

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

COVERING JUNE 2016



President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

Even after the last tassel has been flipped, the final photo snapped and our successful graduates have commenced the next chapter in their lives, our campus continues to hum with activity.

This June, we began developing tools to help struggling students improve their chances for college success, an effort funded by a new \$2 million grant. We also welcomed about 30 students from the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier for a summer camp pilot program.

The camp is just one of several community-focused summer efforts designed to expose middle school students to college life and welcome freshmen preparing to arrive this fall.

For example, our Summer Bridge program introduces students to the College and gives them a leg up on math studies. Our First Year Family

Night helps families of first-year college students engage in the educational journey.

Of course, summer also presents its share of intense academics, with students arriving throughout June for our diverse summer sessions.

Finally, we are fully engaged this summer in renovating our Pico Rivera Educational Center, which is due to open to the community in the fall. This center will offer an exciting new venue for classes at a convenient location for Pico Rivera residents.

We are also remodeling and expanding our Bookstore and Print Shop, creating a facility with a much greater capacity to serve students.

Each of these efforts represents our strong commitment to create an environment that supports our students as they begin their higher education journeys, to give them every possible chance of success and to help them feel welcomed.

College Awarded \$2 Million to Help Students Succeed

Rio Hondo College has been awarded a total of \$2 million over two years to work with area high schools, adult schools and California State University, Los Angeles to improve the chances of college success for students with challenges in English and math.



The grant is one of five totaling \$10 million awarded by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office for basic skills pilot programs across the state.

"Our plan will help students whose struggles with college-level English and math requirements can be overwhelming," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Many of these are first-time college students who may give up on their college dreams when confronted by these rigorous courses."

At Cal State L.A., more than 66.1 percent of incoming freshmen test below college level in English or math. This is similar to remedial challenges at Rio Hondo College, which also enrolls a large population of first-generation college students who may lack cultural, familial or financial support. Students who do not complete remedial classes in a year tend to drop out.

Rio Hondo College will target up to 2,500 Cal State L.A. students for remedial instruction, tutoring and other support each year. Students will take summer courses after high school to build skills before freshman year,

receive aid in spring of their freshman year to complete remedial programs and enroll in summer classes after freshman year if they need additional help.

Rio Hondo College will deliver services by expanding three programs that have proved successful in helping students with remedial course challenges: Summer Bridge, Springboard and Gateway Tutoring.

The two-week Summer Bridge program, which serves 330 students annually, includes an academic workshop that boosts student math preparation. Students can test into more advanced courses at the program's conclusion. The program also provides students with additional tools for managing the transition to college.

Rio Hondo College's Springboard is a two-week math booster program. Two-thirds of the students involved in pilot programs offered during winter intersession have tested at one to two math courses higher than they started.

Gateway Tutoring provides supplemental instruction through peer tutors who assist with in-class activities and hold group-tutoring sessions outside of class. The program serves about 730 students annually.

Rio Hondo College also will work with area high schools and adult schools to ensure that their curriculum in English and math aligns effectively with Rio Hondo and Cal State L.A. This will include a review of student academic records.

Board Report.....	2	Wildland Fire Academy Crew Supports U.S. Forest Service.....	4	Whittier Sorooptimists Encourage Rio Hondo College CARE Students.....	5
College to Serve as Cal-SOAP Fiscal Agent in 2016-17.....	2	Students Snag Competitive Summer Research Program Selections	4	Bookstore, Pico Rivera Projects Under Way	5
College Holds Pilot Summer Camp for Boys & Girls Club Members	3	Rio Hondo College Featured on Reality TV Show	5		
Observatory Holds Summer Star Viewing Nights.....	4	Save the Date	5		

IN THIS ISSUE

Board Report



Rio Hondo College's Board of Trustees welcomed a new student trustee, honored community members and retiring staff, and approved a 2016-17 budget during its June meeting.

The Board's newest student trustee is Brandon Pablo Leon, who took the oath of office at the start of the meeting. Leon will serve a one-year term. Leon was elected by students during the spring Associated Students of Rio Hondo College election.

The Board recognized Gail Modyman, who is retiring after 18 years of full- and part-time service to the College, and Renee Tai, who is retiring after 17 years of full-time service. Modyman was an associate professor of nursing. Tai was an instructional division secretary.

The Board also awarded a distinguished service award to Les Howard, an emeritus professor of sociology at Whittier College. Howard complimented the Board on the quality of the College's graduates.

"This is especially meaningful to me because many years ago, my mother got a similar recognition from Rio Hondo College for civic engagement in El Monte, where I grew up," Howard said. "For many, many years, I have

been privileged to work with people who started their academic work at Rio Hondo College."

Other community members honored included four members of the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier who won the club's Youth of the Year contest. For the program, the students gave a biographical speech to the judges.

The local winners competed for the first time this year at the county level. The students were Jaydhel Herrera, Chris Gonzalez, Emanuel Cano and Mark Perez, who was named Los Angeles County Youth of the Year. Of the four, Perez is headed to Cal State Humboldt and Herrera has enlisted in the Navy.

"Our kids have gone through almost a nine-month process to be recognized as Youth of the Year at the club level for their outstanding achievements and contributions to the community. Not only do they excel academically, but they also represent the best of the best of our organization as well as in our community. We're very proud of our kids," Boys & Girls Club Executive Director Oscar Hernandez said.

The board also recognized student Rosaysela Curiel, who received a scholarship from the South El Monte chapter of Soroptimist International. Curiel is part of Rio Hondo College's Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) program, which serves students who head single-parent households.

Five other CARE members received scholarships through Soroptimist International of Whittier.

Board members also recognized CARE Specialist Laura Verdugo for encouraging the students to apply for the scholarships and mentoring them.



College to Serve as Cal-SOAP Fiscal Agent in 2016-17

Rio Hondo College has been chosen as the 2016-17 fiscal agent for the Los Angeles California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) Consortium, which helps provide resources so first-generation, low-income, underrepresented and underserved students can pursue higher education dreams.

L.A. Cal-SOAP serves students from Los Angeles Unified, Bassett Unified, Montebello Unified, Alhambra Unified, Paramount Unified, El Monte Union High and Garvey school districts.

Rio Hondo College will oversee approximately \$692,500 in annual funding.

College Holds Pilot Summer Camp for Boys & Girls Club Members

Thirty students from the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier attended a four-day pilot summer camp program at Rio Hondo College in June, where they took hip-hop dance lessons, learned about statistics and math through gaming, learned soccer tricks on the newly renovated soccer field and toured the police academy gun range.

This program was designed to introduce middle school students to college to instill the value that attending college is attainable, valuable and a positive experience.

Students were introduced to Rio Hondo's sciences and health programs, public safety careers, theater and digital media. They also had time for fun with chemistry, a brain activity workshop, basketball skills clinic and free swim at the campus pool.

College officials are exploring grant options that would allow the program to expand next summer.



Observatory Holds Summer Star Viewing Nights

Rio Hondo College's Gordon D. Crowell Astrophysical Observatory will hold free, public viewing nights this summer at 8 p.m. Fridays, July 22, Aug. 5 and Aug. 12.

The observatory is home to one of the largest telescopes available to the public throughout Southern California. Guests should arrive 15 to 20 minutes early. Park in Lot C in front of the Child Development Center. The walk to the observatory is about half a mile uphill. Flashlights are not required. Viewing is contingent on clear weather. For information, call 562-692-0921, ext. 3742.



Students Snag Competitive Summer Research Program Selections

Eight students from Rio Hondo College's Math and Science Division have been chosen for highly competitive summer research programs and related activities.

- ▶ **James Nyugen**, Jet Propulsion Lab Undergraduate Scholar, chosen by Rio Hondo College's Math and Science Division faculty. The program includes activities that accustom students to the research environment, demystify NASA science and engineering careers and help them gain an understanding of the internship process.
- ▶ **Lucia Mercado**, Center for the Environmental Implications of Nanotechnology Research Experience for Undergraduates, Duke University.
- ▶ **Alejandro Ivan Ramirez**, Summer Undergraduate Research Program for Diversity in Chemistry, Princeton University.
- ▶ **Nicholas Lara**, Center for Dark Energy Biosphere Investigations Global Environmental Microbiology Course, UCLA.
- ▶ **Jamie Jimenez**, National Institute of Health Bridges to the Baccalaureate program, UC Irvine.
- ▶ **Jose Rodriguez**, Hispanic Serving Institutions STEM Summer Bridge to the Beach program, Cal State University, Long Beach.
- ▶ **Juan Flores**, Undergraduate Student Initiative for Biomedical Research, UC Irvine.
- ▶ **Faustino Gonzalez-Barrales**, UCLA Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental Enrichment Program, a six-week non-residential program for pre-medical and pre-dental students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Wildland Fire Academy Crew Supports U.S. Forest Service

Rio Hondo College Fire Crew 77 was activated on June 20 to support U.S. Forest Service hotshot crews fighting fires across the state, including the Fish and Reservoir fires near Duarte and Azusa.

The Roadrunners crew is assigned to the Angeles National Forest on standby should new fires break out. The crew includes 15 men and one woman who attend Rio Hondo College's Wildland Fire Academy, including Crew Leader Carlos Flores. They are accompanied by four U.S. Forest Service personnel. The crew typically is called up for 14 to 21 days.

The crew was called up twice in summer 2015 to help the U.S. Forest Service combat the Rough Fire outside of Fresno and the Valley Fire near San Francisco.

Rio Hondo College's Wildland Fire Academy is highly regarded, with 100 percent of graduates finding posts with wildland fire agencies. The program is overseen by Rio Hondo College Wildland and Fire Coordinator Tracy Rickman, who also serves as chief of Crew 77.



Rio Hondo College Featured on Reality TV Show

Rio Hondo College's Fire Academy was featured in Episode No. 2 of the 2016 season of "The Bachelorette." The episode included scenes from the Fire Academy in Santa Fe Springs. Wildland and Fire Coordinator Tracy Rickman was featured as the trainer and spokesman.

RIO IN THE NEWS! Click here to watch Rio Hondo College on "The Bachelorette."

Connect with Us on Social Media



RHCRoadrunners



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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, July 13:

Board of Trustees Meeting, Rio Hondo College

9 a.m. to noon July 21, 28, Aug. 3:

Freshman Welcome Days, Rio Hondo College Quad

Through Sunday, July 31:

Student Art Show, Rio Hondo Art Gallery

6 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 10:

Board of Trustees Meeting, Rio Hondo College

Tuesday, Aug. 16 to Friday, Aug. 19:

Open Registration for Fall Semester 2016

5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 17:

First-Year Family Night

Saturday, Aug. 20:

Fall Semester 2016 begins

Whittier Soroptimists Encourage Rio Hondo College CARE Students

More than 30 CARE students, Soroptimist International members from Whittier and South El Monte, and Rio Hondo College staff members gathered June 1 for a Meet and Greet event to encourage students to seek scholarships from the community organizations.

The event, the first of its kind, followed selection this spring of five Rio Hondo College students in the Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) program for Live Your Dream scholarships by Soroptimist International of Whittier and of one CARE student by the South El Monte chapter.

Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss thanked Whittier Soroptimist Lorraine Quiros – a former CARE student, for introducing Rio Hondo College to the group's scholarship program two years ago.

Dreyfuss recognized Angela Rhodes, who has helped mentor and support CARE students over the last 13 years, and the CARE team: Director Heba Griffiths, CARE Specialist Laura Verdugo and counselors and staff with the Extended Opportunity Program and Services.

Dreyfuss also introduced special guest Annette Atwood, a judge for the Whittier Soroptimist scholarship program. Atwood has pledged to donate six laptops to the CARE program this year.



Bookstore, Pico Rivera Projects Under Way

Rio Hondo College launched construction of two new projects in June – renovation of buildings to house its Pico Rivera Educational Center and expansion of the Bookstore and Print Shop.

The College is renovating seven buildings spanning 6,720 square feet to create a collegiate identity and integrate 21st century learning tools into six classrooms and an office. The center will include a computer lab, a student study room, a teacher/staff lounge, counseling and assessment offices, a shaded quad, a new restroom building and 1.3 acres of parking. It will accommodate about 280 students.

The Bookstore is being expanded from 4,109 square feet to 6,682 square feet, while the print shop will grow from 937 square feet to 1,760 square feet.

Both projects are expected to be completed by the start of fall semester on Aug. 20.