



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Institutional Advancement
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Ramapo College to Join National Education Leaders for New Initiative ‘Tools for Postsecondary Schools’

Selected as one of only three public 4-year colleges

MAHWAH, N.J. -- As a leader in student success, Ramapo College of New Jersey has been selected as one of only three public 4-year colleges across the country to launch the inaugural cohort of **Tools for Postsecondary Schools: *Putting Evidence to Work for Student Supports*** workshop series and learning community hosted by nonprofit research organization MDRC.

[MDRC](#), a nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization, is committed to finding solutions to some of the most difficult problems facing the nation – from reducing poverty and bolstering economic self-sufficiency to improving public education and college graduation rates.

“Ramapo College is synonymous with student success. As a public liberal arts college, we take seriously our obligation to equip and empower our students with the leadership skills, experiences, and supports they need in order to thrive as undergraduates and later, as alumni, to serve others as ethical business and community leaders,” said Cindy Jebb, Ramapo College President, adding, “MDRC’s exploration of such student supports and experiences is to be commended and Ramapo stands ready to contribute to this field of research.”

MDRC’s new initiative, the Tools for Postsecondary Schools, will create a learning community cohort centered on putting evidence to work for student supports. MDRC researchers and practitioners will discuss the core components of evidence-based comprehensive student support strategies to help close the success gap for students from low-income families and students of color.

“Student success is foundational to our mission of ensuring every hard-working resident has equitable and affordable opportunities to pursue their college dreams and increase their earning potential in the future. I congratulate Ramapo College for receiving this grant that is aimed at closing equity gaps in degree attainment and positioning New Jersey’s ambitious students for lifelong success,” said Dr. Brian K. Bridges, New Jersey’s Secretary of Higher Education.

Throughout the 6-month engagement period with Tools for Postsecondary Schools, the three 4-year and eight 2-year college teams will take a deep dive into evidence-based components of student supports, focusing on immediately applicable strategies as well as planning for broader implementation of comprehensive programs. Workshop session topics will include:

- Using insights from behavioral science to design effective student-facing messaging;
- Implementing high impact coaching and advising;
- Building academic momentum and including financial incentives in student supports plans;
- Estimating Return on Investment and planning for financial sustainability;
- Equipping student support staff with actionable, real-time data;
- Centering equity in student supports program design.

“Ramapo’s selection into the MDRC learning community cohort reinforces our commitment to student success across all dimensions of the college and is a cornerstone of who we are,” said Christopher Romano, Vice President of Enrollment Management. “Given our strategic priorities, this initiative is timely and the Ramapo team engaged in the project is well-positioned to share best practices, further our institutional efforts, and lead meaningful change on our campus and nationally.”

The Ramapo core leadership team engaged in this project includes representatives from multiple units within the College including: Nicole Videla, Director of EOF and Academic Success; Joseph Connell, Assistant Vice President of Student Success; Cesar León, Psychological Counselor and Multicultural Specialist; Rachel Sawyer-Walker, Associate Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Compliance; Tammi Redd, Associate Professor of Management and Director of the Faculty Resource Center; and Christopher Romano, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

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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; is recognized as the state’s top college on the list of Best Disability Schools by Great Value Colleges; was named one of the 50 Most Beautiful College Campuses in America by CondeNast Traveler; 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, Creative Music Technology, Data Science, Educational Technology, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education, as well as a post-master's Doctor of Nursing Practice.