



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2023

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Ramapo College of New Jersey recognized for commitment to improving experiences and advancing outcomes for first-generation college students

Selected by Center for First-generation Student Success as newest Member of the First Scholars Network

MAHWAH, NJ - Ramapo College of New Jersey is one of only 76 new members of the [First Scholars Network](#) for 2023-24. The [Center for First-generation Student Success](#), an initiative of NASPA and The Suder Foundation, selected Ramapo College for its demonstrated commitment to improving experiences and advancing success for first-generation college students.

“With over 40% of our undergraduate students identifying as the first in their family to potentially graduate from college, Ramapo College has hit the ground running to impact the success of our first-gen students,” said Dr. Nicole Videla, senior director of the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and Student Success. “Being accepted into First Scholars Network shows our long-term commitment to continuous learning as we build the foundation for our first-gen students as they make history at Ramapo College. Some of the initiatives include recognizing November as First-generation College Celebration Month and establishing the Zeta Nu chapter of the first-generation student honor society, [Alpha Alpha Alpha \(Tri-Alpha\)](#).”

The [First-Generation Student Center at Ramapo College of New Jersey](#) provides purposeful support and engaging services to create an equitable environment for first-generation students. The goal of the center is to promote first-generation student success through learning experiences that cultivate a sense of belonging and encourage holistic student development. The First-Generation Student Center also provides training and resources to campus community members to increase awareness and understanding of the lived experiences of first-generation students.

“The Center is pleased to welcome Ramapo College of New Jersey into the First Scholars Network,” said Dr. Sarah E. Whitley, vice president with the Center for First-generation Student Success. “Through the application process, it was evident that Ramapo College is not only taking steps to serve first-generation students but is prepared to make a long-term commitment and employ strategies that foster an environment of success for this important population.”

To learn more about first-generation efforts at Ramapo College, visit the Ramapo College First-generation Student Center website at ramapo.edu/first-gen/

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ABOUT RAMAPO COLLEGE

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



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international and intercultural understanding. The comprehensive college is situated among the beautiful Ramapo Mountains, is within commuting distance to New York City, was named one of the 50 Most Beautiful College Campuses in America by *CondeNast Traveler*, and boasts the best on-campus housing in New Jersey per Niche.com. 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.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT SUCCESS

The Center is transforming higher education to drive first-generation student success effectively and equitably across education, career, and life. We provide data, training, and expertise for a growing network of colleges and universities around the country to scale and sustain the important work of serving first-generation students. The Center aims to acknowledge the intersectional experiences of first-generation college students. It offers an outlet for sharing cutting-edge research and current media conversations, opportunities for engagement through online learning, conferences, and events, and access to a bevy of programs and services intended to improve first-generation initiatives across higher education.

ABOUT NASPA

NASPA is a member-centered association supporting a diverse and passionate network of 15,000 professionals and 1,200 institutions across the globe. It is the professional home for the field of student affairs and is dedicated to cultivating student success in collaboration with the missions of its institutional members—a network of colleges and universities representing every sector of higher education.