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President's Message



Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr.

We are making progress on several fronts! I would like to express appreciation to those working as the Accreditation Response Team, with special commendation to Katie O'Brien and JoAnna Downey for their leadership as co-chairs. Please check the Accreditation Update postings on our website for the latest information, including the timeline grids for each of the Recommendations and team rosters. You will also see the text of the OpEd article (see below) we prepared for the *Whittier Daily News* as a way to help inform readers about the implications of our 'warning' status and to reassure our community that the College's Accreditation is not in jeopardy.

Another area where we have reached important milestones is the institutional planning process. This critical activity is also integral to meeting Accreditation recommendations. Thanks to the commitment of our campus community, program, unit, and area plans were created in a very short time frame. Thanks also to Howard Kummerman, his research and planning team, and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee for their leadership in conducting the plan-

ning process. Next steps include prioritizing resource request for the budget and the creation of Institutional Goals and Objectives for 2009-2010.

We are putting the finishing touches on the *Organizational Structure and Governance* manual. Thanks to all stakeholder groups for their assistance in this review process. The document will be presented as an information item at the April Governing Board Meeting.

Kudos to our Computer Information networking students, working under the tutelage of Shin Liu. Our Imagine Cup teams have been so successful in cyber competition that they are representing the entire West Coast at the upcoming national finals event in Boston, having beaten out teams from CalTech, UCLA, USC and others. If they are successful in Boston in May, where they will go up against teams from MIT and other powerhouses in this Microsoft-sponsored competition, they will be invited to the world finals in Cairo, Egypt! Go Road Runners!

As we reach our half-way mark in the semester, I wish to thank you all for your continuing commitment and diligence on behalf of our students. Please enjoy a restful and safe Spring Break. When we return April 6, we will be headed for Commencement and a flurry of end-of-year celebrations.



For the full text of the opinion piece by Dr. Martinez that ran in the *Whittier Daily News* please see the last page.

Board Meeting Highlights

The Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees held its regular monthly meeting March 11 on the College campus.

A set of commendations was awarded to faculty achieving Tenure, a process for which full-time Faculty are eligible after three consecutive contract years of employment with the College. They are recommended by their department and colleagues for exemplary work in their field as well as participation in committees and other activities to enhance the learning environment for students. Academic Senate President, Beverly Reilly, assisted with the presentation of the commendations. The following faculty members were awarded tenure:

Frank Accardo	Arts & Culture
Eugene Blackmun	Business
Ada Brown	Arts & Culture
Alfred Forrest	Student Health Services
Edward Gonzalez	Career Technical Education
Rebecca Green	Social Science
Theodore Preston	Social Science
Kendra Seiler	Health Science
Jodi Senk	Physical Education



Faculty members approved for a change in academic rank were recognized by the Board of Trustees. The progression of academic rank is very important in a faculty member's career. Rank signifies not only experience, but expertise and all applications are reviewed by the Academic Rank Committee of the Academic Senate. Beverly Reilly also participated in the presentation. The new ranks are as follows:

Robert Bethel	Biology, Professor
Marie Eckstrom	Communications and Languages, Professor
John Frala	Career and Technical Education, Professor
Gary Halvorson	Career and Technical Education, Professor
Lily Isaac	Communications and Languages, Professor
Terry Keller	Biology, Professor
Shin Liu	Business, Professor
Kathy Pudelko	Physical Education, Professor

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Assemblymember Charles Calderon Visits College, Meets with Students and Educators

Assemblymember Charles Calderon visited the Rio Hondo College campus to meet with educational leaders from the 58th Assembly District about K-12 Education and the most recent California State Budget. Calderon chairs the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee and sits on the Governmental Organization, Insurance and Water, Parks and Wildlife Committees.



After his meeting, the Assemblyman had an opportunity to meet with some Rio Hondo College students to discuss both Cal Grants and the costs of textbooks. Participants were Ashley Perez, ASB Senator; Long Nguyen, ASB Senator; Pascale Romero, ASB Senator; Elijah Muniz, ASB Senator; Thomas Guzman, ICC Representative; Russell Castaneda-Calleros, Director of Government and Community Relations; Paul Parnell, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Assemblyman Calderon. Each of the students will also be representing Rio Hondo College in an upcoming trip to Washington D.C. to discuss with lawmakers the issues that are affecting community college students.

The meeting was very productive. The Assemblyman examined a chart that showed that the average Rio Hondo College student pays twice as much for a text book than they pay to register for a course. A three unit class at \$20 a unit is \$60; the text for the same class costs roughly \$140. This can make taking courses prohibitively expensive for students. Although faculty members have put copies of text books on reserve in the library and many are utilizing the same editions year after year, the cost of textbooks remains a problem. All of the students thanked Calderon for his time, and for the work he contributed to making the State Budget favorable toward community colleges.



Latina Leadership Network Celebrates Women's History

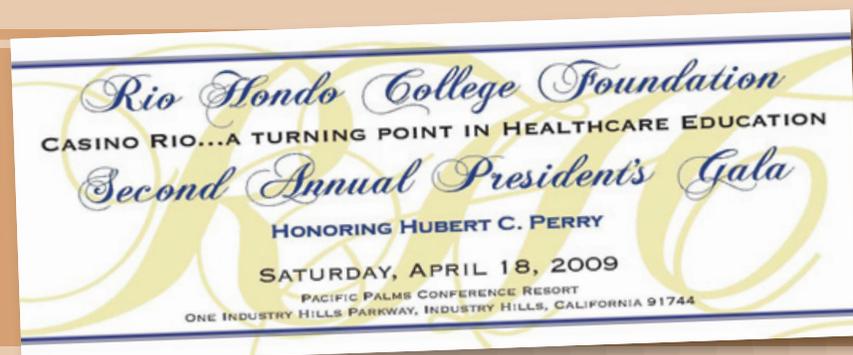
The Latina Leadership Network at Rio Hondo College and the Rio Hondo College Wellness Committees sponsored the Women's History Month Health Workshop. The event was an informative luncheon with speaker Beth Ann Silvey, a social worker from Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital in Whittier, who shared information about the signs and symptoms of stress in the workplace.

The event was well attended and students from Everest College were on hand to give free chair massages. This event is part of the over-all mission for the Latina Leadership Network to raise funds for scholarships and leadership training to ensure educational excellence and student access as well as staff development for Latinas work in and/or attend California Community Colleges. The Rio Hondo College chapter has been active for 18 years. The organization awards an average of four scholarships a year to well-deserving students. In February, the chapter hosted a Mercado (marketplace) outside the Wray Theater where the famous Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles played to the delight of a very enthusiastic audience. There were cultural items for sale and refreshments.

The largest fundraiser is held in May in honor of Mother's Day. The ninth annual event will be a luncheon planned Saturday, May 9 at Pico Park at 2 p.m. There will be live entertainment and a silent auction. Tickets go on sale the second week in April. It is an event that has grown every year and one in which profits not only the students, but the staff and their families as well.



Members of the College chapter include, Alice Tirre, Belen Torres-Gil, Deborah Duran-Wade, Diana Gutierrez, Gloria Reyes, Janice Lopez, Liz Chavez, Margie Munoz, Martha Carreon, Rebecca Rayas, Sandy Sandello, Sylvia Viramontes, and Teresa Martinez. These women coordinate events throughout the year to raise money for scholarships.



BOARD MEETING

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Jeanette Duarte	Communications and Languages, Associate Professor
Kathleen Hannah	Health Science, Associate Professor
Gil Puga	Communications and Languages, Associate Professor
Eugene Blackmun	Business, Assistant Professor
Rebecca Green	Social Sciences, Assistant Professor
Cynthia Lewis	Arts & Culture, Assistant Professor
Jodi Senk	Physical Education, Assistant Professor
Shelly Spencer	Biology, Assistant Professor



The awards were followed by a brief reception.

Dr. Gisela Spieler gave a presentation about the MESA program. MESA is a program design to support students majoring in math, engineering and science. The program offers students an educational plan allowing them to progress through the requirements for transfer in a timely fashion. The program is especially helpful because these majors must take courses sequentially and need to have help navigating the offerings and the requirements for transfer.

MESA offers a student study center, academic excellence workshops, orientation courses, assistance in the transfer process, career advising, links with student and professional organizations, professional development workshops and an industry advisory board. Professor Spieler is seeking more funding opportunities to expand the program and increase the hours of the student study center.

Next, Shari Herzfeld, R.N, of the Health Science Division faculty made a presentation on her sabbatical project about the use of simulation in nursing education. The five minute PowerPoint highlighted some of the simulation education that is going on at other colleges but most of all her research re-enforced the high quality of the Rio Hondo College nursing program and the amount accessible students have to our labs.

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Administration of Justice Building Groundbreaking Draws Crowd

The much anticipated Administration of Justice facility broke ground March 26, with a lively ceremony attended by more than 100 guests. Parking lot 1 was transformed with balloons, banners and architectural renderings of the new facility. The Rio Hondo College color guard presented the colors and Dr. Martinez welcomed guests, thanking everyone for coming and sharing this important moment with the college community.

André Quintero, President of the Board of Trustees also said a few words on behalf of the board of Trustees sharing that Chief Garry Couso-Vasquez was unable to attend but sent all good wishes from his hospital bed where he is recovering from knee surgery.

Whittier Police Chief, David Singer and Jim Hudson, President of the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association spoke about what the facility will mean to the law enforcement community. The Rio Hondo College Police Academy, which will be housed in the new building, is one of the finest training programs in the state, providing opportunities for cadets looking for employment and new recruits from local police departments. This facility will make it possible to expand the program while improving both classroom and simulation spaces, as well as other Departments within the Public Safety Division program.

Upon completion, the Administration of Justice facility will include classroom and administrative space for the Police Academy, as well as classrooms for general College use. The facility will feature innovative and efficient designs and will include physical activity spaces for the cadets. The architect is Quarto Design Group and the construction manager will be Telacu.

Several guests noted the dramatic design of the building that is primarily metal and glass. The facility will be the first building that one sees on approach to the campus from Workman Mill Road and embodies the innovation and beauty of the newly revitalized Rio Hondo College campus.

Several groups had the opportunity to dig with the golden shovels and everyone was excited about the prospect of the ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremony in the Summer of 2010.



It Keeps on Getting Better: College Measure A General Obligation Bonds Receive "AAA" Rating by Standard & Poor's

Underwriting giant Standard and Poor's announced that \$64,996,843.50 of new bonds to be sold by Rio Hondo Community College District to finance campus construction and facilities improvements as authorized by Measure "A" in 2004 have received a top "AAA" rating. Standard and Poor's executives cited exceptional financial management by the College, along with other factors indicating fiscal soundness, that influenced the superior rating. The bonds were sold beginning March 11, 2009 to fund construction on current and future projects in the *Building Access and Excellence* program.

Standard & Poor's is the world's foremost provider of independent credit ratings, indices, risk evaluation, investment research and data. They supply investors with independent benchmarks to help educate investors regarding risks associated with their financial decisions. The better the rating, the lower the interest rate Rio Hondo Community College District will pay investors.

Upcoming projects include South Whittier Educational Center, Administration of Justice building, Physical Education Complex and Student Services buildings.

BOARD MEETING

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A full report is included in the Board meeting agenda.

The Board received an update on the Building Programs by Steve Massetti. In addition, he introduced Jim Sinsheimer to the Board. Mr. Sinsheimer will be taking over as the Program Manager for the *Building Access and Excellence* building program.



Board tour of the building program.

Kevin Gallagher Division II Men's Soccer Player of the Year

Kevin Gallagher, a Whittier native, Rio Hondo College alumnus and former member of the renowned Men's Soccer Team has been named the Division II National Player of the Year by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.



Gallagher went from Rio Hondo to Cal State Dominguez Hills (CUSD) where he is now a four-time All-American. He has led the CUSD Toros to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Champions to 14 shutouts on the year en route to earning NCAA Final Four Most Valuable Player (MVP) Defensive, Daktronics 1st-team All-America, Daktronics 1st-team All-Region, California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) MVP- Defensive, 1st-team All-CCAA, and CCAA Player of the Week honors.

Distance Education Specialists from China Visit RHC

In early March, 18 high-ranking engineers, administrators and other educators from the Peoples Republic of China visited with Rio Hondo College to learn more about online learning, including the effectiveness of that modality of instruction, quality assurance, teaching assessment, student management and credit policies.

Coordinated by Shin Liu, the visit included demonstrations and presentations. The Chinese delegation also visited Cal State San Bernardino, Los Angeles County Agricultural Department, Cal Poly Pomona, and the University of Maryland.

The group was received by College administrators at the beginning of their visit.



Musical Talent Showcased in March

Talent seems to know no bounds at Rio Hondo College and March seems to have been the month for musical talent and more.

The month began with a morning of music at the Choral Festival. This Rio Hondo College Invitational Choral Festival brought choral groups together from nearby high schools. The event was held at the Wray Theatre.



An evening with Kristopher Carter, an Emmy winner, film composer, an orchestrator, film conductor, and concert music composer inspired musicians and those who appreciate music alike. He is also the winner of the Gold Medal for Excellence at the Park City Film Music Festival.

On March 19, Rio Hondo Faculty performed in a recital at the Wray Theatre. Frank Accardo & Friends delighted the audience with an evening of Argentinean music. Mr. Accardo played the guitar and other instrumentalists accompanied him for a wonderful rhythmic sound.

Finally, the Choral Cabaret – *To Everything There Is A Season*, showcased the choral forces of Rio Hondo College as they “Turned, Turned, Turned” back the clock to perform music from the 1960s at the Campus Inn.

The Career Development Center has added a new feature to their website called CareerTV.



It features an array of video clips by industry, career, and career advice. Check it out and enjoy!



<http://www.riohondo.edu/students/careercenter/careertv.htm>

College Receives Grant from Southern California Edison

The Rio Hondo College Foundation received a \$25,000 grant from Edison International to support mathematics, science, engineering and applied technology education for students in the middle school through university levels in Central and Southern California.

The grant funds will be used for a new branch in the Environmental Technology Program, focusing on Alternate/Efficient Energy Systems. The development would include writing three new courses in this area, purchasing new equipment to support the new curriculum, and development and maintenance of a webpage that focuses on news in the Environmental Sciences area (including job opportunities in Alternate Energy Systems). The curriculum development portion of the project would result in three new courses. Alternate/Efficient Energy Systems (overview) and two other courses that would focus on the details of selected energy technology. Classes will begin in Fall of 2009.

Rio Hondo College News Travels

Dr. Martinez and Building Programs Manager Steve Massetti have been travelling throughout the District over the last few months sharing news about the College and the Building Programs with several different groups, including City Councils, School District Boards, and Chambers of Commerce. The President has shared his Vision for the Future of Rio Hondo College, along with progress updates, and Massetti provided up to the minute information on the *Building Access and Excellence* building program.



The presentations have been well received and appreciated.

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33rd Annual Regional Drafting/Computer Aided Drafting & Design/Geographic Information Systems Contest

More than 245 high-school students, representing 16 local high schools including California High, South El Monte, and Bell, came to compete at Rio Hondo's 33rd Regional Drafting/Computer Aided Drafting & Design/Geographic Information Systems Contest on March 4, 5, and 6, 2009.

Rio Hondo's annual contest is coordinated through the college's national and international award winning ACEDD-GIS Program (Architecture/Civil/Engineering Design Drafting and GIS), and is well known among regional high school drafting and design teachers. This regional contest consistently attracts high-school students with top-notch skills in drafting, Computer Aided Drafting & Design (CADD) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Students may compete in one of the following contests: Basic Mechanical Drafting, Advanced Mechanical Drafting, Basic Architectural Drawing, Advanced Architectural Drawing, Mechanical CADD, Architectural CADD or Basic GIS.



As anticipated, this year the contest had an increase in young women who participated and placed in the top ten of the seven areas of competition. This year's event included a GIS contest in which eight of the ten winners were young women from Norwalk High School, Clark Magnet High School, and West Covina High School. Also, a new software package called "Revit" by AutoDesk, was premiered and it is quickly becoming the standard for the Architectural Design and Documentation industry.

Each participating school and each of the 70 student winners received VersaCAD software (valued at \$800 each) donated by Tom Lazear of Archway Systems of Huntington Beach - a long time contributor to the program and the annual contest. Finally, it was announced at the Awards Ceremony that the award winning ACEDD-GIS program has completed official articulation for its new Civil Design and Drafting Program with Cal Poly Pomona School of Engineering and will be offering new courses next year in Landscape Architecture and 3D

BIM (Building Information Modeling) Technology featuring Revit for CAD Architecture and Bentley Architecture CAD software.

There are more than 400 Rio Hondo students currently enrolled in the program. They receive a thorough education on industry standards while developing professional skills required to enter the design industry, using such leading edge visual technologies like Rapid Prototyping or 3D Printing, 3D computer modeling and animation, and G.I.S. The program has been enhanced recently with the addition of a new Civil Drafting and Design curriculum featuring state-of-the-art geospatial equipment / technology for 3D Civil Design and land surveying applications. This year the program continues to be a leader in visual technology with the addition of Pressure Piping Design

courses. Currently in progress is the development of a new Digital Media certificate and degree program in partnership with the Fine Arts Division. Next year the ACEDD-GIS Program also plans to add new courses in the area of Landscape Architecture.

A major goal of the event is to promote the development of professional skills students need for future employment. Winners often go on to study architecture, civil, or engineering design drafting at Rio Hondo and then transfer to a prestigious four-year college or university.



Rio Hondo College News Travels *continued from previous page*

As of March, presentations have been made to the Whittier City Council, Pico Rivera City Council, El Monte City Council, South El Monte City Council, and the Santa Fe Springs City Council. These presentations have not been limited to the city councils. The Rio Hondo College team has also presented to the El Monte Union High School District, El Rancho Unified School District, Whittier Union High School District and the Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce.

Human Resources Mural

On Thursday, March 26 the Art Guild of Rio Hondo College, a campus wide club made up of students from all areas of the college, unveiled a mural project of 11 paintings to the college's Human Resource department.

The paintings, done in a 1960's Pop Art style originated by the artist Andy Warhol, are individual portraits of each member of the HR staff.

They were created by the students of the Art Guild over a period of two semesters and just completed with the assistance of the club advisors and college art instructors, Ada Pullini Brown, Ronald Reeder and Margaret Griffith under the supervision of the Dean of Arts, Joanna Downey. Be sure to stop by the Human Resources office and see this beautiful work.

Ada Brown stated "This was a great project to watch the students produce, they became friends and taught each other, including the non art majors, how to paint. The project helped HR build morale and fun between the students and the employees of the college. The works are beautiful and will be a colorful and lasting memory of the talented students at Rio Hondo College."



Women's History Month Conference 'You Hold the Key to Your Future'

Rio Hondo College hosted the 14th annual Women's History Month Conference Friday, March 27. Conference attendees included 300 local high school girls from the Whittier Union High School District.

Their day began with continental breakfast, followed by a 9 a.m. program. Chief Roberta Abner from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) addressed the audience about roles for women in law enforcement. Chief Abner, a 27-year veteran of the LASD, was promoted by the Sheriff in April 2007 and is responsible for oversight of the Internal Affairs Bureau; Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau; Training Bureau; Drug Prevention Program (STAR); Civil Litigation Unit; Risk Management Unit; and Professional Development Bureau, which provides advanced personnel training, accredited degree programs (LASD-University) and conducts the Deputy Leadership Institute (DLI).

This year the breakout sessions reflected the requests that were submitted by the students. One of those sessions was *Careers in Law Enforcement*. Fifty female students from each of the Whittier Union High School District's five comprehensive high schools as well as 50 students from Frontier High School and Sierra Vista Alternative High School attended the conference. The event was sponsored by Rio Hondo College, Rio Hondo College's President's Office and the Whittier Union High School District.

The program featured greetings from Ted Martinez, Jr., Ph.D., Superintendent/President, Angela Acosta-Salazar, Vice President of the Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees, and Sandra Thorstenson, Superintendent of the Whittier Union High School District. Chief Abner gave the keynote address at 9:15 a.m.

In addition to the keynote address, the students attended three different workshops of their choosing. Topics for the workshops included: the New Faces of HIV, Careers in Nursing, Careers in Law Enforcement, Cash for College, the Reality of Being a Teen Parent, Martial Arts, and On-line Predators. Presenters from the college and from the community lead the workshops. It was a very successful event and it was clear that these young women do hold the key to their future.



College Information Days Begin

College Information Days have begun this year with a March 13 visit from El Monte Union High School District high schools, bringing nearly 250 students to campus. During their welcome to the college, students were made aware of the value of a post-secondary education.

The simple facts are that someone without a college education will be able to earn approximately \$1,000,000 in 47 years working while someone with a college education can earn approximately \$2,000,000 in 40 years. If they want to earn a better living then they should consider college.

After the welcome, they watched a lively skit depicting college life, took a tour of the programs and services and enjoyed lunch before they departed. The students were also able to see first-hand the nearly completed Learning Resource Center, a 90,000+ sq ft library, scheduled to open by Fall 2009.

With the focus on the economy and job market, potential students were given ideas on how to better prepare themselves for the marketplace via education.



Student Athletes Excel

The Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) and State Farm announced the 2009 Junior College/ Community College (JC/CC) State Farm Coaches' All-America Basketball Team. The 10-member team was selected by an on-line vote of the selection committee. The committee is comprised of one representative from each of the nine geographical regions and a chairperson. Roadrunner Guard, Lesley Vodicska, a Rio Hondo College Freshman has been named as a member of the All-American Team. Also in March, Ruben Martinez participated in the Ben Brown Invitational Track Meet at Fullerton College where he set a new school record in the 5000 with a time of 15:15. Congratulations to both Lesley and Ruben!



Rio Hondo College Adjusts to New Accreditation Standards

by Ted Martinez, Jr., Ph.D., RHC President

For the past several months, I have been visiting with school boards, city councils, and community service organizations to share information about the improvements we have been making to Rio Hondo College's instructional curriculum and to our physical environment. These meetings provide me the opportunity to share details with community members about some of our recent successes, including winning the national Bellwether Award for our "Go Rio" program; receiving the first place award for the Rio Hondo Police Academy in Organizational Excellence from the California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST). We also recently began construction on the South Whittier Educational Center and will break ground on the Administration of Justice building later this month.

These visits have reassured me that our community is invested in Rio Hondo College and our future. I have been frequently asked about our Accreditation status and our plan to continue the delivery of higher learning and practical career-tech training we have provided community residents of all ages since 1963.

In fact, we are doing very well, but we are also undertaking a thorough evaluation of our program. Community colleges across the country are in transition, working to meet new accrediting standards, redefine accountability measures, instituting new planning processes, and improving governance systems. We are no different.

A visitation team from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) completed its assessment of Rio Hondo College, providing recommendations and constructive criticisms of our measurable student learning outcomes and governance practices. We welcome constructive criticism, which in fact confirmed our planning assumptions about areas that needed improvement. However, even with a running start, the Accreditation Commission determined that we can make even more progress in a few areas.

As a result, Rio Hondo College, like several other community colleges currently is adjusting to the new standards. We were placed on 'warning' status, the least severe of the several sanctions the Commission might have applied. The College's accreditation is not in jeopardy. 'Warning' means that our students' credits will continue to be accepted by transfer institutions and our students remain eligible for financial aid while the institution works on the recommended improvements. We will be reviewed again in the Fall to reassure the Commission that we are making satisfactory progress. It is our intention to meet the goals set for us by the Commission and to receive a Reaffirmation of Accreditation at that time.

Be assured that the Rio Hondo College family of administrators, faculty, classified staff, and students are working very closely with our Board of Trustees and the greater Rio Hondo community to ensure we are moving quickly and effectively to institute the improvements the Accrediting Commission expects.

We believe the WASC accreditation process provides an important opportunity to look at ourselves through the lens of a third party in order to keep improving and adjusting to meet current student and work force needs. If you would like to know more about the accreditation process or review the accreditation report, the Commission's findings, or to review progress updates, please visit our website at <http://www.riohondo.edu/>

Rio Hondo College is a valued community asset which has been entrusted to this board, administration, staff and faculty. We are thankful for the opportunity to advance the College into the next phase of development, and I wish to express my appreciation for the continuing support we receive from our business and educational partners as well as from our elected officials.

— March 25, 2009 —