RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Office of Communications & Public Relations

RAMAPO
COLLEGE
OF NEW JERSEY

RAMAPO COLLEGE MISSION

Ramapo College is New Jersey's public liberal arts college, dedicated to providing students with a strong foundation for a lifetime of achievement. The College is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding. Ramapo College emphasizes teaching and individual attention to all students. We promote diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement.

RAMAPO COLLEGE VISION

Ramapo College delivers a transformative education in a diverse community dedicated to welcoming and mentoring students who bring with them a range of lived experiences. We will achieve national distinction for developing empathetic problem solvers, ethical change agents, and responsible leaders who make a positive impact and thrive in a changing world.
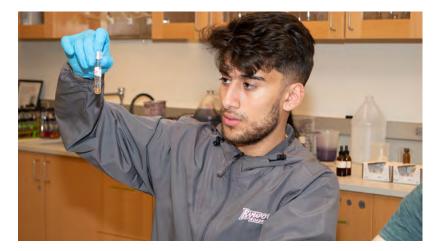
RAMAPO COLLEGE BRAND

College brand sourced from Ramapo College Marketing Brand Strategy
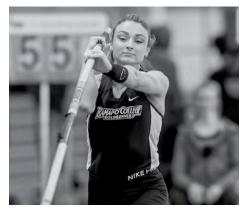
Who we are, what we do, and why it matters.

Every time we communicate — whether we're posting on social media, sending promotional material by mail, or talking with prospective students directly — people form opinions about the College based on their interactions with us.

The more consistent and confident we are when telling the Ramapo story, the better our audiences will understand and trust what we have to say. That's why it's so important for all of us to be on the same page about our brand identity — the tangible, real-world system of design and messaging we use every day to tell the world about ourselves.

College Communications is charged with strengthening Ramapo's positive reputation and increasing awareness of its many accomplishments.

COLLEGE COMMUNICATIONS ROLE

College Communications is charged with strengthening Ramapo's positive reputation and increasing awareness of its many accomplishments. To do this, we:

- Highlight the rigorous academic programs; robust faculty research and pedagogy; hands-on learning and leader development through mentoring provided by faculty and staff; tight-knit and diverse campus community and active student life; commitment to service and community engagement; highly competitive student-centered athletics program; and the achievements of the larger Ramapo College community including students, faculty, staff, alumni, and others.

- Emphasize the College's mission to cultivate a diverse, empathetic, and vibrant community that inspires a culture of inclusivity, and collaboration.

- Share the College story with key audiences by using social media to generate owned media.

- Develop content and strategic communications campaigns that support the College's priorities.

- Steward and contribute to demonstrating the value of a Ramapo College education and the overall College brand through language and visual assets for social media and earned media platforms.

MEASURING IMPACT

With the successful execution of the College's communications plan, framed by the vision of the College's 2023-2029 strategic plan, "Boldly Ascending," Ramapo College of New Jersey will be recognized as an institution that recruits and enrolls highly-qualified students from all backgrounds, attracts and retains faculty scholars and experts in their field; fosters innovative research and practices; cultivates school spirit and pride among all stakeholders; generates empathy, mutual respect, and collaborative community engagement; and secures its foothold as a public liberal arts college.

COLLEGE GOALS

Sourced from Boldly Ascending: Strategic Plan 2023-2029

GOAL 1: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS

- Achieve academic excellence and student success through the advancement of intercultural, global, and interdisciplinary education, experiential learning, and individualized student-centered resources.
- Objectives
  a. Provide learning environments and opportunities that encourage the development of deep content knowledge that leads to discerning engagement in work and in the world.
  b. Increase high-impact practices that promote creative expression, scholarly research, and applied learning.
  c. Grow service opportunities and civic engagement to explore personal identities and diversity, and make a positive societal impact locally, regionally, and internationally.
  d. Strengthen our culture of mentorship through integrated and individualized support systems and resources that help students succeed.

GOAL 2: INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

- Foster a diverse, empathetic, and vibrant community that inspires a culture of inclusivity, accountability, and collaboration.
- Objectives
  a. Prioritize personal well-being by promoting healthy practices and environments.
  b. Advance a culture of belonging, equity, inclusion, and trust by embracing diversity, access, and accountability.
  c. Promote an environment that elevates voices, examines structures of power and privilege, and creates justice-oriented actions and solutions.
  d. Develop future leaders who gain self-awareness, mentor others, and emerge as change agents.
  e. Foster school pride by building relationships and partnerships, amplifying creative collaboration, and enhancing community engagement.

GOAL 3: AGILE STEWARDSHIP

- Drive institutional distinction, sustainability, and pride by galvanizing our community members and partners, and building organizational agility, accountability, and resilience.
- Objectives
  a. Drive institutional distinction through student and alumni satisfaction and success, faculty scholarship, thought leadership, national and international collaborations, and organizational expertise.
  b. Bolster Ramapo pride through serving as both a public college of choice and an employer of choice.
  c. Secure long-term fiscal sustainability through the entrepreneurial management and development of resources at every level.
  d. Strengthen organizational resilience and agility through sustainable practices and data-informed SMART1[1] choices (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound).

---

1 Doran, G. T. (1981). "There's a S.M.A.R.T. Way to Write Management's Goals and Objectives," Management Review, Vol. 70, Issue 11, pp. 35-36

COLLEGE COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

GOAL 4: INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF RAMAPO COLLEGE

Long considered a hidden gem in New Jersey, Ramapo College strives to become a public liberal arts college exemplar known throughout New Jersey, the Northeast region, and nationally. Increasing earned media through our presence in newspapers, magazines, podcasts, and television is a key component to this goal. By consistently monitoring developing news, we can identify trends in the news and connect media outlets with campus members as thought leaders and subject matter experts to speak on issues, raising the visibility of Ramapo College and the work of its community members.

The College's owned media play an important role in raising the visibility of Ramapo College. Consistent message sharing while leveraging the College's brand will enable target audiences to know more about Ramapo, its tight-knit community, and the caliber of its students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners. Keeping apprised of social media trends and assets in order to create timely and engaging content relevant to each platform's audience is critical in our efforts to increase the visibility of the College and generate motivation for our stakeholders to talk about, promote, and share our stories in their personal and professional circles online. To achieve this, we will develop a cohesive content plan that supports the Ramapo College Brand Strategy spanning the entire College.

Target Audiences

- RCNJ students, faculty and staff
- Alumni
- Donors
- Prospective students and families
- Media
- Elected officials (local, state, federal)
- Business and industry partners
- New Jersey residents

Shared Priorities

1. Showcase our academic programs, collaborative research endeavors, dynamic student life, community contributions, dedication to service, athletic excellence, and overall accomplishments of our diverse College community.

2. Give prominence to the College's mission of academic excellence and student success, inclusive community, and agile stewardship.

3. Cultivate and enhance partnerships with essential collaborators throughout the College cores.

4. Foster a culture of continuous knowledge exchange, establishing mechanisms for improved collaboration across units.

Objectives for Content and News

1. Develop a content plan that encompasses a strong framework for prioritizing key areas of focus, messaging, target audiences, and effective distribution strategies.

2. Enhance the news platform, accompanied by a strong social media program, working in synergy to promote strategic priorities, expand our owned media, and amplify positive external content.

3. Execute a targeted and proactive media relations strategy that concentrates on the most critical stories and desired audiences.

GOAL 5: POSITIVELY INFLUENCE COLLEGE PERCEPTION AMONG KEY AUDIENCES

The growth in the equity of our brand is directly tied to the perceptions of both stakeholders and the general public regarding Ramapo College's exceptional institutional quality and its contributions to society at large. We strive to create an environment where our stakeholders are motivated to actively participate in and endorse Ramapo College. Additionally, it encompasses contributing time and resources and advocating for the value and significance of Ramapo College. By cultivating a positive perception, we fortify the strength, relevance, and longevity of the College.

It is imperative that, as an institution, we maintain an unwavering commitment to generating, producing, and disseminating captivating content that fosters positive perceptions and aligns with the objectives, priorities, and initiatives outlined in Boldly Ascending. To gauge our effectiveness in reaching key stakeholders and shaping their perceptions about the College and its endeavors, we will consistently evaluate the impact of our communications, content, and campaigns. This ensures that we remain effective in our efforts and maintain the ability to influence the opinions of our target audiences.

Target Audiences:

- RCNJ students, faculty and staff
- Alumni
- Donors
- Prospective students and families
- Media
- Elected officials (local, state, and federal)
- Business and industry partners
- New Jersey residents

Shared Priorities

1. Create targeted distribution strategies for disseminating narratives through various media channels (owned, paid, social, and earned) to effectively engage and sway our primary target audiences.
2. Establish and execute optimal methods for reaching specific audiences, aiming to optimize efficiency and captivate them with compelling communications delivered through appropriate tools and messaging at the opportune moments.
3. Establish a research-driven methodology to assess the effectiveness and impact of communication initiatives.

Objectives for Content and News

1. Improve the structure of the Ramapo College institutional storytelling strategically for effective distribution and tailor to the target audience.
2. Strengthen and expand the use of advanced storytelling techniques and methods that maximize the capabilities and expertise of the staff.
3. Create and implement a proactive media strategy with specific outreach goals to establish Ramapo College as having local, regional, and national subject-area experts.

GOAL 6: EXERCISE EXCELLENCE & BEST PRACTICES IN COMMUNICATIONS

Achieving the objectives outlined in this plan requires a campus community equipped with the necessary and evolving skills to create and develop content for current and evolving communication strategies. Our ability to effectively support Ramapo College relies on our proficiency in maintaining up-to-date practices and continuously improving our work. Additionally, it requires fostering a culture that highly values collaboration, ideation, celebration, risk-taking, accountability, and mentorship. We must possess a deep understanding of institutional priorities, exhibit discipline in recognizing our core expertise, and remain attentive to the elements that ignite our passions. With an all-hands-on-deck approach to understanding and employing how we communicate about who we are, our collective efforts strengthen the ability to share our stories with a uniform and unified delivery. The convergence of these three components—priorities, expertise, and passion—establishes a team poised to excel and surpass expectations in our pursuits.

Target Audiences

- RCNJ president and Mission Element Team
- Communications and PR staff
- Office of Marketing
- RCNJ faculty and staff

Shared Priorities

1. Foster an environment that prioritizes collaboration, idea generation, recognition, innovation, and mentorship.
2. Ensure that the College's brand is leveraged when communicating and networking with peer institution colleagues; regional, national, and international conferences and organizations; alumni; donors; government officials; and key stakeholders.
3. Ensure that the College's brand is leveraged and social media best practices are employed when creating content for social media platforms.
4. Conduct regular evaluations of the tools, services, and applications utilized to facilitate our work, encompassing project management, digital asset management, surveys, social media monitoring, third-party hosting, proactive media outreach, media subscriptions, and more.

Objectives for Content and News

1. Develop and enhance an exceptional content curation strategy that promotes collaboration among internal teams and fosters close coordination with stakeholders throughout the organization.
2. Act as a valuable source for providing communications guidance across the organization.
3. Formulate a comprehensive approach to engage influencers and media, establish relationships that lead to favorable and accurate coverage while amplifying our news.
4. Ensure a consistent alignment between the College's strategic objectives, the content plan, and proactive media tactics.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

Efforts can be measured and evaluated in a number of ways with a variety of approaches. Some include:

- Analyzing viewership/readership, social media influence, and engagement with content.
- Assessing the produced communications and social media that support Boldly Ascending as outlined in the College Communications plan.
- Conducting research of earned media placement and perceptions of Ramapo College by stakeholders and external audiences related to institution/brand reputation.
- Reviewing community members' use of the College's brand incorporated into their communications with stakeholders.