

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

COVERING SEPTEMBER 2015



President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

Rio Hondo jumped into September with a unified message of community support embodied in an array of impactful efforts.

Community characterizes our plans to create a regional education center in Pico Rivera. This move will establish a campus of convenience that gives local residents greater access to the opportunities of higher education.

Community underscores the shift in focus for our career center, now designated as the Center for Career and Re-entry Services. The new focus, and new resources, will ensure career guidance is especially effective for

students over 25 who are entering college for the first time or returning after an extended absence.

Community also describes Rio Hondo's award of \$2.6 million from the U.S. Department of Education to create new opportunities for Hispanic and low-income students. Those funds will help expand our capacity to ensure success for these students, who constitute about 70 percent of our student body.

Community encompasses our adopt-a-school outreach program that is connecting Rio Hondo College with students at 11 elementary and middle schools across the region. Our team is hard at work planning a big event later this fall to help inspire these students to consider higher education.

Community is the byword behind our new Fall Lecture Series, which celebrates artists and activists dedicated to strengthening equity in our community through their talents.

Finally, community is the ideal that drives all of our dedicated staff and faculty at Rio Hondo, the ideal that inspires us all to ensure our students succeed regardless of any challenge.

College to Open Pico Rivera Satellite Campus in Fall 2016

Rio Hondo College is expanding its already extensive partnership with the community of Pico Rivera, launching a \$1.3 million effort to open an educational center in collaboration with El Rancho Unified School District – bringing the promise of higher education closer to home for thousands of residents.



When completed in fall 2016, the 2.4-acre Pico Rivera Educational Center will be the third satellite campus established by Rio Hondo College since 2010. The South Whittier Educational Center opened in August 2010. The El Monte Educational Center opened in spring 2013.

"Our mission at Rio Hondo is to support our community by providing access to college education opportunities," said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. "These centers are bringing that mission closer to home across our service area."

The satellite sites circle Rio Hondo College's hilltop campus, with Pico Rivera to the southwest, El Monte to the north and South Whittier to east.

The Pico Rivera center will provide a new use for El Rancho Unified's former adult school at 9426 Marjorie St., across the street from El Rancho High School. The College will upgrade seven buildings spanning 6,720 square feet to create a collegiate identity and integrate 21st century learning tools into six classrooms and an office. The site will include a shaded campus quad and 1.3 acres of parking.

Rio Hondo College's Board of Trustees and El Rancho Unified's Board of Education both unanimously approved the center in meetings this summer.

The satellite campuses help Rio Hondo reach students who otherwise might not be able to attend college, as do a host of other programs provided to the Pico Rivera community through the College's extensive partnerships with local groups.

College educators take part in the Pico Rivera Partnership Group, an informal collaborative that includes the Pico Rivera Chamber of Commerce, the City of Pico Rivera, Los Angeles County Office of Education and El Rancho Unified. Through the partnership, the College's Center for Career and Re-Entry Services has created internship opportunities Rio Hondo College students who are residents of Pico Rivera.

Rio Hondo College also plays a strong role at the El Rancho Adult Educational Center, offering several English as a Second Language courses for adult community members. College leaders collaborate closely with the Adult Educational Center on projects through the Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium (RHRAEC).

In addition, Rio Hondo College offers an array of classes at El Rancho High School, including courses focused on the administration of justice, art and sociology.

RIO IN THE NEWS! Click here to read more about Rio Hondo College's Pico Rivera Satellite Campus in the *Whittier Daily News*.

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Board Update

Rio Hondo College has taken its mission to promote a college-going culture to a new level: local middle and elementary schools.

In spring 2015, the College launched an “Adopt-a-School” program with eight local school districts, connecting staff members with nine middle schools and two elementary schools, as presented to the Board of Trustees on Sept. 9.

With each school, the College has offered a menu of outreach options, many of which were realized in the program’s first few weeks: Classroom visits, higher education assemblies, participation in back-to-school nights and open houses, presentations to parent groups and Rio Hondo campus tours and student panels.

For example, at Kranz Intermediate School in Mountain View School District, Rio Hondo held a schoolwide assembly for seventh- and eighth-graders. College representatives hosted science students from Los Nietos Middle School in Los Nietos School District for an egg-drop contest at Rio Hondo College, gave a presentation to parents at Columbia School in El Monte School District and staffed a table at a South Whittier School District community fair.

Rio Hondo teams also attended back-to-school nights at Graves Middle School in South Whittier School District, Los Nietos Middle School and New Temple Elementary and Dean Shively Middle School in Valle Lindo School District. At both the elementary and middle schools in Valle Lindo School District, they visited individual classrooms to engage with principals, teachers, parents, students and families and individually handed out marketing materials. They also attended Cinco de Mayo festivities at New Temple Elementary and an open house at Dean Shively Middle School.

The Adopt-a-School program is one of several collaborations pursued by Rio Hondo with local schools. In addition to an extensive outreach program focused on high schools – including agreements that allow Rio Hondo to teach classes at many local high schools – K-12 students are invited to the hilltop campus for an annual debate program and a summer career technical academy.



Rio Hondo College educators present information on higher education options to parents at Columbia Elementary in the El Monte City School District (above) and spoke to a school assembly of seventh- and eighth-graders at Kranz Intermediate in Mountain View School District (below).



Rio Hondo College to Host Hundreds of Elementary, Middle School Students

For the first time, Rio Hondo College will host up to 550 middle and elementary school students on Nov. 18 for Discover Rio Days, for a special educational day about college opportunities. The event is being hosted by the entire campus with the backing of the Board of Trustees to promote early awareness of higher education across the Rio Hondo Community College District.



Students will learn about Rio Hondo’s public service career programs in nursing, firefighting and police services, how to prepare for college and about campus programs designed to help students start at Rio and transfer to a four-year college or university. The event will run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and will include campus tours and lunch.

The College invited 50 students each from 11 elementary and middle schools in eight districts.

“Our goal is to expose younger students from schools across the Rio Hondo Community College District to higher-education options while supporting our partner school districts in their mission to prepare students for college and careers,” said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. “We think of it as planting a seed.”

If the event proves successful, it may join a constellation of other signature Rio Hondo College outreach programs, such as the Senior Preview Days held each spring for high school seniors.

Adopted Schools

During the first phase of Rio Hondo College’s Adopt-a-School Program, the College has connected with 11 schools from eight districts.

Trustee Area 1

- Kranz Intermediate School, Mountain View School District
- Columbia School, El Monte City School District

Trustee Area 2

- STEAM Academy @ Burke Middle School, El Rancho Unified
- North Park Middle School, El Rancho Unified

Trustee Area 3

- Dean Shively Middle School, Valle Lindo School District
- New Temple Elementary, Valle Lindo School District
- Dexter Middle School, Whittier City School District

Trustee Area 4

- Graves Middle School, South Whittier School District
- Los Nietos Middle School, Los Nietos School District

Trustee Area 5

- Hillview Middle School, East Whittier City School District
- Scott Elementary School, East Whittier City School District

First-ever Fall Lecture Series Highlights Artists, Activists Known for Human Rights Focus

More than 300 members of the Rio Hondo College community packed the Wray Theater in September for the first talk in the College's new Fall Lecture Series, a multi-disciplinary effort that features writers, artists and activists known nationally for their talent and focus on human rights.

The event launched Sept. 23 with renowned sculptor Mario Chiodo, whose works have been praised for their focus on social issues and display of deep human character and emotion.

It continues Thursday, Oct. 15 with celebrated syndicated cartoonist and satirist Lalo Alcaraz and concludes Thursday, Nov. 5 with LGBT rights scholar and activist Dr. Ronnie Sanlo.

"We wanted to provide authentic learning opportunities for our students that would inspire their social consciousness while providing a real-world perspective to the topics they are studying in their courses," said Dr. Robert Holcomb, Ph.D., Rio Hondo's Dean of Communications & Languages.

The lecture series was Holcomb's inspiration, tying together programs from his Division with thematically similar events planned by colleagues at the Division of Arts and Cultural Programs and the Office of Student Life and Leadership.

Each of the speakers is known not only for possessing a unique voice, but for using his or her talents to promote social justice – a concept integrally linked with Rio Hondo College's dedication to providing access to higher-education opportunities for all members of its community, especially those that are under-represented.

Mario Chiodo

Based in Northern California, Chiodo is known for sculptures that celebrate noted humanitarians, including his massive "Remember Them: Champions for Humanity" monument. The 60,000-pound sculpture spans 1,000 square feet of Oakland's Henry J. Kaiser Memorial Park.

Students who attended his talk were able to connect his artistic depictions of such political and cultural leaders as Frederick Douglass and Maya Angelou to lessons on their social impact, Holcomb said.

Lalo Alcaraz – Oct. 15

Alcaraz is author of *La Cucaracha*, a nationally syndicated, politically themed Latino comic strip. He hosts a KPFK radio show, helped create artwork for President Obama's 2008 campaign and is writing and producing "Bordertown," a 2016 animated TV series exploring race issues executive produced by Seth MacFarlane.

Alcaraz discussed the new series and screen an episode during his visit.

Ronnie Sanlo – Nov. 5

Sanlo is an education consultant on the issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, among other topics. Her career includes stints as director of UCLA's LGBT Center and UCLA's Senior Associate Dean of Students. Before entering higher education, she was an HIV epidemiologist.

Sanlo will screen the 2014 documentary, "Letter to Anita," which relates the impact of her decision to come out as a lesbian during Anita Bryant's anti-gay campaign in the 1970s. Sanlo will comment on the documentary and join a post-screening discussion. Director Andrea Meyerson will also attend.

"Talks by figures such as Mr. Chiodo, Mr. Alcaraz and Dr. Sanlo enrich our learning environment and generate a meaningful dialogue among our campus community," said Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. "Their focus on social justice will help deepen and underscore the learning that goes on our Rio Hondo College classrooms."



President Dreyfuss Joins Whittier Soroptimists

Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss was installed Sept. 22 as a new member of Soroptimist International of Whittier, a group whose focus echoes the College's mission of equity and educational opportunity.

The club is part of an international organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls. More than 80,000 women in 120 countries and regions are members.

Each year, the Whittier club hosts a Women's History Day Conference in conjunction with Rio Hondo College and Whittier Union High School District and gives out Live Your Dream Awards to help women make better lives for themselves. In 2015, all five awards went to students at Rio Hondo College.



Club President Mary L. Venegas, left, stands with Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, middle, and Ana Maria Jimenez

Growing Career Center Provides Specialized Services for Adult Re-Entry Students

Rio Hondo College's Career Development Center has been renamed the Center for Career and Re-Entry Services (CCRS) to reflect an expanded role in providing comprehensive support for students ages 25 or older who are beginning their higher education journeys or returning after an absence of five years or more.

Adult re-entry students constitute about a quarter of all new Rio Hondo College students each fall – typically between 1,200 and 1,300 students.

"We wanted to create a place on campus where our adult re-entry students will feel at home and where their diverse educational needs can be met in a thorough and efficient manner," said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss.

Adult re-entry students face a number of challenges specific to them that include financial responsibilities, childcare issues and balancing the demands of school, work and home, Re-Entry Services Counselor Angelica Martinez said.

"Our center is uniquely equipped to help our re-entry students succeed as they pursue their educational goals through a combination of services and support based on our deep understanding of their specific challenges," said CCRS Coordinator Belen Torres-Gil, a counselor and professor at Rio Hondo College.

Along with the name change, the College has hired two staff members to work with adult students.

The new role builds on the Center's core mission – to assist all students in making confident career and life decisions by providing them with resources and career counseling services.

The center's services include:

- Individualized counseling for educational and career planning
- Assistance with their college application, registration and financial aid
- Use of a dedicated computer lab and career library
- Job preparation aid, including help with resumes, interviewing and job searches
- Free career assessments and interpretations
- Access to CCRS's job and internship board
- Assistance with using social media for professional networking purposes

Career Guide Available

The **Rio Hondo College Career Planning Guide** is now available online and as a paper copy in the College's Center for Career and Re-Entry Services. The guide provides comprehensive job and career resources to assist students with the job search process. It is designed to supplement the in-person assistance that students can receive from the Center for Career and Re-entry Services.



Student Support Services Spotlight

Rio Hondo College offers an array of services to support students in their pursuit of a two-year degree and career preparation. This is the second in an ongoing feature highlighting these services.

Writers' Resource Center: The center offers one-on-one help with writing assignments, researching, UC and other college personal statements, bibliographies and other work that needs pre-writing, crafting or revisions. The center serves students by appointment and walk-in requests when staffing permits.

CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids): The program is instrumental in providing critical education, training, support services and job opportunities to assist families living in poverty to reach their educational/employment goals and achieve economic self-sufficiency. The CalWORKs program at Rio Hondo College works in collaboration with the Department of Public Social Services to assist students with education, training and job skills.

Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOP&S) and the Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE): EOP&S/CARE is a comprehensive program committed to providing compassionate and innovative services to students facing economic and educational challenges. The group's mission is to work in partnership with students and the campus community to enable students to fulfill their highest educational potential. Services include priority registration, counseling and educational advice, tutoring and book vouchers.

Honors Transfer Program: The Honors Transfer Program provides challenging courses for academically talented and highly motivated community college students who are seeking transfer to four-year universities. At Rio Hondo College, the program provides personal honors counseling, smaller classes, participation in the student research conference and privileges at several University of California libraries. Our transfer agreements can provide priority admissions and registration opportunities, special housing consideration and scholarship opportunities.

Learning Assistance Center (LAC): The LAC provides our diverse student population with the tools needed for academic success. Empowering RHC's students to cultivate the abilities, tactics and behaviors of confident, self-reliant and enduring learners, the LAC contributes to the college's focus on student-driven learning, increased retention and success rates.

Office of Outreach and Educational Partnerships: The office teams with local K-12, university and community partners to create college access and ensure preparation for all students while developing a college-going culture within schools, families and the community as a whole. High school outreach is a primary focus, in which the office aids students in the four key enrollment steps: admissions application, assessment, orientation and educational plan. It also provides future students with detailed information on Rio Hondo academic programs and student support services.

Connect with Us on Social Media

 **RHCRoadrunners**

 **RioHondo_College**

 **RioHondoCollege**

 **#iLoveRioHondo**

Serving the communities of

- El Monte
- Santa Fe Springs
- South El Monte
- Whittier
- Pico Rivera

and portions of:

- Norwalk
- East Whittier*
- Downey
- South Whittier*
- La Mirada
- West Whittier*
- City of Industry
- Avocado Heights*
- Los Nietos*

*Unincorporated communities within our District

Mission Statement

Rio Hondo College is committed to the success of its diverse students and communities by providing dynamic educational opportunities and resources that lead to associate degrees, certificates, transfer, career and technical pathways, basic skills proficiency, and lifelong learning.

Save The Date



7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 22: SUR:Biennial panel discussion for art show that runs through Nov. 15, Wray Theater

10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5: Rio Hondo College Fall 2015 Lecture Series presents two screenings of the documentary "Letter to Anita" with a Q & A and reception with Dr. Ronnie Sanlo at 11:15 a.m., Wray Theater

6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 11: Board of Trustees meeting, Board Room

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18: Discover Rio Day for elementary and middle school students, Rio Hondo College

6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9: Board of Trustees meeting, Board Room

\$2.6 Million Award Will Expand College Services for Hispanic, Low-Income Students

Rio Hondo College will receive \$2.62 million in federal funds to help Hispanic and low-income students prepare for the rigor of college courses, identify educational goals and map achievable programs of study in order to shorten their time to completion, the College announced Friday.

RIO IN THE NEWS! [Click here to read more about Rio Hondo College's \\$2.6 Million Award in the *Community College Daily*.](#)

The award is one of about 87 five-year grants of up to \$2.63 million for individual institutions and up to \$3.25 million for cooperative arrangements awarded this week by the U.S. Department of Education to colleges and universities at which enrollment is at least 25 percent Hispanic. At Rio Hondo, 70 percent of students are Hispanic.

"This generous grant will allow us to develop important new resources to significantly improve Rio Hondo College's already highly successful model for ensuring student success," said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. "I'm excited to see the difference we will make in the lives of these students thanks to the innovative ideas our team has developed."

The new grant will fund The *Avance* Project, aimed at expanding Rio Hondo College's capacity for fostering student success by establishing a year-long integrated and connected success pathway for first-year students to persist into their second year. *Avance* is Spanish for advance.

"Our goal is to create a continuum of integrated academic and student service supports for our first-year students," said Barbara Salazar, Interim Assistant Dean and Title V Grant Project Director for Rio Hondo College's Office of Student Success & Retention. "We have learned that strong guidance during the students' first year is critical to ensuring they get the most out of their college experience."

Avance's components include a summer math academy, a guaranteed first-year schedule, a seminar course so students can explore discipline-based career paths and focus on a continued program of study, and regular tutoring, counseling and coaching.

In addition, Rio Hondo College will celebrate and support *Avance* students through a First-Year Seminar Conference, where they can learn more about different college disciplines, hear both student and professional presentations, and present their own field-related research inspired by the First-Year Seminar Course.

Avance will run from Oct. 1, 2015 through Sept. 30, 2020, serving 200 students in its initial year and adding 100 students annually until participation peaks at 600 students in its final year.