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**TURNED WOOD BOWLS BY NEW JERSEY ARTIST PHYLLIS MCCRAW
WILL BE ON DISPLAY AT RAMAPO COLLEGE**

(Mahwah) – Turned wood bowls by New Jersey artist Phyllis McCraw will be on display in the Pascal Gallery at Ramapo College of New Jersey beginning Wednesday, March 29 and continuing through May 3. An opening reception will be held from 5 – 7 p.m. on March 29. An artist’s talk will begin at 6:30 p.m.

For Phyllis McCraw, the look and feel of wood has always been a thing of mysterious beauty. As a child, she loved to play and experiment with gadgets; her father Max, a woodshop teacher, encouraged her to use various tools. But it was not until 1999 that McCraw became enamored with turning wood. Marge Felder, a master wood turner in northeast Georgia, took McCraw to her lathe studio for a demonstration and the artist was enthralled. Felder wanted to learn about computers, and McCraw, who has a Ph.D. in educational technology, wanted to learn wood turning. Eventually they traded lessons.

McCraw lives in West Milford, NJ where she turns wood in a garage “studio.” Her turning needs progressed so quickly that she moved from a small lathe to a more professional grade one during the first year of turning. She uses the techniques of scraping and cutting to produce the wooden forms on her bowls.

“One of my most joyous moments was when I realized I had created a work that would last longer than me,” she says. “It was a bowl so beautiful it would always be owned by someone.” Her current work consists of bowls of many sizes and types of wood including maple, walnut, cherry and ash. She also turns exotic woods like cocobolo, padauk, purple heart, zebra, snake and osage orange. In addition to wooden

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bowls, the artist also has created trays and platters, tree ornaments, knife handles, wine corks, tiny jewelry and balls. More unique items include three-piece-box sets and a lamp.

In 2002, one of McCraw's bowls won first place as a sculpture at the Ringwood Manor Association of the Arts (RMAA) Open Juried Exhibition. She also was one of the featured artists in The Winner's Circle Exhibit of the RMAA the following year. In 2003 another bowl won second place in the same juried exhibition. Both of those bowls will be on display at the Pascal Gallery.

McCraw is an adjunct professor in the Master of Science in Educational Technology program at Ramapo College. Her other interests include making stone jewelry, watercolor painting and music. She is affiliated with the Ringwood Manor Association of the Arts and the Wayne Art Association.

This program is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Pascal Gallery is located in the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts at Ramapo College. Gallery hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 1 to 5 p.m. and Wednesday, 1 to 7 p.m. For more information, call 201.684.7147.

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