

## A.J. Sabath, Ramapo College (1993)



A.J. Sabath, Ramapo College, class of '93, gleefully declares that he has the spirit of a trouble-maker, someone who loves to "shake things up," but do it in a way that benefits others -- his family, friends and community. "I was a wild kid in high school, but my years at Ramapo encouraged me to channel my crazy energy on projects for the greater good," said A.J., who now serves on the Board of Trustees of Ramapo College (former chairman of the board), and is vice-chair of the Board of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities.

He thanks Ramapo and its professors, particularly his freshman senior professor, Ben Mazor, and Dean Mitchell Kahn, for inspiring this maturing process. Community organizing became his goal, because he saw it as a way to retain his "spirited" personality, while being productive and useful to others. He chose social work as his major, because he wanted to learn about how individuals and groups interact with one another and how he could make a positive difference in people's lives.

A.J. Sabath is the co-founder of Advocacy & Management Group (AMG), a government relations and legislative advocacy firm based on West State Street in Trenton. He has spent more than 20 years working in government and politics in New Jersey, including holding prominent positions in state government and running political campaigns local, state, and congressional candidates. His government positions have included: Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, chief of staff to New Jersey Senate President Dick Codey, and several senior positions in the New Jersey General Assembly and New Jersey State Senate. Since 2000, A.J.'s campaign positions have consisted of serving as New Jersey State Co-Director for the Kerry-Edwards Presidential Campaign, director of the New Jersey Senate Democratic Campaigns in 2003 and 2007, field director for the election campaign of U.S. Senator Frank R. Lautenberg, and political organizer for U.S. Senator Jon Corzine, Congressmen Rush Holt, Steve Rothman and Bill Pascrell, among others.

When working for Acting Governor Dick Codey, he was appointed to the New Jersey State Board of Examiners for Master Plumbers as the representative of the governor. When he went into the private sector, he remained on the master plumbers' board as a citizens' advocate.

Prior to his service in state government, A.J. worked as public affairs director for the Trenton-based MWW Group, as a field representative for the National Democratic Institute in Baku, Azerbaijan, and as an organizer for the New Jersey Tenants Organization. While at MWW, A.J. represented the World Sikh Council, the Constitutional Monarchy Movement of Iraq and the Puerto Rico Statehood Movement.

"I can relate my passion for community activism and government work directly to my mentors (Professor Mazor and Dean Kahn) at Ramapo ... As part of my academic requirements in social work, I had to get 2,000 hours of field training. Dean Kahn arranged for me to be hired with a housing advocacy law agency, where he helped low income tenants find suitable shelter. Meanwhile, Professor Mazor instilled in me a progressive conscience, a desire to go into government for all the right reasons -- and I have been doing government/community service work ever since," said A.J., who added that his wife Lynn Haynes, his partner at AMG, shares his commitment to good government and appreciates the role Ramapo played in her husband's personal and professional development.