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**SIDDHARTHA, FOUNDER OF FIREFLIES INTERCULTURAL CENTER IN INDIA, WILL GIVE TWO PRESENTATIONS AT RAMAPO COLLEGE**

(Mahwah) – Siddhartha, founder of the Fireflies Ashram in Bangalore, India will make two public presentations at Ramapo College of New Jersey. Both presentations are free and open to the public. To reserve a seat, please call 201.684.7533.

On Wednesday, October 3 at 3 p.m., Siddhartha, who is Ramapo College's Schomberg Fellow for the Fall 2007 semester, will talk about "Spirituality and Social Justice" in outreach projects at the Fireflies Intercultural Center. The Center is the host of the college's study abroad program on "Culture, Peace, and Development." A Ramapo College faculty panel will respond to his presentation. The talk will take place in Room SC-138 in the Robert A. Scott Student Center.

Contemporary Indian intellectuals have been arguing that the country can move beyond the instrumental rationality of the state-supported secularism that has served as arbiter between religious communities. An emerging sensibility asserts that dialogue between religious communities can promote new inter-religious core values as the basis of a more authentic grass roots consensus on how to initiate social justice and essential legislative reforms.

On Wednesday, October 10 from 1 to 3 p.m., Siddhartha will present a report on "Social Justice Movement for the Adivasi (tribals)." The presentation will take place in Friends Hall in the Robert A. Scott Student Center.

When the Kabini dam was built a few decades ago, about half the forest dwelling tribal population was thrown off their land. Later, when the forest was declared the Rajiv

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Gandhi National Park, the forest department tried to throw the remainder of the tribal population out. Siddhartha will document the non-violent campaign that he and the Fireflies-based Pipal Tree organization helped develop to respond to this injustice.

The two presentations will be sponsored by the college's department of International and Intercultural Education. For further information, please contact Susan Rachouh, director, 201.684.7533.

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