

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2017



President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

The strengths of Rio Hondo College's campus community were demonstrated during September, as we stood together to remember the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, expressed our unwavering support for students in the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, supported students who come from foster homes and gathered with our K-12 colleagues.

It's quite amazing how the students, faculty, staff and administrators of Rio Hondo College come together – even in such a brief time after the fall semester begins – to form this community. Our campus becomes a place of trust, honor and support, not only for the higher-education mission we all

share, but for the goals we set to make our world a more just and compassionate place to live.

Throughout my tenure at Rio Hondo College, that belief and its tangible expression through events and gatherings such as these have been an ever-present element of our campus, a reminder that we are all in this together.

I like to think that when our students depart Rio Hondo College for advanced academics or fulfilling careers, that they bring these non-classroom lessons with them to share with their new communities. I'm always heartened when I meet Rio Hondo College grads and they share stories of their time here and the lasting impact of those days on their lives. It's a humbling and emotionally fulfilling experience.

More than 450 Students Enroll in the Rio Promise Program

Rio Hondo College welcomed more than 450 students as part of its inaugural class of Rio Promise scholars, a program that waives first-year tuition for 2017 graduates of area high schools and offers special support services.

"We are thrilled that so many local students are taking advantage of the Rio Promise," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Our mission is to ensure our community has access to all the possibilities offered by higher education, and the Rio Promise is already becoming a key element in that effort."

Similar tuition waivers have been offered this year at several other community colleges, prompting legislation at the state to extend first-year tuition waivers for all community college students. Assembly Bill 19 passed both houses of the Legislature and is awaiting Gov. Jerry Brown's approval to take effect.

If signed, the tuition waivers would be available to an estimated

19,000 first-year students at the state's 113-campus community college system.

Activist groups are lobbying for the bill, along with related measures that would benefit students shielded from deportation under the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which is being phased out over the next six months by the White House.



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Board Report

Rio Hondo College's Board of Trustees recognized the top two winners of the Marketing and Communications Department's "Why I Love Rio!" video contest at their September meeting.



The winners are students Justin Chow, first place, and Jerome Pantaleon, second place.

The two students expressed their heartfelt thanks to Rio Hondo College for caring about students and for giving them the opportunity to showcase why they love Rio. The contest drew entries from more than 20 students in less than a month.

In addition to the contest prize, Chow also landed a summer and fall internship at the Marketing and Communications department. The College will hold another student video contest again in spring.

College Stands by DACA Students

Rio Hondo College reiterated its commitment to stand by its students in September after U.S. President Donald Trump announced his plan to phase out the Federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that allowed the children of undocumented workers to receive scholarships and work legally in the U.S.

RIO IN THE NEWS! Click here to read more about Rio Hondo's Healing Circle in the *Whittier Daily News*.

In a letter to students, Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss pledged to students that the College would remain a safe haven for them.

"Rio Hondo College has been, is, and will remain an inclusive space in which all persons are welcomed and invited to engage in constant learning and open dialogue," Dreyfuss wrote. "Our continuous care for students is what motivated us to become leaders in education and advocates for our students."

The statements echo the College's commitment to students made in November 2016 after the election of Trump.

The College has posted a template on its [website](#) for a letter supporting DACA that students can send to Congressional legislators.



Art Show Reception Celebrates Latino Artists



Rio Hondo College Gallery held a reception on Sept. 12 to celebrate its participation as one of the host galleries for the 2017 SUR:biennial exhibit featuring works by Luis G. Hernández, Margaret Griffith, Maria Rendón, Albert Lopez Jr., Ruben Millares and Lino Martinez.

SUR:biennial is a multi-venue exhibition presented in conjunction

with Pacific Standard Time: Latin American & Latino Art in LA. Showcases include Cerritos College Art Gallery and Torrance Art Museum. The show runs through Friday, Oct. 13.

Focusing on artists influenced and/or impacted by cultures from south of the U.S. border, SUR aims to expand Los Angeles' importance as a critical epicenter in today's decentralized art scene.

The artists' videos, paintings, installations and performances declare the limitations of the physical and constructed spaces of home, text, barrio, body and art gallery. The works explore the possibilities of invisibility, flexible boundaries, open constructions and imagined spaces.

Many of the works are new to Southern California audiences. Most exhibitions will emphasize modern and contemporary art; some will highlight the ancient world and pre-modern era. Topics include luxury objects in the pre-Columbian Americas, 20th century Afro-Brazilian art, alternative spaces in Mexico City and boundary-crossing practices of Latino artists.

RIO IN THE NEWS! Click here to read more about Rio Hondo's 2017 SUR:biennial exhibit in *Art and Cake Magazine*.



College Community Marks 9/11 Anniversary

Rio Hondo College marked the anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks with memorial events hosted by the Associated Students of Rio Hondo College (ASRHC), Police Academy Class 206 and Fire Academy Class 89.



The first program, held at the Whittier campus, included the San Gabriel Valley Memorial Team and was emceed by U.S. Air Force veteran Robert Diaz.

Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss led a moment of silence after sharing with the students and staff about the importance of remembering those who perished 16 years ago in 2001. She recounted her experience the morning of Sept. 11 on campus, and concluded her remarks by thanking all the armed forces for their services.

ASRHC President Martin Covarrubias and Student Trustee Pariss Youngblood delivered heartfelt remarks, as did Navy Corpsman Daniel Ramos, Navy Seabee Dominic Lopez and Marine Helicopter Crew Chief Antonio Guzman.

Student David Watson sang the National Anthem and Amazing Grace. Diaz closed the event by dedicating the memorial to Jose Ramos, founder of Welcome Home U.S. Vietnam Veterans at Rio Hondo College. Ramos passed in early September.

Fire cadets held their event at the Fire Training Center. In a small ceremony, they raised the colors, placed them at half-staff, rang bells and placed a wreath to salute the 343 New York firefighters who lost their lives on Sept. 11.

Class members, clad in full turnout gear, also climbed the four-story training center tower 27 ½, the equivalent of climbing the 110-story World Trade Center's twin towers destroyed in the attack.



Guardian Scholars Connect for Fall Semester



Students in Rio Hondo College's Guardian Scholar program, which supports current and former foster youths, attended a retreat on Sept. 15-17 in Big Bear Lake focused on support, connections, strength and perseverance.

Led by Counselor/Coordinator Marisela Saenz and Foster and Kinship Care Education & Independent Living Program

Specialist, Deborah Lopez along with three staff members, the retreat spotlighted the knowledge and tools to set goals, student responsibilities and ways to identify and access support services.

Topics included:

- ▶ Realizing that you are not alone regarding the adversity you experience;
- ▶ Letting go of unresolved issues that may hold you back from your potential; and
- ▶ Recognizing that you possess the strength to conquer any hurdle in college and in life.

Students also had the opportunity to build support networks among peers while taking part in a variety of individual and team-building activities, including a high-ropes course, canoeing and archery. By the end of the weekend, valuable friendships were forged.

The retreat was made possible through Student Equity Funding in collaboration with the California Community College Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS) Grant.

The retreat was the program's second event of the fall. On Aug. 16, a student conference entitled "Fostering Resiliency" was held for new and continuing students.

Executive Dean of Counseling and Student Services Mike Muñoz welcomed students during morning remarks; the event's inspirational facilitator was Nikita Gupta, UCLA educator, mentor and resilience expert.

The program focused on thriving on campus. Students gained effective tools to support a growth mindset as well as skills to empower themselves to persist through challenges in college and beyond. Students also enjoyed lunch, received college supplies and learned about the Burton Book Fund, which aids of up to \$250 to buy textbooks.



Kinesiology Program Uses Fitness Bands in Student Training



Rio Hondo College is the only community college in California that provides students with health-monitoring wristbands during workouts.

The system, which launched this fall, provides AccuroFit wristbands during workouts that provide data on heart rate and calories burned. Students receive an email with the data after the workout as well as a monthly fitness report.

Wristbands are provided during two certificate programs: Fitness Specialist and Coaching of Sports. The College is adding several other certificate programs in Yoga Teacher Training, Strength and Performance Coach, and Health Care Worker that will use the bands to train students in using the new technology.

The wristbands will be especially effective in understanding the benefit of a working heart rate, according to Rio Hondo College kinesiology professor Kathy Pudelko, fitness center coordinator. Students said the bands helped them to focus on their workouts.

Gallery Exhibit Chronicles Artist's Battle with Cancer

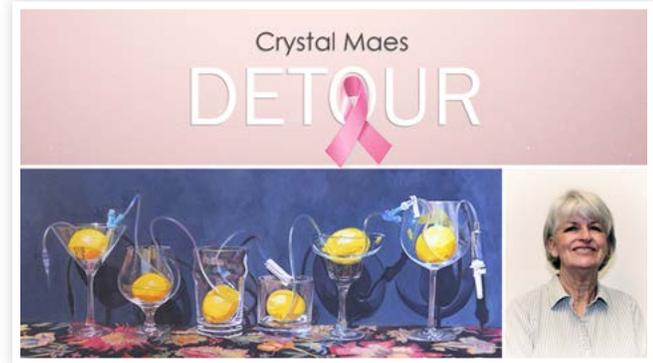
A series of 10 still-life paintings by Crystal Maes on display at the Rio Hondo Gallery recount the artist's journey through months of physical pain and uncertainty as she battled cancer.

With a BA in art and a BFA in illustration and graphic design, Crystal Maes works daily with color, design and typography as a professional graphic artist for Rio Hondo College's Marketing and Communications department. She brings to her artistic work more than 30 years of quilting and textile background.

In 2013, when Maes was diagnosed with breast cancer, she took time off to have surgery and undergo chemotherapy and radiation treatment. She decided to tell her story through still-life paintings. She visualized each process of the emotional and physical challenges she encountered. She painted the highs and lows of her journey by depicting the different procedures and treatment stages she underwent.

In the tradition of still-life paintings of the Dutch Golden Age, each work explodes with "illusory flavors, glints of light, dazzling reflections and the vivid scent of lemons," according to Rio Hondo College art and art history professor Sheila Lynch. But, unlike those 17th century memento mori paintings, which contain symbols designed to remind viewers of their own mortality, Maes' paintings are memento vivere: reminders of life.

"Maes creates a close, intimate space within each skillfully arranged composition, allowing the objects to communicate directly with the viewer," Lynch said. "Through the works, the painter tells of how while trying to cope with the loss of part of her body, trusted the mastery of her craft to keep herself whole and be a gift to others."



College Hosts Area School Administrators

Rio Hondo College highlighted its newest programs during an annual breakfast for Whittier Area School Administrators held Sept. 8 at the Rio Café to launch the fall semester.

Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss described how the College has launched the Rio Promise, which offers free

first-year tuition to area high school graduates, the impact of its Summer Bridge college transition program and the addition of degrees offered.

"Rio Hondo College is an inclusive campus where ALL are welcomed and invited to engage in constant learning and open dialogue," Dreyfuss said. "Our continuous care for students is what motivated us to become leaders in education and advocates for our students."



The College's Promise program has expanded the opportunity of higher education to more than 450 students in its first year; a similar number of students took part in the Summer Bridge program, which about 20 percent boosting math placements after taking part in workshops.

Dreyfuss also noted the expansion of College offerings to 53 associate degrees, 24 associate degrees for transfer, 70 certificate programs and a Bachelor of Science program in automotive technology. In addition, the College received a \$778,000 National Science Foundation grant to expand technician training in its automotive tech program.

Dreyfuss told the gathered administrators that the College is providing support and resources to Rio Hondo College students as part of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which President Trump recently announced would be phased out in six months. The College has a webpage solely dedicated to Dreamers, available by [clicking here](#).

She also introduced new deans and a new vice president who have joined her administrative team.

Connect with Us on Social Media



RHCRoadrunners



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RioHondoCollege



Rio Hondo College YT Channel



bit.do/riohondocollege



#iLoveRioHondo

Serving the communities of

- El Monte
- Santa Fe Springs
- South El Monte
- Whittier
- Pico Rivera

and portions of:

- Norwalk
- East Whittier*
- Downey
- South Whittier*
- La Mirada
- West Whittier*
- City of Industry
- Avocado Heights*
- Los Nietos*

*Unincorporated communities within our District

Mission Statement

Rio Hondo College is committed to the success of its diverse students and communities by providing dynamic educational opportunities and resources that lead to degrees, certificates, transfer, career and technical pathways, basic skills proficiency, and lifelong learning.

Save the Date



10:18 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 18:

The Great California Shake Out, Rio Hondo College

1 and 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 19:

Works in Progress Dance Concert, a showcase of student dance, Wray Theater

12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 24:

Town hall on food access and student success, Student Union-201

1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 24:

Grand opening of food pantry, the RIOSOURCE ROOM A-Building

Wednesday, Oct. 25 to Wednesday, Nov. 22:

Excavation: a group art project, Rio Hondo Gallery

7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 26

Reception for Excavation: a group art project, Rio Hondo Gallery

Through Friday, Oct. 27:

Detour: An exhibit chronicling artist Crystal Maes' physical and emotional challenges during her breast cancer journey, Rio Hondo Gallery

6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8:

Board of Trustees meeting, Rio Hondo College



8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 16 to Saturday, Nov. 18, 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 19:

"Our Country's Good," fall play, Wray Theater

7:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 20:

Joel Garcia, director of programs and operations of L.A.-based Self Help Graphics, presents The Art of Indigenous Resistance: Inspiring the Protection of Mother Earth, Wray Theater

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 21:

Frank and Friends jazz performance with Rio Hondo College guitar professor Frank Accardo, Wray Theater

7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 30:

Fall concert by RHC Concert and Chamber Choirs, Ariel Ramirez' Spanish mass, "Misa Criola," and a feature of Haydn's "Te Deum," Wray Theater

Art History, Theater Students Trek to Getty for Performance

Rio Hondo College students of art history and theatre arts took part in the J. Paul Getty Museum's annual classical Greek theater production series on Sept. 19.

Students of professors Sheila Lynch and Matt Schleicher's classes attended an invitation-only matinee performance of the play "Iphigenia in Aulis" by Euripides. Performed at the Getty Villa's outdoor Greek theater, the play was followed by a lively Q&A panel with the cast and a private self-guided tour of the museum's collection of antiquities.

Students and faculty were accompanied by RHC theater technician Jennifer Scott who contributed to the Getty Villa's 2013 production of "Prometheus Bound" as part of the team that built the 25-foot-tall, 5-ton steel wheel to which Prometheus would be bound during each performance. To view video of the wheel, [click here](#).

