

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

COVERING FEBRUARY 2017



President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

This month's newsletter captures a sense of the many Rio Hondo College services that assist students in achieving their goals, including programs to boost access to higher education, enhance basic academic skills, pursue career technical education and secure transfers to four-year colleges.

The El Monte Pledge, for example, knocks down barriers to higher education and supports students once they arrive at Rio Hondo College.

In fact, Pledge students report elevated success rates that are prompting an expansion of their services to other students.

A pilot effort now underway provides a comprehensive evaluation of basic skills that is improving placement of students in required math and English courses. This tool may be a significant element in helping students secure degrees.

Basic skills play a big role in Rio Hondo College's mission – so much so

that we have entered a partnership to provide instruction in these topics to Cal State Los Angeles students. In February, we held a summit with nearly 200 representatives of Cal State and area K-12 school districts to smooth the transition for Rio Hondo College students between the three educational levels.

Students at Rio Hondo College also benefit from our Writers' Resource Center, which offers tutoring for students as they seek to organize and present their ideas.

Also in February, we showcased our extraordinary career technical education programs during an open house that drew 140 visitors, including students from area high schools and middle schools, and previewed our programs and services for more than 1,200 high school students during Senior Preview Days.

Taken together, the services are a great reminder that success and support go hand in hand, and that Rio Hondo College takes the extra step to ensure the academic success of all our students.

College Hosts Second Education Forum

Rio Hondo College held the second of five Community Education Forums on Feb. 23, connecting with community members at Whittier Union High School District's La Serna High School.

During the event, College leaders provided information on comprehensive academic and career skills programs, including nursing, public safety, automotive technology, business administration, kinesiology, dance and athletics. Attendees also learned about the College's stellar transfer and career pathways, honors programs, adult re-entry programs and student support services.

Guests also learned about Rio Hondo College's class offerings at La Serna High. Some 63 students attend Anthropology 102 and Humanities 110.

Spanish-language translation was also provided during the event.

The next forum will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 16 at Whittier High School.



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Board Report

Nearly 20 students are already taking upper division courses for Rio Hondo College's new Bachelor of Science degree in automotive technology, with outreach efforts just launching to drive enrollment for the innovative program, Board of Trustee members learned in February.

The major was first offered in fall 2016 as part of a historic state initiative to allow four-year degrees at 15 California community colleges. Rio Hondo College's program, which builds on a host of Associate of Arts and Sciences programs, is the only one of its kind in Southern California.

The program is being reviewed for accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), part of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. A team the ACCJC visited Rio Hondo College in January.

The board took action to accept a \$35,000, nine-month planning grant to develop a strategy for developing a zero textbook cost curriculum. The grant runs from Jan. 1 through Sept. 30.

Trustees also were updated on the status of ongoing construction projects.

Renovation of the campus bookstore and print shop, started in June 2016, was completed this month. The effort expanded the bookstore to

6,682 square feet from 4,109 square feet. The print shop doubled in size to 1,760 square feet.

Meanwhile, construction work at the Rio Hondo Educational Center at Pico Rivera is nearly complete. The project also was started in June 2016.

Also in February, Rio Hondo launched a major seismic upgrade for the hilltop campus' signature L Tower. The project is anticipated to run through December 2018.

Board members also said farewell to Robert Villaneda, who is retiring after 36 years of service. Villaneda started with Rio Hondo College as a custodian in 1980 and was promoted in 2002 to custodial lead person.



College, Partners Explore Ways to Improve High School, College Transition

Rio Hondo College leaders gathered in February with 197 representatives of more than 10 educational partners from regional K-12 school districts and California State University for a Rio Hondo College and Career Readiness Summit addressing the need to align instruction across systems to boost student success.

The Feb. 22 gathering explored a framework to understanding and defining college and career readiness, identified gaps in the alignment of instruction of secondary and post-secondary education and raised awareness for how engaging in a "community of practice" can facilitate transition from high school to college.

Presentations were provided by Rio Hondo College and California State University, Los Angeles representatives.

The event is part of Rio Hondo College's work to improve student performance under a \$2 million Basic Skills Partnership grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. It is the first in a series of summits on improving student success.

"This summit represents the essential connections among our different educational levels and the necessary partnerships needed to ensure the highest levels of student success," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Together, we can create a seamless path from K-12 to community college to four-year university."

Panel discussions included a review of Rio Hondo College's new multiple measures assessment, a pilot program that uses alternative measures to determine a student's placement in basic skills classes. The sophisticated tool allows for a more accurate placement, which in turn can significantly improve a student's chance of obtaining a degree.

Other topics covered: support strategies, bridge programs that prepare high school students for college and a pilot program through which Rio Hondo College provides basic skills instruction for Cal State L.A. students.

Participants at the summit included representatives of Bassett Unified School District, El Monte Union High School District, El Rancho Unified School District, Little Lake City School District, Whittier City School District, Whittier Union High School District, Rio Hondo College as well as Cal State L.A.



Students to Provide Free 2016 Income Tax Filing Aid through April 14

IRS-certified students from Rio Hondo College are providing free basic income tax return preparation through April 14 for individuals and families who earned \$54,000 or less in 2016 as part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.



The service is offered from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays, except March 31, at the Administration of Justice Building Room 203.

VITA volunteers will help prepare Form 1040, 1040A and 1040EZ, including standard and itemized deductions and earned income tax credit. VITA does not handle Form 1040NR, married couples filing separately, Schedules C, D, E, F and SE, rental property or farm income.

1,200 High School Seniors Attend Annual Preview Days

Rio Hondo College hosted more than 1,200 seniors from 30 area high schools for its annual Senior Preview Days on Feb. 15 and 16, offering workshops on academic and career programs, and student support services.

Students also learned about student life through the College's Club Rush, organized by Student Life and Leadership. Prospective students also were encouraged to mingle with other seniors and participate in various activities.



El Monte Pledge Program Spurs Academic Success

Students in Rio Hondo College's El Monte Pledge program are achieving success at substantially higher rates than other U.S. community college students, according to a new report.

These students have completed certificates, degrees and achieved transfer readiness with the help of a slate of services that are being expanded to the entire student body because of their proved effectiveness, according to the Rio Hondo College report released in February.

"These statistics, though they are for a small cluster of students so far, show the depth of success we can achieve when we work closely with community partners to prepare and guide students through the challenges of higher education," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said.

The El Monte Pledge grew out of a partnership among Rio Hondo College, El Monte Union High School District and UC Irvine to create a pathway to higher education success that starts even before students begin elementary school. Students who participate in the program sign the El Monte Pledge to receive the additional support.

In 2012, the El Monte Promise Foundation was formed to take over several programs started by Rio Hondo College while the College focused on providing



El Monte Pledge students with specific support services at Rio Hondo College.

Those services include a full-time dedicated El Monte Pledge counselor, priority for El Monte Pledge students who wish to attend the annual Summer Scholars Transfer Institute at UC Irvine and priority registration for Rio Hondo College classes. The college also helps ease transfer to UC Irvine and California State University, Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, the foundation helps students save for college by matching savings funds and holding financial literacy programs in elementary schools, college planning nights for high school students, community dialogues on college attendance, and arranging internship opportunities.

The new numbers demonstrate the program's impact.

Cohorts of El Monte Pledge students entering Rio Hondo College in 2011 and 2012 received degree and certificate awards at a rate of 50 percent higher than similar community college cohorts across the nation; in addition, the cohorts transferred to four-year institutions at a rate of 21 to 23 percent higher than their peers, according to the Rio Hondo College report.

Now, Rio Hondo College is applying the lessons of its El Monte Pledge support model to a comprehensive program to strengthen student support for other college students.

Debate Students Honored for Dedication, Academics

Two students on the Rio Hondo College Forensics Speech and Debate Team have been named to the Pacific Southwest Collegiate Forensics Association (PSCFA) All-Conference



Academic Team in recognition of their sterling academic records and debate participation.

Tyerra Boyd and Saul Garcia were awarded the honor on Feb. 25 at the PSCFA Spring Championship Tournament awards ceremony at Cal State Long Beach. The award honors students who participate in three tournaments before Feb. 1 and who maintain a 3.75 GPA.

“Tyerra and Saul are excellent examples of the drive to succeed that characterizes Rio Hondo College students, especially our returning, adult re-entry students,” Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said.

Boyd is a former foster child and single mother who cares for her siblings, including one with special needs, a daughter, a foster child and her grandfather – all while maintaining a 3.85 GPA.

A licensed vocational nurse, she is pursuing a degree in communications/linguistics with the goal of becoming a motivational speaker and running a nonprofit that helps low-income families, foster youth and at-risk youths and teens.

“My goal is to show people that it does not matter where you come from, but how hard you are willing to work to get to your destination,” Boyd said.

She plans to transfer to a four-year college after graduating this spring from Rio Hondo College. She has been accepted already to multiple California State University campuses.

Garcia started college at UCLA in 1993, but had to quit when family circumstances changed. He entered the business world and considered college a luxury he couldn't afford. Finally, after 23 years, he re-entered college through Rio Hondo, pursuing a degree in business and marketing.

“Even if I don't find success as defined by business standards, coming back to college has been a dream come true,” Garcia said.

Garcia isn't sure whether he will pursue his four-year degree at UCLA or another school, but does plan to use his education and business experience to launch his own company.

Community Members Explore Career Tech Options

More than 140 community members explored Rio Hondo College's career and technical education (CTE) options during an open house staged Feb. 25, including students bused in from Montebello Unified, El Rancho Unified, Paramount Unified and Whittier Union High School District.

Visitors, including parents, learned about Rio Hondo's programs in alternative energy technology and electronics; alternative fuels/fuel cell technician; architecture and engineering technology; civic design technology, drone technology; heavy equipment operation; and graphic design; as well as the College's new Bachelor of Science program in automotive technology.



This is the college's second annual CTE Open House.



Writers' Resource Center Supports Students

Students who visited Rio Hondo College's Writers' Resource Center (WRC) in fall 2016 were more likely to succeed in coursework and earn higher grade point averages than their peers, according to a new Institutional Research and Planning report.

The report shows that most of those using the WRC for coursework help are Hispanic and women, and the most popular courses for seeking aid were anthropology, computer information technology and sociology.

“It is highly gratifying to see so many of our students benefiting from the support provided by our Writers' Resource Center,” Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. “Even more rewarding is seeing how significantly the WRC can help our students on their paths to success.”

The WRC, located in Learning Resource Center LR 126A, provides one-on-one writing assistance from English faculty and half-hour conference sessions. Help with the writing process includes brainstorming; outlining; organizing; creating thesis statements; evaluating and using research; formatting, citing and creating bibliographies; revising for fluidity and coherence.

Some 328 students visited the WRC for coursework tutoring; of those seeking help more than twice, success rates topped other Rio Hondo College students.

For example, 41 students in Anthropology 125 sought help, achieving a 95.1 percent success rate and GPA of 3.1. Other students in the course achieved a 56 percent success rate and a 2.12 GPA. Similarly, 33 students in Computer Information Technology 101 who sought aid achieved a 94 percent success rate and a 3.1 GPA compared with 64.1 percent success rate and 2.54 GPA for those who did not.

Sybonay Gamino, a creative writing major who is transferring to San Francisco State University in the fall, said the WRC helped her focus her writing.

“It was a good opportunity to get feedback on ideas that I had bouncing around. I was able to build a strong thesis and come up with a good essay,” said Gamino, who has attended Rio Hondo College since fall 2015.

This spring, the WRC is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays and 9 a.m. to noon Fridays. For information, call 562-463-3122.

College Foundation Prepares for 'A Taste of Rio' Scholarship Fundraiser

The fifth annual "A Taste of Rio" restaurant and wine tasting will take place at 6 p.m. Friday, April 28 on the Rio Hondo College campus.

This popular and festive event, produced by the Rio Hondo College Foundation, brings together more than 350 guests for an evening of food, fine wine and beer, entertainment and opportunity drawings. The evening raises funds to support scholarships, programs and equipment that promote student success at Rio Hondo College.

This year's event will feature 20 restaurants and chefs offering samples of their gourmet dishes, as well as fine wines, craft beers and more. Live musical entertainment by Trio Nacimiento will add to the atmosphere. Guests will vie for more than 120 opportunity drawing prizes.

Featured restaurants include Portsmouth Oyster Bar, Fiesta Adobo, Clearman's Steak and Stein, Simply Southern Cuisine, Setá Dine-Lounge, Herach and Ara Catering, California Grill, Doubletree by Hilton Whittier, Tepeyac Restaurant and Tequila Sports Bar, Forkin' Good Café, Frantone's Pizza and Spaghetti Villa, Sodexo, and more.

Del Terra and WestbergWhite Architecture will serve as presenting sponsors



The flyer features a photograph of two women holding wine bottles. Below the photo is the text: "You're Invited" in a cursive font, followed by the Rio Hondo College Foundation logo. The main title "A Taste of Rio" is in a large, elegant script. Below that, it says "A festive evening of delicious food, wine and beer tasting and drawings!". The event details are: "Friday, April 28, 2017 • 6 p.m. Rio Hondo College". Ticket prices are listed as "\$75 VIP; \$50 at the door, \$35 pre-sale". Sponsorship and ticket information is provided at the bottom: "Sponsorship and Ticket information: (562) 908-3476 or www.riohondo.edu/foundation".

once again this year. Ongoing supporters of "A Taste of Rio" also include Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, Bank of the West, Keenan & Associates, RBC Capital Markets, Rose Hills Memorial Park and Don and Marta Hannah.

Additional sponsorships are now being accepted from \$500 to \$10,000, each with complimentary VIP admissions to the event and other benefits.

Click here www.riohondo.edu/foundation/a-taste-of-rio/ to access the website.

Admission to "A Taste of Rio" is \$75 for VIP access (including exclusive tastes of special beers and wines, and a VIP gift to take home); \$50 general admission at the door, and \$35 with advance purchase.

Opportunity drawing items and ticket sales will be available April 25-27 on campus. Winners need not be present to win.

Rio Hondo College Foundation is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is raising funds to promote student success at Rio Hondo College.

For further information, please call 562-908-3476, email foundation@riohondo.edu or visit www.riohondo.edu/foundation/a-taste-of-rio/.

3 Community Leaders Join RHC Foundation Board

The Rio Hondo College Foundation Board of Directors has approved Delia Morales, Bryan Tabizon, and Ryan Ward as its newest members.

Morales completed a distinguished career in public education as principal of the Continuation High School at Bassett Unified School District. Prior to that she taught social studies at the high school level and ESL at the adult school level. Delia is an active member of the Whittier Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission, the Assistance League of Whittier, League of Women Voters, Hispanic Outreach Task Force and the Rotary Club of Whittier. Delia earned her A.A. in social sciences from San Diego City College; B.A. in public administration from San Diego State University and M.A. in education from Claremont Graduate School.

Tabizon is director of cemetery Operations and Park superintendent at Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary. Bryan is an alumnus of Rio Hondo College, having begun his career with Rose Hills nearly 25 years ago while attending courses at Rio Hondo College. He holds a B.A. in business economics from California State University, Fullerton and an MBA from the University of La Verne. Bryan lives with his wife and four children in Whittier, coaches and referees in the youth basketball and soccer league at WACC church, and is an active board member of the Whittier Chamber of Commerce.

Ward is vice president of human resources at Penske Motor Group. He formerly held management positions at Transamerica, Artisan/LionsGate



Entertainment and Lowe's Home Improvement. Ryan was recognized with the "President's Volunteer Service Award" for his work with Habitat for Humanity. He is a former board member for Habitat for Humanity in the Pacific Northwest Region. Currently, Ryan is a member of the Dean's Advisory Council for the College of Business Administration at Cal Poly Pomona. He holds a bachelor's degree in management and human resources from Cal Poly Pomona.

The Rio Hondo College Foundation Board of Directors includes: John Peel, president; Dr. Carmella Franco, vice president/treasurer; Don Hannah, secretary; Neal Welland, past president; Teresa Dreyfuss, superintendent/president, Rio Hondo College; Rebecca Green; Terry Keller; Delia Morales; Mohamed Rassmy; Madeline Shapiro; Bryan Tabizon; and Ryan Ward.

Students Compete in Mock Trial Contest

Students in Rio Hondo College's Pathway to Law School program competed head to head against students from four-year universities at an American Mock Trial Association tournament at Pomona College in February.

This is the College's first foray into mock trial competition. Accompanied by Forensics Speech and Debate Team head coach Grant Tovmasian, students

prepared two cases – as defense and prosecution – for four separate rounds over the two-day contest.

The Pathway to Law School program guides students from Rio Hondo through four-year institutions to enrollment in one of six top California law schools. The program is offered at 28 California community colleges.



Rio Hondo College Announces Registration for 8-Week Spring Courses

Rio Hondo College is letting students know they can enroll in eight-week spring classes starting April 1.

Open classes include courses in behavioral and social sciences, communications and languages, health science, kinesiology, dance, athletics, math and sciences, and public safety.

Courses are offered online and at the College's main campus, Santa Fe Springs Training Center, South Whittier Educational Center and the Rio Hondo College Educational Center at Pico Rivera, which opened in fall 2016.

OPEN SPRING CLASSES
8-week classes start April 1st - no joke!

www.riohondo.edu

Connect with Us on Social Media



RHCRoadrunners



RioHondo_College



RioHondoCollege



Rio Hondo College YT Channel



bit.do/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 degrees, certificates, transfer, career and technical pathways, basic skills proficiency, and lifelong learning.

Save the Date



7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday, March 11:

Hard Day's Night Tribute Band, Wray Theater

7 p.m. Tuesday, March 14:

Faculty Art Show Reception, Rio Hondo College Art Gallery

6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 16:

Community Education Forum, Whittier High School, 12417 Philadelphia St., Whittier

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, March 17:

Southern California Vocal Festival, Wray Theater

March 27-April 1:

Campus closed for spring break

7:30 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, April 4:

Spring Faculty Concert, Wray Theater

6 p.m. Wednesday, April 12:

Board of Trustees meeting, Rio Hondo College

2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, April 13:

"The Vagina Monologues," Black Box Theatre

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, April 19 and Thursday April 20:

Writes of Spring, Wray Theater

6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, April 20:

Community Education Forum, Santa Fe High School, 10400 S. Orr & Day Road, Santa Fe Springs

6 p.m. Friday, April 28:

A Taste of Rio, Rio Hondo College

6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, May 11:

Community Education Forum, Rio Hondo College Educational Center at Pico Rivera, 9426 Marjorie St., Pico Rivera

Division of Arts and Cultural Programs presents:

Performing LIVE, the band Hard Day's Night provides audiences with the costumes, boots, haircuts, vintage drums, guitars, amplifiers, and British accents in note-for-note renditions of Beatles songs that forever changed the face of pop music.

FREE EVENT • Parking \$3.00

Saturday, March 11th, 7:30 PM
Rio Hondo College Wray Theatre
3600 Workman Mill Road, Whittier, California 90601
Cultural Events Hotline: (562) 908-3492 • www.riohondo.edu

HARD DAY'S NIGHT

Twist and Shout
She Loves You
Day Tripper
Penny Lane
Hey Jude
Let it Be
Imagine