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President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

While it is essential for a community college to provide the best education possible for our students, we would be remiss if we didn't stress the importance of student engagement outside of the classroom and connection to the community. After all, it was the great Dr. Robert C. Maxson, former president of California State University, Long Beach, who said: "If all you do...is go to class, then you're not getting an education." At Rio Hondo College, we take this phrase to heart.

Rio Hondo College students who study at our Child Development Center apply what they learn in the classroom to the care they provide the children enrolled at the Center. The benefits are two-fold: students follow their passion in seeking promising careers in child development, and students help shape well-rounded, ready-for-kindergarten children.

Another example of outside-the-classroom engagement is when more than 50 students received hands-on experience in activism and lobbying as they attended the annual "March in March" event. During this annual event at the State Capitol, community college students from across the state convene in Sacramento to rally for higher education and meet with state legislators.

We also had the opportunity to kick off Women's History Month with an empowering Women's History Day Conference, co-hosted with Whittier Union High School District and Soroptomist International of Whittier. The keynote speaker, TV personality Dunia Elvir, captured the hearts and minds of 300 young women who learned that through hard work and perseverance their dreams, too, can come true.

I am proud to say that Rio Hondo College boasts an array of student services, programs and events that take place outside the classroom, helping us offer a well-rounded education for our students. From our impressive E.O.P.&S./C.A.R.E. and CalWORKs program, to our "Writes of Spring" poetry and literature celebration, students have a wide variety of options to ensure they are engaged to the campus and connected to their communities.

'Writes of Spring' to Celebrate Poetry, Literature



Gustavo Arellano

With its long days and warmer nights, spring is a season that most of us look forward to. At Rio Hondo College, this is especially true because the season makes way for "Writes of Spring."

"Writes of Spring," a festival that celebrates the written word while allowing students to interact with professional writers and entertainers, is scheduled for Wednesday, April 23 and Thursday, April 24 at the Rio Hondo College Wray Theatre.

The festival will feature student and staff work that range from poetry and short stories to monologues and one-act plays. The work featured at "Writes of Spring" will be published in the *River's Voice* journal, which consists of art by Rio Hondo College students, faculty and staff.

This year, "Writes of Spring" will welcome author and OC Weekly editor Gustavo Arellano, famous for his nationally syndicated column, "¡Ask a Mexican!"; Poet Brendan Constantine, whose first book, "Letters to Guns," is now taught extensively in schools across the nation; humanitarian Deo Niyizonkia, founder and CEO of Village Health Works; conceptual artist Yanira Cartagena; award-winning writer, director, producer and acting coach Anthony Meindl; and Zohreh Ghahremani, author of "Sky of Red Poppies," "The Moon Daughter" and "The Commiserator."

"Each year the 'Writes of Spring' committee endeavors to bring to our stage talented professional authors for the purpose of promoting the value of writing to our campus community," said English Professor Dana Vazquez. "The festival also provides students with an entertaining event containing interesting college-level content that they will review, discuss, and/or analyze in their reading, composition and/or speech courses."

Board Update



A presentation by Christine Aldrich, the Interim Director for Extended Opportunity Program & Services (E.O.P.&S.)/C.A.R.E. and CalWORKS at the Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees meeting on March 12, received a warm reception from the trustees and the audience.

Aldrich highlighted the programs' accomplishments and explained how they each support students who are traditionally educationally and economically disadvantaged by helping them succeed. She also highlighted how each of the three programs differ.

- E.O.P.&S. is the umbrella program under which C.A.R.E. and CalWORKS operates;
- C.A.R.E. is geared toward single parents attending Rio Hondo College;
- CalWORKS is a welfare-to-work program that provides students who are receiving cash aid/temporary aid for needy families (TANF) with education, training and employment skills to become gainfully employed.

E.O.P.&S./C.A.R.E. has helped 769 students over the past year with resources ranging from financial aid assistance and comprehensive educational planning to tutoring and awarding merit grants.

Fitness Director Jodi Senk then gave a presentation on her Sabbatical Report and did something a little different: she asked everyone in the room to stand up and stretch before launching into her report.

On Sabbatical, Senk completed several projects, including authoring a fitness manual titled "Highway to Health," which highlights information on fitness, nutrition and strategies to maintain a healthy lifestyle. She also researched new Physical Education certificate options that create viable job opportunities, including yoga and Pilates.

Senk attended and spoke at several conferences, traveled abroad and ran two half-marathons.

"It's a good thing to keep on moving and keep on learning," she said.

Later in the evening, the board voted to designate retired Humanities professor Martha Carreon as the "Fellow of the College for 2014" for her outstanding contributions to the progress and development of the College. A permanent plaque will be displayed at Rio Hondo College honoring Carreon's award.

Retiring Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca was also honored for his contributions to the College with the Distinguished Service Award.

After Associated Students of Rio Hondo College President Valeria Guerrero explained how students are positively impacted by the GO RIO program, the Board voted to allow ASRHC to put a \$9 fee on the April 2014 student election ballot to fund the program.

Students Advocate for Higher Ed in Sacramento



Rio Hondo College students and staff meet with Assemblymember Ed Chau.

percent," said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. "Advocacy is essential to the ever-changing landscape of higher education."

Guerrero, Santana and Flores met with Assembly members Ian Calderon, Ed Chau and Cristina Garcia, as well as Sen. Ed Hernandez.

"I hope I was able to project or let them know what our needs and concerns are," Guerrero said.

The student leaders advocated the legislators to support: AB 548, which helps nursing students; SB 1369, which helps students with disabilities; AB 2445, which helps colleges with transit fees; and SB 837, with an amendment, to help protect community college child development centers.

"Part of my role as a student leader is to advocate for the needs of Rio Hondo College students, so I feel that going to 'March in March' is already a part of my role," said Santana, 21, a political science major.

This year, students had the opportunity to attend mini workshops that covered the most pertinent issues the community college is facing.

"Advocacy is important because it is one of the ways we as Americans can have somewhat of a purified direct democracy," said Flores, 24.

Vice President of Student Services Henry Gee, Dean of Student Affairs Dr. Dyrell Foster, ASRHC Advisor Jasmine López and Director of Governmental & Community Relations Russell Castañeda-Calleros accompanied the students on the trip.

"While Gov. Jerry Brown has proposed a state budget that will restore funds to the community college system, advocating for students' rights should be at the forefront of any college," Dreyfuss said.

Rio in the News: Click here to read about the March in March in the Wave Newspapers!

Three Rio Hondo College students took the State Capitol by storm on March 3 as they joined thousands of their peers statewide to lobby legislators in Sacramento at the annual "March in March" event.

Associated Students of Rio Hondo College President Valeria Guerrero, Vice President Christopher Santana and Senator for Legislative Affairs Julio Cesar Flores met with legislators while another 50 Rio Hondo College students participated in the "Classroom to Capitol" march and educational rally.

"The College supports these students' efforts 100 percent," said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. "Advocacy is essential to the ever-changing landscape of higher education."

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Rio in the News: Click here to read more about the Women's History Conference in the Whittier Daily News!

EMMY-Winning Anchor Headlines Women's History Conference



Emmy-award winning Telemundo news anchor Dunia Elvir offered the keynote address at the 19th Annual Women's History Conference on March 7 at the Rio Hondo College Wray Theatre.

The conference, themed "Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility," was a joint venture with the Whittier Union High School District and Soroptomist International of Whittier.

In a moving speech geared toward young women, Elvir spoke of her poverty-stricken childhood in Honduras and becoming a young mother. She emphasized she always worked toward her ultimate goal of being on television and never gave up no matter the circumstances.

"I never stopped dreaming," said the *Noticiero Telemundo 52, Buenos Días Los Angeles* host. Elvir has received many prestigious awards, including the Golden Mike for Best Investigative Reporting and the 2008 Journalism Award of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) for Best Investigative Reporting. Some of her interviewees include many Latin-American presidents, including Antonio Saca, Ricardo Maduro, Vicente Fox and Alvaro Colom.

The event also featured a welcome from Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, remarks from Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson and Soroptomist International of Whittier President Petra Schmischke, lunch and several workshops. The workshops focused on college survival, self-discovery and personal growth, maintaining healthy relationships, job-interview skills and Zumba.

Child Development Center Hosts Snow Day



On March 7, the Child Development Center provided a fun Snow Day for the Center's children, their families, staff and students completing lab hours. Almost

100 community members slid down the sled run and played in the snow (seven tons total) while a four-foot snowman watched the festivities. The event was funded by a basket raffle at the center and the Auxiliary Services Organization.



Visit our Facebook page to view pictures of our Snow Day fun.

Open House Held for RioSource



RioSource Project Coordinator Marta Muñoz, right, and Rex the Roadrunner receive a proclamation from 30th Senate District Office Field Representative Luis Gonzales.

On March 13, the 2010-2011 Leadership Academy Cohort officially introduced its Campus Improvement Project, RioSource to the community, both to on-and off-campus partners. The leadership academy cohort felt there was a need to better connect our students with off campus resources to increase student success. The project entailed developing a website that contained local resources in the Rio Hondo College service area.

With the efforts from the RioSource core team members, Christine Aldrich, Jennifer Burchett, Russell Castañeda-Calleros, Rachel Garcia, Rebecca Rayas, Gloria Reyes and Project Coordinator Marta Muñoz, this project started from a conceptual idea and became a reality. The event was a grand success with over 70 community members attending the festive event. Representatives from agencies, district offices and the Rio Hondo College community were able to network, share information and celebrate the official kickoff of RioSource.

Child, Student Development Goal for Coordinator



Dr. Sandra Moe

When it comes to child development, there's no better place for hands-on experience than the Child Development Center at Rio Hondo College; and no better instructor than Dr. Sandra Moe.

Dr. Moe is a Child Development/Education full-time tenured faculty member. In addition to teaching the Child Development Practicum class – which allows students to apply what they've learned in Child Development classes to working with children in a laboratory environment – Dr. Moe is the coordinator for the center. She also teaches one course over the semester that varies between Introduction to Special Education, Child Growth and Development or Adult Supervision.

"I enjoy facilitating, supporting and observing the learning process," Dr. Moe said. "Here at the lab school I have the opportunity to do all of this with preschool children, professionals in the field, community college students and with the parents and families of the children enrolled at the Center."

Dr. Moe earned associate degrees in general studies and early childhood education from Cerritos College; a bachelor's degree in child development from California State University, Fullerton; and a master's degree and doctorate from Utah State University in family and human development.

For the last 12 years, Dr. Moe has worked at Rio Hondo College and served as coordinator for the center for the last four. She has a great wealth of knowledge in the area of laboratory schools, having worked her way up from aide to teacher at the Cerritos College lab school, and directing the lab school at Utah for six years.

"My hope is that college students understand the importance of relationships with adults to the optimal development and learning of children," Dr. Moe said. "I also want the students to understand the value of following the lead of the children when it comes to providing learning experiences for them. It is so important to make the learning process meaningful and to allow the learner to explore and discover themselves, and with their peers, rather than being told the information by another person."

Dr. Moe said she also hopes the children enrolled in the lab school maintain their joy and motivation for learning while they gain the skills they need to be lifelong learners.

College Teams With Tax Board for Resource Fair

On March 14, more than 50 community members attended the Free Tax Preparation and Family Resource Fair throughout the day on campus.

Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss gave the welcoming remarks and introduced the Honorable Jerome E. Horton, Chairman of the State Board of Equalization, representing the Fourth District. The partnership of working collaboratively was confirmed to provide free tax assistance to those who qualify under the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

The partnership between Rio Hondo College and the Board of Equalization was made possible by Interim Dean of Business and Dean of Public Safety Dr. Ygnacio "Nash" Flores and Accounting Instructor Jeannie Liu. Liu has worked tirelessly to bring the VITA program to the community two years in a row.

The program assisted more than 50 taxpayers and prepared 45 tax returns on March 14 alone. Statewide, VITA programs have earned individuals earning less than \$52,000 a year \$354,800 in Earned Income Tax Credits, for the 2013 tax year.

"The Earned Income Tax Credit is the most successful anti-poverty program in America, lifting millions of Americans out of poverty each year," said Chairman Horton. "It is our ground-zero program to help fight poverty, educate people on income tax compliance, and improves people's lives."

Approximately 30 partner agencies provided resources such as financial literacy training, job preparation assistance, low-cost auto insurance, and low-cost and free medical services. On hand were 15 volunteers from California State University, Long Beach, five from the Franchise Tax board, and 10 Rio Hondo students.



California State Board of Equalization Chairman Jerome E. Horton speaks at the Free Tax Preparation and Family Resource Fair on March 14.

Award-Winning Vocal Ensemble project ERANOS Performs 'American Spring'



On March 15, project ERANOS presented an outstanding concert of modern American repertoire that flowed seamlessly from one scene to another in the Wray Theater. The audience loved the music and danced and laughed with the comedy. They were mesmerized by the fusion of beautiful singing and lighting design by Jennifer Scott. All of the student performers have sung leading roles with our Arts and Cultural Program Division's touring outreach program "Songscapes" and were directed once again by Ann Gresham, accompanied by pianist Kyounghee Kim. The performance included the innovation of new "Tweet Seats" in the back row, providing hashtags for social media savvy students to use during the show.

College Hosts Conference for Teens

Rio Hondo College hosted the Third Annual CHOICES Conference in partnership with SPIRITT Family Services and the Hispanic Outreach Taskforce on March 21. Nearly 300 high school students from Southeast Los Angeles, and the San Gabriel and Pomona valleys convened for a youth empowerment conference designed to equip local students with the tools and knowledge to make positive choices in life.

Keynote speaker Marhiell Ramirez, Investigator at the Orange County Public Defender's Office inspired the student attendees with her personal story of how she overcame obstacles to eventually graduate from college, and how she kept her eyes on the prize of graduating from law school.

The conference included motivational opening remarks by Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss and Whittier Mayor Pro Tem Cathy Warner. Topics for the conference included workshops on college and vocational educational pathways, career choices, and the importance of physical and mental health in a student's overall well-being. Workshops were designed in collaboration with student leaders from California and Pioneer high schools who were recognized by certificates from the State Assembly, Congress and the City of Whittier in the Wray Theatre.





Dates to Remember

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Fridays through April 11 (except March 28)
9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Business building B118

Writes of Spring

Featuring Gustavo Arellano and Deo Niyizonkia
April 23-24
Wray Theater

Taste of Rio: Restaurant, Wine Tasting, Auction and Drawing

Friday, May 2
6 p.m.
Mid-Quad
www.riohondo.edu/foundation

Commencement

Commencement Speaker
Honorable Hilda Solis,
former U.S. Secretary of Labor
Thursday, May 22
6 p.m.
Soccer Field

Rio Hondo College Presents: Undercurrent—The Paintings of Cole Case and Joan Kahn

The newest exhibition in the Rio Hondo Art Gallery had a successful opening on March 13, featuring the work of artists Cole Case and Joan Kahn. Well over 100 students, faculty and community members crowded into the Gallery to hear Case and Kahn speak about their work and answer questions about their artistic process, inspirations and careers. Gallery Director Robert Miller commented that the students benefited tremendously from the exhibit because Cole and Joan are both important local artists and art instructors at the Art Center College for Design in Pasadena. The artists were able to compare and contrast their styles, their creative processes and talk about the importance of training. *Undercurrent* runs through April 18 in the Rio Hondo Art Gallery.



Did You Know?

The Financial Aid Office worked diligently to disburse more than \$2.7 million to 3,882 students in Spring 2014. This means that Financial Aid disbursed \$13,229,631 to 4,973 students in Fall 2013 and Spring 2014.



Left to right: Dr. Elizabeth Coria, Director; Deborah Lopez, Senior Financial Aid Assistant; Maria Lopez, Financial aid Assistant; Monika Acosta, Financial Aid Coordinator; I Chen Liao, Senior Financial Aid Assistant; Brenda Navarrete, Senior Financial Aid Assistant; Elizabeth Ellis-Viorato, Financial Aid Assistant; Cindy Villegas, Senior Financial Aid Assistant