



**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Office of Marketing and Communications**  
**Press Release**  
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*Contact: Angela Daidone*  
*201-684-7477*  
*news@ramapo.edu*

## **ABC-TV's John Quiñones Give Keynote at Ramapo College's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Diversity Convocation**

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Ramapo College's 13th Annual Diversity Convocation was held on February 13 in the Sharp Theater of the Angelica and Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts. Noted news anchor John Quiñones, best known for hosting ABC-TV's "What Would You Do?" was the keynote speaker.

Quiñones opened his remarks paraphrasing the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., which set the tone for his presentation. "The reason we fear each other is because we don't know each other. And the reason we don't know each other is because we don't communicate with each other," Quiñones said, adding that we, as a nation, need to be more tolerant of one another.

Quiñones discussed his growing up in a poor Latino family in San Antonio, Texas. He faced many challenges and bigotry throughout his youth, including being punished for speaking his native Spanish when he entered school. He dreamed of being a television reporter – his idol was Geraldo Rivera, he said – but he received no support from school counselors because he was judged by the color of his skin and his accent. He credits his mother for encouraging him to follow his dreams. "She told me not to be embarrassed by eating beans and quesadillas for lunch, and to keep learning and doing my best," he said.

Quiñones said he participated in an Upward Bound Program in Texas, which he said shaped his love of learning. He began his career as an intern at a local country music station and eventually went on to study journalism at Columbia University. He worked in Chicago media, covering concerning immigration and other social issues. "The stations began to realize that it would be helpful to have someone who spoke Spanish and I was an ideal choice," he said.

His decades of outstanding national news journalism garnered Quiñones multiple Emmy awards. However, the success of "What Would You Do?" has brought him full circle to emphasize the need for all of us to treat others with dignity.

“When we witness any kind of injustice, do you step in or do you step away? Isn’t that the true definition of character? It’s not what we do in our heads,” Quiñones said.

Ramapo’s annual Diversity Convocation is sponsored by the College’s Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Compliance, whose mission is to ensure the community celebrates diversity and to create a favorable campus climate for all through programs and peer education.

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Ramapo College of New Jersey is the state’s premier public liberal arts college and is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding. The College is ranked #1 among New Jersey public institutions by College Choice, and is recognized as a top college by *U.S. News & World Report*, *Kiplinger’s*, Princeton Review and *Money* magazine, among others. Ramapo College is also distinguished as a Career Development College of Distinction by CollegesofDistinction.com, boasts the best campus housing in New Jersey on Niche.com, and is designated a “Military Friendly College” in Victoria Media’s *Guide to Military Friendly Schools*.

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 master’s degrees in Accounting, Business Administration, Educational Technology, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education.