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DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS AWARD DINNER RAISES MORE THAN \$200,000 FOR RAMAPO COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS, PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH

Kenneth T. Neilson, Joseph R. Nothwang, Debra M. Perry, and Tom Purves are honorees

(Mahwah) – The Ramapo College Foundation’s 2005 Distinguished Citizens Award Dinner, held Saturday, March 5 at the Rockleigh Country Club, raised more than \$200,000 for scholarships, programs and research, while honoring four distinguished citizens for their leadership and commitment to higher education: Kenneth T. Neilson, president, Hudson United Bancorp and Hudson United Bank; Joseph R. Nothwang, executive vice president, Hertz Corporation and president, Vehicle Rental and Leasing for the Americas and Pacific; Debra M. Perry, ’85, partner at the law firm of McCarter & English, LLP; and Tom Purves, chairman and CEO, BMW US Holding Corp.

Following the presentation of the honorees, President-elect Peter Philip Mercer was introduced to the 450 guests. Dr. Mercer was selected in February by the Board of Trustees to become Ramapo College’s fourth president, effective July 1. The program also included remarks by Interim President W. Sanborn Pfeiffer, Vice President Cathleen Davey, student Joe Tropia, and Thomas O. McGurn, chair of the Distinguished Citizens Dinner Committee.

Entertainment for the gala was provided by The Happenings, who exploded onto the national charts in May of 1966 with their first single, *See You In September*. Recently, *Entertainment Magazine* listed *See You In September* in the top 100

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summer songs of all time. The Happenings continued as a major force in the music industry, releasing other hits including *Go Away Little Girl* and a successful album, They shared the stage with music giants such as The Beach Boys, Roy Orbison, John Denver, The Drifters and The Kingston Trio. Additional entertainment for the evening featured the dance band Soiree.

The annual benefit dinner raises funds for student scholarships, College programs and faculty research.

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Biographical Information About the Honorees

Kenneth T. Neilson has served as president of Hudson United Bancorp and Hudson United Bank since September 1989. He was named chairman of the board in 1996. Prior to joining Hudson United, Neilson was with The Summit Bancorporation and American National Bank. He is past chairman of both the NJ Bankers Association and the Hudson County Chamber of Commerce. He is currently a member of the Executive Committee and Convention Committee of the NJ Bankers Association, the Nominating Committee of the Northern NJ Council of the Boys Scouts of America, and the Board of Governors of the Ramapo College Foundation. In addition, he is active with Habitat for Humanity.

Joseph R. Nothwang is executive vice president of the Hertz Corporation and president of Vehicle Rental and Leasing for the Americas and Pacific. Nothwang is based at Hertz Worldwide Headquarters. He has held a variety of top management positions since joining the Hertz Corporation in 1976, including division vice president for its West Central Region, based in Denver, Colorado. Nothwang serves as vice chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Northern New Jersey Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, co-chairs the Parents Council at Skidmore

College, and is a member of the Executive Committee of the Ramapo College Foundation's Board of Governors.

Debra M. Perry, Esq. is a 1985 graduate of Ramapo College and a partner at McCarter & English, LLP. Her practice focuses primarily in the areas of pharmaceutical products liability litigation and the coordination of mass tort products liability litigation. She also specializes in appellate practice in the state and federal courts. Perry regularly appears in state and federal courts around the nation, addressing issues involving scientific and medical causation, exposure, and the application of statutes of limitations and damages. She has been involved in the
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development of national litigation strategies for the defense of product liability claims in both the mass tort and pharmaceutical products liability context. Perry regularly appears in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Chancery Division, Probate part, specializing in complex guardianship and estate matters.

Tom Purves, chairman and CEO of BMW US Holding Corp., is responsible for the BMW Group's sales and marketing activities for BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce in North and South America. He joined BMW in 1985 and has served in a variety of management positions including managing director of BMW Great Britain Ltd. Prior to his arrival in the U.S., he was a Rover board member, overseeing the global sales and marketing for Land Rover, MINI, MG and Rover brands. Purves began his automotive career with Rolls-Royce Ltd. Car Division. *Automotive News* named Purves an "Automotive All Star." He is chairman of the board of directors of the Automotive Youth Educational Systems Inc. (AYES).

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