



August 12, 2019

Dear Faculty Colleagues at Rio Hondo College,

I am an enthusiastic supporter of the Rio Hondo College Foundation because I have been able to witness firsthand the benefits to students through grants obtained by the Foundation and grants administered through the Foundation. In just the Biology Department alone, we have been able to acquire new microscopes and spectrophotometers for the students to use in lab. Funds from another grant have been used to purchase native plants that students planted in our native plant garden. These funds have also been used in keeping our greenhouse operational.

Another area of major benefit to our students has been through scholarships administered through the Foundation. Last year, over \$170,000 in scholarships was awarded to our students. Some of the scholarships have been in the form of direct financial aid, while others have been in the form of book vouchers. As you are well aware, many of our students have severe financial challenges. These scholarships have provided the students with the means to obtain course materials, and in some cases, help with living expenses as well. Additionally, the scholarships show the students that there are others out there who care about them and are supportive of their endeavors. This provides the students with added confidence and motivation in completing their educational objectives. Take a look at the Foundation website to see the variety of scholarships available, and encourage your students to do the same (if possible, take a few minutes of class time to show them). Maybe even provide a link to the scholarship web page in your syllabus.

Also take a look at the RHC Foundation website to see some of our students that have had their lives changed for the better as a result of receiving scholarships. Consider providing or contributing to scholarships (individually or as a department or division). Even if you are able to start with just a small monthly contribution, they do add up, and demonstrate to potential donors that educators at the college are willing to provide financial support to their students.

In addition to hosting the scholarship process, the Foundation also provides students assistance in their scholarship applications. Each semester, a variety of workshops are offered to make students aware of the types of scholarships available, and how to get through the application process. Foundation representatives are also available to come to your classes to provide presentations on the scholarships available and to encourage students to apply. By having a Foundation representative come to your class, the students can put a "face" to the process and look forward to having that same caring person assist them at one of the many application workshops. (Thank you to those of you that have served as readers for the scholarship process.)

This year the Foundation will be expanding its Innovation/Mini Grant program. These awards will go directly to departments/divisions to support activities benefiting our students. See the Foundation web site for information about the Innovation/Mini Grant program.

Thank you to everyone that has participated in the very successful Taste of Rio events, including the wonderful volunteers, attendees, and donors. It is so encouraging to see the growing support on campus for our students. If you are not yet a financial supporter of the Foundation, I ask that you will seriously consider becoming one. For those already making financial contributions, I hope that you will continue to do so in ongoing support of our students.

Sincerely,

**Terry Keller**

Professor of Biology

Faculty Representative on the Rio Hondo College Foundation Board of Directors