



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
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Ramapo Students Serve as Judges for Elementary School STEAM Expo

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Ramapo College students studying in the Teacher Education program got a glimpse of young minds at work recently when they served as judges for a STEAM Expo at Corpus Christi Elementary School in Hasbrouck Heights, N.J.

Amanda Khoudary and Frederick Weinberg volunteered their time to be judges in the fifth and sixth grade categories.

"I was pleased that some of my students were able to be judges at the STEAM Expo. I know they were very impressed with the students' projects," said Eva Ogens, Associate Professor, Teacher Education (Math and Science) at Ramapo College. "I believe that any time Ramapo students can interact with 'real' elementary and middle school students, it helps them realize that we should set our expectations high and that young students are capable of doing some amazing things! It also provides an opportunity for our students to make connections with the community. I welcome other experiences like this for my students."

Weinberg, a post-baccalaureate student studying for certification in K-6 and middle school mathematics and social studies, said he found the staff and student body at Corpus Christi to be quite impressive, "embodying a true dedication to learning."

"This competition was a perfect example of how learning can be made to be both fun and meaningful," said Weinberg. "The students showed great pride and enthusiasm in their work, and when presenting their projects to me, I could tell that it was not just to *win* the competition. They were proud of what they had accomplished and truly wanted to share it with me."

Ramapo alumna Amanda Sambucini '15, who teaches sixth grade at the school, said, "As their teacher, I was proud to see my students' exhilarated faces and enthusiasm as they explained their amazing

projects and experiments to the judges.” Sambucini, who also is in Ramapo’s Master’s in Special Education program, credits the Ramapo faculty and staff with her success as an educator.

“Their guidance and community atmosphere was a significant reason for me to continue my academic career as a graduate student. The teacher education certification program gave me opportunities to develop into the teacher I am today.”

Gina Deppert, who organized the STEAM Expo at Corpus Christi, said she was thrilled to have Ramapo students participate.

“Getting a first-hand look at what our students are capable of was important for Amanda and Fred as they continue their studies,” said Deppert. “It was important for us, too, and I am grateful for Ramapo’s willingness to send their students to be part of this special event.”

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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.