

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE
RUSS BERRIE AWARD FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

*Uncommon Acts for the Common Good
Earn Everyday Heroes Extraordinary Recognition
Deadline for Nominations Is March 26*

MAHWAH, N.J., February 18, 2010 — The deadline for nominations for the 2010 Russ Berrie Award for Making a Difference has been extended through Friday, March 26, 2010. New Jerseyans who have made a significant difference in their communities through a heroic effort or a lifetime of service are eligible for cash awards of up to \$50,000. Members of the community are invited to nominate New Jersey residents whose deeds, carried out in the state, make them worthy of recognition.

Established in 1996 by the late Russell Berrie, founder of Russ Berrie and Company, Inc., and Ramapo College of New Jersey, the awards honor “unsung heroes” from throughout the state. Up to 19 individuals will be recognized for making a significant difference to the well being of their community during the annual spring award ceremony at Ramapo College in Mahwah. The Russell Berrie Foundation will provide monetary awards of up to \$50,000, \$35,000 and \$25,000 as well as runner-up grants of \$2,500 each.

Nominees will be reviewed by an Advisory Board, which is co-chaired by Josh S. Weston, honorary chairman, Automatic Data Processing, Inc., and Dr. Peter P. Mercer, president of Ramapo College of New Jersey. Following this evaluation, based on criteria refined by the Board, the group will present the awards at a ceremony in June.

Last year, the top honorees included a patient care technician whose quick thinking likely saved the life of a truck driver whose gas tanker overturned and exploded, the founder of a project to help Kenyan schoolchildren and an EMT who has been volunteering on her township’s ambulance corps for more than 35 years.

For more information on The Russ Berrie Award for Making a Difference or to nominate someone, please contact:

(more)

The Russ Berrie Award for Making a Difference
c/o Office of the President
Ramapo College of New Jersey
505 Ramapo Valley Road
Mahwah, New Jersey 07430
Phone: 201.68477910.

Nomination forms are also available on the Internet at www.russellberriefoundation.org or <http://www.ramapo.edu/news/events/berrieawards/nomination.html>. The deadline for entries is March 26.

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