



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
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ESPN Sports Analytics Guru Speaks to Ramapo College Students About How Data Science is Used in Sports

MAHWAH, N.J. – Ramapo College of New Jersey, which recently announced the addition of two new data science degree programs—a master’s and a bachelor’s degree in Data Science—created a front-row seat interaction for students with Brian Macdonald, director of sports analytics at ESPN. During the event, Macdonald discussed how data science is used to identify the value of box score statistics when estimating NBA players’ contribution to on-court performance as well as how analytics are used in a variety of sports such as hockey, soccer, football and eSports.

“One of the defining features of Ramapo College's data science programs is how students will apply the knowledge and skills they gain to real-world applications,” said Stefan Becker, provost and vice president of academic affairs at Ramapo College. “We were very pleased to have Dr. Macdonald on campus to discuss how data modeling is used in ESPN sports analytics. This is yet another example of how we can harness big data to present information and make an impact in our daily lives.”

In addition to his position with ESPN, Macdonald is currently principal consultant at GreaterThanPlusMinus LLC, where he specializes in all aspects of data science and analytics, especially data management, data visualization, predictive modeling, forecasting and developing interactive web applications, for both sports and business applications. He is an adjunct professor in sports analytics in the College of Business at Florida Atlantic University, and an adjunct professor in the Department of Management Science at the University of Miami.

He previously spent four seasons as director of Hockey Analytics with the Florida Panthers Hockey Club, where he was responsible for analyzing data in both hockey operations and business operations. He also served six years as an assistant and associate professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at West Point.

Ramapo's undergraduate and graduate programs, starting with the fall 2020 semester, will prepare data science graduates entering the job market with sought-after skills in programming, statistics, machine learning and data visualization, providing opportunities to pursue high-paying, high-quality jobs at some of the most influential and prestigious companies in the country.

Data science is integral to the needs and operations of almost every business sector and enables companies to leverage data to predict trends, inform decisions and make breakthroughs. Data scientists are employed by hospitals, pharmaceutical manufacturers, financial and trading firms, sports teams, marketing agencies, and of course, tech companies. In fact, Glassdoor ranked data scientist as the #1 job in America in 2019, with a median base salary of \$108K/year, as well as the #1 Best Paying Job Out of College in 2019.

More information is available at www.ramapo.edu/data-science

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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.