The Trustee Survey Says...

The Board of Trustees completed its first formal self-assessment this summer. The results of the assessment will be analyzed by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) and will inform the agenda for the October 10-11 Board of Trustees Retreat.

The Retreat will be facilitated by AGB's Dr. Ellen Chaffee and Ms. Cristin Touts.

Dr. Chaffee’s distinguished career includes service as past president of two universities and two national professional associations. She has led executive, academic affairs, student affairs, research, and equal opportunity functions. She has also served on and consulted with numerous governing boards as well as national organizations in higher education research, health care, allied health, and foundations.

As a senior fellow at AGB, from 2009-2011 she directed a Lumina Foundation project that helped presidents and governing boards work together to meet key goals by improving academic, strategic, and financial performance in an environment of scarce resources.

Ms. Cristin Touts is the Interim Director for AGB Consulting and the Senior Program Specialist for the Ingram Center for Public Trusteeship and Governance. Ms. Touts works with boards to offer workshops and consulting engagements, which include but are not limited to presidential and board assessments, board-retreat facilitations related to integral leadership, board structure, strategic planning and finance, and achieving high performance.

Ms. Touts produces resources on public higher education governance and tracks state and federal legislation affecting public board structures and policies affecting the practices of system and institutional boards. She also serves on the board of the Association for Collaborative Leadership.

Math, Science, and...Theater?

On Wednesday, September 25th at 7pm the Sharp Theater will host Truth Values: One Girl’s Romp Through M.I.T.’s Male Math
Maze.

*Truth Values* is focused on the underrepresentation of women in the sciences. NYC writer/performer and "recovering mathematician" Gioia De Cari offers a woman’s perspective on this question, as she shares her experiences in higher mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in this autobiographical solo show.

Dr. Amanda Beecher, assistant professor of mathematics at Ramapo, described bringing the performance to campus as an interdisciplinary and collaborative effort that included Academic Affairs, the Center for Student Involvement, the Women’s Center, the Diversity Action Committee, Math Club, Pi Mu Epsilon Mathematics Honors Society, and Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society.

"Most importantly, through all of these organizations as well as with faculty and staff from a variety of disciplines (Women and Gender Studies, the School of Theoretical and Applied Science, First Year Seminar, and others) we are promoting this event to students. There are many perspectives for any diversity issue and this performance highlights many of them, which will enhance discussions in the classroom," Beecher said.

More about *Truth Values*.

**Employer Support for Liberal Education**

The Association of American Colleges and Universities recently released a report linking liberal education to 21st century employer demands, and a Ramapo education stacks up well.

Of the employers surveyed, they identified the following components as critical to employee/organizational success:

1. A broad knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences
2. Research and inquiry skills
3. Breadth plus depth in study
4. Critical thinking and analytic reasoning
5. Complex problem solving
6. Written and oral communication
7. Problem solving in diverse settings
8. Ethical decision making

These 8 components are at the heart of a liberal education which the Ramapo College Strategic Plan 2014-18 described using
AACU's definition:

"A liberal education is an education that exposes students to a wide breadth of courses, perspectives, and educational experiences designed to equip them with the essential skills and learning necessary to deal with complexity, diversity, and change, and entails study across many fields, as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a strong sense of personal and social responsibility—important in all spheres of life."

For the full report, visit AACU.

**Obama's Higher Education Proposal (in brief)**

President Obama announced in August that his administration will pressure colleges to lower the cost of attendance and to raise graduation rates.

Ramapo College, for several years, has been both (1) benchmarking our cost of attendance with our competitors' costs, and (2) tracking our 4- and 6-year graduation rates as key performance indicators.

The Department of Education reports it will publish a new college-ratings system by fall 2015. The system will measure how much it costs to attend an institution, what proportion of students graduate, how much they earn afterwards, etc...

Obama went on to say that Federal financial aid could then be tied to the ratings.

For more information on Obama's proposal, visit [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) or read AACU's statement Ensuring the Value of US Higher Education.

**Save the Dates!**

Constitution Day Programs: September 17 at noon

President's State of the College Address: September 18 at noon

Truth Values: September 25 at 7:00 p.m.

Board of Trustees Regular Meeting: September 30 at 5:30 p.m.

Lecture by Damien Conners '06: October 9 at 11:15 a.m.

Board of Trustees Retreat: October 10 (p.m.) and 11 (a.m.)