



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Marketing and Communications
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Ramapo College Alumna Receives Prestigious EOF Award

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Ramapo College of New Jersey alumna Bianca Thompson-Owen '02 received the Thomas H. Kean EOF Outstanding Alumni Award at the Educational Opportunity Fund Professional Association of New Jersey's (EOFPANJ) Spring Conference on March 21. Each year the EOFPANJ and the Educational Opportunity Fund Statewide Alumni Association, Inc. recognizes up to four alumni with the prestigious award.

"As a former foster child and 'at-risk' youth, I understand the value of higher education and I have committed myself to philanthropy and educational excellence," said Ms. Thompson-Owen. "My mantra is 'If not now, then when? If not me, then who?'"

Celebrating 50 years of existence, the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) provides college access, academic support services and eligibility-based financial assistance to highly motivated students who come from economically and/or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Since its inception, the EOF Program has graduated over 45,000 students from over 50 New Jersey Colleges and Universities.

"We are thrilled that Bianca was selected for this award and even more proud to have her as part of the Ramapo College EOF family," said Christopher Romano, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs at Ramapo College. "Her dedication to the mission of EOF throughout her career in higher education is inspiring."

Ms. Thompson-Owen, a Jersey City native, received several honors as an EOF student: in Hudson County Community College in 2000 where she was inducted into the Chi Alpha Epsilon Honor Society; and as a recipient of the Distinguished Academic Honor award at Ramapo College in 2002. She earned her Master's degree in counseling at New Jersey City University where she earned the outstanding research award for her thesis on counseling programs in New Jersey prisons. Ms. Thompson-Owen is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Education program at Rowan University, where she is a distinguished scholar having been inducted into the National Graduate School Honor Society.

She currently serves as the Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management and Student Success, and Director of the EOF program at the Rutgers School of Health Professions. Prior to working for higher education, she served as the Assistant Director of the College Preparatory Incentive Program, serving Union and Hudson Counties; where she provided over 1,000 “at-risk” students with higher education counseling and career guidance. Additionally, she serves on several regional and state higher education committees and is a recipient of the following awards: School of Health Professions Employee of the Year, UNC-Women Making a Difference Award, and Emerging Leader Award for the American Association for Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

In 1967, EOF was established by legislation that was sponsored by then, freshman legislator, Thomas H. Kean, who became New Jersey’s 48th Governor in 1982 and served for two terms. The Thomas Kean Outstanding EOF Alumni Award --- established in his honor --- is given to prestigious alumni who have made outstanding contributions in their community and have demonstrated professional success.

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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.