



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
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IRS Adrian Project Gives Ramapo Students a Look at Criminal Investigation

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Forget the pocket protectors and calculators. Twenty-two Ramapo College students – accounting, finance and law and society majors – used different tools to uncover a money laundering operation for terrorists: surveillance equipment, bright red or blue “handguns,” handcuffs and protective vests. Certainly not a typical day of crunching numbers.

These students were participating in the IRS Criminal Investigation Adrian Project, a day-long simulation of a mock criminal investigation. They reviewed bank statements, tax returns and invoices, and conducted interrogations of “witnesses” based on the evidence they uncovered. Divided into four groups and working with coaches from the IRS CI Springfield Field Office, the students compared their findings and determined who their suspects might be. They then surveilled their suspects, using radios to communicate, presented their case for arrest warrants to a “magistrate judge” and eventually stormed the sites under investigation, handcuffing suspects and making mock arrests.

“The Adrian Project was a great hands-on event that allowed me to experience a different perspective of the law,” said Angelina Farallo ’22, a law and society major in Ramapo’s School of Social Science and Human Services. “We were able to meet actual investigators while learning tactics and examining a case, and get firearms training and practice surveillance. While I would not see myself being a criminal investigator, I will definitely be looking into a job position as a lawyer within the criminal division of the IRS.”

Assistant Director of the Cahill Career Development Center at Ramapo LaQuan Norman said she first learned of the project when Ramapo alumnus Jonathon Helmstetter, who is a special agent with IRS CI, brought the concept to her office. They worked with IRS Special Agent Robert Glantz to work out the details and propose the project to College administration.

“The Adrian Project was a great opportunity for Ramapo students to engage in hands-on learning and broaden their perceptions of career options in accounting and law enforcement,” said Norman. “What resonated most with our social science majors interested in law enforcement is that adding an accounting minor would make them more competitive in the job market.”

Glantz explained that the exercise is designed to give students a glimpse into a career path they might not have thought of. “The day condenses what could be months or even years of work into a one-day simulation, but students still get a good idea of what goes into such investigations,” Glantz said.

IRS Special Agent Leo Ravensky '04 said the students were serious about learning and were “really engaged” in their assignments for the day. Ravensky, who majored in finance, first learned of the opportunity when he attended a career fair while he was a student here.

“I had no idea what I wanted to do, and I saw that the IRS was offering civil positions,” he said, adding that he started in the agency’s revenue office in Manhattan before eventually becoming an investigator. “I wouldn’t have thought of this as a career had it not been for that initial meeting.”

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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, data science, 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, Data Science, Educational Technology, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education.