



**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Office of Marketing and Communications**  
**Press Release**  
**May 1, 2018**

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## **Congressman Gottheimer to Deliver Commencement Address for Ramapo College of New Jersey**

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Ramapo College of New Jersey has announced that Congressman Josh Gottheimer will give the keynote address at the College's 2018 Undergraduate Commencement Ceremony on Thursday, May 10 at Prudential Center in Newark. President Peter P. Mercer will present 1,434 students to Board of Trustee Chair, William F. Dator, to confer their degrees.

[Congressman Gottheimer](#) represents New Jersey's Fifth Congressional District in the northernmost part of the state, which includes parts of Bergen, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties. He serves on the House Financial Services Committee where he works on three Subcommittees: the Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments Subcommittee, the Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee, and the Terrorism and Illicit Finance Subcommittee. Congressman Gottheimer was raised in North Caldwell, the son of a preschool teacher and a small business owner. He graduated from West Essex High School before attending the University of Pennsylvania, later becoming a Thouron Fellow at Oxford, and then attended Harvard Law School. After finishing college, he went on to work in the Clinton White House as one of the youngest presidential speechwriters in history.

Also during the ceremony, Nicholas C. and Susan A. Vallario of Upper Saddle River will be presented with Honorary Degrees in recognition of their tremendous service and commitment to the College. Mr. and Mrs. Vallario currently serve as the Honorary Chairs of the College's Campaign Cabinet for the new Learning Commons. Ms. Vallario also serves as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and is a member of the Foundation Board of Governors.

Dr. Bridget A. Taylor, Ramapo College alumna of the Class of 1986, is the recipient of the President's Award of Merit. Dr. Taylor is a leading authority in the treatment of children with autism spectrum disorder. She co-founded Alpine Learning Group 30 years ago and currently serves as Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of the Paramus-based center.

Keivon Hemmings will deliver the student address. Hemmings, of Newark, has served as an Admissions Student Ambassador, Resident Assistant and has been active in numerous student-related community activities.

Mahwah Chief of Police James Batelli will receive an Honorary Degree at the College's Graduate Programs Commencement exercises on Thursday, May 17 at the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center on the College's campus. Under Chief Batelli's leadership, the Mahwah Police Department has worked extensively with the College on matters of student safety, emergency preparedness, the opioid epidemic, and community policing. At this ceremony, which marks the first time Ramapo will have a separate ceremony for graduate programs, 241 students will receive their master's degree.

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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.