

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

JUNE 2018



President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

June is a time of many transitions at Rio Hondo College as our May commencement celebrations give way to the start of our summer session and preparations for fall. We are officially underway for the 2018-19 academic year, which means staff members also are busily preparing for the fall semester.

Because of this, June is an especially great time to acknowledge some of the College's many extraordinary faculty members, and to note our upcoming outreach efforts to share the College's message of possibility with our community.

This issue of our monthly update does both, offering a small dosage of the passion that makes Rio Hondo College so effective at connecting with students and helping them discover their dreams.

To the many members of our team who are enjoying a break to recharge and prepare for fall, thank you for all you do. We are already looking forward to your return.

To the staff, faculty and administrators who remain on the job through the summer, thank you for your continued dedication and talents.

Professor Wins Martha Vineyard Writing Contest

Rio Hondo College Spanish Professor Mariano Zaro attended the Martha's Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing's 2018 Summer Seminar, reviewing writing techniques, collaborating with fellow writers and receiving guidance on his own work.

Zaro, who serves as co-club adviser to Rio Hondo College's Creative Writing Club, received free tuition and housing for the exclusive weeklong seminar after taking first place in the Institute's 2018 Writing Contest with a short story titled "Ninamiel/Honeygirl."

"I always wanted to go to this seminar," Zaro said. "It was a great experience. They have classes on poetry and fiction writing in the morning and in the afternoon, and you share a house with five or six fellow writers. You get to know these writers really well and you share your writing with them."

Zaro said highlights of the event included receiving feedback from the Institute on a collection of short stories he is revising for publication and learning about lyrical essay writing from author, teacher and poetry editor Christopher Citro.

The format, he said, blends poetry with the factual strength of an essay.

"I thought it was a fascinating form," Zaro said. "You can create more elliptical connections."

On the event's last day, each of the roughly 25 writers in attendance joined in reading their works aloud.

Zaro, who is the author of four bilingual books of poetry, has had his work showcased in a number of anthologies and journals. He is known throughout Los Angeles for his video interviews of prominent American poets, conducted since 2010 as part of the Poetry.LA project.

He will publish two new books of poetry – "Decoding Sparrows," a book of English poems in October 2019; and "Padre Tierra," a book of Spanish poems that will be released between July and September 2019.

His **winning short story** was originally published 10 years ago. It tells the story of children who go to the river to swim together, including a disabled girl, and the girl's later death. Zaro said he wove the compelling piece from elements of his own childhood in Northern Spain.

"All of the elements in the story are from my own biography, but they are blended in this character," he said.



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Board Update



Rio Hondo College's Board of Trustees conferred its Distinguished Service Award, congratulated students for their efforts in journalism and speech, reviewed an update on basic skills support programs and bid farewell to a retiree during their June 13 meeting.

The Distinguished Service Award was given to a local attorney Ricardo Perez, who has helped lead Rio Hondo College's Pathway to Law School program. The program creates a

bridge for students from community college to four-year university to a top California law school.

Perez, who also served as Rio Hondo College's 2017 commencement speaker, mentors students and provides much guidance to the pathway program.

The board also lauded students participating on the *El Paisano* newspaper for their print and broadcast journalistic excellence. The team included: Aaron Martinez, Angelica Perez, Autumn Lewis, Diana Juarez, Jake Laurell, Jose Ahumada, Olivia Venegas, Sara Tabarez, Brayan Altamirano, Anthony Moreno, Cynthia Rizo, Ignacio Cervantes, James Spencer, Noah Garcia, Ramon Alvarado, Sabrina Torres, Vincent Franco and Malena Lopez. Adviser Wendy Carrera guides the newspaper.

Members of the Rio Hondo College Forensics Speech and Debate team were honored for their success at the 2018 Phi Rho Pi National Championships. Team members include Saul Garcia, Jonathan Kaldas, Gabriela Rodriguez, Edward Minasyan, Melissa Gonzalez, Rodolfo Juarez-Pineda, Vince Sampieri, Edgar Minasyan and Dylan Logas. The team is advised by Coach Grant Tovmasian, a Rio Hondo College professor who received the Collie-Taylor Award at the event for outstanding coaching.

Board members also heard about plans to consolidate a series of student support programs into a single effort in 2018-19. The programs include the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), Student Equity and Basic Skills Initiative (BSI).

The programs are part of an array of support efforts at the Rio Hondo College, and have shown success in guiding students.

An SSSP pilot effort launched in fall 2017 to ensure students who need help are referred to guidance showed a jump in success rate for at-risk students.

A Student Equity program called Reaching Institutionalized Students through Education (RISE) has helped formerly incarcerated students or those impacted by the criminal justice system navigate the challenges of higher education. Rio Hondo College works with a local legal nonprofit and the Los Angeles Public Defender's Office on the project.



Rio Hondo College's multiple-measures program targets basic skills. The effort allows students to go beyond a single test when being evaluated for enrollment in basic English, reading or math placement.

Board members also thanked Lead Testing Technician Eva Menchaca for her 29 years of service. Menchaca joined Rio Hondo College in March 1989 as a clerk typist. She was promoted five years later to the role

of instruction assistant, communications; six months later, she became a testing technician and, in 2016, became lead testing technician.

The board members appointed Diana Laureano as the 2018-19 student trustee.



Foundation Donors Lauded at Annual Meeting



Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss welcomed more than 50 guests to the Rio Hondo College Foundation Annual Meeting and President's Circle Reception on June 28, awarding donor pins to eight

new members of the President's Circle in recognition of contributions totaling 1,000 or more.

Dr. Carmella Franco will lead the incoming 2018-2019 Board of Directors of the Rio Hondo College Foundation as its president. Dreyfuss will continue as a Foundation Board member, along with the president of the Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees and plus nine members from Rio Hondo College and the greater community.

Speeches of gratitude and resilience by 2018 graduates Justin Chow and Yarisma Rocha capped off the event.

Also in attendance were members of the Board of Trustees; Henry Gee, vice president of student services; Vann Priest, dean of mathematics, sciences and engineering; Catherine Page, dean of health sciences & nursing; Mark Yokoyama, dean of public safety; Walt Allen, director of the police academy; Ruthie Retana, director of marketing & communications; Gary Van Voorhis, director of IT; Barbara Salazar, outgoing MCC president; Cecilia Rocha, incoming MCC president; Loy Nashua, executive director of human resources; Mark Matsui, director of disabled student program and services; emeriti Don Jenkins, Yosh Nakamura, Ellie Bewley and Judy Sanders; Foundation board members and staff; and Rio Hondo College faculty members.



Instructor Praised for Rosa Parks Documentary

Rio Hondo College instructor and filmmaker Angela S. Williamson, Ph.D. is screening her first documentary – "My Life with Rosie," about her cousin Rosa Parks – which won grand prize for best documentary at the Culver City Film Festival and audience award for best documentary at the Silicon Beach Film Festival.

Three upcoming screenings will be held in Las Vegas – the Action on Film International Film Festival and the Hollywood Dreamz International Film Festival in August and the Silver State Film Festival in September.

In February, Williamson was featured in Women Who Rock with Success Magazine and CUI Magazine. In March, she was featured on the PBS program "Civil Women" on Empire KVCR. In April, she was featured in the Black Women's History Month edition of Black Girls Allowed magazine and The Record magazine for PEO International, a nonprofit specializing in women's scholarships.

In February 2019, Williamson will speak and screen her documentary at Concordia University Irvine. She is currently on a speaking tour visiting California chapters of PEO International to discuss her film journey.



College to Host Boys & Girls Club Members for Camp Rio



Rio Hondo College will host up to 45 members of the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier at Camp Rio, an exploration into an array of academic programs, including science, career technical education and physical fitness activities.

The program was piloted in 2016 and officially launched in 2017. This year, it expands to focus on exciting project-based learning summer activities designed to inspire interest by children ages 11-13 in college attendance.

The program will run from 12:30 to 5 p.m. Monday, July 16 through Thursday, July 19.

Students will choose one of three different tracks: coding, design/printmaking and electronic music. All students will participate in afternoon activities that include soccer, volleyball and basketball.

On Thursday, July 19, students will present projects created during their weeklong immersive experience and enjoy a trip to the Fitness Center pool along with a closing celebration.

Participating students also will receive T-shirts, baseball caps and backpacks.

The camp is supported by a donation from the BCM Foundation, a Whittier-based community support organization.

College Hosts Foster Care Awareness Programs

Rio Hondo College's Foster/Kinship Care Education (FKCE) and Resource Programs and Guardian Scholars Program celebrated Foster Care Awareness Month with a series of programs that raised awareness in a fun, informative and educational way for students, staff and community partners.

Donuts, candy apples and blue ribbons/lanyards were given out in the mid quad to mark the start of the month on May 1, while informing the campus community of the services provided by the Guardian Scholars (GS) Program.

On May 7, students and staff were invited to the Guardian Scholars Social/Open Mic event. Poems written by a former Rio Hondo College Guardian Scholars were shared and information about the GS Program was provided to the audience.

On May 8, the Guardian Scholars hosted a showing of the film "My Life as a Zucchini," which is about a child who experiences life in a group home.

On May 17, the Los Angeles County Office of Education presented a Trauma Informed Practices for Schools (TIPS) Workshop for faculty, staff, and students on campus and around the community. The workshop was offered in collaboration with Student Psychological Services for Mental Health Awareness, which is also during the month of May.

The audience received information on trauma, how trauma can affect a student emotionally, mentally and academically, and how to support students. Lunch was provided to those who attended.



Finally, the eighth annual "Children are the Future" one-day conference took place at the Doubletree Hotel in Whittier on May 18. This was a day to honor all caregivers and professionals who make a difference in a child's life by staying informed and involved in their well-being.

Lastly, throughout the month of May, the FKCE and Guardian Scholars programs teamed up with the Library and built an inspirational display featuring both programs along with books, movies, and other resources highlighting foster care.



Foster Youths Learn Financial Management



About 25 foster youths recently visited Rio Hondo College to learn about campus support programs and explore what it will mean to be independent adults as part of the College's first-ever Mad City Money event.

The youths, ages 16 to 20, learned what it's like to hold a job, pay bills and management money. Youths were given character roles with different attributes – some had degrees, some had families. They needed to buy significant big-ticket items, such as cars and houses, as well as strike a balance between budgeting for needs and for wants, such as entertainment.

Students walked away with financial literacy knowledge plus \$50 to open a savings account with SCE Credit Union. Additional giveaways included: \$10 In N Out gift cards, movies package with two tickets, as well as \$50 and \$100 Visa cards.

The program was organized by Rio Hondo College Foster Care Programs: Guardian Scholars and Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS), Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), SCE Credit Union and the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs.

Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss and Interim Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. Alisia Kirkwood, welcomed students and shared the importance of money management.

"I encourage you to think about how best to align your financial decisions with what matters most to you and your values," Dreyfuss told the foster youth attendees.

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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



9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, through July 26: Student art show, Rio Hondo Gallery

Monday, July 16 to Thursday, July 26:

Second of three Summer Bridge orientation programs to assist incoming first-year students transition to college

8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 2: Freshman Welcome Days

Monday, July 30 to Thursday, Aug. 9: Third of three Summer Bridge orientation programs to assist incoming first-year students transition to college

8 p.m. Friday, Aug 3: "The Hollywood Summer Christmas Show," Black Box Theater

2 and 8 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 4: "The Hollywood Summer Christmas Show," Black Box Theater

2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 5: "The Hollywood Summer Christmas Show," Black Box Theater

6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9: First Year Family Night, Rio Café

8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9: "The Hollywood Summer Christmas Show," Black Box Theater

8 p.m. Friday, Aug 10: "The Hollywood Summer Christmas Show," Black Box Theater

2 and 8 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 11: "The Hollywood Summer Christmas Show," Black Box Theater

More than 1,000 Students Apply for Summer Bridge Preparation Program



Rio Hondo College is holding three sessions of its highly popular Summer Bridge program to support incoming students with campus orientations, English preparation and a math academy that can help them boost math placements.

Session 1 ran from Monday, July 2 through Thursday, July 12. Session 2 runs from Monday, July 16 through Thursday, July 26. Session 3 will run from Monday, July 30 through Thursday, Aug. 9. With more than 1,000 applications received, the first two sessions filled quickly, and registration has been ongoing for Session 3.

The sessions – each with a capacity of 150 students – are available to all incoming freshmen but are required for students in Rio Promise, which provides free first-year tuition and priority registration to 2018 graduates of high schools in the College's service area.

The sessions feature scavenger hunts, small group activities with a mentor and student support organization presentations on such topics as financial aid, assistance to low-income students and transfers to four-year universities. Students also tour the campus and receive guidance in registering for classes.

Summer Bridge students can join Rio Hondo College's Avance first-year program, which includes support from faculty and success coaches. Avance students attend courses that help them map their educational progress and goals, receive one-year priority registration and a free textbook loan.