



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
Office of Marketing and Communications
Press Release
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The Year 1938 in the Development of the Holocaust to be Examined

MAHWAH, N.J. – Dr. Frank Mecklenburg, Director of Research and Chief Archivist at The Leo Baeck Institute, New York, will speak on Tuesday, October 22 at 1:45 p.m. in the Alumni Lounges of the Robert A. Scott Student Center at Ramapo College of New Jersey about “The Crucial Year of 1938: The Fate of Jews in the Balance.” The program, presented under the auspices of the Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, is free and open to the public.

Dr. Mecklenburg’s talk will be based on the work that he and a team of archivists, librarians and IT consultants did to create the Leo Baeck Institute’s “1938Projekt (1938 Project),” an exciting initiative that tracked the experience of German Jews in 1938 on a day-by-day basis. The project discusses the transformations over the course of 1938 and the importance of learning from the past, and asks: how we can comprehend daily life under the Nazi regime; how such “normalcy” illustrates how authoritarian regimes consolidate their power and marginalize elements of the population; and how we can identify parallels between the past and today’s international crises of refugees and discrimination against minorities and immigrants. The LBI’s 1938Projekt, by posting one item each day that relates to what happened on the exact day eighty years ago, illustrates the past and also presents a demand for us to think about what’s happening today, too.

Frank Mecklenburg is the Director of Research and Chief Archivist of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York. He received his Ph.D. in modern German history in 1981 from the Technische Universität Berlin. In 2000, he was involved in the LBI’s move to the Center for Jewish History, as well as in the establishment of a joint archives facility with the Jewish Museum Berlin.

The Leo Baeck Institute is a research library and archive that documents the history and culture of German-speaking Jewry, primarily in the 19th and 20th centuries, but also includes documents dating back to the middle ages. It was founded in 1955 as a repository for the books, papers, photos and documents that were salvaged from Central Europe after World War II and donated to the Institute.

For information or to request disability-related accommodations for this event, please contact holgen@ramapo.edu or call 201-684-7409.

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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 College is ranked #1 among New Jersey public institutions by College Choice, and is recognized as a top college by *U.S. News & World Report*, *Kiplinger's*, Princeton Review and *Money* magazine, among others. Ramapo College is also distinguished as a Career Development College of Distinction by CollegesofDistinction.com, boasts the best campus housing in New Jersey on Niche.com, and is designated a "Military Friendly College" in Victoria Media's *Guide to Military Friendly Schools*.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, 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, Business Administration, Educational Technology, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Social Work and Special Education.