

## Board Update

At its Oct. 9 meeting, the Board of Trustees honored the MESA/TRiO Student Support Services STEM Program with a commendation for being named one of the country's best programs that increase academic opportunities and increase achievement for Latino students.

Dr. Gisela Spieler-Persad, director of the Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) program accepted the commendation with several of the students involved in the program. MESA was honored in Washington DC on Oct. 1 by *Excelexia* in Education, a program that identifies and catalogues educational programs that contribute to Latino student success.

After the commendation, Interim Counselor-Coordinator Jose Lara gave a presentation about the events and success of the Transfer Center.

Lara said many students have been served in several capacities, including hosting:

- Transfer Day where about 50 representatives from public and private universities were available to offer information on their respective schools;
- Transfer Conference where nearly 600 students attended workshops regarding the transfer process;
- Summer Scholars Institute where students could take a transferrable course over the span of 10 days; and
- A tour of northern California college campuses, including the University of California campuses of Berkeley, Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara, as well as San Jose State.

The Board also heard updates on Measure A facilities projects and the College's accreditation process.

Along with approving revisions of Board policies, the trustees voted unanimously to hire the Dolinka Group, which will audit surrounding community development agencies to ensure the College is getting its fair share of redevelopment dollars.

### BOARD ATTENDS WORKSHOP

On Oct 19 the Board of Trustees participated in a special study session that was led by trustee trainer and consultant Bill McGinnis on what their roles and responsibilities are with respect to Standard IV.

Given Standard IV's focus on leadership and governance, McGinnis led the Board in a discussion of how to thoroughly and honestly assess their performance as a Board with respect to the leadership and governance of the District. Also at this study session, the Board was briefed on the mission statement review process.

## Rio Hondo Celebrates PE Complex Grand Opening

Students, staff, faculty and elected officials were on hand Oct. 23 for the grand-opening celebration for the new Physical Education Complex.

At 41,000 square feet and more than 2,000 users, the PE Complex is one of the largest and most widely used community college recreation centers in the state.

Some of the amenities include:

- An Olympic-sized swimming pool with rehab/workout pool;
- Brand-new electronic scoreboards for the softball field, baseball field and pool;
- Full-size fitness center and weight room;
- New men's and women's locker rooms with centralized access to sporting equipment;

- New athletic training room, dance studios, brand new offices, conference room, media room, weight room and classrooms;
- Newly renovated softball field and new tennis courts.
- Gymnasium for athletes on- and off-campus.

The complex is primarily used by students – athletes and those who take physical education classes – as well as faculty, staff and community members.

“This building is gorgeous and the facilities are state-of-the-art,” said Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. “Our student athletes and community users deserve the very best that Rio Hondo College has to offer. This complex offers them the very best.”



## MESA Named One of Nation's Best

Rio Hondo College's MESA/TRiO Student Support Services STEM Program was honored Oct. 1 as one of America's top programs that increase academic opportunities and increase achievement for Latino students.



The MESA (Math Engineering Science Achievement) Program was selected from among 165 competitors from 22 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico as one of 22 national finalists for the *2013 Examples of Excelexia* recognition. Conceived and run by *Excelexia* in Education, this is the only national initiative to systematically identify, recognize and catalogue evidence-based programs that improve Latino college success.

“This award solidifies what we have known all along – the MESA Program elevates students to reach their greatest potential,” said Dr. Gisela Spieler-Persad, director of the MESA/TRiO

SSS STEM Programs. “To be recognized at a national level is important to the Rio Hondo community because it shows that the College commits the resources to help students achieve academic excellence.”

MESA provides students with enrichment in mathematics, physics, and chemistry; a supportive peer group; priority registration and enrollment in classes with other MESA students; and access to the MESA Center, resources for summer research internships, mentoring experiences with industry professionals and transfer support.

Students who participated in the MESA/TRiO SSS STEM Programs in 2012-13 outperformed their peers by wide margins. The success rate for MESA students in the spring was 80 percent, compared to 65 percent for others. Students who took two or three mathematics and science courses during the semester also succeeded at a higher rate than their peers in all their courses.

“Rio Hondo College is responding to a national need for STEM professionals with these programs. Since its inception, MESA has been an outstanding program that has enriched and engaged our students,” said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. “Not only are students succeeding in math, science and engineering courses, but they are also being prepared for well-paid, highly-skilled and rewarding careers in the STEM fields.”