



FOR RELEASE

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Renowned Chemist Benny Chan Joins Ramapo College as Dean

The American Chemical Society Fellow will Lead the School of Theoretical and Applied Science

Mahwah, N.J.- Dr. Benny Chan, Ph.D., a distinguished teacher-scholar in inorganic chemistry, has been appointed dean of the School of Theoretical and Applied Science at Ramapo College of New Jersey, effective July 1, 2025.

Chan brings a keen understanding of the liberal arts and sciences to Ramapo College. He is a professor of chemistry and currently serves as chairperson of that department at The College of New Jersey in Ewing, NJ. He has been widely recognized for [his contributions to STEM education](#). As a co-principal investigator of numerous grants awarded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), his most recent longitudinal study explored the role of qualitative evidence in creating and sustaining student-centered teaching cultures.

As an active member of the [American Chemical Society](#) (ACS) since 2008, Chan has made wide-ranging contributions to ACS. In 2020, he was named a fellow of ACS for not only his pioneering work in solid-state chemistry, but also for his deep commitment to mentoring the next generation of scientists, more than 30 undergraduate students, many of whom come from economically disadvantaged or historically underrepresented backgrounds in STEM. Most recently, he led the development of the workshop "The Science of Managing Diverse and Inclusive Teams," which is now part of the ACS leadership development program.

"Dr. Chan's leadership in fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and securing external funding for research initiatives provide strong experience to lead our School of Theoretical and Applied Science in expanding its impact within Ramapo and in the community," said [Ramapo College Provost Michael Middleton](#). "Dr. Chan has also demonstrated a deep commitment to academic excellence, student success, and community engagement throughout his career. Those values embody the mission and goals of Ramapo and will contribute to achieving national distinction as a public liberal arts college."

As dean of the [School of Theoretical and Applied Science](#) (TAS), Chan will provide strategic and academic leadership for the school, guiding its 34 diverse undergraduate and graduate programs including [biochemistry and chemistry](#), [cybersecurity](#), [nursing](#), and other related academic programs in the natural and environmental sciences. The school is also home to the [Center for Data, Mathematical, and Computational Sciences](#). Chan will collaborate with faculty,



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staff, and college leadership to support excellence in teaching, research, and student success, while advancing innovative curricular and co-curricular initiatives. He will play a key role in faculty recruitment and development, undergraduate research, program assessment, resource management, and external partnerships, including industry and community engagement. As a member of Ramapo College's academic leadership team, Dean Chan will help shape institutional priorities and promote the mission of a public liberal arts college committed to inclusive excellence and interdisciplinary learning.

"I am ecstatic to be a Roadrunner by combining my love of the liberal arts education and serving the State of New Jersey," said Chan. "There is huge potential for the hidden gem that is Ramapo to reach national recognition through high-impact teaching and mentoring of TAS students." To bring this to fruition, Chan will build upon the tight-knit community and mentorship for which Ramapo is known by working with colleagues on creative curricula, engaging classrooms, scholarly research, extracurricular activities, and advising.

Chan is also a strong advocate of being student-focused. "We can't do this without centering our amazing Ramapo students so they can achieve their career goals and become strong, ethical problem solvers who will impact the world in positive ways using their scientific training," he added. This vision aligns with the Ramapo College strategic plan, [Boldly Ascending](#).

[Dr. Edward T. Saiff](#), who serves as interim dean and joined the Ramapo College faculty in 1972, will be succeeded by Chan. Saiff has been and will continue to be part of the Ramapo community as he rejoins the faculty in the [Department of Biology](#).

Dr. Chan earned his Ph.D. in Chemistry from The Pennsylvania State University in 2003, and his B.A. in Chemistry with honors from Franklin and Marshall College in 1996.

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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 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 *Condé Nast 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



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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.