

# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

COVERING DECEMBER 2016



## President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

It seems like Rio Hondo College rarely slows down these days. Even during December, traditionally a time for reflection, our college community manages to provide not only the academic lessons that will help our students succeed in the classroom and in the workplace, but the life lessons that will help them succeed everywhere else.

This December, the Rio Hondo community came together to support foster children, to celebrate dance with local students, to combat hunger and to celebrate our diverse regional culture.

Our third annual Case of Hope Drive generated a record number of backpacks and suitcases for area foster children and youths, as well as those transitioning out of the foster care system. We celebrated the effort's

success with a lunch that featured a surprise gift of hundreds of toys from a former Rio Hondo College student.

Our college dancers engaged local school children in our holiday production of "The Nutcracker," providing roles for 70 students in addition to the talented dancers from Rio Hondo. Our theatre arts students also helped stage a play celebrating Our Lady of Guadalupe at Rose Hills.

New for fall semester was a program to ensure our students didn't go hungry. A new task force is tackling the very real issue of student hunger with a variety of programs, including one that provided food during finals for our students. It's a tremendous program that will help so many.

Altogether, these efforts provided the perfect conclusion to our fall semester and the start of the winter holidays.

## College Stages 'Nutcracker' with 70 Local Dancers

The Rio Hondo Dance Collective presented its sixth annual holiday program on Dec. 11, staging a contemporary version of "The Nutcracker" with 27 dancers from Rio Hondo College and 70 dancers from five area schools and the Rio Hondo College Child Development Center.

The show filled the Wray Theater for two performances. Audience members noted the costumes, set designs and choreography outshone last year's popular production.

The Dance Collective is an ensemble of advanced students in the Rio Hondo Dance Program who are pursuing careers as dancers, choreographers or in another aspect of the field. This is the Collective's second year of engaging area students in the holiday show.

Participating schools included Dean Shively Middle School, Hadley School, Montebello High School, Edgewood High School and Esteban Torres High School.



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# Board Report

The Board of Trustees adopted a resolution supporting students, including those who are undocumented, recognized retiring staff members, selected new officers and received an update on campus construction projects during its Dec. 14 meeting.

The resolution celebrates the College's values of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, pledges to train College faculty, staff and administrators on how to protect student privacy, promises to hold legal clinics to assist immigrants and their families, and commits the College to providing forums for open discourse about those issues.

The resolution will be signed by the College's president, Board of Trustees president, Faculty Association president, Academic Senate president, California School Employees Association chapter president and Associated Students of Rio Hondo College president, to show the College's unity and commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive and safe learning environment for all students, especially those who are undocumented.



The College also honored five retiring employees:

- Shari Magnus: Hired in 1973, Magnus advanced through the ranks from clerk typist to become human resources coordinator. She served the College for 43 years.
- Claire Caplis: Hired in 1990 as a part-time clerk typist, Caplis was promoted to senior secretary. She served the College for 26 years.
- Nancy Galban: Hired in 1981 as a clerk typist, Galban was promoted to coordinator of admissions and records. She served the College for 35 years.
- Myrna Reyes: Hired in 1976 as a clerk, she served as a library clerk, clerk typist and worked for the Public Safety Division. She served the College for 40 years.
- Lorraine Sedillo: Hired in 1987 as a part-time switchboard operator and mailroom clerk, Sedillo was promoted to senior switchboard operator and mailroom clerk. She served the College for 29 years.

The board named new officers for 2016-17: Norma Edith García, president; Madeline Shapiro, vice president; Vicky Santana, clerk. The board includes members Gary Mendez and Mary Ann Pacheco, the outgoing president. Pacheco was named as the representative to the Los Angeles County School Trustees Association.

In an update on building projects, the board learned its renovation of the campus bookstore and print shop would be completed in December 2016. The project expanded the bookstore to 6,682 square feet from 4,109 square feet. The print shop nearly doubled in size to 1,760 square feet.

Next up for the College is a seismic upgrade of its iconic L-Tower, which started in December 2016 and runs through November 2018.

**RIO IN THE NEWS!** Click here to read more about Rio Hondo's new board president in *The Whittier Daily News*.



# College, Community Partner Collect Bags and Toys for Area Foster Youths

Rio Hondo College students, faculty and staff donated close to 250 backpacks and suitcases for foster children and youths this December as part of the College's third annual Case of Hope Drive.

The donations, which included gifts from community members, far exceeded the 150 bags donated in 2015, and came with an added surprise: a donation of 200 toys by a Rio Hondo College alumna.

"It is heartwarming to see this amazing sense of giving at all levels of the Rio Hondo College community," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "This is an event that truly captures the spirit of the holidays."

"The drive was launched in 2014 to help foster youths and children, who often have no bags when they shift homes or leave the system, forcing them to abandon their possessions," said Marisela Saenz, interim counselor/coordinator for Rio Hondo College's Guardian Scholars Program, which oversees the drive.

Saenz's team for this year's drive included intern Paola Mejia and a team of staff and students.

The event was sponsored by the Rio Hondo College Guardian Scholars Program, which partnered on the drive with the Rio Hondo College Foster/Kinship Care Education Program, Rio Hondo Associated Students, Student

Life & Leadership and the Concept 7 Foster Family Agency.

Many of the bags and toys were handed out at a Dec. 3 lunch at the Rio Café attended by about 130 guests, including 90 foster children and youths. Guests enjoyed holiday songs performed by a student violinist, guest speakers and activities.



Jocelyn Ortega, 24, a former Rio Hondo College student and former foster youth, returned as a guest speaker and surprised the children with a donation of 200 toys.

"I've spent many lonely Christmases...wishing more than anything that somebody out there was thinking about me," Ortega said. "The most important thing is that we remind the foster youth that no matter where they are or what they go through, they are remembered."

Rio Hondo College enrolls about 135 students in foster care or in transition – a number that grows annually. Since the College began providing specialized services, more than 400 foster youths or former foster youths have received assistance.



## Task Force Tackles Student Hunger with Finals Food Breaks

More than 120 Rio Hondo College administrators, faculty, staff and student volunteers served hundreds of meals during an event dubbed Finals Week Food Breaks, held Dec. 5-8 in response to a survey that showed significant levels of hunger among students.

The volunteers served 3,400 hot meals, 3,500 pieces of fruit, 110 gallons of coffee and distributed more than 200 bags of groceries to students.

The food was catered by Rio Café, Pamore Pizza, and El Camino Mexican Grill and funded by Student Equity funds. The effort was overseen by the recently formed Food Access Taskforce, which is led by Ryan Khamkongsay, Dorali Pichardo-Díaz, Elizabeth Ramirez and Cecilia Rocha.

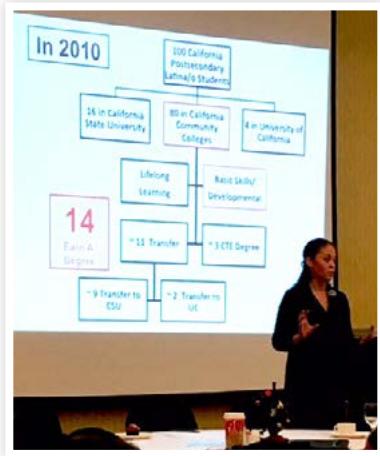
"This new event represents a tremendous outpouring of support for our students at a time when their needs have never been greater," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Their contribution is truly significant."

The level of student need was discovered this summer, when Rio Hondo College's Financial Aid and Student Equity offices implemented the 2016 Student Financial Wellness Survey. The survey found that 47 percent of 1,844 respondents stress about not having enough money for food.

The task force has worked to boost awareness of student food needs, with support from Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. JoAnna Shilling, Vice President of Student Services Henry Gee and Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences and online education Rebecca Green.

The effort includes presentations at campus meetings, including the November Board of Trustees meeting, Planning Fiscal Council, Academic Senate and Student Senate. The group also conducted research on best practices among college campuses, distributed bags of free groceries and established Snack Grab and Go stations across campus.

# College Holds Inaugural Equity Summit



Rio Hondo College hosted approximately 200 staff, faculty and students for its first-ever Student Equity Summit, held Dec. 13 at the Whittier Grand Hotel.

The event featured opening remarks from Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, a keynote address by Cal State University, Long Beach assistant professor Lindsay Perez Huber, an expert on racial inequalities in education, as well as a series of afternoon discussions.

Dreyfuss thanked Vice President of Student Services Henry Gee for being a student equity champion even before the College received student equity funding, and acknowledged associate professor of Chicana/o studies and Student Equity Faculty Coordinator Dr. Juana Mora and Student Equity Project Manager Cecilia Rocha for making the summit possible.

Huber gave an overview of the growing gap in the education pipeline, drawing from her co-authored policy brief titled: "Still Falling Through the Cracks: Revisiting the Latina/o Educational Pipeline."

Rio Hondo College professor Warren Roberts guided participants in mapping the sociodemographic characteristics of the College's surrounding communities and consultant Deanna Cherry facilitated afternoon discussions and activities on the importance of being "institutional agents" and "equity minded."

# Consortium Holds Adult Education Workshop

About 40 members of the Rio Hondo Regional Adult Education Consortium gathered Dec. 9 to discuss issues critical to the success of continuing students during a workshop at the College.

Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss welcomed consortium members and introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. Carlos Turner Cortez, president of San Diego Community College District Continuing Education.

Cortez gave a presentation on non-credit pathways for student success, the importance of continuing education and curriculum development and alignment.

## Students Help Stage 'Juan Diego' Play at Rose Hills

Rio Hondo College students helped Rose Hills Memorial Park present "Juan Diego and the Beautiful Lady," a free, bilingual outdoor theater performance on Dec. 4.

The play was performed by students in the Theatre Rehearsal and Performance class from Rio Hondo College's Performing Arts Department, along with students from St. Marianne de Paredes Elementary School in Pico Rivera.

The performance moved across several stages within Mission Hills and in the surrounding hillside. A replica image bestowed upon Rose Hills by the Archbishop of Mexico City, along with a stone from the original Basilica de Guadalupe built between 1531 and 1709, were incorporated into the production.

Rio Hondo College's Gabriel Carrasco served as the main director of the play.

After the play, a traditional procession began at Mission Hills Plaza and ended at SkyRose Chapel, where a special blessing was given.



# Rio Hondo Offers Coaching Certificate

A new certificate of achievement in sports coaching has been added to the academic options in Rio Hondo College's Division of Kinesiology, Dance and Athletics to begin in fall 2017, providing students with the theoretical and practical background for the career path.

The one-year program will prepare students for the California Interscholastic Federation's mandatory CIF test for coaches. It includes courses in nutrition, strength and conditioning, water safety, first aid or athletic training.

Graduates will be qualified for immediate employment.

## Connect with Us on Social Media



## 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 degrees, certificates, transfer, career and technical pathways, basic skills proficiency, and lifelong learning.

# Save the Date



### 8:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 9:

Rio Hondo Police Academy Class 203 Pride Run, San Fernando city streets

### 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 11:

Board of Trustees meeting, Rio Hondo College

### Monday, Jan. 16:

Campus closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

### 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 19:

Rio Hondo College Community Education Forum, El Monte Educational Center

### 8 to 11 a.m. Friday, Jan. 20:

Regional High School Counselor Breakfast, Rio Café

### 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28:

Cash for College workshop, Rio Café

### 9 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 1:

Lift Off art exhibit opens, Rio Hondo Art Gallery

### 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11:

American College Theater Festival Showcase, Wray Theater

### 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23:

Rio Hondo College Community Education Forum, La Serna High School

## College Holds Community Education Forum Series

Area residents may learn about Rio Hondo College's transfer and career pathways, honors program, financial aid, adult re-entry program and student support services during a series of monthly community education forums scheduled for Thursdays from January through May.

The events will also provide community members with a chance to meet the top-notch faculty from the College's comprehensive academic and career programs, including its highly popular programs in nursing, public safety, automotive technology programs, business administration and more.

Each forum will run from 6 to 8 p.m. Here are the dates and locations:

**Districts 1 and 3:** Thursday, Jan 19, El Monte Educational Center, 3017 Tyler Ave., El Monte

**District 5:** Thursday, Feb. 23, La Serna High School, 15301 Youngwood Drive, Whittier

**District 3:** Thursday, March 16, Whittier High School, 12417 Philadelphia St., Whittier

**District 4:** Thursday, April 20, Santa Fe High School, 10400 S. Orr and Day Road, Santa Fe Springs

**District 2:** Thursday, May 11, Rio Hondo College Educational Center at Pico Rivera, 9426 Marjorie St., Pico Rivera

**RIO HONDO COLLEGE**  
**COMMUNITY EDUCATION**  
*Forums 2017*

**JAN 19 | El Monte Educational Center (EMEC)**  
3017 Tyler Ave. • El Monte, CA 91731  
(Corner of Tyler Ave. & Concert St.)  
Trustee Norma Edith García, District Area 1 – City of El Monte;  
Trustee Mary Ann Pacheco, District Area 3 – City of South El Monte

**FEB 23 | La Serna High School**  
15301 Youngwood Dr. • Whittier, CA 90605  
(Corner of Villa Verde Dr. & La Serna Dr.)  
Trustee Madeline Shapiro, District Area 5 – City of East Whittier

**MAR 16 | Whittier High School**  
12417 Philadelphia St. • Whittier, CA 90601  
(Corner of Whittier Ave. & Gregory Ave.)  
Trustee Mary Ann Pacheco, District Area 3 – City of Whittier

**APR 20 | Santa Fe High School**  
10400 S. Orr and Day Road • Santa Fe Springs, CA. 90670  
(Corner of Orr and Day Rd. & Clarkman St.)  
Trustee Gary Mendez, District Area 4 – City of Los Nietos,  
City of Santa Fe Springs, City of Whittier & No. Norwalk

**MAY 11 | Rio Hondo College**  
Educational Center at Pico Rivera  
9426 Marjorie St. • Pico Rivera, CA 90660  
(Corner of Passons Blvd. & Mulix Ave.)  
Trustee Vicki Santana, District Area 2 – City of Pico Rivera

**Forums will be held from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

**QUESTIONS:**  
Call (562) 908-3403 or email [outreach@riohondo.edu](mailto:outreach@riohondo.edu)  
Light dinner will be served. Opportunities to win prizes!

**RIO HONDO COLLEGE**  
*Building Educational Excellence*  
*Transfer and Career Pathways*

Rio Hondo College is a proud member of the Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium (RHRREC) whose mission is to provide dynamic, effective educational and academic to meet the needs of a diverse population of adult learners in our communities. The RHRREC works together to connect over 55,000 students to education and career opportunities.

Members: El Monte, Rosemead Adult School, El Rancho Adult School, La Mirada Adult School, Inglewood Adult School, and Rio Hondo College.

For more information, please visit us at <http://www.rhradult.org/> or come join us at our Community Educational Forum listed above.