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## President's Message



*Teresa Dreyfuss*

Spring Break is an important mid-semester opportunity to renew and reflect, and to gear up for the rest of our academic year as we head toward our 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Commencement Ceremony May 23. I hope everyone enjoyed the time away from campus.

I am pleased to commend the progress of the Web Design Task Force under the leadership of Gary Van Voorhis. The group has been meeting almost twice weekly since the beginning of the semester to build upon focus group-based research we commissioned to help identify user group navigational preferences. In the meantime, the college researched and identified WordPress as the content management software system (CMS) we will use for our new site.

The current task force is composed of faculty members identified by the Academic Senate, classified representatives and members of the management/confidential group. Their task is to move the project forward and to enter the design stage. They have established a hierarchy for the new Rio Hondo College website and wireframe designs for successive landing pages, and are now interviewing design consultants who will create the 'look and feel' of the site and develop templates for campus-wide use. The goal is to have the new site and system in place by the beginning of the Fall 2013 semester.

Things are moving along our established schedule in the search process for the next Superintendent/President of Rio Hondo College. The application deadline was earlier this month and on March 22, the Search Committee met to review applications and select semi-final candidates for preliminary interviews. Those interviews will be held April 11 & 12, with the Search Committee recommending four to six finalists to the Board of Trustees. During the week of April 22, finalists will visit the College and participate in open forums. The Board will also conduct interviews at that time.

The campus and community are anticipating the Rio Hondo College 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Friday, April 19, at the Industry Hills Expo Center in the City of Industry. We are planning an upbeat, inclusive and lively event to appeal to our internal stakeholders and the communities we serve. Division Deans are helping organize tables, as are other campus-based groups. Please do plan to join us.

## College Community Gathers for 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash and Time Capsule Installation



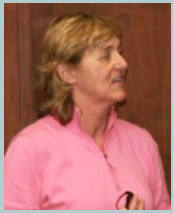
## Board Update



In a Sabbatical Leave Report Dr. Vernon Padgett explained his work in developing a new lab manual for research methods in the social

sciences that emphasizes new ways of learning certain core concepts.

Within his presentation he explained “confounding variables” to the board.



In a Physical Education Update, Kathy Pudelko highlighted student athletes and the sports they play through an engaging video presentation.

Student athletes tend to have a higher GPA than regular students and a higher retention rate, she said. Pudelko added that PE faculty works closely with students to assure their academic success and help them to transfer.

In a Nursing Program Update, Gail Modyman pointed out the high passing rate of 90 percent and above for all the department programs (CAN, HHA, LVN, AND). She said several recent grants received are helping the department to achieve its goals of improving attrition rates and bolstering faculty development and student success. She commented on the importance of “Roadrunner General Hospital,” as the nursing simulation center is known, and how it helps students greatly increase their confidence levels.

In his update on the Disabled Students Programs & Services, Director Mark Matsui reported on the recent increase in “wounded



warriors,” students with brain injuries due to military service. The other increase in a disability category has been students in the autism spectrum. He added that, because 1100 students commit suicide nationally every year, it’s critical that Rio Hondo continue to focus on mental health issues.

## College Community Gathers for 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bash and Time Capsule Installation (continued)

The Rio Hondo College community gathered on Thursday, March 14, for a time capsule installation ceremony as part of its year-long 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.

The safe, with an interior capacity of 12 x 13 x 18 inches, was filled with 28 items reflecting what it was like for those attending and working at the hilltop campus during the 2012-2013 academic year. The capsule was encased in a structure beneath and behind the new showcase for the Phil Putnam memorial plaque.

“This is an important milestone in our college’s history as today we locked up a safe that contains 28 items that represent our campus at this point in time, our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration,” said Interim Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. “We hope it will provide insight for students and employees in 2038 about our lives as part of the Rio Hondo College community in 2013,” she said.

When opened 25 years from now, people will find: issues of the student newspaper, El Paisano; a RHC logo T-shirt; a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary medallion and pin; a Rio Fest flyer; a college brochure; Facilities Facts; sports and cultural arts events schedules; campus life images on a CD; a cell phone (with a description of its purpose and use); a small pennant; a college mission statement document; photos of campus individuals; and student essays about their lives as students in 2012-2013.

“Rio Hondo College has been through a lot of changes over the past 50 years, from its beginning until now, and all the changes have been good, except for the budget cuts we’ve faced in these troubled times,” said Associated Students President Irina Barajas. “I hope that when we dig up the time capsule in 25 years we will have seen an improvement in this area and that we know we helped each other through these troubled times.”

The Associated Students also sponsored interactive activities during the celebration, including an attempt to set a new Guinness Book of World Record for the number of signatures on a giant birthday card and a cake-cutting ceremony. Organizers collected 1446 signatures on the four 4-foot by 4-foot paneled birthday card.



## DAGU Performance



Traditional Chinese operatic storytelling and story-singing were performed by nationally acclaimed Chinese artists actress/singer Yang Fengjie, actress/sihu player Wang Hongmin, lute player Zheng Liwen and actor/lute player Xia Yan on March 21 at Cerritos College.

DAGU is a traditional form of story-telling, a narrative ballad singing that emerged in the late 19th Century. Performances typically feature a solo actor who portrays all the characters, using song, stylized speech and movement while sounding a drum and a pair of wooden clappers. A small string ensemble supports the onstage actor. Trustee Gary Mendez introduced one of the three stories performed by the Tianjin Folk Art Troupe, the Story of the Heavy Monk, a person who often aided helpless people with his formidable strength and wisdom. Interim Superintendent/College President Teresa Dreyfuss greeted the audience on behalf of Rio Hondo and explained that the RHC co-sponsorship of the DAGU performance is part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration activities. Professor Shin Liu, who serves as a Cerritos College Trustee, also greeted the audience.



All proceeds benefit future international and global awareness education programs at the colleges.



传承文化之美 JINGYUNDAGU Concert  
BEYUNJINFENG Beauty Of Inheriting Culture

## State of the College City Council Presentation



Rio Hondo concluded its series of State of the College presentations to City Councils at the City of Whittier Council Meeting on Tuesday, March 5. Trustees Madeline Shapiro and Angela Acosta-Salazar joined Interim Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, Russell Castaneda-Calleros and Susan Herney for the presentation. The City of Whittier was presented with a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banner to display and a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorative pin for each council member. City Council members expressed appreciation for Rio Hondo College programs and accomplishments.

## Join the Fun! Tickets Still Available for April 19, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration



Rio Hondo College 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Friday, April 19, will include a Champagne reception, dinner, dancing, an auction, and awards. The event begins at 6 p.m. at the Industry Hills Expo Center. Individuals who have made exemplary contributions to Rio Hondo College will be honored with Medallion Awards. Business attire requested. Tickets are \$50 and benefit student scholarships. Industry Hills Expo Center is located at 16200 Temple Ave., City of Industry. For more info contact Michelle Yriarte, myriarte@riohondo.edu, or 562-908-3403.

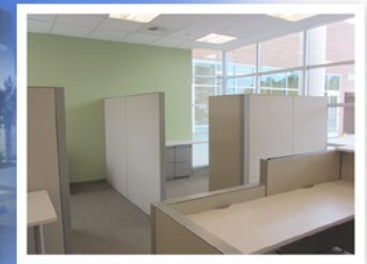
## El Monte Educational Center Opens April 1

The El Monte Educational Center, its construction proceeding right on schedule, opens its doors to students on April 1. During its inaugural semester this spring, nearly 200 students will study Biology, Chinese, Computer Information Technology, English as a New Language, History, Political Science, Reading, Spanish, and Speech in eight-week classes. The general educational curriculum is geared to help students from the surrounding community begin and/or continue their post-secondary education.

With the establishment of the El Monte Educational Center Rio Hondo has accomplished a major goal underwritten by Measure A facilities funding passes by area voters in 2004 – providing the El Monte community with local access to higher education. The realization of the Center also reflects the outstanding partnerships the College has with the communities of El Monte and South El Monte. It is a companion project to the South Whittier Educational Center, which opened in 2010 and now serves citizens of nearby communities in the same way.

The El Monte Educational Center on a one-acre site features four classrooms, a computer study room with computer stations, and a courtyard.

*A Grand Opening takes place May 2.*



## Puente Program Students Join UC Riverside Community College Transfer Day

Puente Program students gained valuable insight into the transfer process at UC Riverside when they attended the UC Riverside Community College Transfer Day on March 1.

About 300 students from various community colleges spent the day at UC Riverside, hearing speakers and attending workshops and breakout sessions. Faculty guest speakers spoke about challenges they overcame to get where they are now, illustrating they had shared many of the same struggles as transfer students. Students also had the chance to talk with deans and faculty in areas in which they may transfer.

“UC Riverside was extremely welcoming and the Puente students came back very empowered,” says Puente Program Coordinator Michelle Velasquez Bean.

Students attended the event through a joint venture between the College Transfer Center and Puente Project. The spring college tour also includes Cal State Long Beach, UCLA, and USC.

## Third Annual Forensics Speech and Debate Showcase



The Third Annual Forensics Speech and Debate Showcase took place Thursday, March 7, in the Wray Theatre. Beyond featuring performances by the College's award-winning Forensics students, the event also included appearances by actress Carolyn Hennesy and producer and talent manager Marilyn Atlas.



Hennesy is known for her roles on the HBO series "True Blood" and on ABC's "Cougar Town" and "General Hospital." Atlas is the founder of Marilyn Atlas Talent Management in Los Angeles where she represents actors, authors, and screenwriters.

## New Associate Degree Flyers

The Department of Marketing and Communications is working with each Division Dean to produce new flyers to highlight the 52 associate degree programs now available to Rio Hondo students. Academic Affairs is sponsoring the project by underwriting the printing costs and Dean Rebecca Green is coordinating the effort on behalf of Academic Affairs. The goal of the project is to provide students with a brief overview of the academic requirements of each degree and to provide available information on related careers and vocational opportunities.



## Boyle Heights Students Visit Rio Hondo

Professor Juan Fernandez hosted a group of fifth-grade students from the Boyle Heights Save Ourselves leadership program in his English 101 class on February 25.

The collaboration between Fernandez and retired fifth-grade teacher Janis Hiura had as its goal inspiring and promoting academic achievement and empowerment among both the college students and fifth-graders, and guiding students to an awareness and understanding of their responsibility and role in their own education.

While Rio students discussed their challenges and strategies for learning at the college level, the fifth-grade students shared how they take ownership of their education to achieve levels of excellence and success.

Hiura provided strategies and gave the students tools to handle various situations, ranging from completing assignments to bullying.

Their interaction with the college students helped them see the value of staying focused and using resources to their advantage, said Fernandez.

"The fifth-grade students were inspired by the candor of the college students and the manner in which they were treated," he said. "I believe the fifth grade students walked away from this experience with an awakened hope that they too can one day achieve at the college level if they continue taking ownership of their own education."

The students also enjoyed a campus tour and received souvenir bags provided by the Office of Educational Partnerships.



## Spring Transfer Fair

The spring Transfer Fair on March 19 gave students the chance to talk with reps from almost 30 colleges and universities. Institutions on hand in the Middle Quad included The Art Institute; American Public University System; Biola University; Cal States Dominguez Hills, Fullerton, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Northridge; CSULA-College of Business and Economics; Cal Poly Pomona; Chamberlain College of Nursing; Chapman University; FIDM; Hope University; Indiana University Perdue; Mount Saint Mary's College; National University; Springfield College; Trinity Law University; West Coast University; Whittier College; Woodbury University and many more. A UCLA Admission Workshop also took place that day.

That day Rio Hondo also hosted 638 seniors from area high schools who toured the College and learned about its program and services as part of Senior Preview Day. The students represented high schools from the El Monte Unified, Whittier Union, El Rancho Unified, and Montebello Unified high school districts as well as Bassett Unified School District.



## National Women's History Month



Keynote speaker  
Tracy Webb

Rio Hondo, in collaboration with Whittier Union High School District and Soroptomist International of Whittier, hosted the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's History Month Conference on Friday, March

22. The goal was to bring inspiration, as well as information, to 300 Whittier high school students. The conference offered unique workshops of special interest to women that provided essential information on a variety of issues.

This year's keynote speaker was Tracy Webb, Senior Trial Attorney for Cyber Crime and Child Abuse Prevention Division, Los Angeles City Attorney's Office and Federal Internet Crimes against Children Task Force affiliate (ICAC).

## Choices Conference

On March 15 Interim Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss helped to welcome nearly 300 high school students to the Choices Empowerment conference in the Wray Theatre. Community participants included the Honorable Cathy Warner, City of Whittier councilmember, Kara Medrano from the Office of Congresswoman Linda Sanchez, and representatives from SPIRITT Family Services and the Hispanic Outreach Taskforce (HOT), two primary Rio Hondo non-profit partners. Students attended workshops and heard motivational speakers who urged them to make healthy choices in their personal, educational, and professional lives. The event was coordinated by the Office of Government & Community Relations, along with SPIRITT and HOT.

## Whittier Area School Administrators Award

On February 28 six College administrators were on hand to applaud the presentation of the Whittier Area School Administrators Community Service Award to the 2013 recipient, Yosh Nakamura.

*"I appreciate receiving the award although I feel that others in the Rio Hondo College community are equally deserving. Thanks to Interim President Teresa Dreyfuss and other Rio Hondo College officials for advancing my nomination. My wife, Grace, and I were very impressed with the recipients from the other Whittier Area districts."*

Concurrent with an art career Nakamura had a long and distinguished career as an educator and administrator at Rio Hondo. Nakamura is an honored Japanese-American soldier who fought in WWII as part of the U.S. Army's 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion and the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team. In 2011 he received a Bronze Star Medal, as well as the Congressional Gold Medal at a ceremony in Washington D.C.



Photo (Left to Right): Barbara Salazar, Dr. Kats Gustafson, Steve Hebert, Grace Nakamura, Henry Gee, Yosh Nakamura, Dr. Kenn Pierson, Dr. Zolita Fisher.

## Wake Up Whittier

On March 20 Rio Hondo College hosted the Wake Up Whittier Chamber of Commerce Morning Mixer. About 150 guests visited the campus to network and mingle. Interim Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss welcomed the attendees, Professor Belen Torres Gil discussed the various ways the Career Development Center could connect local businesses with Rio Hondo College students, and GCR Director Russell Castaneda Calleros promoted the upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration scheduled for April 19. Thanks to the College's outstanding facilities and A/V staff for so beautifully setting up the Rio Café for the event.

