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**TD FOUNDATION GRANT WILL HELP UNDERSERVED STUDENTS
IN RAMAPO COLLEGE'S NURSING PROGRAM**

MAHWAH – Ramapo College of New Jersey announced receipt of a \$20,000 grant from the TD Bank Charitable Foundation to support programs designed to improve academic success for nursing students from underserved backgrounds.

“We are extremely grateful to the TD Bank Charitable Foundation for providing a means to enhance Ramapo College’s nursing program,” said Robert Tillsley, chairman of the Ramapo College Foundation’s Board of Governors. “The nursing faculty is committed to the success of minority and underserved students in order to graduate nurses who will mirror the diversity of patients they will serve.” TD Bank Market President Gregg Gerken is a member of the Ramapo College Foundation Board of Governors.

From a modest beginning with 36 students, today more than 400 men and women are working toward a bachelor's degree in nursing at Ramapo College. Forty-nine percent of Ramapo College students new to the nursing profession are underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities. In addition, 20% of students, regardless of race or ethnicity, are economically disadvantaged.

The grant will be used to address a trend recognized by the nursing faculty among minority

nursing students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. More than half who start as freshmen do not make it to the junior year and less than one-fourth graduate with a nursing degree. In addition, more than one-fourth of minority students take longer than four years to complete the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

Discussions with students, other faculty and counselors indicate that a primary reason for this attrition is lack of academic preparation. Students from underserved backgrounds have not had the structure in high school to learn how to effectively apply content knowledge.

“The intent of this project is to broaden existing efforts and reach all minority and underserved students who are at-risk academically,” said Dr. Kathleen Burke, assistant dean of the Nursing Program at Ramapo College. The project will provide tutors for the academically at-risk nursing students to help them succeed in some of the most difficult nursing courses, primarily science, mathematics and nursing.

The TD Bank Charitable Foundation, a community giving organization of TD Bank, is committed to making a meaningful and positive contribution to the individuals, families, businesses and communities within its marketplace.

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