

# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

DECEMBER 2017



## President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

As we open the door on 2018, I'd like to reflect on the slate of amazing accomplishments we have achieved together. In 2017, Rio Hondo College forged major advances in our ability to provide support services for our students by significantly expanding our academic offerings and strengthening our connections to the community.

Each of those efforts represents a critical element of our shared mission to serve our community by not only providing access to top-notch higher education and career training options, but to

provide the support necessary to ensure our students have the best possible chances to succeed in achieving their goals.

In December alone, that commitment has been demonstrated by our holiday community support, our collaboration with local schools in the dance department's annual showcase as well as our performance in the Rose Hills Memorial Park annual play.

In addition, our community came together to once again ensure students didn't go hungry during finals week, taking time to volunteer to serve breakfast and dinner.

Finally, our team of talented and dedicated educators has committed itself to pursuing greater equity and student guidance as part of our Guided Pathways program. We started this with a summit in December and will continue to focus on it during our campus FLEX gathering in January.

As always, I am honored to be a part of this dedicated community of educators.

## College Continues Finals Week Food Distribution Tradition

Six hundred students at Rio Hondo College's main campus, three educational centers and fire academy received free breakfasts and 700 received free dinners during fall semester finals week as the campus continued its tradition of battling food insecurity.

More than 100 staff, faculty and administrators assisted in the effort, which followed closely on the heels of the grand opening of the RioSource Room, a food pantry and resource area for students who struggle with food insecurity.

Forty-seven percent of Rio Hondo College students experience food insecurity, meaning they lack access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food, according to a Rio Hondo College survey conducted in fall 2016.

The effort, conducted in collaboration with Student Equity, was also held at Rio Hondo College's regional educational centers. Meals included breakfast burritos, slices of pizza, fruits, hot coffee, juice and water.

The collaborative teamwork of the Food Access Task Force committee members consisting of Ceci Rocha, Shaina Phillips, Marisela Saenz, Lauren Maki, and Tam Nguyen made this effort possible for the campus.



For more information about the RHC Food Access Task Force, contact Ceci Rocha at the Student Equity Office (562) 463-7066, or at [crocha@riohondo.edu](mailto:crocha@riohondo.edu).

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# Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees Names 2018 Officers

Rio Hondo College's Board of Trustees named Madeline Shapiro as president for 2018, Vicky Santana as vice president and Mary Ann Pacheco as clerk during the group's annual reorganization meeting on Dec. 14.

Trustee Pacheco will also serve as the board representative for the L.A. County School District Organization and the L.A. County Schools Trustee Association.

Shapiro was most recently re-elected in 2013 and represents Trustee Area 5, which includes East Whittier. She served as clerk in 2016 and as vice president in 2017. Santana, who was elected to her second term in 2015, represents Trustee Area 2, which includes Pico Rivera. Pacheco, elected to her first term in 2013, represents Trustee Area 3, which encompasses Whittier and South El Monte.

The board includes outgoing president Norma Edith García, whose Trustee Area 1 includes El Monte, and Gary Mendez, whose Trustee Area 4 spans Los Nietos, Santa Fe Springs, South Whittier and North Norwalk.

Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss congratulated the new officers.

"Together, we are forging a stronger future for our community," Dreyfuss said.

During the meeting, the board approved the following employment:

- ▶ Alisia Kirkwood, interim dean, student affairs;
- ▶ Cesar Oyervides-Cisneros project manager, PASS (TRIO)
- ▶ Veronica Holbrook, full-time faculty, math
- ▶ Brenda Harlow, full-time faculty, CIT Strong Workforce

The Board also acknowledged the retirements of two classified employees who each logged more than 20 years of service: Therese Safavi, a librarian technician hired in May 1997 and Manuel Castro, a custodian hired in September 1997.



# College Fire Crew Battles Wildfires

Sixteen cadets from the Rio Hondo College Wildfire Academy helped to battle the Creek Fire and 24 former graduates joined efforts to quell the massive Thomas Fire burning near Santa Barbara.

The firefighters were activated on Dec. 18. Crew 77, known as the Roadrunners, was previously activated on Dec. 5 to work the Creek Fire near Sylmar.

The 24 firefighters assigned to the Thomas Fire include Rio Hondo College Wildland Fire Academy graduates who worked the fire season in Oregon, California and Washington, and a group of firefighters who graduated from the Rio Hondo College Fire Academy in November.

"We are sending as many as we can due to the devastating nature of this fire," said Crew 77 Chief Tracy E. Rickman, who is the College's EMT, wildland, fire and homeland security coordinator. "They all wanted to go and help out."

The crew assists with all aspects of fire monitoring, suppression and control. In summer, the crew was activated to support U.S. Forest Service crews. In 2016, the crew was called up three times to aid the Forest Service.

Some crew members left other jobs to join the effort.

Rio Hondo College's Wildland Fire Academy is highly regarded within the industry, with 100 percent of graduates finding positions with wildland fire agencies.

"Our fire academy crews and graduates are true community servants, and we could not be prouder of them," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Their dedication to their craft and to the State of California is a testimonial to the lessons of compassion and commitment they learn at the Rio Hondo College Fire Academy."



## Sophomore Scores State Wrestling Championship

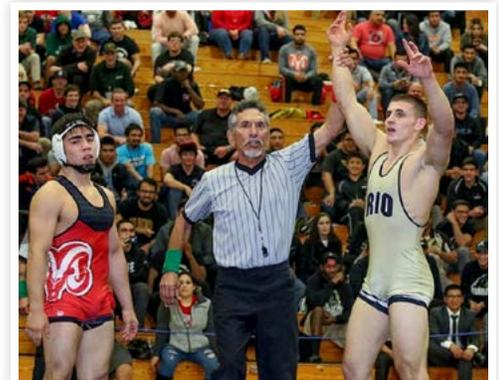
Sophomore James Schmidt capped a 3-0 weekend on Dec. 9 and 10 with a 13-4 major decision over Fresno City College's Conrad Lopez to bring home to Rio Hondo the 157-pound CCCAA State Championship.

After defeating Northern California champion Josh McMillon of Fresno in the semifinals, Schmidt capped off his season with a convincing win over Lopez, who defeated Southern California champion Wyatt Gerl (Cerritos) in the other semifinal.

In the final, it was a close 2-2 match in the second period, when Schmidt recorded a pair of takedowns to carry a 6-3 lead into the third period. After an escape point to start the third period, Schmidt also received a point when Lopez was penalized for stalling. Another takedown with 1:01 left sealed the win.

Joining Schmidt at the State Championships was Khalil Howard at 149 pounds. He finished in seventh place after pinning Carlos Vasquez of San Joaquin Delta to close out his weekend.

The duo totaled 33.5 points for Rio Hondo to finish in 11th place in the final team standings.



# Campus Community Pursues Guided Pathway Plan

Approximately 160 Rio Hondo College campus community members gathered on Dec. 12 to engage in an important dialogue focused around Guided Pathways and Student Equity.

The summit, held at the Swiss Park Banquet Center, provided a space for 20 students, 60 faculty members, 40 classified staff and 40 administrators to collaborate and work together. Two members of the Board of Trustees also attended.

The day included cross-representational team-building with activities led by the Guided Pathways Planning team, which included an interactive cell phone game, an appreciative inquiry exercise, a data review presentation, a student panel with Q&A and a collective-perspective activity.

The goal of the summit was to provide an overview of the four Guided Pathways pillars:

1. Create clear curricular pathways to employment and further education,
2. Help students enter their pathways,
3. Help students stay on their paths, and
4. Ensure student learning with intentional outcomes.

The College will continue to work on clarifying and integrating college-wide approaches and systems that provide structured guidance for students as they move through the college experience.

The hope is that the summit provided the first commitment to increasing trust and a greater appreciation for the innovative and intentional work already begun at Rio Hondo College to ensure student success.

The College will continue its dialogue and outlining of specific roles at the Guided Pathways-themed FLEX Day on Friday, Jan. 26



# Dance Collective Performs Stunning 'Nutcracker'

The Rio Hondo Dance Collective presented its seventh annual holiday program, pleasing a packed house with its a contemporary version of "The Nutcracker" featuring 26 College dancers and more than 80 students from area schools and the Rio Hondo College Child Development Center.

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 was the Collective's third year of engaging area students in the holiday show. Participating schools in the Dec. 10 show included Whittier High

School, Edgewood School, Montebello High School, Dean Shively Middle School and Hadley School.

The production was streamlined to one hour to create a more enjoyable experience for parents with young children. Proceeds benefit the Collective and its participation in the 2017 American College Dance Association, a national program of workshops and performances for U.S. colleges and universities.

The event featured food and gifts for purchase, including homemade tamales. Audience members took photos with dancers following the performance.



# College, Community Donate Bags to Foster Youth



Rio Hondo College students, faculty and staff donated more than 230 backpacks and suitcases for foster children and youths as part of the College's fourth annual Case of Hope Drive.

The donations exceeded the group's goal of 200, and came with an added plus – more than 80 gifts donated by SPIRITT Family Services.

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, Concept 7 Foster Family Agency and SPIRITT Family Services.

Many of the bags and toys were handed out at a Dec. 2 lunch at the Rio Café attended by about 120 guests, including 60 foster children and youths.

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

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.

Guests enjoyed holiday activities and a singalong with Princess Anna from Frozen which also included a surprise visit from Santa Claus.

The Guardian Scholars program on Dec. 8 also hosted its first annual Holiday Celebration, which included lunch, games and gifts. Foster Care Counts, a nonprofit through the Pritzker Foster Care Initiative, donated 250 gifts, which were distributed to students during the Holiday Celebration.



More than 40 students attended and received several gifts. Guardian Scholar students who were unable to attend may continue to pick up gifts in Guardian Scholars Office.



## Automotive News Highlights Auto Tech Partnership

Rio Hondo College's auto tech training program was highlighted in December in an article in the Automotive News.

The article cited Rio Hondo College's partnership with Honda's Professional Automotive Career Training program, or PACT. Students at Rio Hondo who take part in the program are assigned to Honda dealerships for training, according to the article.

**RIO IN THE NEWS!** Click here to read more about Rio Hondo's Auto Tech Training program in *Automotive News*.

# College Brings the Holidays to Students' Families

Rio Hondo College's CARE/EOP&S provided gifts to the 100 children of more than 100 CARE students for the holidays during the annual CARE Holiday Event. In addition, the group worked with Rio Hondo College's Facilities Department, which adopted the Rivas family for the holidays.



The department ended up donating more than \$750 in assistance and gifts to the family, far more than its original goal of \$200.

Facilities representatives said they were inspired by the dedication of the CARE/EOP&S staff and were rewarded by the smiles on the faces of the children who received gifts.



# Pathway to Law School Students Hail Holidays with Mentors

On Dec. 21, approximately 10 Pathway to Law School students attended the Ferias Legales Holiday Party in Downey, an enriching networking opportunity to interact with attorneys, elected officials and community leaders

Students included those in the Rio Hondo College legal mentorship program and mock trial team. Six participating attorney mentors also attended.

Pathway to Law School Students Chris Galeana, Arlette Raygoza and Vanessa Marquez were all recognized at the event with awards honoring their hard work as interns for Ferias Legales during the fall semester. Ferias Legales President Ricardo Perez, Esq., and Director Maria Torres presented the "Inspiring Diversity Award" to the Pathway to Law School program for its "relentless work in increasing diversity in the legal field and becoming a model program for other colleges to follow."

Those who attended the event representing Rio Hondo College, in addition to the students, were: Vice President of Student Services Henry Gee, Director of Marketing and Communications Ruthie Retana, Grant Manager of Student Equity Ceci Rocha and the Pathway to Law School program team members Angelica Martinez, Vanessa Figueroa and Robin Acosta.



# 700 Attend Rose Hills Seasonal Play

About 700 people attended "Juan and Beautiful Lady," a bilingual outdoor play performed by Rio Hondo College students at Rose Hills Memorial Park and Mortuary commemorating Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 3

The show included students from St. Marianne de Paredes Elementary School in Pico Rivera.

After the performance, Mariachi Trompetas de Mexico and dancers from Pacifico Dance Co. led a procession following the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the SkyRose Chapel, where a special blessing took place. Roses were distributed to all guests who participated in the procession.

In addition, artist Eduardo Serrato Moreno created a sand tapestry with the image of Our Lady. There was a marketplace in which food and Our Lady of Guadalupe items were available for purchase and rosaries were given to guests.



# Professor Frala Hosts Workshop

Community members attended a Zero-Emission Technology Workshop on Jan. 12 featuring Rio Hondo College automotive technology professor John Frala, who has pioneered alternative fuel repair training.

The event, which was free to attend, was hosted by SunLine Transit Agency in Palm Springs. Frala discussed how to grow and maintain a zero-emission fleet.



## 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



### 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24:

Board of Trustees special meeting, Rio Hondo College

### 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 2, 9, 23, March 9, 16, 23 and April 12:

Free tax preparation help, Rio Hondo

Educational Center at Pico Rivera

### 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 2, March 2 and April 6:

Free tax preparation help, Rio Hondo College

### 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 3:

Cash 4 College workshop, Rio Café

### 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Feb. 3 to Thursday, April 5:

William Lane: Then and Now, Rio Hondo Art Gallery

# College Provides Free Tax Preparation

IRS-certified students from Rio Hondo College will provide free basic income tax return preparation for individuals and families who earned \$54,000 or less in 2017 as part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

The program will run Feb. 2 through April 13 at two locations – the Rio Hondo College main campus Administration of Justice Building, 3600 Workman Mill Road, Whittier, and the Rio Hondo Educational Center at Pico Rivera, 9426 Marjorie St., Pico Rivera.

The program will cycle between the two locations:

- ▶ Rio Hondo College main campus: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 9, 23, March 9, 16, 23 and April 12
- ▶ Rio Hondo Educational Center at Pico Rivera: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Feb. 2, March 2 and April 6.

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.

Applicants for aid will need:

- ▶ Photo identification for all those on the return
- ▶ Social Security cards
- ▶ Birth dates for filers and all dependents
- ▶ Wage and earnings forms (W-2, W-2, 1099-R)
- ▶ Interest and dividend statements (Form 1099s)
- ▶ Copy of 2015 federal and state returns, if available
- ▶ Blank check with bank routing and account numbers for direct deposit
- ▶ Other data: interest statements, day care records, day care tax ID number

**INFORMATION:** Call (562) 463-7359 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.