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**NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR UNSUNG HEROES IN NEW JERSEY  
FOR THE RUSS BERRIE AWARD FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

*Uncommon Acts for the Common Good  
Earn Everyday Heroes Extraordinary Recognition  
Deadline for Nominations Is February 15*

MAHWAH, N.J., January 7, 2013 - Nominations for the 2013 Russ Berrie Award for Making a Difference will be accepted by The Russell Berrie Foundation through February 15. 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 the Russell Berrie Foundation, and Ramapo College of New Jersey, the awards honor "unsung heroes" from throughout the state. Up to 11 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 up to eight runner-up grants of \$5,000 each.

"Through this award, we honor the contributions of people who don't seek recognition for what they do, yet generously give of themselves to make the world a better place," said Angelica Berrie of Englewood, president of The Russell Berrie Foundation.

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. The Board, comprised of eminent New Jersey business leaders and professionals, will evaluate nominations submitted by community groups, houses of worship, educators, representatives of the media and others. Following this evaluation, based on criteria refined by the Board, the group will present the awards at a ceremony on May 2, 2013.

Last year, the top honorees included a comic who prevented a man from committing suicide and who donates a portion of his performance fees to the man's care, a 15-year-old who co-founded an organization that provides social and recreational programs to special needs children and a woman who established an organization that provides literacy classes, immigration services and cultural events to the Salvadorian community.

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

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: 201.684.7179

Nomination forms are also available on the Internet at [www.russellberriefoundation.org](http://www.russellberriefoundation.org) or <http://www.ramapo.edu/news/events/berrieawards/>. The deadline for entries is February 15.

The Russell Berrie Foundation, established in 1985, works to foster continuity and enrichment of Jewish communal life, support issues of health with an emphasis on diabetes and humanism in medicine and strengthen New Jersey communities.

Ramapo College of New Jersey is the state's public liberal arts college, serving more than 6,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The College, which offers more than 700 courses and 40 academic programs, was ranked sixth by *U.S. News & World Report* among the top public universities-master's in the region. The campus center for performing and visual arts - the site of the Russ Berrie Award for Making a Difference ceremony - is named in honor of both Mr. Berrie and his wife, Angelica.

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