gift builds on a partnership the global manufacturer formed with RMU in 2015 to build bonds between corporations and nonprofit service organizations. The new Covestro Center for Community Engagement will offer innovative training programs to increase employee engagement and productivity through social purpose service work at nonprofits in the Pittsburgh region.

The Covestro Center will have a presence on the university's Moon Township campus as well as at the Heinz 57 Center in downtown Pittsburgh, which is also the home of the RMU Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management. The Bayer Center will mark its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019, and during that time it has produced important research into the state of the nonprofit community – addressing, for example, pay disparities between male and female employees and the challenges facing many nonprofit workers in trying to save for retirement.

"The Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management is a tremendous resource for the region, and Bayer is proud to be part of its past, present, and future," said Dan Cella, chair of the Bayer USA Foundation.

The Bayer USA Foundation has provided significant support to the Bayer Center over the years, and has been integral to its success.

“Our collaboration with corporations such as Bayer and Covestro benefit the entire Pittsburgh region. Together, we are developing a more engaged professional workforce and building stronger communities in western Pennsylvania,” said Derya Jacobs, vice president for corporate relations and senior vice provost at RMU.

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### **ABOUT ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY**

Through more than 80 undergraduate and graduate degree programs across five academic schools, Robert Morris University (RMU) in Pittsburgh, Pa. enrolls more than 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students from 48 states and 39 countries. A nationally ranked, doctoral degree-granting research university, RMU offers fully online courses as well as a traditional residential college experience at its campus on 230 scenic acres 17 miles from downtown Pittsburgh. The Colonials compete in 16 NCAA Division I sports, including football, basketball, volleyball, ice hockey, and lacrosse.

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