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## President's Message



*Teresa Dreyfuss*

As we wrap up the season of Thanksgiving and witness fall slowly yielding to winter, we find ourselves experiencing changes on our campus. This is a theme that has been relevant for us during the month of November. We thanked outgoing Trustee Angela Acosta-Salazar for her service at our Nov. 13 Board of Trustees meeting, and now welcome incoming Trustee-Elect Mary Ann Pacheco who will be installed in December. We said goodbye to Dean of the Library Kats Gustafson, but will say hello to new Director of Marketing & Communications Ruthie Flores Retana in December, and Interim Director of Grants Maria Elena Martinez. We approach the end of the current Fall '13 semester, but have already begun priority registration for the Spring '14 semester.

Continuing with the theme of change, Rio Hondo is currently responding to changes at the state level, some of which are state-mandated, while others are highly recommended to facilitate better service to our students. Campus leaders continue to work diligently and collaboratively on accreditation, the student success initiative, program review and institutional planning. Each of

these initiatives bring arduous work – especially as they concurrently overlap upon our regular jobs – but achieving them enables us to improve our institution.

Given that we just celebrated Thanksgiving, I want to especially acknowledge our student leaders who have been engaged in serving the needy. Alpha Gamma Sigma (AGS) hosted an older kids' book drive; Helping Hands collected children clothes from sizes newborn to 5T; Association of Latin American Students (ALAS) hosted a younger kids' book drive; One in Christ hosted a food drive for the homeless; and Government Relations Ambassadors for Community Events (GRACE) have organized a toy drive for the Family Self Sufficiency Program. Recently, some students started a relief effort for the victims of the typhoon in the Philippines. Rio Hondo College students have demonstrated that they are truly global citizens. I am thankful to our generous students for inspiring us all!

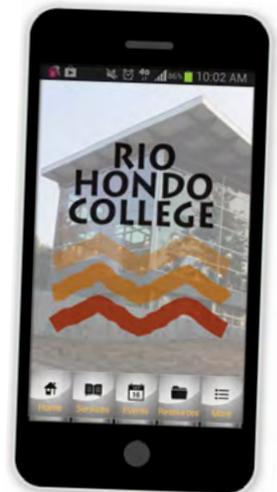
## College Launches App

Information on everything from Academic Counseling to the Veterans Service Center is now available in one convenient, streamlined and pocket-sized place – on any smart phone or tablet.

The new Rio Hondo College app, which launched this fall, contains hours and contact information for several student services, a calendar for campus programs and events, College resources such as AccessRio and Rio Café, and – most importantly to many commuters – a feature that locates where a student parked his or her car.

The app is part of the Student Mental Health Awareness and Support Program, which was created with a \$245,000 grant from the California Mental Health Services Authority. The grant, which is being dispersed over two years, has funded wellness education workshops, online access to social service referrals, peer-to-peer mentoring programs, and mental health awareness events.

*El Paisano*, the student newspaper at Rio Hondo College, gave the app glowing reviews for its ease of use and information, calling it “beneficial for the everyday student [with] many features [that] will make college life easier with all the information you want in the palm of your hand.”



## Board Update



Staff, faculty and dignitaries from the College district area attended the Nov. 13 meeting to honor outgoing Board Member Angela Acosta-Salazar.

After receiving commendations from federal, state and local officials, Acosta-Salazar – who decided not to pursue re-election – said she was humbled by the praise and will continue to be a supporter of Rio Hondo College.

“The Rio Hondo College community is a community of strength, a community of power,” Acosta-Salazar said. “It has personally touched my life in so many ways.”

“I’ve always tried to do what was best for the students of Rio Hondo College,” she said. “No matter what, it was about creating a pipeline for students to transfer.”

Before the Board heard two reports, they also gave commendations to retiring faculty and staff, including Nilsa Rivera from Counseling & Student Development; Senior Financial Aid Assistant Sandra Sierra; and Ralph Romo from Facility Services.

Vice President of Student Services Henry Gee and Associate Dean of Student Services Dr. Mike Muñoz gave a presentation on the progress of the Student Success Initiative.

Dean of Institutional Research and Planning Howard Kummerman also gave an update on the College’s Student Success Scorecard, which is being implemented at all 112 California Community Colleges. The Scorecard includes data given to the state and is used as an accountability tool that measures student success in a clear and concise way.

The Board then went on to approve several items on the agenda, including a resolution in response to Assembly Bill 86, which stipulates that community colleges and school districts must work together in consortia to remain eligible for adult education funding from the State of California.

The Board’s resolution authorizes District officials to form the Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium, which is comprised of Rio Hondo College and all of the local K-12 school districts – each of which has an adult education program. This resolution also authorizes the District to enter into an agreement with each of the

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## Conference Highlights Transfer, Student Success

The Student Success and Retention Division hosted its first-ever Student Motivational Conference on Nov. 22 at the Wray Theatre.

The conference, which was themed “Achieve Higher Education: Actively Pursuing Your Dreams,” featured keynote speaker Dr. Mike Muñoz, Dean of Counseling and Student Success, and workshops designed to inform students about many pathways to transfer, address challenges and help students create a blueprint for success.

“As the name implies, the goal is to motivate students to be persistent in pursuing their college degrees,” said Interim Assistant Dean of Student Success and Retention Barbara Salazar. “It’s really meant to instill in them the value of higher education for their personal and professional pursuits and education goals.”

Workshops include:

- Beyond the Household: Women and Higher Education;
- Losing the Battle: Men and Higher Education;
- A Path to Success: Transferring to a Four-Year University;
- More than a Bachelor’s Degree: A Professional’s Perspective;
- Exploring Your Options: A Career Seminar; and
- College Involvement, Leadership and Student Life: A Student’s Perspective.

The conference is just one tool the Rio Hondo College Transfer Center is using to bolster the number of students who transfer to four-year universities. Along with Transfer Fairs, where representatives from four-year institutions come to campus to offer students information about their schools, the Transfer Center also offers university tours; application workshops and review; university representative visits; and mentoring and counseling services.



## Veterans Club Hosts Comedy Night

The Wray Theatre was filled with laughs and applause on Nov. 6 as the Veterans Club hosted its Sixth Annual Comedy Night.

The Veterans Club’s annual fundraising event benefited the nonprofit organizations Wounded Warrior Project and American Legion Post 272. Aside from the laughs, guests were also treated to all-you-can-eat tacos from Tijuana Restaurant for a nominal price.

The event raised about \$400 for the charities and featured comedians Benny Mena, Jill-Michele Melon, Eric Blake, Aida Rodriguez, Harold Cooley Bookart and Ben Morrison.

Since its establishment in 2008, the Rio Hondo College Veterans Service Center has served more than 4,000 veterans and eligible dependents from five branches of the United States Armed Services annually.

Rio Hondo College has been designated as a military friendly school for four consecutive years by *GI Jobs* magazine.



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local K-12 school districts so that it can be eligible for the adult education planning and implementation grants which will be summarized in a request for applications after the first of the new year.

The Board expressed gratitude to the President and to staff for having multiple meetings with school district partners and for taking steps to prepare the District for its role in the new consortium.

## College Hires New Marketing and Communications Director



Communications Expert Ruthie Flores Retana will serve as the College's new Director of Marketing and Communications, effective December 2, 2013.

As Director, Flores Retana will be responsible for all internal and external communications, public relations and marketing for the College.

Flores Retana holds a bachelor's degree in mass communications from UCLA and a master's in theological studies from Harvard Divinity School at Harvard University. Most recently, she was associate director of communications at Long Beach City College where she planned, organized, developed and implemented District-wide media relations; and marketed and promoted LBCC and its programs, services, special events and activities through a broad spectrum of media platforms including print, broadcast and social media.

Flores Retana has also held similar positions with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, Building Healthy Communities, and the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. She also worked as a media relations consultant for a variety of elected and appointed officials, grassroots leaders, non-profit organizations and municipalities.

### SAVE THE DATE

Oath of Office Ceremony/Reception

**Dec. 11, Rio Café**

RSVP for catering purposes to: [myriarte@riohondo.edu](mailto:myriarte@riohondo.edu)



## College to Offer Hazmat Certification

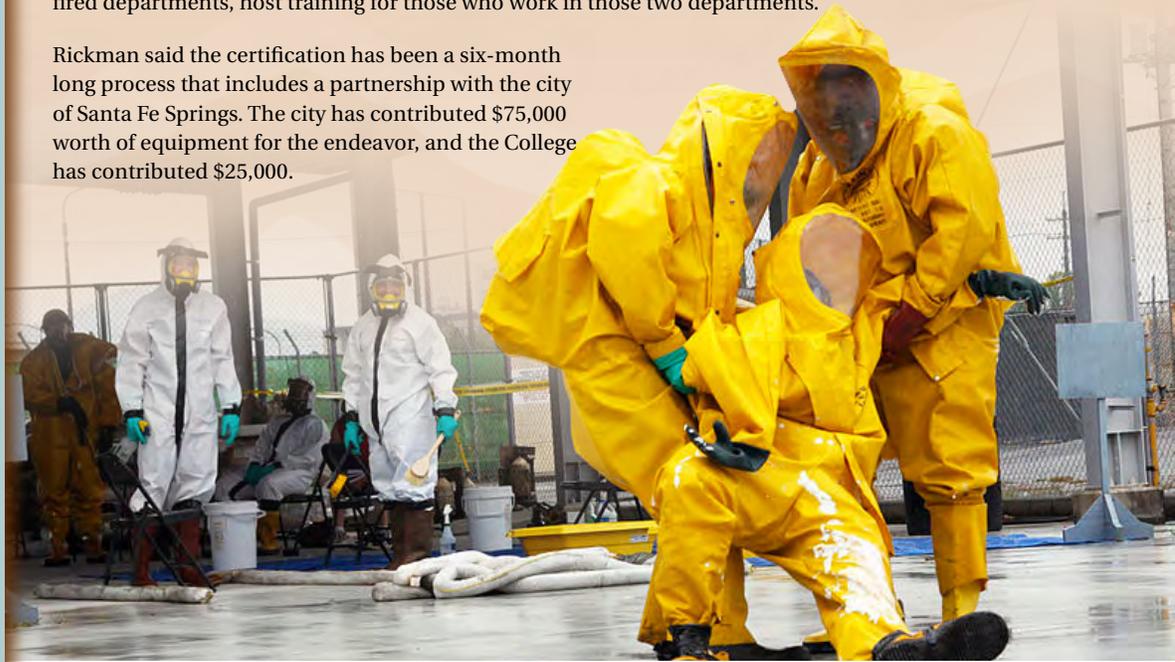
Rio Hondo College's Regional Homeland Security Facility is now one of only three facilities in Southern California to become a Hazardous Materials Certification site.

The California Specialized Training Institute, California Fire Marshall and California Emergency Management Agency visited the facility on Nov. 6, giving the green light for Rio Hondo College to certify first responders as hazardous materials technicians and specialists. Classes are scheduled to begin in March 2014.

"Most firefighters in Southern California have to go to San Luis Obispo or Sacramento to get their training and certification," said Fire Academy Coordinator Tracy Rickman. "Now, they'll be able to do their training here at Rio Hondo College, reducing costs for departments and municipalities."

While the Rio Hondo College facility is the third hazmat certification facility Southern California, it is the only one that will cater to all first-responder departments. The other two, the Los Angeles County and City fired departments, host training for those who work in those two departments.

Rickman said the certification has been a six-month long process that includes a partnership with the city of Santa Fe Springs. The city has contributed \$75,000 worth of equipment for the endeavor, and the College has contributed \$25,000.



## Chancellor Harris Visits Campus



On Nov. 5, Superintendent/President Dreyfuss hosted two events with California Community Colleges (CCC) Chancellor Brice Harris. The first event was a meeting that included CCC Board of Governors President Dr. Manuel Baca, and included a discussion of the Student Success Taskforce Recommendations and what steps our campus has taken to comply with these recommendations. Chancellor Harris, President Dreyfuss, and President Baca also discussed how each of these relate to Rio Hondo College.

The second event was a roundtable discussion that was chaired by Board Member Angela Acosta-Salazar for a group of Latina professionals affiliated with Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE). The purpose of this discussion was to enable the Chancellor to listen to concerns related to Latina student success and achievement, and to concerns related to supporting Latinas, who are aspiring to fill educational leadership positions, through the educational and professional pipeline.

The Chancellor had the opportunity to share his vision for what individual colleges and what the entire system needs to do, to provide support for Latina students, Latina professionals and other historically underrepresented segments of our state's population.

## State Senator Hosts ACA Talk at Wray Theatre



On Nov. 18 in the Wray Theatre, the Honorable State Sen. Dr. Ed Hernandez visited our campus to discuss the Affordable

Care Act (ACA) with a large group of students from various Behavioral and Social Science classes.

Political science professors Dr. Manuel Baca and Colin Young invited the senator and helped organize the visit. Nearly 200 students were in attendance to receive the latest updates with respect to the ACA.

## Moviemakers Screen Film at Wray Theatre



The director and cast of independent film "Geek USA" were on hand at the Wray Theatre Nov. 21 for a screening of the movie and a question-and-answer

session with the audience.

The movie, which was filmed last summer and used many Rio Hondo College students as extras, had its world premiere at the CBGB Film Festival in New York City. The screening at the Wray Theatre served as a 'thank you' to the College and its students before the west coast premiere.

Filmed on campus and at several local businesses in and around Whittier and Hacienda Heights, the film is a semi-autobiographical high school experience of writer Phillip Bladh. The movie, a quirky romantic comedy filled with '90s nostalgia, centers on a high school senior in a rock band who suddenly goes from having no social life to having three competitive dates for prom.

## Nursing Students Volunteer at Free Clinic

Nearly 40 students from the first- and second-year Associate Degree and Licensed Vocational nursing programs volunteered at Care Harbor LA, the largest free clinic held in California.

Over four days, 3,571 patients were seen and received 7,279 medical, dental and vision visits with treatment. Nearly 1,800 patients received influenza and/or tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis immunizations. More than 1,000 were provided with follow-up appointments or contacts.

Rio Hondo's nursing students arrived at 5:30 a.m. to start triaging clients and directing them toward available services. While there were many schools of nursing participating in Care Harbor, Rio Hondo's nursing students were the last student group remaining to provide intake and direction to late arrivals. After 12 long hours, the student volunteers were tired, yet exhilarated by the experience of touching so many lives.



## Men's Soccer League Champs

The Rio Hondo College men's soccer team just finished a highly successful Fall 2013 season. After being crowned Foothill Conference League 2013 champions with a league-best 12-4-5 record, the men's soccer team earned an opportunity in postseason play due to its outstanding regular season record. The Roadrunners won their first round match against Orange Coast College on Nov. 23. Although the men's soccer team fell short in its second round 3-0 loss to four-time defending state champion Mt. San Antonio College, it should be noted that the team progressed to the "Elite 8" for the entire Southern California Region and finished with an impressive 13-5-5 overall record.

Roadrunner Edward Maya was named Foothill Conference League Most Valuable Player. Roadrunners Alejandro Casas, Miguel Mendoza, Jaime Ayala, and Amisraim Valdez were named to 1st Team All Conference, while Erick Magana, Nicolas Andrade, Erick Barranco, and Makoto Shoji were named to 2nd Team All Conference. Congratulations to Coach Orlando Brenes, who was recognized as Foothill Conference 2013 Coach of the Year, the assistant coaches, and all of the players on another amazing season! Rio Hondo College is very proud of the season the men's team enjoyed and the future looks very bright for both coaches and players.

