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From the Buffalo Business First:

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Education

Denise Rotondo named first woman dean of Canisius College business school

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Denise Rotondo has been named the first female dean of Canisius College's Richard J. Wehle School of Business, overseeing some of the most prominent higher education business programs in Western New York.

Rotondo said she will focus on improving ties with the Canisius' alumni network, which she characterized as a source of untapped potential for the private Catholic college in Buffalo.

"The thing I'm most excited about is the opportunity to get alumni back to campus and engaged with students both in and out of the classroom," she said. "That's a real advantage this institution has and it's something that is hard for other colleges to replicate."

Rotondo takes over the permanent appointment from [Daniel Borgia](#), who served for about a year until leaving for a position at a Chinese university last July.

Rotondo's last position was at SUNY Geneseo, where she was named head of its "School of Business" in 2014 and served in that position until earlier this year when she was removed by college president [Denise Battles](#). The move sparked an online petition seeking answers for the reasoning behind the move.

Speaking to Business First this week, Rotondo explained the situation by saying that "deans serve at the pleasure of presidents and provosts, and sometimes you run into irreconcilable differences on the future or role of a business school in an institution."

She said that's especially true at a college "like Geneseo that prides itself on its liberal arts mission."

[Margaret McCarthy](#), Canisius vice president for academic affairs, said she investigated the situation at Geneseo before the decision to hire Rotondo and came away satisfied she has "a great deal of support in the community among faculty and staff."



Denise Rotondo, dean of Canisius College Richard J. Wehle School of Business

McCarthy said Rotondo will bring strong experience to Geneseo, particularly in dealing with the Wehle school's AACSB accrediting body. Rotondo helped develop a trading room at Geneseo comparable to the Financial Markets Lab at Canisius and helped foster a competitive team at Geneseo for the annual Chartered Financial Analyst competition, which is also a source of pride at Canisius.

"I'm very satisfied that the experience she can bring to Canisius will be tremendously valuable to us," McCarthy said.

Rotondo has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Florida, and earned an MBA degree and Ph.D. from Florida State University. She said it's time for colleges to start including interdisciplinary and experiential learning into their business curriculum, which will help breed a more complete 21st-century student.

"We're looking for ways to do things that are more innovative," she said. "This isn't your traditional model anymore."

Dan Miner

Reporter

Buffalo Business First



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