



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Communications and Public Relations
Press Release
July 28, 2016

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Ramapo College of New Jersey Recognized for Innovative Student Retention Initiative

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Ramapo College was recently recognized as the winner of the 2016 Hobsons Education Advances Award for its accomplishments in increasing student retention and establishing a campus-wide "success network." The College will be named the Admissions and Student Success winner during the annual Hobsons University user conference.

"We are honored to receive the 2016 Hobson's Education Advances Award. Over the last five years, our campus has focused on developing a culture of academic advisement and harnessing technology to foster student success," said Christopher Romano, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs at Ramapo College. "This award reaffirms Ramapo's commitment to personalized attention and developing the whole student."

Ramapo College, which has achieved an 88 percent retention rate and 61 percent four-year graduation rate in recent years, is using Starfish Retention Solutions software platforms by Hobsons to connect staff and faculty across campus to encourage student success, ensuring that both at-risk and those on track receive the support they need to complete their studies.

"It's rewarding to see how the technology has had such a positive impact on our students," said Joseph Connell, Director of Student Success at Ramapo College. "Our goal is to connect the student with all parts of the College and to allow us to holistically aid those students in their educational endeavors."

In the fall of 2013, Ramapo tapped Hobsons technology to replace its paper-and-pencil early alert system with a comprehensive early alert plan that has increased communication between the College and at-risk students, enabling advisors and faculty to support struggling students in real-time. Since then, the percentage of academic warning first-year students meeting with their advisors regularly each semester has increased from less than 20 percent to 62 percent. The College was recognized as a Rising Star by Hobsons in 2014 for its efforts.

"The success at Ramapo College reflects the importance of strong campus culture, and the thoughtful application of technology to advance institutional strategy," said Stephen M. Smith, President of Advising and Admissions Solutions at Hobsons. "We are proud to support Ramapo College in its work to

expand postsecondary opportunities for all students, and applaud the tireless work of the administration, staff and faculty.”

Said Connell, “We owe thanks to our faculty and staff who are dedicated mentors to students and who are focused on helping each student achieve their desired goal.” Romano added, “As a result, we have seen our four-year graduation rates increase due to the campus-wide commitment to student success. This work supports the College’s strategic plan to increase first-year retention to 90 percent and a six-year graduation rate to 75 percent.”

The College will be awarded a cash prize, which will go toward funding Ramapo’s student success efforts.

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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 viewed as 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.