



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Marketing and Communications
Press Release
March 31, 2017

Contact: Angela Daidone
201-684-7477
adaidon1@ramapo.edu

Ramapo College's Master of Arts in Special Education Program Launches Partnership with The Forum School

MAHWAH, N.J. – Ramapo College's Master of Arts in Special Education program has launched an innovative partnership with The Forum School, a private, non-profit, non-sectarian day program for developmentally atypical children from preschool through high school.

Working under the guidance of Professor Julie Norflus-Good, Director of the Master of Arts in Special Education program at Ramapo College, educators at the Waldwick, N.J.-based Forum School mapped out a pilot project designed to expand and improve transition services, and at the same time, help prepare the next generation of educators to work with students on the autism spectrum.

Joined by their teacher, Ms. Beverly Asinofsky, students from The Forum School's E.L.I.T.E. program head to Ramapo College every week, where they spend time with 18 undergraduate students who are studying in the College's Teacher Education program. Together, they work on collaborative projects, including touring the campus, cooking together and working on homework. At the end of every visit, the group enjoys lunch together in the College's cafeteria.

Norflus-Good believes this cutting edge partnership will help her students, all of whom are studying general education.

"Today's classrooms are diverse, and I believe all students need as much hands-on learning as they can get," she said. "Not only do my students benefit, but The Forum School students have developed confidence, independence, problem-solving and new social skills. It is an amazing collaboration – a win-win for everyone."

Brian Detlefsen, principal at The Forum School agrees. "This collaboration gives our students an excellent opportunity to experience life on a college campus, and develop friendships with similar-aged peers. They look forward to the visits and have grown so much."

###

Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the top 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.