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Gumpert Teachers' Workshop to Explore Transitional Justice in Aftermath of Genocide

(MAHWAH, NJ) – The Gumpert Teachers' Workshop, "Transitional and Transformative Justice in the Aftermath of Genocide," will be held at Ramapo College on May 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Trustees Pavilion.

Sponsored by the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies in cooperation with the New Jersey State Commission on Holocaust Education and with funding from the Gumpert Foundation and the New Jersey State Department, workshop participants will learn how exploring societal experiences from Germany and Yugoslavia to Peru and Rwanda, coming to terms with and transcending their tainted pasts can enhance the teaching of the Holocaust, genocide, and human rights in the classroom.

Transitional justice is implemented by a society coming to terms with an occurrence of mass violence, e.g. genocide or the widespread abuse of human rights. It may be used in tandem with restorative measures to foster the recovery from mass violence and transgressions of human rights. As such, they are not intended to be solely punitive, but are designed to assist a society as a means of building a better future.

Professor of Political Science and International Studies Dr. Rebecca Root will deliver the keynote to introduce the topic, focusing on the efforts in Peru to right the wrongs of the Fujimori regime (1990-2000) and the nearly two-decade long struggle against the Shining Path insurgency.

Dr. Root has a doctorate in Political Science from the University of Massachusetts and has recently written her first book, "Transitional Justice in Peru," which will be out this fall from Palgrave Macmillan. At Ramapo, she teaches Political Science and International Studies, with a special focus on human rights. She also serves as convener for the minor in Human Rights and Genocide Studies.

Sharon Van Blijdesteijn of Milburn High School will deliver a hands-on presentation on how the subject matter of transitional and transformative justice can be brought into the classroom to foster student involvement and engagement.

Van Blijdesteijn has been a history teacher at Millburn High School for the last eight years where she teaches World History, Global Issues, and Economics. For the last three years she has served as the chair of the Holocaust Remembrance Day Committee and has worked to transform the event into a broadly focused Genocide Awareness Program, involving both survivor testimony and student-led discussion. Van Blijdesteijn holds a bachelor's degree in International Relations from the University of Pennsylvania and a master's degree (with Distinction) in

Political Economy from the London School of Economics where her graduate research focused on philo-Semitism in Eastern Europe during Post-Communist Transition.

Two survivors of the Rwandan Genocide will reflect on the route their country has taken since the murderous events of 1994. Telesphore Kagaba was a teacher and interpreter at the time of the genocide and now an Immigration & Refugee Services Case Manager at Catholic Charities in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Eugenie Mukeshimana, also a Human Services professional, is the founder and executive director of Genocide Survivors Support Network, a charitable organization based in South Orange, New Jersey with a mission to help genocide survivors rebuild their lives and use their voice to educate the world about the crime of genocide.

The workshop (including breakfast and lunch) is free. Educators may register at: <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=hpok9gdab&oeidk=a07e5snes5n94f48c13>
For more information or to register by phone, please call 201.684.7409.

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as fifth in the Best Regional Universities North category, 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 six 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.