



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Marketing and Communications
Press Release
January 30, 2018

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

Judge Paul J. Vichness Addresses Legal Name Change Process in New Jersey

MAHWAH, N.J. – The Honorable Paul J. Vichness was the guest speaker at Ramapo College of New Jersey on January 29. Judge Vichness addressed the topic “My True Name: Exploring the legal process of changing one’s name in New Jersey.”

Ramapo President Peter P. Mercer made the introduction, lauding Judge Vichness for his commitment and many years of service to the judiciary in New Jersey. “I thank Judge Vichness for his willingness to come to Ramapo to speak with our students, staff and faculty on this very timely subject,” said President Mercer.

Addressing, in particular, the students, Judge Vichness explained the “very formalized” legal steps of [changing one’s name in New Jersey](#), calling it a process that required patience and careful planning.

“It’s not a difficult process but it does need you to pay careful attention to the details required of the state,” he said. “Probably the biggest mistake people make is not following the filing time limits. You can do the paperwork yourself but there is an advantage to hiring an attorney to avoid frustration or having to repeat all the forms.” He added that laws regarding name changes in the state continue to be amended to meet the needs of today’s society and population. “It’s a very different world today than it was, say, in 1984.”

A panel discussion with students and staff who have experienced elements of the name change process followed the talk, which was sponsored by the Civic and Community Engagement Center at Ramapo.

Judge Vichness was appointed to the Superior Court in 1995 and during his 18 year tenure, served in all of the divisions of the Superior Court. He stepped down in 2013 and joined a

private firm as counsel the same year. During his tenure on the bench, he served in the civil division where he was the Business Court Judge presiding over commercial and complex matters. He was involved in the management, trial, and settlement of various medical malpractice, construction and personal injury cases.

While on the bench, Judge Vichness served as a member of the Supreme Court Committees on Judicial Education and Jury Selection in civil and criminal trials. He also was a frequent lecturer at the New Jersey Judicial College.

Since leaving the bench, Judge Vichness has served as a mediator and arbitrator in a wide range of cases including construction cases, personal injury cases, medical malpractice cases, contract cases and probate cases.

President Mercer also thanked Board of Trustees member Sharlene S. Vichness for facilitating the Judge's appearance.

"Trustee Vichness continues to be an advocate for Ramapo. We thank her for her wonderful contributions and service to the College," said President Mercer.

###

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.