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Aug22

[Bob](#)

[U.S. News rankings: A challenge to RIT alumni](#)

The 2007 [U.S. News & World Report: America's Best Colleges](#) report is out and once again [RIT](#) received recognition for being among the best regional universities in the North. RIT also earned kudos for being among the best [co-op](#) programs in the nation. Both the [Kate Gleason College of Engineering](#) and the [E. Philip Saunders College of Business](#) were also ranked. For more details, check out our news release: <http://www.rit.edu/~930www/webnews/viewstory.php3?id=2023>

So how can RIT improve its rankings?

Our friend Becca was right on target in an earlier [post](#): RIT alumni can move the needle. Here is how: U.S. News uses a series of metrics to rank a school. These include 11 areas such as assessments by other colleges, freshmen retention, graduation rate, SAT scores and more. But one area stands out with a somewhat poor grade: Alumni participation. At RIT, about 9 percent of alumni participate in annual giving. By comparison, most schools that we compete against are above 20 percent in giving. And Princeton, No. 1 overall in the *U.S. News* rankings, has an alumni-giving rate of 61 percent.

Alumni participation doesn't mean you have to give away your first born. I realize gas prices and the cable bill are out of control. But just giving a few bucks to your alma mater will increase the value of your degree. The key is participation, not the actual amount. Move the needle.

RIT's endowment of about \$580 million is solid. But when compared to other peer universities, it could be better.

RIT alumni: Don't you want to see your alma mater continue to ascend? Don't you want to help a current student by contributing to the endowment?

Don't you want to brag around the water cooler that your school is on the move?

You don't need a football team to be proud. Besides, we have D-I [Tiger Hockey](#).

Move the needle. Participate.

It should be noted that the metric with the most weight is "peer assessment." Here, RIT does extremely well. And it's a good thing because this counts for 25 percent of the entire score. In this measurement, other college presidents, provosts and dean judge RIT. RIT ranked second in this category behind Villanova.

Meanwhile, now is RIT's chance to make a move. Apparently some alumni at the Ivies are getting complacent about the rankings. It must be true because it says so in the Washington Post <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/08/20/AR2006082000603.html?sub=new>

On a final note, RIT was also just listed in the Princeton Review's "The Best 361 Colleges" (<http://www.princetonreview.com>). I have no idea why they settle on such a strange number as 361, but it is impressive and important to be in the annual guide. According to Princeton Review, only 15 percent of the four-year colleges in America and two Canadian colleges are in the book.

In surveys, RIT students had this to say about their own campus: "small classes...lab facilities are great...great computer facilities...great library...athletic facilities are great...great off-campus food...campus feels safe"

RIT is on the move. Alumni can help in RIT's transformation from good to great. Move the needle. Participate.

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1. [Pete K](#)
Aug22

As I read your post (very compelling, by the way), I thought, "How can I give RIT that 74 cents I found in my car this morning?" Seriously, though, I'm not sure where or how I can donate. Do you happen to know off the top of your head?

2. [Silandara](#)
Aug23

Perhaps not off the top of my head, but after a quick Google search: [Giving to RIT](#). Lots of giving options. :)

3. [Pete](#)
Aug23

Hot!

4. [D](#)
Mar29

Why don't you guys create a Facebook group to raise awareness about donating and its impact on rankings? I just think, a lot of alumni are unaware or believe that they have to donate large sums of money. I myself donated a paltry 5 bucks but it is

better than nothing. =)

5. [Brian](#)

Sep02

Change starts with the administration. My alma matter has an endowment of over 800 million and considering their student body is about 1/8th the size of RIT's you have to question what the hell RIT is doing wrong here. For starters, start listening to the rankings and outside judgment criteria. RIT has consistently performed poorly in the yearly university rankings, I didn't even see them on the list this year (I've now realized that they only publish the top 300 in print while RIT ranks at 361, nothing to be proud of). And the fact that our poster "Bob" tries to spin the regional ranking by not even listing what number we placed is laughable. In addition, being ranked one of the nations ugliest campuses is hardly flattering. And yet, in both cases the administrations tag line is that these rankings don't encompass the full scope of what RIT represents. Well, I have news for you, stop sticking your head in the sand and wake the hell up! Obviously our current methods aren't working, it's time to bring in some fresh talent and shake things up. Secondly, start treating students like human beings and pretend that you care. The level of ineptitude across every department of RIT is staggering and, in addition, most of these departments aren't acting with the students' best interest in mind. The general attitude at RIT is, if your check clears, welcome to RIT. At some point that cash cow attitude and absurd 7% rate hikes have to end because, as we can see, it's not sustainable. Try to remember who the real customers here are: the students aka the one's paying your bills. If you don't give individual attention to students and you don't act like you care don't expect the students to care either. And lastly, how about building some community at RIT. Concert events are all fine and dandy, but how many people can honestly say they met any new people there? We have this huge campus and yet, it is completely deserted on the weekends. How about building some real university entertainment, maybe an on campus bar, don't even insult my intelligence with the Ritz, or other venues that students will actually frequent and enjoy. In addition, having classevents shows that the school appreciates the student body enough to make the effort to plan special days. A perfect example of this was a senior graduation week at my alma matter. It was an entire week of planned events for seniors to have fun and say their goodbyes to all their classmates before shoving off for the real world. And how does RIT show their appreciation to graduating seniors? One extra day. No student events, commencement need not apply here, and no appreciation. So honestly, the fact that anyone at this university throws their hands up and wonders why student giving is so low is only another notch on the totem pole of ineptitude. If anyone says, "it's a mystery to us," or "we just can't explain it," that means that they aren't doing their job and quite frankly they don't deserve their job. It's about time that RIT brings in some talented intelligent people to restructure the face of this university, start addressing the criticism, acting like they care about the student body, and bring some community to this school. Until that day RIT will NEVER receive a dime of my money and I will continue to advocate to other students that they should similarly refuse donations to RIT until the administration starts taking these issues seriously

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The Tiger Beat takes you behind the scenes with the members of [RIT University News](#)—the news and public relations division of [Rochester Institute of Technology](#). Get the "story behind the story" and an insider's look at who we are and what we do to publicize RIT news.

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