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Resistance Fighter and Breaker of Palestine Blockade to Speak at Holocaust Remembrance Commemoration

(MAHWAH, NJ) – The Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies of Ramapo College and Temple Beth Haverim Shir Shalom will hold a Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance) commemoration on Wednesday, April 18. It will commence at 7 p.m. and take place at Beth Haverim Shir Shalom at 280 Ramapo Valley Road (Route 202), Mahwah, NJ 07430.

The commemoration will feature Benjamin Levin who was a member of a Jewish partisan brigade that joined the Red Army in liberating Vilna, the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," from Nazi oppression. Once 500 strong, combat reduced its size to a handful of fighters.

Levin joined the Irgun with Menachem Begin and assisted the smuggling of Jews and arms into Palestine. In that capacity, he was on the cargo vessel Altadena, when a confrontation ensued after Begin refused to halt his operation that separately supplied the Irgun. The provisional Israeli government under David Ben-Gurion ordered the ship taken by force. Shelling began when the ship was about 100 yards off the coast of Tel Aviv. Setting aside the controversy over the affair, there were casualties on both sides, including a number of Auschwitz survivors on the ship. One of the last crew members to leave the ship was Benjamin Levin.

The evening also will include a commemorative service conducted by Rabbi Joel Mosbacher program of chorale music performed by the adult choir of Temple Beth Haverim Shir Shalom, under Cantor David Perper and the choir the Ramapo Chorale and CantaNOVA, under the direction of Lisa Lutter, associate professor of choral music at the College.

For more information, please contact Michael Riff at 201-684- 7409.

Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as fifth in the Best Regional Universities North category for public institutions, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,008 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to

teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers five graduate programs as well as articulated programs with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.