

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Anna Farneski; afarnesk@ramapo.edu

August 30, 2010

Humanitarian and Global Health Expert to Speak at Ramapo College Convocation September 22

(MAHWAH, NJ) – Philanthropist and physician David Walton will be the guest speaker at Ramapo College's Opening Convocation. The Convocation will be held on Wednesday September 22 at 1p.m. in the Arena at the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center on campus.

Walton will be speaking about his journey through the global healthcare system in a speech titled, "A Purpose Driven Life." His words will have special significance for the incoming Class of 2014, who as part of the First-Year Seminar program read Tracy Kidder's "Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World." The book explores how Dr. Paul Farmer, as one man, was able to create a world-health revolution and truly make a difference for those who need it. Convocation speaker Walton was able to witness Dr. Farmer's work first-hand.

Walton met Dr. Farmer during his first year of medical school and became his research assistant, joining him in his quest to better the health of those all over the world, not just those within his immediate community. Both Walton and Farmer were particularly inspired by the healthcare situation in Haiti. It was in Haiti that Dr. Farmer and his colleagues created "Partners in Health", an organization with a mission to bring healthcare and social justice to the poor of the world, not only in response to emergency situations but as a supportive relationship that will strengthen over time and lead to empowerment.

Walton currently works extensively with Dr. Farmer and Partners in Health, and is the associate director of the Hôpital de Lascahobas in Haiti, where he divides his time with Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. Emphasizing healthcare as a basic human right, he helps to provide care for more than 500,000 people living in Haiti by leading HIV prevention programs, consulting with patients with chronic diseases by home visit and conducting operational research. He is also one of the first candidates to be selected for the Howard Hiatt Residency in Global Health Equity and Internal Medicine.

According to the Brigham and Women's Hospital Web site, Walton said he knew he wanted to use medical knowledge to help those in communities lacking resources. "The medicine is the same, it is just the path that is different," he stated on the Brigham and Women's Hospital Web site. "The challenges we face are central to our mission, which is redefining academic medicine so that medical centers can create a pathway for people to

be more involved in global health. It is still difficult for motivated people to find tools to serve the poor and to serve the poor in an all-encompassing way.”

Press inquiries about Opening Convocation may be directed to Anna Farneski, assistant vice president, Marketing and Communications, 201.684.6844 or cell, 201.697.3022.

###