



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Marketing and Communications
Press Release
September 18, 2019

Contact: Cathleen Davey 201-684-7612 or
Angela Daidone 201-684-7477

news@ramapo.edu

Ramapo College Board of Trustees Announces President Peter P. Mercer Will Step Down in 2021

MAHWAH, N.J. – The Board of Trustees of Ramapo College of New Jersey has announced that Peter P. Mercer will step down as President of the College at the end of his current contract in June 2021. This will mark the culmination of Dr. Mercer’s 16 years of dedicated leadership and impactful service to the College.

“Dr. Mercer is a tremendous asset to public higher education in New Jersey. Ramapo College students and alumni have benefited from his steadfast vision and his unwavering dedication to the mission of the College. The Board of Trustees is confident that the College will continue to thrive under his leadership for the next two years,” said William F. Dator, Chair of the College’s Board of Trustees.

Under President Mercer’s leadership, the College has thrived on several fronts:

- **State-of-the-Art Living and Learning Environment:** President Mercer has led Ramapo College through a transformative campus-wide building and renovation program, which included the opening of the Anisfield School of Business and its fifth floor trading lab, Laurel Residence Hall, Sharp Sustainability Education Center, Topken World Languages Lab, Salameno Spiritual Center, Padovano Commons, Les Paul Recording Studio, Dugan Engineering Physics Lab, Veteran and Transfer Students Lounge, Adler Center for Nursing Excellence, extensive renovations to the College’s G-and B-Wing academic complexes, and enhancements to the athletics and recreational facilities.
- **Curricular Growth and Academic Reputation:** The College’s curriculum and academic reputation have grown under President Mercer’s leadership. He has steadfastly advanced Ramapo’s focus on faculty-student research and experiential learning; dramatically expanded the College’s Honor Program; provided students with awards to present their research at outside conferences or submit their work for publication;

secured accreditation for the Anisfield School of Business by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business; and received excellent accreditation reports for the College's Social Work, Nursing and Teacher Education programs. At the graduate level, the College has launched programs in Social Work, Education, Nursing, and Accounting.

- **Campus Safety:** Describing sexual assault as “an affront to the well-being and inherent dignity of our college,” President Mercer led the development and implementation of *Ramapo Advance*, a comprehensive and substantive campus safety plan. *Ramapo Advance* is a solutions-oriented plan focused on educating students and preventing sexual misconduct and alcohol abuse at the college as well as ensuring cases are swiftly and fairly adjudicated.
- **Commitment to Affordability:** Ramapo's capacity to attract external funds, both public and private, has been wedded to President Mercer's commitment to affordability, his penchant for friend- and fundraising, and his dogged persistence in Trenton.

The College has been able to boast to families, students, employers, and legislators that Ramapo has had the lowest cumulative tuition increase of any New Jersey State college in recent years.

President Mercer's commitment to affordability has also been manifest in his alacrity to share with people why Ramapo College is worthy of their generosity. Just last year, with the support of the Foundation and countless inspired donors, the College awarded more than \$700,000 in student scholarships, this is up from \$583,000 just two years earlier.

As a result of Dr. Mercer's consistent engagement with the Bergen County legislative delegation and other State leaders, the College secured \$15M from the State of New Jersey enabling it to embark on an 80,000 square-foot renovation to its Library to construct a new comprehensive Learning Commons (due to open in 2021).

- **Increased Student Success and Demand for a Ramapo Education:** Ramapo also has been increasingly regarded as a great value and a superior institution, consistently ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as among the “Best Regional Universities in the North,” and by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine* as one of the “100 Best Values in Public Colleges.”

The demand for a Ramapo College education continues to grow. In fall of 2006 the College received 4,430 applications for 815 seats and thirteen years later, the College received 7,329 applications for 1,030 seats.

The next two years at Ramapo College will include its 50th Anniversary Celebration, the opening of a new Learning Commons, and continued progress under its Strategic Plan: *Fulfilling Our Promise 2018-2021*.

Planning for a national presidential search is underway. Susan A. Vallario, Vice Chair of the Board, has been appointed chair of the Presidential Search Committee, which will also include student, faculty, staff, alumni, administration, and Ramapo College Foundation representation.

###