



**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Office of Marketing and Communications**  
**Press Release**  
**May 10, 2019**

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

## **Ramapo College Representatives to Serve on Governor's Higher Education Task Force**

MAHWAH, N.J. – Six representatives from Ramapo College of New Jersey have been appointed by Governor Phil Murphy to serve on a new Student Success Task Force that is part of the administration's higher education plan, *Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education*.

The Task Force will be divided into five working groups: 1) Creating On-Ramps to College; 2) Making College Affordable; 3) Student Success; 4) Safe and Inclusive Learning environments; and 5) Research, innovation, and Talent.

Selected for the working groups are student Juliana Florez '19; Barbara Harmon-Francis, director of the Educational Opportunity Fund Program; Emily Leskinen, assistant professor of social science; Alberta Tamika Quick '03, assistant director of Equity and Diversity Programs; Christopher Romano, vice president of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs; and Mariella Zijdel '20, student trustee.

"Marked by competitive internship and undergraduate research opportunities, impressive 4- and 6-year graduation rates, and robust alumni employment, Ramapo College has a rich history and a strong reputation for delivering a high quality, student-centered undergraduate experience," said Ramapo College President Peter P. Mercer. "The six Ramapo representatives selected to serve on the Governor's Higher Education Task Force have all contributed to the College's success and surely have the thoughtful experience and perspective to advance the efforts of the Task Force."

The working group members, who were selected through a formal application process, will provide recommendations related to specific charges for each group by the end of the year.

“Many leaders and stakeholders in higher education are committing themselves to coming up with innovative strategies to strengthen our state’s higher education system,” said Governor Murphy. “I applaud the willingness of these talented New Jerseyans to roll up their sleeves on behalf of our colleges and universities and help us refine the state’s higher education plan.”

Secretary of Higher Education Zakiya Smith Ellis said, “These work groups will take a comprehensive look at strategies to increase support for students at New Jersey’s colleges and we appreciate their time and dedication to the future of higher education in the state.”

A complete overview of New Jersey’s Plan for Higher Education can be viewed at <https://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/stateplan.shtml>

###

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.