

Fall Semester 2024

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Franzese and Family,

Thank you so much for the TJ Franzese Memorial Scholarship.

My name is Grace Guzzo and I am a 22 year old graduate student at Ramapo College, studying to become a social worker. I am currently enrolled in the Masters in Social Work program. I live in Pompton Plains, New Jersey with my family and I am currently working at the Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris as a part time case manager, and working in Morris County.

I am adopted from South Korea and I do not know much about my biological family and if they struggled with addiction. My life has been affected by the disease of addiction, but I have managed to get through it. There are times that I have struggled with relapses and lapses. Dealing with the disease of addiction has been thought to ruin my work, education, friendships, relationships, and family relations. Showing up places hung over, or cutting class to do things that I should not have done. However, I did not want to be that person on the news missing or dead. It is scary to think about what could have happened.

To this day, I am so grateful to have the Ramapo Collegiate Recovery Program in my life. Having the support and guidance of many people to pursue my opportunities in my education and my career has been an impactful experience. Through my life, I have been through many treatment centers, rehabs, sober livings, group therapies, and had a recent suicide attempt in the last year and a half. These experiences have led me through gaining insight in my life to what I need. I know abstinence is not what works for me, but the practice of harm reduction and continuing to learn about myself *does* work for me.

Thank you for the generous support of my education and future career.

Sincerely,
Grace Guzzo