PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I would like to congratulate all of our faculty, staff, and students for a seamless transition into the new academic year. The incredible work that has been done as a team and as a community to bring up our enrollment figures has paid off. At this time, the College has a thirteen percent increase at our census date in new students for the 2007-2008 academic year. We are waiting to have confirmation on returning students, but that also looks like a significant increase. It has given me great pride to share our accomplishments with other superintendents and with the community.

As I take my daily walks around our campus, it is bustling with activity including: Club Rush, Book Sales, Art Openings, and the New Faculty Luncheon. It is wonderful to see our classrooms filled with students and the energy that they bring to campus. Finally, thanks to all those that contributed to this update, and I encourage each and every one of you to share the accomplishments and achievements of your colleagues or your department for the next President’s Update. Please submit items to Sandy at SSandello@riohondo.edu.

I look forward to an incredible year.

Environmental Symposium

The College will be hosting “Educational Pathways to Green Jobs,” an environmental education symposium. The event is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., October 5, at the Pacific Palms Conference Center at 1 Industry Hills Parkway in Industry.

Hundreds of invitations have been sent out to leaders throughout the state to an environmental symposium aimed at helping its students land fruitful jobs in the "green" workforce. The idea is to have regional environmental leaders talk about what kind of job skills incoming workers should have in five specific areas: waste management, water and wastewater management, alternative/efficient energy systems, environmental health and safety, and land-use planning and environmental restoration.

With some of the most renowned environmental representatives from both industry and academia, the symposium will serve as a mini-think tank on environmental education and the trends in industry. The information gathered will be used to craft a new program to make Rio Hondo students more marketable in the green industry.

The event’s master of ceremonies is KABC-TV personality Danny Romero and the keynote speaker is Steven Maguin, Chief Engineer for the Los Angeles County Sanitation District. The symposium will feature breakout sessions, and invited guests are being asked to fill out surveys that will be used to direct the discussion during the breakout sessions.
**Consultant Services:**

The Board of Trustees approved the consultant services of Scott Epstein to present a workshop for Rio Hondo College managers on strategic planning, including establishing strategic goals, priorities for planning and resources as well as evaluating the strategic planning process. Service will begin in September 2007.

The Board of Trustees also approved the services of Obed Mejia to develop curriculum and training for southern California Bus Transit agencies. Dates of service will be September 20, 2007 through July 30, 2008.

**Facility Usage with Whittier City School District:**

The Board of Trustees authorized The Rio Hondo Community College District (RHCCD) – Community Services and Contract Education Department to offer classes of community interest at the Katherine Edwards Middle School of the Whittier City School District (WCSD).

**Instructional Services Agreements:**

The Board of Trustees approved The Department of Public Safety to make Fire and Police Training available to local agencies including cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena. These courses include Administration of Justice and Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certified classes for police departments and Wildland Fire Crew 77

Rio Hondo College’s Wildland Firefighters have had a busy fire season this year. The 23-member fire safety crew is on call 24-hours a day throughout the fire season, which runs from May 1 through November 30, to lend a helping hand to fire departments across the nation.

Most recently the crew has been working on the Zaca fire, the third largest fire in the history of the United States. The fire is located in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. On their break from the fire the crew members received commendations from the Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees for their outstanding service.

At the Zaca fire the team had to hike through rough hilly terrain to cut lines or set backfires. The team spent 16-hour days, starting at 6 a.m., on the fire near the Los Padres National Forest, which burned 240,207 acres and cost $118 million.

In the meantime, they are keeping up their training, which includes clearing the brush around the Rio Hondo Campus. “It’s a great advantage having the team keep our campus and the local community safe from a potential fire hazard,” said Joseph Santoro, Dean of the Rio Hondo Department of Public Safety. He said the Wildland Academy has been a great success since it started in 2001.

The Roadrunners, in an internship for the spring academy, work in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service and are dispatched by the Angeles National Forest.

Once called, “the Team” - which ranges in age from 18 to 35 - has from an hour to 24 hours to get to their designated assignment. They travel by chartered buses and sometimes by helicopter, usually within California. However, they sometimes go out of state and help on fires and national disasters such as the space shuttle disaster recovery a few years ago in Texas.

These Roadrunners are doing the hard work needed to extinguish fires and we are all very proud of them.

**Club Rush**

On Wednesday, September 21st and Thursday, September 22nd Rio Hondo College students gathered in the upper quad for “club rush.” Club Rush is an opportunity for students to find out more about the club activities offered at the College and to get involved with extracurricular offerings.

Several different groups participated including: Alpha Gamma Sigma, Art Guild, American Society of Engineers and Architects, Asian Club, BBQ Club, Campus Light, Dual Enrollment Club, French Club, Gay Straight Alliance, Honors Transfer Society, Newman Catholic, Nursing Club, Parents in College, Phi Beta Lambda, Student Advocacy Club, Students United for Positive Change, Tennis Club, Tri Omega and the Vocal Arts Alliance.

The Associated Student Body served luncheon foods (pizza on Wednesday and Bar-b-que on Thursday) to over 800 students. On Thursday, World Beat Rhythms played while clubs signed up 100s of potential club members and sold fundraiser items.

Student Services booths were also available for students who might have questions or need more information. The two-day event was a great success and fun was had by all.
President Speaks to Supporters of Project Avanzando

President Martinez was the keynote speaker on Saturday, September 8, 2007, at the Project Avanzando event held at the Wray Theatre on the Rio Hondo College campus. Project Avanzando makes it possible for many youth in the area to prepare for college by offering computer training, Student Support Services, Transition to College, Life Skills Workshops, cost free childcare and transportation to eligible participants.

Dr. Martinez shared with the audience that growing up as a farm worker, he could identify with the mission of the Project, which is to work in a collective educational effort.

“Education and the importance of education changed my life,” said Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr., Superintendent/President of Rio Hondo College. “In a family of seven children, I was the eldest male child. When I was 14, my family joined the migrant farm worker stream, but because my parents were determined that I receive an education they did not go north to the fields until school was out in June and were back for the start of school in September. My parents’ commitment to education paid off, and all of their children completed high school.”

Project Avanzando is designed to provide GED (High School Equivalency) instruction that is specifically tailored for seasonal agricultural workers and their eligible family members residing in the Eastern Los Angeles and Western San Bernardino Counties. The College supports the work of Project Avanzando to prepare more students to seek secondary and post-secondary education.

Rio Hondo College’s Opening Art Show
The Missing Women Of Juarez

The Rio Hondo College art gallery is featuring artist Deborah Koenker’s powerful show, ¡Ni Una Más/Not One More! The show deals with the missing women in Juarez, Mexico. The gallery reception and artist talk was held on September 13 from 7pm-8pm with over 200 people in attendance. The show runs from September 13-October 10 both daytime (Monday-Thursday 9am-3pm) and evening (Monday-Wednesday 6pm-9pm) gallery hours and admission is FREE.

The exhibition title, ¡Ni Una Más/Not One More!, is borrowed from a social justice movement established in 2002 that has attracted international attention to the violence that has claimed the lives of hundreds of women and girls in the northern Mexico state of Chihuahua for more than a decade. ¡Ni Una Más! consists of individuals and organizations demanding social justice and an end to the violence and incompetent investigations into these crimes.

These asesinatos/murders and desaparecidas/disappearances are symptomatic of an epidemic of violence against women globally. Amnesty International cites violence against women as the number one human rights violation in the world. Widespread indifference to abuse and violence against women is a fact. That most acts of violence against women are never investigated is a fact.

That workers who labor globally to produce goods cannot afford to consume the products they make is a fact. That the craft of the hand is undervalued and disappearing in the mechanized global economy is a fact. It’s a fact that many of the Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua victims worked in the maquiladoras/factories that line the Mexican side of the border as a result of the NAFTA agreement. Over the past fourteen years, since statistics started to be kept, approximately 500 young women and girls have been murdered or have disappeared in Ciudad Juárez.
Oversight Committee which met on September 25, 2007.

Public Hearing and Approval of the Proposed 2007-2008 Adopted Budget: The Board of Trustees formally opened a public hearing on the adopted budget. With no comments from the public, the Board formally closed the public hearing and approved the adopted budget for 2007-2008.

“Community College Civic Participation Month”: The Board of Trustees adopted a resolution supporting the Southwestern Voter Registration Education Project in its effort to register youthful voters, reinforcing the importance of every eligible American’s participation in the democratic process and providing the opportunity for voter registration.

Resolution in Support of Membership and Participation in the San Gabriel/Foothill Association of Community Colleges: The Board of Trustees adopted a Resolution to support, become a member of, and participate in San Gabriel/Foothill Association of Community Colleges.

College Reorganization: The President recommended an administrative reorganization and the Board of Trustees took action.

Authorization of Out-of-State Travel and Conferences: The Board of Trustees approved the travel that was outlined in the Consent Agenda. This travel was approved in accordance with

Exciting News Around the Campus

Grand Opening for the Santa Fe Springs Fire Training Facility: On Friday, October 19, 2007 the Santa Fe Springs Regional Training Center of Rio Hondo College Fire Academy will be having a grand re-opening. The event will begin at 9:30 am with a Continental Breakfast and the program will begin at 10:00 am.

As was called for in the Campus Master Plan, the site has been renovated and expanded. New more usable spaces have been created to accommodate increased classroom space and training areas. New irrigation has been installed as well as redesigned landscaping.

The Santa Fe Springs Regional Training Center is located at 11400 Greenstone Avenue, Santa Fe Springs. For more information about the event please contact Tracy Rickman at (562) 941-4082 x. 21, 23 or trickman@riohondo.edu.

New Faculty Luncheon: Every year, the Vice President of Academic Affairs hosts a luncheon for all non-tenured contract faculties (a total of 31) at the beginning of the fall semester. This year, we introduced nine new faculty members at the event. The luncheon for over 50 people, including administrators and faculty leadership, was held Thursday, September 13th at 12:30 p.m. at the Swiss Park Restaurant, 1905 Workman Mill Rd.

Although there was no formal agenda, everyone had an opportunity to introduce themselves and mingle with their colleagues in a relaxed yet informative setting.

Whittier Area Literacy Council: The Whittier Area Literacy Council, a non profit agency that helps adults and children improve their literacy skills, held their first Scrabble Challenge on September 7th. The game was 45 minutes of competition.

Edna Ball and her team were the over-all winners with a score of 695. Edna Ball also was the highest scorer. Russell Castaneda-Calleros, Lisa Sandoval, Andy Edge and Gloria Reyes scored 537 and came in fourth out of eight teams. Russell Castaneda was second highest scorer with 218 points.

Book Sale: The Rio Hondo College Library recently held a used book sale in the breezeway under the library building. The book sale, held occasionally as the library “weeds” its collection of outdated and/or donated books, always garners enthusiastic attendance by students, staff, faculty, and administrators. The books are priced to be affordable to everyone at $.50 per paperback and $1.00 per hardback. Many students take advantage of the last two hours of the sale, traditionally reserved for the “Buck a Bag” special. The library does not expect to make a profit from the book sale and all proceeds go right back into the library budget for the purchase of new resources. The proceeds from the sale on September 13 netted just over $200.00 for new materials. Books that do not sell are donated to Better World Books, an organization that funds and supports literacy initiatives locally, nationally, and around the world.
Acceptance of Bid Substantially Completed - #1111 Building Panel Correction Repair: The Board of Trustees accepted as complete the work performed under Bid #1111 Building Panel Connection Repair and the Board authorized the filing of a Notice of Completion with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

Project Manager – ERP Software Implementation: The Board of Trustees approved the hiring of the Project Manager to coordinate the implementation of the ERP software.

“Go Rio” Program Adds New Partners to Offer Even Greater Access to Students

The award-winning “Go Rio” program, which has become a national model for increased student access to education by offering free bus passes to all full-time Rio Hondo College students (12 units or more), has added two new partners for the Fall of 2007, Montebello Bus Lines and the Sunshine Shuttle. These agencies join METRO, Foothill Transit, and Norwalk Transit Service in honoring the “Go Rio” transit sticker. The Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees honored these new members with commendations at their September 19, 2007 meeting.

These new partners increase the coverage area for “Go Rio.” Montebello Bus Lines will honor the “Go Rio” sticker on all of its bus lines throughout the City, while the Sunshine Shuttle will cover all unincorporated portions of the District. “Go Rio” students now will be able to ride all METRO, Foothill Transit, Norwalk Transit Service, Montebello Bus Lines, and Sunshine Shuttles and any combination thereof at no cost.

The “Go Rio” program was developed as a part of the College's on-going work to increase access to post-secondary education. Full-time “Go Rio” students have enjoyed convenient cost-effective access to the campus. Since “Go Rio’s” inception, several other community colleges throughout the Los Angeles area have contacted Rio Hondo College with the intention of starting similar universal transit access programs in the future.

Construction Update

Construction is proceeding well on all of the current projects. The Lot A Pedestrian Bridge has been bid and awarded to EMMA Construction at the September 5, 2007 Board meeting. Construction will begin in November. The Applied Technology renovation is at DSA for approval and the Building Program Management Team is working with the users to create viable swing space options so that the entire program can continue uninterrupted during the construction. The PE Complex design drawing is on target to be submitted to DSA in November.

Quatro Design has completed the initial drawings of the Administration of Justice Building which has met with a warm reception from the users and from the Citizen's Oversight Committee. The schematic design phase is complete and the design development is underway. The plans will be submitted to DSA for review in November of 2007.

The South Whittier (STARS) Center construction is at the preliminary stages as Rio Hondo College is coordinating with the County for the leasing of space and will begin geotechnical investigation pending the right of entry agreement with the county. The El Monte Center is being developed by the City of El Monte and the College has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City for that space to be used by the College.