



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
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Contact: Angela Daidone
201-684-7477
adaidon1@ramapo.edu

Ramapo College Visiting Professor Receives Distinguished Honor at Native Ghana University

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Dr. Kofi Owusu-daaku, professor of biology at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Ghana and visiting scholar and associate professor of biology at Ramapo College, was recognized with the Medal of Distinguished Service during a special biennial commencement ceremony at KNUST in November.

"I was planning to go home during the Thanksgiving break but this was such an unexpected surprise," said Owusu-daaku, who was recognized for helping to forge a relationship between KNUST, where he served as dean of students for eight years, and Ramapo College. He also was instrumental in helping to secure funds for needy African students through the \$20 million MasterCard Foundation's scholarship program.

Owusu-daaku first taught at the College in fall 2002 as the pioneer exchange scholar for a semester. He returned in 2006, becoming the first faculty member to teach anatomy and physiology during the summer class period. He said the difference in classroom culture inspired him and he has taught every summer since then. He is currently midway through a yearlong residency for the 2017-18 academic year.

Looking back at his original visit to Ramapo and the ensuing relationship between the College and KNUST, Owusu-daaku said, "A trickle turned into a waterfall. It began as an exchange between TAS [The School of Theoretical and Applied Science] of Ramapo and the College of Science of KNUST under then-President Rodney Smith." It gained traction under current President Peter P. Mercer and the agreement has been renewed twice under his tenure, first in 2010 and recently in 2016, Owusu-daaku added.

"The most exciting thing that keeps bringing me back to Ramapo is the assertiveness of American students. It's that pushback. It energizes me and keeps me on my toes," Owusu-daaku said.

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Ramapo College of New Jersey is the state's premier public liberal arts college. Ranked among the top colleges in the region by College Choice and recognized by, among others, U.S. News & World Report, Princeton Review, Colleges of Distinction and, also designated by Victory Media as a "Military Friendly College," Ramapo College is

committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding.

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 business, education, nursing and social work. In addition, the College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels, and offers graduate programs leading to degrees in Accounting, Business Administration, Educational Technology, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education.