

A welder works on a girder on the Barnes & Noble building on Rowan Boulevard Wednesday.



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Staff photos by Tim Hawk

From left, Greg Fillipek, principal owner of SORA Holdings; Dr. Thomas Gallia, vice president of Rowan University Relations; and Glassboro Mayor Leo McCabe laugh as they get their picture taken after signing a beam on the new Barnes & Noble under construction on Rowan Boulevard in downtown Glassboro.

Rowan Blvd. hits milestone in bookstore construction

By Jessica Driscoll

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GLASSBORO — Borough, Rowan University and Sora officials gathered Wednesday to sign their names on one of the I-beams of a Barnes & Noble Collegiate Superstore quickly materializing downtown.

Due to open this November, the 36,000-square-foot store will be Rowan Boulevard's first

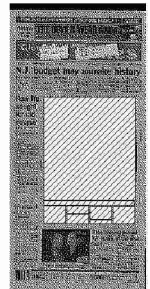
retailer. It will contain a floor that caters to the academic needs of Rowan University and another that will serve the general public as well as a 6,000-square-foot Starbucks Cafe and the Rowan University Spirit Shop.

"Seeing the building of the Barnes & Noble bookstore is a key part of what we have in Rowan Boulevard," said

Mayor Leo McCabe. "There's now a magnificent steel structure that tells us just what we're going to have as one of the anchors."

"It's reality now," said Greg Fillipek, a principal of Sora Holdings. "It's one of the centerpieces of the project and it's exciting to see it going up."

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The store will hold more than 75,000 books and is being designed to reflect the local culture, including custom murals that celebrate the achievements and history of Rowan and Glassboro. Rowan Boulevard's store will be one of only two Barnes & Noble collegiate superstores in the state. In existing locations, collegiate superstores host faculty author readings and signings, children's and holiday events, local and national author events, discussion groups, charity and community activities and more.

The cafe will feature Starbucks espresso and coffee beverages, teas, baked goods and meal items and will accommodate 77 patrons indoors and 24 in the outdoor section with bistro chairs, upholstered lounge chairs, community tables and bar seating.

Hours for the store are anticipated to be 9 a.m. to

9 p.m. with the cafe being open slightly longer.

Council President Tony Fiola said the store's progress was rewarding after 10 years of planning for the massive redevelopment project.

"This project, as a whole, will change Glassboro for the next 50 years," said Fiola. "It will change the history of Glassboro."

"This is an example of what can happen when the university and the town come together," said Thomas Gallia, vice president for Rowan's university relations. "It has been a true delight working with Sora and the borough. I've been a part of the Rowan University community since I was 17 and part of the town and it's extremely exciting to me that this will be a place where students, their parents, faculty and members of the community mix. I'm doubly proud, both for the town and Rowan."