



**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Office of Communications and Public Relations**  
**Press Release**  
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## **‘Teach-In’ on Human Dimension of Migration Crisis to Be Held at Ramapo College**

MAHWAH, N.J. – Ramapo College of New Jersey will hold a “teach-in” to help students put a human face on the current wave of migration into Europe brought about by turmoil in the Middle East and Africa. The program will focus on the migrants’ aspirations, resilience and the experiences of their quest for safety and a better life.

The teach-in, which is free and open to the public, will be held on Friday, October 23 from 10:15 a.m. to noon in the Trustees Pavilion at the College (PAV 1-3). The program is co-sponsored by Ramapo College’s School of Social Science and Human Service and the Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. It is organized in conjunction with an ad-hoc faculty, staff and student initiative in solidarity with refugees.

Participants in the teach-in, who have had on-the ground experience of the phenomenon, will be:

**Marilee Johns**, the resettlement supervisor for the International Rescue Committee’s New York City’s regional office;

**Timothy Jay Smith**, a France-based American author who has been tirelessly working as a volunteer with refugees on the Greek Island of Lesbos;

**Ivan Watson**, CNN's senior international correspondent based in Hong Kong who, from his former base in Istanbul, documented the surge of refugees across the border into Turkey and reported on the ethnic and sectarian cleansing of hundreds of thousands of minority Christians and Yazidis in Iraq by the militant group known as ISIS.

**Behzad Yaghmaian**, professor of Political Economy at Ramapo College and a frequent traveler to Turkey and its neighbors, is the author “Embracing the Infidel: Stories of Muslim Migrants on the Journey West.” He will introduce the program by providing an overview of the topic.

Timothy Jay Smith and Ivan Watson will be participating in the event by teleconference. Each participant will deliver a brief statement on his or her view of the topic. Afterwards, the floor will be opened for a Question and Answer session.

Michael A. Riff, director of the Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, will serve as moderator of the event.

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as fifth in the Best Regional Public 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 6,000 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 eight graduate programs as well as articulated programs with Rutgers, The State University 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.