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President's Message



Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr.

October is traditionally one of the busiest months on campus, and this year is no exception. Students are busy in class, in the LRC, on the athletic fields, and in the Student Activities Office. Faculty is engaged in a myriad of tasks and activities, as is our classified support staff. The campus hums along, taking the realities of construction and related 'sound effects' in stride. I am very proud of everyone's contributions and ability to accommodate as we pass the mid-point in our fall semester.

We're certainly not idle! The Parking Task Force has met to consider options for mitigating anticipated impacts of the P.E. Complex building project as we look forward to the spring semester. That task force is comprised of representatives of campus constituencies.

Speaking of constituent groups, I believe it is important to commend constituent leadership representatives who came together in a five-hour session earlier this month to identify communication barriers and develop trust. In the facilitated conversation, the group made substantial progress and we are looking forward to a follow-up session.

It's important to keep the grant pipeline moving, so our institution can be positioned to apply for and contend for important fiscal supplements to our general operating budget.

Thanks to Karen Koos and Vann Priest for their work to coordinate a regional workshop to provide technical assistance and strategies for obtaining National Science Foundation funding. Traditionally, community colleges have not competed for the prestigious NSF grants. We hope the skill-building workshop will help level that playing field.

Kudos to the Accreditation Response Team (ART), and special commendation to Matt Koutoulis for exceptional effort in demonstrating progress in meeting the expectations of WASC with regard to Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). You may recall that although we received word of Full Reaffirmation of Accreditation earlier this year, progress reports regarding our SLO progress are still required. The follow-up report was dispatched immediately following the October Board of Trustees meeting. Good work Matt and team!



**2010 Election
Discussion
Forum
Wednesday,
October 27, 2010
at Wray Theatre**

The Behavioral and Social Sciences Division and the Political Science Department faculty hosted and presented a free Discussion Forum Oct. 27 to address important issues in the upcoming elections.

Board Meeting

The Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees held a Board Meeting and Community Mixer at Santa Fe Springs City Council Chambers Wednesday, October 13.

Commendations were presented to the South Whittier Advisory Committee, the Santa Fe Springs City Council and to Friends and Supporters of Trustee Area 4. Present at the meeting to receive this recognition were: Jerry Jaramillo; Ray Bueno; Cesar Jame; Dr. Ralph & Deborah Pacheco; Ruben Trevizo; Ramon Diaz; Fernando Del Rio; Martin Bueno and Randy and Rosemary Economy.



Dr. Robert Holcomb presented a progress update on the South Whittier Education Center and reported the feedback from the community has been positive regarding the services offered at the center.

Board members reviewed the Accreditation Response Follow-Up Report that focused on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), which was subsequently submitted to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC) on October 15. Please see a detailed summary on page 3.

Student Services Building Progress



Local Children Celebrate “The Art of Puppetry”

Children of all ages witnessed socks, paper bags, recycled artifacts and bigger-than-life size puppets come to life Saturday, Oct. 16 during an all-day Puppetry Celebration Festival on the College campus.

The event was made possible thanks to a partnership between the Division of Arts and Culture and the Los Angeles Guild of Puppetry (LAGOP), one of the largest independent organizations of puppet enthusiasts in the United States.



Children and adults marveled as a Giant-Walk-Around-Puppet-Parade kicked-off the festivities. The celebration, held at Wray Theatre and Lower Quad Plaza, was full of spectacular attractions and entertainment that included puppet making demonstrations, creative workshops on how to make puppets with recyclable/found objects, as well as a potpourri of staged and strolling performances.

“This unique celebration is another example of the diversity of the arts and cultural events presented by Rio Hondo College,” said Angela Acosta-Salazar, President of the Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees. “We strive to provide our students and our community, including children, with rich and quality educational opportunities to instill a love for the arts. I encourage students, faculty and the general public to visit one of the many events planned this fall.”



National Science Foundation Workshop Brings NSF Expertise to Campus

The College was host to a free regional National Science Foundation (NSF) Workshop and Panel Discussion Oct. 15 that brought together Southern California's local community colleges and schools to network, share best practices and learn the latest news and strategies for successful NSF grant writing.

In collaboration with the San Gabriel/Foothill Association of Community Colleges (SanFACC) and the Los Angeles/Orange County Workforce Development Leaders (LOWDL), the workshop was designed to help increase the percentage of funds dedicated to two year colleges by building NSF grant proposal success in the San Gabriel Valley region.

With an annual budget of about \$6.06 billion, NSF (an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950) is the funding source for about 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted at America's colleges and universities. NSF also supports science and engineering education from pre-K through graduate school. NSF-funded research is integrated with education to promote science-based professions. NSF researchers have won more than 180 Nobel Prizes.



George Wilson, Legislative Specialist, NSF, conducts a session on proposal writing.



Celeste Carter, Program Director, Division of Undergraduate Education, NSF.

College Submits Accreditation Follow-Up Report Documents Progress for Student Learning Outcomes

As part of the Accreditation Follow-up process, the College prepared a formal update for the Accrediting Commission regarding progress in reaching milestones in the development and implementation of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Accreditation Response Team Co-Chairs JoAnna Downey and Katie Obrien coordinated the report, along with SLO Coordinator Matt Koutroulis, associate professor of chemistry. The Follow-up Report was reviewed by the Board of Trustees and submitted to ACCJC by the October 15 deadline.

Rio Hondo College has made significant progress in the development and assessment of SLOs. Key highlights include:

- More than 98 percent of Rio's active courses are associated with SLOs.
- Rio Hondo closely monitors progress through the use of the SLOutions content management system (developed by Professor Koutroulis)
- Rio Hondo has collected assessment results from more than 1,400 of the sections offered in the past year.

The Report shows that the College is making substantial progress toward meeting criteria for proficiency on the accrediting commission's rubric for SLOs and has already established a framework and assessment strategy at the course level. The College plans to continue to work toward meeting the established milestones, which include creating an implementation timeline; evaluating the effectiveness of the SLO assessment process on a regular basis; facilitating college wide discussions; developing and implementing training for all constituencies integrating college wide efforts between Instruction and Student Services; creating a special emphasis on identifying valid and reliable data and use of authentic assessment; and implementing a system of quality control to ensure meaningful and accurate assessment of student learning throughout the College.

Rio Hondo College Receives \$3.2 Million Competitive Federal Grant to Increase Student Success and Timely Graduation

Rio Hondo College has been granted a 5-year, \$3.2 million, Title V grant from the United States Department of Education Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program to continue the College's efforts to increase student goal completion, and success to timely graduation.

The project's title is IDEAS – Instructional Development and Educational Assessment of Students for Success. It is designed to expand support for educational opportunities and improve strategies and retention rates for Hispanics and other underrepresented students in earning postsecondary degrees. Rio Hondo College houses a diverse student population averaging about 68 percent Hispanic, 12 percent Asian, 10 percent White Non-Hispanic, 2 percent Black, and 8 percent other or undeclared ethnicities.

For more than 10 years, Rio Hondo College has maintained transfer contracts with local universities, including Cal State Fullerton, Cal State Long Beach and Cal State Los Angeles to promote increased retention and better access to four-year universities for local students. In fact, Rio Hondo College has been at the forefront in producing Hispanic graduates, ranking 22nd nationally for the number of degrees awarded in all disciplines for Hispanic students.

The College's persistence rates (percentage of first-time students who completed at least six units in the Fall semester and re-enrolled in the subsequent Fall semester) were at 72 percent in 2009. Course retention rates (the proportion of enrollments in which the student completed a course with any valid grade other than a withdraw) were at 82 percent.

"We appreciate the recognition of Rio Hondo College as a center of innovation in the national effort to raise the bar on college completion," said Ted Martinez, Jr., Ph.D., "We are pleased to be able to leverage local resources with this Title V grant to promote more timely matriculation and graduation among our students."

The funding is very timely given recent announcements in California that have highlighted the need to increase coordination between California Community Colleges and the California State Universities. Last month, the California Legislature passed SB 1440, a state Senate bill mandating the California State University system to guarantee admission with junior status to any community college student who meets the requirements for an associate's degree for transfer.

La Feria Es El Momento, Edúcate (The Fair is the Moment, Get Educated) Event

"La Feria Es El Momento, Edúcate" or "The Fair is the Moment, Get Educated," held on Saturday, Oct. 9 at California State University Dominguez Hills, is an event that aims to educate Hispanic families on the key steps needed to help their children have a successful college education. More than 100 information exhibits were available to families that included information from early childhood development education to the community college, CSU, and UC systems. Rio Hondo College had a booth and provided information in English and Spanish on the programs and services that are offered on campus to educate parents on the basics of higher education. La Feria was free and open to all students and their families in Southern California. Lieutenant Governor Able Maldonado served as a speaker at the opening ceremony and also stopped by the Rio Hondo College information booth.



Fall Sports "Roadrunner" News

- Men's Soccer team is tied for first place in the Foothill Conference and is working toward their 9th consecutive conference championship.
- Women's Soccer is closing in on a playoff berth.



- Wrestling team is ranked #18 in the state.
- Men's and Women's Cross Country are placing individuals in their weekend invitatorials.
- Women's Volleyball is close to securing a playoff berth for the first time in 10 years.
- Women's Water Polo is having their best season in seven years.



Save the Date New P.E. Complex Groundbreaking

**Groundbreaking Ceremony
for the new Physical
Education Complex
Tuesday, November 9
10:30 a.m.**



Rio Hondo College Student Named Aerospace Scholar

The following story was published by the Whittier Daily News Oct. 19

WHITTIER - Today Rio Hondo College student Peter Kim is taking a major step toward his dream of becoming an aerospace engineer.

He is in the first of a three-day program at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Kim, 27, of Diamond Bar, is one of only 89 community college students nationwide selected to be named a National Community College Aerospace Scholar.

"Peter is typical of my students," said physics professor Vann Priest. "He is smart, hardworking, thinks hard and works hard."

He called it a perfect opportunity for his student.

"It exposes Peter to what he'll be doing in the future, and allows him to figure out if it is indeed where he wants to focus his energy."

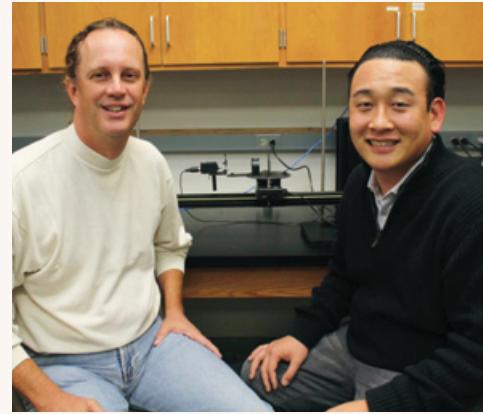
"It's quite an honor, and I am looking forward to learning all I can," Kim said.

He is especially hoping to make contacts with those professionals whose ranks he hopes to join.

Kim said he was always good at math and science but wasn't ready to go to college immediately after graduating from Diamond Bar High School.

"I wasn't mature enough," he said. "I needed to be more disciplined."

Kim enlisted in the Navy and gained those qualities as a gunners mate.



Student Peter Kim and Vann Priest, physics professor.

He also learned, while dealing with missiles and satellites, he wanted to be an engineer.

Kim spent the summer completing his application to the program, which included drafting a plan for a Mars rover.

His idea was to use renewable energy to fuel the rover and the rocket which takes it to Mars.

"Right now, all NASA is able to do is dispatch the rover," Kim said. "I hope to design a rocket that has space for the rover and a man, so that they can come back with hard data."

He credits the Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) group with helping him succeed.

"MESA Director Gisela Spieler first informed me about the program, and I couldn't be more grateful," Kim said.

Herney Authors NCMPR Journal Article

Susan Herney, director of Marketing and Communications, recently authored an article published in *COUNSEL*, a quarterly publication of the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR).

Susan's article, titled "Communicating in Accreditation's Aftermath" serves as a guide for other community college chief communications staff seeking to prepare for upcoming accreditation visits. The article outlines a strategy for practitioners as they develop a plan to accommodate a range of possible outcomes, and provides tips for educating both internal and external audiences about the accreditation process.

NCMPR is an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges and is the only organization of its kind that represents marketing and PR professionals at community and technical colleges. Its membership of 1,550 includes 650 institutions across the US, Canada and other countries. Susan served on the national NCMPR board and as the organization's national president in 2000.

