

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

MARCH 2018



President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

If I had to pick a theme for Rio Hondo College in March, it would be empowering students. So much of what we accomplished resonates with this idea, which is a central tenet to our mission. By giving students an opportunity to share their ideas to map their futures and explore new possibilities, we are empowering them to become the leaders of our community well into the future.

We saw this in our *Avance* program, now in its second year. In spring, students in the program were guided in an effort to visualize their paths to the future. The program builds on our other services that are designed to support them as they pursue those goals.

This idea was also very much in evidence during the 23rd Women's History Month Conference, themed Young Women on the Rise. It also plays a role in our highly regarded Forensics Speech and Debate Team's continued success – teaching students that they can excel against the very best the nation has to offer – and in our hosting of the Southern California Regional Science Olympiad.

It's a great message to send to our new students, to our potential students and one represented so well by our graduates: Rio Hondo College students can tackle any challenge and succeed.

College Hosts 23rd Annual Women's Conference

Rio Hondo College joined with Whittier Union High School District and Soroptimist International on March 2 to host its 23th annual Women's History Month Conference, themed this year as Young Women on the Rise.



The event included welcome remarks from Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, a keynote address by a Rio Hondo College trustee and workshops on such issues as healthy relationships, the power of art, human trafficking, life after high school, harassment and cyber safety and living in the hook-up culture.

Dreyfuss talked of immigrating to the U.S. and rising to a position where most office holders are men.

"As the ninth Superintendent/President of the Rio Hondo Community College District, it has been a long journey," she said. "I moved up to my current leadership position with a lot of hard work and persistence, step by step, always doing and being my best in every position I had – even when I was a part-time faculty member – I gave it all I got."

Dreyfuss, who holds an MBA from the University of La Verne, encouraged students to pursue a higher education.

"Education has been my ticket to succeed, along with my strong work ethic, discipline and determination," she said.

Also speaking at the event were history Professor Ea Madrigal and sociology Professor Melissa Rifino-Juarez, a professor in Behavioral & Social Sciences. Madrigal talked about "Standing on the Shoulders of Those Who Came Before." Rifino-Juarez spoke on the issue of consent.



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Board Report

Board of Trustees members designated Dr. Jennifer Fernandez as the 2018 Fellow of the College, attorney Ricardo Perez as recipient of the 2018 Distinguished Service Award and staff development coordinator Katie O'Brien as recipient of the 2018 Distinguished Faculty Award.

Fernandez retired in 2017 after serving Rio Hondo College for 31 years and four months. She helped students while serving in a variety of roles, including director of student activities, a counselor for the Fire and Police Academy and Administration of Justice programs, the Whittier Educational Center coordinator and interim dean of student affairs.

Perez is a Downey attorney who has helped guide Rio Hondo College's Pathway to Law program, including serving as a mentor to students. In 2017, he was keynote speaker at the College's 54th commencement ceremony.

O'Brien, who has worked for the College since 1988, serves as a counselor, professor and staff development coordinator.

Board members received an update on Rio Hondo College's new partnership with Tesla. The partnership, in which the College will train students to service Tesla vehicles, began its first 12-week class on March 1. The class is just one of two in the nation and the only one in California. So far, 11 students are enrolled, including four women and seven men.



As part of the program, students are equipped with laptops, hard tools, uniforms and vouchers for steel-toe shoes; they are also paid \$12 an hour. Tesla's goal is to graduate 100 students from the program in 2018 and expand to 300 to 500 in its second year.

By 2020, all new Tesla hires will be required to go through the 12-week program. Rio Hondo College is developing a certificate of achievement for graduates.

Avance Students Explore Academic Disciplines

Students in Rio Hondo College's cutting edge *Avance* program enrolled in the College's first-ever First-Year Seminar course this semester to explore an academic discipline aligned with their intended area of study.

Avance, launched in 2016-17, is designed to expand Rio Hondo College's capacity for fostering student success through a year-long integrated and connected success pathway to help first-year students persist into their second year.

As part of the new course, students and faculty gathered at the Wray Theater in March for presentations of the turning points in their fields of study. The presentations followed a format known as PechaKucha, in which 20 images are shown on a screen for 20 seconds each while a narrator speaks. The format keeps presentations brief and focused.

First-Year Seminar faculty members Rudy Rios, Ea Madrigal, Sheila Lynch, Melissa Rifino-Juarez and Robert Bethel discussed pivotal topics that changed the discourse in their respective fields.

Topics included the advent of the internet and its daily impact upon global commerce; the introduction of the Declaration of Sentiments at the first women's rights convention at Seneca Falls; the wonder of photography as it both magnifies and expands our worldview as we swallow pill cameras and launch probes to Saturn; the shifting definition of family as technology allows such alternatives as gender reassignment surgery and robotic spouses; and the pioneering work of Charles Darwin that led to his theory of adaptation by natural selection.



1,000 Students Compete in Science Olympiad at Rio Hondo College

Rio Hondo College on March 3 hosted more than 2,000 students, teachers and family members for the Southern California Regional Science Olympiad.

About 1,000 students on 80 teams competed in 46 events, earning 276 medals. Trophies were awarded to the six highest-scoring teams in each division; these teams advance to the state Science Olympiad competition.

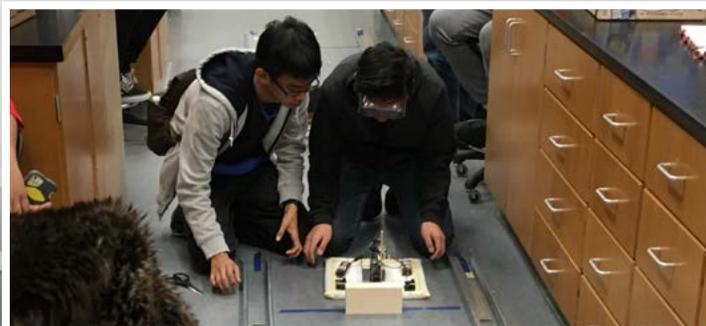
The high school teams advancing to state are:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. North Hollywood | 3. Diamond Bar | 5. Walnut |
| 2. Glen Wilson | 4. Arcadia | 6. Temple City |

The middle school teams advancing to state are:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Dana | 3. Mesa Robles | 5. Edgewood |
| 2. Sierra Madre | 4. Chaparral | 6. La Canada |

More than 50 Rio Hondo College faculty, staff and administrators assisted in hosting the event.



Forensics Speech and Debate Team Ranks 3rd in State



Rio Hondo College's Forensics Speech and Debate Team has been ranked third in California following its strong showing in the California Community College Forensics Association (CCCFA) State Championship, held March 7-11.

The College took home eight individual and team awards, including a gold in National Forensic Association (NFA LD) one-on-one policy debate, and a silver and two bronzes for parliamentary-style (parli) team debates.

AWARDS

Bronze International Public Debate Association: Jonathan Kaldas;
Bronze Parli Team: Edward Minasyan and Rudy Juarez-Pinedo, Jonathan Kaldas and Saul Garcia; **Silver Parli Team:** Dylan Logas and Gabriela Rodriguez; **Gold NFA LD:** Saul Garcia; **Speakers awards:** third, Edward Minasyan; fifth, Jonathan Kaldas; 17th, Rodolfo Juarez-Pinedo.

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 **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



8:30 a.m. Friday, April 20:
Dreamers Conference. Register here:
bit.ly/DreamersConference

6 p.m. Friday, April 27:
A Taste of Rio. Purchase tickets at
www.riohondofoundation.org

10:45 a.m. Thursday, May 3:
All Campus Active Shooter Preparedness Drill

6 p.m. Thursday, May 24:
55th annual Commencement Ceremony with Assembly Majority Leader Ian Calderon as keynote speaker

10-year-old Author Enthralls Campus Audience

Ten-year-old Diego Peña, who wrote a book on autism at age 9, discussed his book and his life with autism during a presentation to more than 100 students, faculty, staff and family members at Rio Hondo College on March 15.

Diego's mother, Dr. Edlyn Peña, is the director of the Autism and Communication Center at California Lutheran University. She presented a video on Diego's life as well as information about her duties at Cal Lutheran.

Following the presentations, Diego, who uses an Augmentative/Alternative Communication device, an iPad and other electronic tools to communicate, answered student questions. Diego presented with his communication partner, Amanda Johnson. Here are some exchanges from the Q & A:

Q: Are you going to write another book?

A: Can I hire a personal assistant first?

Q: How do the other kids treat you in school?

A: I am one of the homies.

Q: What is your goal?

A: To stop hatred.

Q: Do you think you will overcome autism?

A: I am learning to love my autism.

Diego signed and sold copies of his book, "Anatomy of Autism," at the event's conclusion.



Summer 2018 Registration in Full Swing

Register now to reserve your seat at accessriopro.riohondo.edu. If you wait until the last minute, your course might not be available.

Visit bit.ly/RHC-Summer2018 to view our Summer 2018 schedule.

Important dates and deadlines can be found on the link below (choose "Summer Semester" on the drop down menu):

www.riohondo.edu/admissions/important-dates-and-deadlines/.

If you require help with registration, please call Counseling Center at 562-908-3410 or visit us at SS-160.

