

A Message from the Office of the President



Dear Students, Colleagues, and Friends:

All members of Ramapo College are valued. While this is indeed true for all, I write to emphasize its magnitude for our international students, faculty, and staff. As I traveled this weekend from San Francisco to New York, I saw some of the chaos and disbelief occurring in the airports. However, I also witnessed palpable good will among airport personnel, passengers, protesters, and others.

Such good will is also present here on our campus. In recent years, we have reiterated our support of internationalization and multiculturalism through our Strategic Plan and the development and strengthening of associated curricula and programming. In September of 2013, along with many of the presidents at our sister institutions, I endorsed a [letter urging the NJ Congressional Delegation to address the adverse impact of current immigration policy](#) on the state's higher education system and economic growth. More recently, on December 1, 2016, I again joined my presidential colleagues and signed a [letter pledging to support our students who registered under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.](#)

President Trump's January 27 Executive Order (EO) "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States" has raised critical questions and concerns for many of us and our families. Indeed, some of the elements of the EO readily appear incongruous with the purposes of higher education. The College, however, continues to review the order and the associated rulings that have since been issued to understand more fully how our campus may be affected.

Ramapo College has existing policies and procedures to protect its members and their privacy. In addition, Ramapo is a long standing member of NAFSA (the world's largest nonprofit association dedicated to international education and exchange). We rely on NAFSA, in part, for guidance on matters related to the interest of our international students and scholars and participants in our study abroad programs. [NAFSA issued this advisory regarding President Trump's Executive Order.](#) It details the exception made for lawful permanent residents and it describes the application of the EO to nonimmigrants and immigrants. I encourage you to review it and direct any questions you may have concerning any international travel or immigration policies to Ramapo College's [Roukema Center for International Education.](#)

In addition to NAFSA and the Roukema Center, helpful resources for faculty, staff and students also include:

- [Center for Health and Counseling Services](#)
- [Council on Faith and Spirituality](#)
- [Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Compliance/Affirmative Action](#)
- [Department of Homeland Security](#)

Perhaps, however, our biggest resource is one another. What we can learn from one another through patient, respectful dialogue, and simple kindness yields us tremendous and transformative power. I have no doubt that we are a campus that is, and will continue to be, enriched by the range of our human experience.

Peter P. Mercer
President