

PROFILE: David Fried: Mayor of Robbinsville, NJ; Rowan University/Glassboro State College, Class of 1989

Robbinsville, New Jersey Mayor David Fried and the internationally renowned NJ research institution Rowan University share some common experiences that define their respective successes over the past several years. They both are associated with a name change and major economic growth that includes the creation of a vibrant town center. Furthermore, they are linked to one another not by marriage – but by a bachelor’s degree. Mayor Fried is a 1989 political science graduate of Rowan University.

When Dave Fried went to Rowan, it was known as Glassboro State College. And when Dave was at Glassboro, Robbinsville was Washington Township. Neither Robbinsville nor Glassboro at the time had a thriving town center. And neither entity had yet acquired the reputation of being an economic engine of growth. Over the past 25 years, Rowan has transitioned from a well-regarded local comprehensive college that once focused primarily on teacher education to a world-renowned research university. During this same timeframe, Mayor Fried has gone from being a recent college grad with a startup business to a renowned New Jersey local government leader, as well as a business leader in the area of human resource management.



“I loved my years at Glassboro State College. It was a great college experience while giving me the basic skills – acquired through my classes as well as in extracurricular activities – to succeed in life,” said Mayor Fried, a native New Jerseyan who grew up in Hightstown, NJ.

Multiple press accounts about Dave Fried have used the word “successful” when describing both his political and professional achievements. The “successful” mayor of Robbinsville, NJ, Dave Fried is in his fourth term as mayor after first being selected to fill an unexpired term in 2000 under the prior township committee form of government.

As a committeeman, Mr. Fried was successful in helping to achieve the change to be the nonpartisan, strong mayor form of government that voters approved overwhelmingly in 2004. He became the first Robbinsville mayor directed elected by the voters, was sworn in on July 1, 2005, and then reelected and reelected and reelected (most recently, in 2017).

Robbinsville, a diverse community with a population of 14,500 residents, is now among the most stable Mercer County communities reflecting years of flat or reduced taxes, along with a

greatly increased corporate ratable base. During his mayoral tenure, Fortune 500 companies McKesson Corporation, Amazon, Walgreens Pharmacy, Rite Aid and Starbucks began to operate in Robbinsville. The Amazon deal alone is expected to generate over \$22 million in revenue over 20 years and provide approximately 1,500 new jobs. In addition to new jobs, Mayor Fried has managed to fulfill the community's affordable housing obligations, while preserving hundreds of acres of open space.

Dave Fried also is a successful family man (married with two teenaged children), businessman and entrepreneur. As the CEO of Robbinsville-based TriCore Human Capital Management (HCM), Mr. Fried and his employees provide integrated payroll, benefits administration and human resources management services to employers. In 2012, TriCore became the second company Mr. Fried has vaulted into the prestigious **Inc. 5000**, as one of the nation's fastest-growing human resource companies. His experience in human resource and employee benefits has proven to be particularly valuable in his volunteer role as a member of the Mercer County Community College Board of Trustees.

"Rowan encouraged and inspired my entrepreneurial instincts. While a student, I started a fraternity, and in my senior year, I started my first human resources/staffing business while still on campus. Thanks to Political Science Professor Johnson, I became very interested in the workings of state and local government," said the mayor.

"I also loved the historic Glassboro downtown and have watched (since I graduated) what Rowan has done with the Rowan Boulevard project, a \$400-million, mixed-use redevelopment project that links the campus with Glassboro's historic downtown. It has influenced my vision of how to achieve town center development while respecting a community's historic roots and traditions."

"A very appealing quality about Rowan was that nothing I wanted to do as an entrepreneurial student seemed to be ridiculous or out of reach. I was coached by a lot of people in my approach to maximizing success," said Mayor Fried.

That entrepreneurial approach to implementing community service initiatives in the region has been a trademark of his political profile in Robbinsville. He started a Hydroponic Farm (non-profit enterprise) that helps to feed hundreds of children in Trenton through a partnership with Mercer Street Friends. He wanted to ensure better communication with all residents, so he started a weekly online municipal newsletter. And he has transformed several township events – including the annual State of the Township event – into fundraising benefits to raise money for worthy causes and promote a community service culture of "paying it forward."

"Few things have given me greater satisfaction, not just as mayor but as a human being, than when we changed the format of our State of the Township address from something that we had to do to something that we wanted to do," said Mayor Fried.

