



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
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Jane Addams Papers Project at Ramapo College Receives \$460K in Grants to Continue Digitizing Historical Works

MAHWAH, N.J. — The Jane Addams Paper Project has received two significant grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and National Archives/National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The grants of \$300,000 and \$160,000, respectively, will support the project’s continued work at Ramapo College. The Jane Addams Papers Project started work at Ramapo in September 2015, with the goal of creating a digital edition of the correspondence and writings of the founding mother of American social work.

“We are delighted to have received two federal grants to support the work of the Jane Addams Papers Project, funding the [Jane Addams Digital Edition](#) and the *Selected Papers of Jane Addams* (planned four volumes). The Project makes the life and work of Jane Addams accessible to broad audiences from grammar school students, doctoral candidates, and international researchers,” said Cathy Moran Hajo ’85, Editor and Director of the Jane Addams Papers Project at Ramapo.

The award from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission's Program in Publishing Historical Records in Collaborative Editions, part of the National Archives, awarded \$160,000 for 2022-2023. The \$300,000 from the NEH's program in Scholarly Editing will cover three years, from 2022 to 2025 and comes with a challenge -- an offer of an additional \$150,000 -- if we can raise private matching funds, Hajo explained. “This means that every dollar donated to the project will be matched by the NEH. This is especially important to us,

because we use these funds to pay the salaries of student workers and research costs,” she said.

Ramapo students from each of the College’s five schools are the backbone of the digital edition, Hajo said. “We have trained more than 70 students since the project started to read 19th and 20th century handwritten documents, transcribe the texts and describe them, adding subjects, identifying people, organizations and events. Students are gaining experience doing historical research, analyzing primary sources and developing metadata,” adding that the program also offers internship opportunities (co-operative education, faculty-student research, and internships for high school students and students from other colleges). “Our goals for this coming year are to add documents from 1925-1928 to the digital edition. We will also submit Volume 4 of the *Selected Papers of Jane Addams* to the University of Illinois Press.”

Hajo is currently working with a high school educator to develop History AP resources based on the Jane Addams Digital Edition, and have already produced guides for students doing National History Day Projects and educational resources for middle-school teachers.

Susan Hangen, Dean of the Ramapo’s School of Humanities and Global Studies, applauded Hajo’s leadership for the project. “Dr. Cathy Hajo is a tremendous asset to Ramapo College and it is due to her vision and leadership that she has secured continued grant support for this prestigious project,” Hangen said. “The Jane Addams Papers Project is creating a significant public humanities resource and dozens of Ramapo College students have had the valuable opportunity to gain digital skills through their work on this project.”

Working on the Addams Papers is a wonderful combination of cutting-edge digital humanities work and old-fashioned sleuthing, Hajo said. “When asked what I do, I can honestly say ‘I read dead people's mail and gossip about it,’ with the caveat that my ‘gossip’ is all well-researched and carefully sourced. This fine-grained work, where we read each document with extreme care and attention, is a different way of doing historical work. It builds up an understanding of the past that is personal and local, that just isn't the same as you find in a textbook.”

The College has started a fundraising campaign to secure the matching funds from the NEH that will help secure a larger student staff. Visit [here](#) for information on how to donate.

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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 *CondéNast 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, Applied Mathematics, Business Administration, Contemporary Instructional Design, Computer Science, Creative Music Technology, Data Science, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education, as well as a Doctor of Nursing Practice.