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President's Message



Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr.

Congratulations to Professor John Frala, the recipient of the Advanced Transportation Technologies and Energy Leadership Award for 2011 at this year's Green California Community Colleges Summit. John's innovation and leadership over the years have helped Rio Hondo College become a leading center of the latest in sustainability concepts in community college automotive repair instruction.

With the removal of the construction fencing around the Upper Quad earlier this month, everyone has been enjoying this attractive new space. We cut the official ribbon to inaugurate this latest part of the campus landscape, which is embellished with approximately 3,900 drought-tolerant plants to complement the mature existing Sycamore trees. The new 'grand staircase' is especially inviting. Once we celebrate the opening of the new Student Services Building and Student Union early next year, the entire central portion of the campus will have been reconfigured.

As a legacy from the former Quad, approximately 20 Bird of Paradise plants were successfully transplanted to the central island at the main entrance on Campus Drive.

Student elections, Club Rush, Transfer Fair and Conference, and other celebrations in the Lower Quad signify a robust calendar of events for our students. Congratulations to our club advisors for their work with students to enhance their college experience. We know that the more our students engage with campus life, the more likely they are to succeed in their program of study and progress toward their goals.

I would like to express my appreciation to everyone who serves as a member of our safety team as a BEC or a BEL, and to those who participated in our preparations for campus emergency. Our building evacuation drill after the 'shakeout' earthquake exercise was a good test of our readiness. I am especially pleased with the efficiency of the new Emergency Notification System, which uses the Blackboard Connect system to send messages in three modalities: telephone; email; and text messages. The Blue Light Emergency Phone System is fully operational, adding yet another element of safety to our campus. We will schedule additional drills, usually once each semester.

Arts & Cultural Programs Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month with *Tres Vidas*



The Rio Hondo Arts & Cultural Programs developed a special event for Hispanic Heritage Month. On Monday, October 24 in the Wray Theater, there was a performance of *Tres Vidas*, a musical performance piece based on the lives of three Latin American women: Frida Kahlo, (Mexican painter) Rufina Amaya (Salvadoran activist), and Alfonsina Storni (Argentinean poet).

Board Meeting

At its October 13 Board Meeting, the Rio Hondo Board of Trustees heard two presentations regarding student success and California Community College Basic Skills Initiative. The California Community College Basic Skills Initiative is a comprehensive and strategic effort to serve the educational needs of the increasing number of California community college students entering college without basic skill competencies.



Dr. Robert Holcomb, Assistant Dean of Student Success and Retention (Basic Skills), presented information regarding Title V Hispanic-Serving Institution Grant funds and how Rio Hondo College is working to achieve increased levels of retention and success among basic skills students, and to prepare this population to succeed throughout more advanced courses of study.

He discussed college activities and programs geared toward creating and maintaining a strong focus, throughout the institution, on the core fundamentals of learning: reading, writing, math, ESL, learning strategies – which are being studied further to ensure positive results.



Dr. Kenn Pierson, Dean of the Division of Communications and Languages, also presented regarding strategies focused on student learning and development. As a member of the Developmental Education Taskforce at Rio Hondo, Dr. Pierson discussed how Basic Skills programs, among other creative teaching styles and methods, contribute not only to student success, but student completion at the community college level.

He updated the Board on learning theories that have been proven to work, support programs that are geared specifically toward Rio Hondo students, and curriculum changes that foster a collective progress among students.

Professor Frala Receives Prestigious State Leadership Award

Advanced Transportation Technologies and Energy Professor John Frala received the 2011 Leadership Award, in the Instructor category, at this year's Green California Community Colleges Summit in Pasadena Monday, October 17. The award honors Frala's "decade's-long work as an instructor who brings sustainability concepts into community college automotive repair instruction."

With more than 40 years of experience in the transportation and alternative fuels industry, Frala provides Rio Hondo students extensive knowledge and training in the latest and emerging technologies: "gasohol", ethanol blends, clean natural gas, liquefied natural gas, hydrogen, hybrid, all-electric, and biofuel construction and use. Further, his biofuel workshops at Rio Hondo have turned algae, grown in test tubes on campus, into a viable fuel for use in the College's diesel equipment.

"I have been given a gift by Rio Hondo College," said Frala. "That gift is to explore, and bring students, staff, local business, and local elected officials, the knowledge of environmental and automotive technology. By supporting me as an instructor of a very cutting edge technology, Rio Hondo allows me to contribute to the expansion of the ever-growing field of alternative fuels education."

The Leadership Award by the Green California Community Colleges Summit reflects the commitment the group has to providing students with hands-on exposure to new technologies, and to providing local communities with models of sustainability in practice. The Summit featured Carl Pope, Chairman of the Sierra Club, and Tom Torlakson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, as speakers.



The Great Rio Hondo ShakeOut and Evacuation Drill

On October 20, at 10:20 a.m., Rio Hondo College joined eight million participants throughout the State of California for the annual ShakeOut Earthquake Drill. The main goal of the ShakeOut Drill is to get Californians prepared for major earthquakes, and to provide an opportunity to learn what to do before, during, and after an earthquake.

Like other state-wide participants, at 10:20 a.m., Rio Hondo students, faculty, and staff were to asked to "Drop, Cover, and Hold On", wherever they were on campus, as if there was a major earthquake occurring in that moment. The ShakeOut simulation lasted for one minute, and was followed by an emergency evacuation drill campus-wide. The BEC and BEL Leaders – the Rio Hondo staff who assist by directing students and administrators to designated evacuation sites around campus – then led all participants to designated evacuation areas.

For tips on how to prepare, protect, and recover from an earthquake, visit http://www.earthquakecountry.info/roots/seven_steps.html.



Early Learning Mentor Coaches Impact Head Start Education



Members of the Rio Hondo Child Development adjunct faculty are currently serving as Early Learning Mentor Coaches for Los Angeles County Office of Education Head Start teachers, and are making a significant impact on how the teachers are facilitating cognitive skill development for their pupils. Outcome data based on work with the first cohort of teachers show statistically significant change in the Instructional Support (IS) category of the Classroom Learning Assessment Scale, where the teachers' post-mentoring scores were 47% higher than their pre-mentoring baseline scores, on average.

Furthermore, this finding is particularly significant because the IS category consists of cognitive skill areas such as analysis, reasoning, integration, open-ended questions, self-and parallel talk and language modeling.

The third cohort of the project, pictured here, began their coaching in October and met at Rio Hondo for an orientation conference hosted by the Pre-School Laboratory. We applaud the effective input the Rio Hondo Child Development coaches within such an important program.



Upper Quad Opens with Blue Light Emergency Phone Demonstration

After nearly 18 months of demolition, construction fencing and pedestrian detours, jackhammers, and heavy equipment noise, Rio Hondo College eagerly celebrated the newly-completed Upper Quad area with students, faculty, and administration on October 11. Construction is funded by the Measure A facilities construction bond approved by District voters in 2004.

Complete with lush new drought-tolerant landscaping to complement the remaining mature sycamore trees, the new quad is spacious enough to hold large student gatherings and meetings. Embellished with a new grand staircase, it connects and overlooks the new Lower Quad, which was opened to pedestrian traffic and student use last spring, and the new Student Center complex, which will open after the winter break.

Students helped demonstrate another early-anticipated feature, a new system of 27 solar-powered Blue Light Emergency Phones throughout campus. (Two additional phones will be installed when other construction is completed.) The demonstration included an inaugural test call from ASB President, Zeus Galindo, to the Security Office. A few minutes later, a campus security officer arrived on scene. Even if the caller is unable to speak, the operator in the Security Center will be able to identify the location of the call.

Blue Light Phone towers are located throughout campus parking lots while the in-building units will be found in the new Student Services, Student Union and Physical Education buildings. The phone network supplements the recently implemented electronic emergency notification system, as well as the existing escort service, where students can contact campus security to be escorted to their cars after evening class.



Rio Hondo College Foundation News



What is the President's Circle at Rio Hondo College?

The President's Circle was established to recognize donors who support Rio Hondo College. As the leading giving circle of the College, President's Circle members annually support the Foundation at giving levels of \$1,000 or more. Contributions build financial support for the Foundation's general fund, which supports the mission and activities of the College.

What are the benefits of being a President's Circle member?

President's Circle members receive recognition in the College Annual Report and other Foundation publications. Members are invited to attend College and other special events throughout the year. Members also receive dedicated communications from the Foundation regarding the state of the college and activities of the campus community.

If you would like to join or need more information, please contact Kerry Franco, Executive Director at 562.908.3476 or email at kfranco@riohondo.edu.

Rio Hondo Honors Students Gather at Fall Honors Luncheon

Approximately 35 Honors students attended the annual Fall Honors Luncheon on Wednesday. Honors faculty were awarded for their service, the Honors Coordinator and Counselor shared information about upcoming Honors events, and three Rio Hondo Honors alumnae shared their experiences about what comes after completion of the program.

Alumnae presentations included:

Alice Yuang is a graduate of Columbia University in New York City. Alice transferred to Columbia from Rio Hondo and graduated with a degree in Religious Studies. She provided advice on looking into non-traditional private schools, which students don't normally consider and the rigors of moving from an area like Whittier to big city New York. Alice is currently back at Rio Hondo taking Statistics and other classes to prepare her for the LSAT, the law school admissions exam.

Elizabeth Fasthorse is a graduate of UCLA with a Bachelor's Degree in American Indian Studies. She shared her experiences as a returning, non-traditional student at Rio Hondo who then moved on to a very large school like UCLA. She advised students to set up a strict and regimented schedule that still allows time for fun and extracurricular involvement. Elizabeth is currently a graduate student at UCLA.

Susana Plascencia is a 2011 graduate of Rio Hondo who is currently in her first semester at USC. She was also a recipient of the Carlos and Felicia Rodriguez Scholarship awarded last Spring. Susana is a Communications Studies major at USC and discussed how her early successes in classwork at USC have increased her confidence and made her feel that she belongs with all of her peers at USC.

Fall Athletic Programs Roundup

The Fall Roadrunner Athletic Program is well underway, and doing great, says Interim Dean of Physical Education and Athletic Director, Larry Mercadante. All five Fall sports teams are "working hard, having fun, and remaining competitive in the classroom and in their respective leagues."

- **Women's Volleyball** – Coached by Teddi Esko who was voted Foothill Conference Coach of the Year in 2010, the Roadrunner's Women's Volleyball team, composed of 13 students, is very competitive. Their lively games attract many fans, and they remain viable contenders in their conference.
- **Women's Soccer** – Equally competitive, and likely to reach the Foothill Conference playoffs this season, is the 18-player women's soccer team, coached by Jennifer Tanaka. Currently, the Roadrunner's Women's Soccer team is tied for third in their conference.
- **Women's Water Polo** – Coached by Mike Hinze, the eight-women Roadrunner Water Polo team remains very engaged in their season, working hard to develop new strategies to keep the team successful this season and beyond.



- **Men's Soccer** – Coached by Orlando Brenes, the Roadrunner Men's Soccer team remains one of the finest soccer programs in the Foothill Conference and in Southern California – having won many Foothill Conference titles in recent years. They remain a highly competitive and strong team this year as well, currently in third place.
- **Men's Wrestling** – Though a large team, each person of the 38-student Roadrunners' Wrestling team is very successful in their conference. Coached by Mike Tellez, many individuals on the team will go on to wrestle in regional and state conference matches this season.

Library Features Dia de los Muertos Display

Karen Bourgaize, part-time Librarian and Library Display coordinator, organized a "Dia de los Muertos" display in the Library foyer. The display featured books and items specific to the celebration. The main features of the display included paintings and figures by Irene Torres, artist and Schedule Technician in the Office of Instructional Operations at Rio Hondo College.

Irene's artwork depicts her perception of life after we depart from this world. When she begins a painting, she focuses on how the subject lived and the beauty he or she exhibited. The purpose behind her work is to communicate that death isn't a final farewell, and can be viewed with a light and hopeful heart. The display continued throughout the month of October. Congratulations Irene!

