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President's Message



Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr.

The success of our students, especially during this wonderful time of commencement, is the most gratifying and symbolic element of our work here at Rio Hondo College. As we bask in the reflected light of their achievement, it is important to take note of the collective energies and talents that contribute to this annual celebration.

First, our classified employees are essential to college operations, quite literally helping us keep the doors open. They serve students in every conceivable venue, and make sure the campus is clean and attractive, serving in capacities ranging from instructional assistants, grounds keepers, clerks, and technicians. In recognition of their commitment and service, the Board of Trustees recognized Classified School Employee Week, which was celebrated the week of May 16-20. Kudos to our dedicated classified staff and thanks for their continuing commitment to our students.

Faculty are the heart of the teaching and learning equation, of course. In the past few weeks we have acknowledged their collective contribution to student achievement and success in several ways. Ten newly-tenured faculty members were recognized earlier this spring, as were faculty reaching milestones of academic rank, which is a project of the Academic Senate. Thanks to the Faculty Association's Martha Carreon for coordinating the outstanding end-of-year recognition celebration and for the creative and fun luncheon around the "Alice in Rioland" theme.

In addition to the Rio Hondo College 48th Annual Commencement ceremony May 26, we also celebrated the ADN Nursing Pinning Ceremony as well as celebrations for our students completing their Vocational Nursing and CNA programs. My thanks for the outstanding planning and execution of these important events by our managers and volunteers...successful ceremonies do not plan or manage themselves!

Thanks to those responsible for two significant events held to recognize and honor student transfer and graduation, as well as outstanding achievement through the Outstanding Students Division Awards program and the Celebration of Student Success, "Celebrating our Shining Stars".

Another academic year will quickly begin anew, of course. However, in the brief interim, I hope we all take a celebratory moment to savor the importance of the lives we have touched.



Commencement Speaker, Alysha Del Valle, Encourages Grads



Offering this year's commencement address "Choose to Be Happy" was Rio Hondo College alumna Alysha Del Valle, who is the weekday

morning traffic reporter for ABC7 Eyewitness News.

Alysha was born and raised in Southern California. She attended Rio Hondo College in 1995-1997 and then transferred to the University of Southern California, where she majored in communications and graduated with honors.

Alysha thanked Rio Hondo College for its strong and supportive community. "It nurtured my confidence," she said. "I felt good returning every semester and eager to participate and volunteer with many of the activities and programs on campus. I am proud to have earned my associate degree there. Rio helped expand my dreams and realize my goals."

Alysha began her broadcasting career on the Assignment Desk at UPN/ Fox 11 News, as well as doing field reporting for local stories. Shortly after, she reported on Southern California traffic for the "The George Lopez Morning Show" at Hot 92 Jamz. She then moved on to morning show positions at 102.7 KIIS FM (Los Angeles). As part of "Rick Dees in the Morning" and "On-Air with Ryan Seacrest," Alysha reported on entertainment in her "Filmgirl" segment, as well as lifestyle and cultural news with her daily "On the Streets with Alysha Del Valle" segment. In her evenings, Alysha hosted and produced several shows on the nationally viewed LATV Network, including "LATV LIVE," and then co-hosted on LATINO 96.3 FM.

Congratulations, Graduates!

Rio Hondo Commencement 2011



Congratulations are in Order for our Rio Family Graduates:

- **Reneé Gallegos (Academic Affairs)** – Bachelor of Science in Organization Management, University of La Verne
- **Teresa C. Gonzalez (Office of Outreach & Educational Partnerships)** – Masters of Science in Educational Counseling from the University of La Verne
- **John Ramirez (Facilities Services)** – Masters of Public Administration specializing in Public Sector Management and Leadership, California State University Northridge.
- **Yolanda Ramirez (Math & Sciences)** – Master of Library and Information Science, San José University
- **Lorraine Serrano (Finance and Business)** – Bachelor of Science in Organization Management, University of La Verne
- **Sylvia Viramontes (Marketing & Communications)** – Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, California State University, Long Beach
- **Michelle Yriarte (President's Office)** – Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts, Rio Hondo College.



Board Meeting

The Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees held its regular monthly meeting May 11.

- Sociology Professor Melissa Rifino-Juarez made a presentation to the Board of Trustees, highlighting her recent sabbatical leave. Her presentation included additional courses she took during that time, the fieldwork she completed and what she learned.



- Associated Student Body President, Julianna Ojeda gave her end-of-the-year State of the Students Address, with her fellow student officers attending in support.



- Director of Facilities Services, Gus Gonzalez, presented the College's Five-Year Construction Plan to the Board of Trustees, highlighting what the plan does, the purpose and benefits of the plan as well as its projected project list.
- The Board of Trustees commended and recognized faculty and staff who are retiring this year, including Patricia Gallego and Mario Martinez.
- Professor of Anthropology, Adam Wetsman, Ph.D., J.D. received a plaque from Board of Trustees President, Maria Elena Martinez, in recognition of the conclusion of his service as RHCFA President.



Fire Academy Graduates 59 New Cadets

The Rio Hondo College Fire Academy graduated 59 cadets from its "Wildland Fire Academy, Class #13" on Saturday, May 7 at 9 a.m.

A total of 40 of Rio Hondo College's "Wildland Fire Academy, Class #13" were already hired by the Angeles National Forest upon graduation. These 40 are currently ready to be deployed anywhere in the United States where their services are needed most.

"During tough economic times there is nothing better than to see our graduates immediately employed upon graduation," said Ted Martinez, Jr., Ph.D., Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President. "Not only is our academy among the best in the nation, but our graduates are obviously in demand, which is a winning combination for them and the region's public safety organizations."

Each of the graduating cadets completed 360 hours of Wildland Training, CPR and first aid as well as hazardous material training at Rio Hondo College. Rio Hondo College has an aggressive Fire Technology program. The Academy, which ranks as one of the largest fire academies in California, specializes in wild fire fighting techniques and prevention.



Board Meeting

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- Government and Community Relations Director, Russell Castaneda-Calleros provided the Board of Trustees with an update on the Leadership Academy. He shared information on the Academy's cohort, highlighted what was learned throughout the year and named all cohort members. The group completed nine workshops from September through May. He also presented Superintendent/President Ted Martinez, Jr., Ph.D. with a frame acknowledging his hard work and efforts on behalf of the Leadership Academy.



Community College Association Names Award for Rio Hondo College Professor

The Community College Association recently honored the president of the United Faculty of North Orange Community College District with an award named after Rio Hondo College's own English Professor MaryAnn Pacheco.

CCA established the new award to honor Mary Ann, who has been tireless in her efforts to involve all faculty in student and teaching issues, and has also served as a former CCA President, CTA Board Director and NEA Director. The award will be given annually to honor those who have supported and promoted ethnic minority issues on campus.

Rio Hondo College Honors Graduating Students



As commencement day approached, a celebration was held to honor students who completed their Rio Hondo College programs. "Celebrating Our Shining Stars" recognized students receiving either their associate degrees, certificates and/or transferring to four-year universities.

The event was co-sponsored by these programs: CalWORKs, Disabled Students Program and Services (DSP&S), Extended Opportunity, Program and Services (EOP&S), the Honors Transfer Program, MESA/STEM, the Transfer Center, the Veteran's Service Center and the TRiO Program.

The event included a reception and awards ceremony for honored students and their families as well as Rio Hondo College staff and faculty.

Academic Affairs recently honored approximately 50 students at its Outstanding Students awards held on May 18.

At the awards event, students are given a certificate of recognition for their excellent work and efforts. Each academic division recognizes discipline-specific excellence. In the event program, honored students were described as "students reflecting the vision, mission and values of Rio Hondo College."

Approximately 50 students were honored and received certificates of recognition.



Rio Hondo College Recognizes Debate Team Success at Nationals

The four students that competed at Nationals were Jeff Najjarro, Vince Sainz, Alex Najjarro, and Michael Moran. They competed against schools from four year universities and community colleges. Najjarro won a Bronze Medal in Impromptu Speaking. He was one of 14 Bronze Level National Championships.

The Speech and Debate team showcased their talents on Friday, May 20 in the Wray Theatre.



The Board of Trustees recognized the great work of the Rio Hondo College Speech and Debate team at its last meeting. Members of the team competed at the Phi Rho Pi National Championship Tournament in Greenwich, CT in April.

Retreat Invigorates and Refines College Planning Process

Seventy-six members of the campus community came together in a retreat setting to review accomplishments and to assess, revising as necessary, the goals and objectives established for the coming year. Table groups, each comprised of a cross section of stakeholder representatives, were each assigned a specific objective to review and date as appropriate.

As an entertainment diversion between activities, participants were invited to 'name that tune' when Dean Howard Kummerman played videos of a few rock 'oldies'. Those whose memories provided the quickest response were rewarded with candy bar prizes.



End-of-the-Year Luncheon Celebrates, Acknowledges Milestones

This year's all staff end-of-the-year luncheon, "Alice in RIOLand" was sponsored by the Rio Hondo College Faculty Association and the Office of the President. The event included a croquet game, a Mad Hatter hat contest and even had a Queen's Poker Game.

Acknowledgments from the luncheon included recognizing year of service by tenured faculty and retirees, including

10 Year Honorees

Pam Boyd
Thomas Callinan
M. Dennyse Clark
Marie Eckstrom
Cameron English
John Frala
Hank Fung
Gary Halvorson
Steve Hebert
Lily Isaac
Donald Mason
Barbara Mikalson
Dianna Reyes
Richard Stein
Suzanne Tang
Julius Thomas
Steve Tomory
Ralph Velazquez
Nguyen Vu

20 Years Honorees

Karleen Curlee
Sheila Lynch
John Marshall
James Matthis

30 Years Honorees

Leah Griffith
Irene Huang
Judy Marks

Newly Tenured Faculty

Lisette Acevedo
Sharon Bell
John Bennett
Alyson Cartagena
Michael Dighera
Kelli Florman
Margaret Griffith
Patricia Luna
Kevin Smith
Bianca Urquidi

Faculty Retirement

Patricia Gallego
(1990-2011)



Safety Update: College Enhances Campus Safety with Life-Saving AEDs

In 2008, Rio Hondo College tragically lost one of its own staff-members to Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA). SCA is most often caused by an abnormal heart rhythm called Ventricular Fibrillation (VF). VF is the most common arrhythmia that causes cardiac arrest. Cardiac defibrillation from an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) device and CPR is the only known therapy for VF. For every minute that passes without defibrillation and CPR the victim's chance of survival is decreased significantly.

Recently, 28 AED units have been placed throughout the campus. Officials have directed the implementation of this essential safety measure so that SCA preparedness has the same high priority as installing fire extinguishers in and around campus. Training college faculty as rescuers and providing them access to AEDs will save lives.

On average, the distance of each AED device can be reached within a 5-minute interval to help ensure help can be delivered in a safe and timely manner when needed.

With the placement of the AEDs throughout campus, another safety enhancement has been added to the campus. Rio Hondo College is committed to providing a "Heart-Safe" learning centered environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

