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General Information About Río Hondo College

History

The Río Hondo Community College District was established by election in October 1960, but first classes were not held until 1963-1964. Since the district's boundaries at that time were identical to those of the Whittier Union High School District, administration of the district was by the high school district Board of Trustees. Creation of the El Rancho Unified School District in 1962 required that Río Hondo College establish its own Board of Trustees, and an election for that purpose was held in April 1962.

The new Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Phil Putnam as the founding Superintendent-President in February 1963. In May 1963, the Board chose Río Hondo as the name for the college. The name, long associated with the area surrounding the Río Hondo River, means "deep river."

College classes were offered for the first time in the late afternoons and evenings in September 1963 at Sierra and El Rancho High Schools. Following selection of the present campus site, a \$12 million bond issue to build the college was approved by 80.1 percent of the district voters in October 1963. During 1964 and 1965, Río Hondo College conducted classes for a limited enrollment at the former Little Lake School in Santa Fe Springs.

The present campus opened in the fall of 1966 with an enrollment of 3,363 day and 2,682 evening students. Measure A, a \$245 million bond passed by voters in 2004, now provides new buildings and facilities upgrades campus-wide as well as new off-site educational centers in South Whittier and El Monte. Today, Río Hondo enrolls approximately 20,000 students per semester.

Río Hondo College is an open-access California community college that contains nine cities, in whole or part, four distinct unincorporated communities, and a portion of one other unincorporated community of Los Angeles County within our district boundaries. The cities include El Monte, South El Monte, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, and Whittier. The District also encompasses portions of Norwalk, Downey, La Mirada, and the City of Industry. The unincorporated communities within our District include Los Nietos, East Whittier, South Whittier, West Whittier, and a portion of Avocado Heights.

School districts within the college boundaries are the Whittier Union High School District, El Rancho Unified School District, and the El Monte Union High School District. Students come to Río Hondo seeking a variety of educational experiences. Río Hondo's educational program includes courses for transfer to four-year colleges and universities, general education courses for greater understanding of individual and community life, vocational training in certain areas, and courses for improving academic performance necessary for studying at a higher level.



The Río Hondo College Foundation was established in 1992. The Foundation assists the college in meeting the needs of its students. The Foundation's focus is to secure financial and community resources to support Río Hondo College students and student scholarships. The Foundation also supports innovative educational projects, teaching, and training support.

Vision

Río Hondo College strives to be an exemplary California community college, meeting the learning needs of its changing and growing population and developing a state-of-the-art campus to serve future generations.

Mission

Río Hondo College is an educational and community partner committed to advancing social justice and equity as an antiracist institution that collectively invests in all students' academic and career pathways that lead to attainment of degree, certificate, transfer, and lifelong-learning goals.

Values Statement

As a teaching/learning community, we come together and strive to meet the needs, aspirations, and goals of our changing student population and communities. Since what we value forms the core of who and what we are, the college community--trustees, faculty and staff--recognizes the importance of openly and candidly expressing the college's values. Río Hondo College values the following:

1. Quality teaching and learning

The college is dedicated to excellence in instruction and student services to develop the intellectual and personal competence of each student. Río Hondo College is committed to preparing students to adapt to the demands of a multicultural society.