

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

JULY 2018



President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

Rio Hondo College highlighted its mission to provide access to higher education throughout July, with two camps designed to spark interest in career fields and college for area school children and programs created to orient our incoming students for their coming year.

The events are a great example of the importance of reaching out to the community to showcase the extraordinary opportunities and support services offered at Rio Hondo College.

Our two-week Summer Bridge program provided students with an invaluable head start for their first semester of college. The program outlines our deep array of support programs, but also gives them a chance to navigate the campus, meet with deans and other students and generally acclimate to the college environment they will soon inhabit.

Summer Bridge also gives students a chance to improve their placement in English and math classes.

In the coming weeks, the impact of the Summer Bridge and our other orientation programs will be seen as new students embark on their first semester of college.

On a different front, we welcomed 110 middle school students from five area school districts as well as 45 middle-school age children from the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier for programs exploring career programs and other college offerings.

Not only do these programs provide an engaging activity for summer, but they promote the idea of going to college for children who may not otherwise see that in their future. They also put a spotlight on the many talented educators who work at Rio Hondo College.

▲ Former Dean Yoshio Nakamura Honored for Military Service

Yoshio Nakamura, an emeritus faculty member of Rio Hondo College, was honored as the Military Hero of the Game by the Los Angeles Dodgers on July 13 for his military service during World War II.

Nakamura, who taught art in high school and at Rio Hondo College over more than four decades, was interned along with other Japanese-Americans at the start of the war when he was 16. He reported for duty in 1944, joining the 442nd Regimental Team, a unit of Japanese-Americans, in France in Italy. He, along with his fellow soldiers, received the Medal of Honor; Nakamura also received the Congressional Gold Medal and a Bronze Star.

Nakamura joined Rio Hondo College's first faculty as a fine arts chairman, eventually becoming a dean and vice president.

The Dodger honor – offered during the game's second inning – recognized Nakamura for his service and dedication.

Watch the Los Angeles Dodgers honor former Dean, Yoshio Nakamura.



Board Update	2
Boys & Girls Club Members Explore Arts, Sciences at Camp Rio	2
Police Academy Graduates 24 in Class 206	3

Middle School Students Explore Career Fields during Summer Academy	4
Summer Bridge Programs Guide Incoming Students	5

Save the Date	6
Rio Hondo College Welcomes Freshmen	6

IN THIS ISSUE

Board of Trustees Reviews Classroom Support and Promotional Videos

Rio Hondo College's Board of Trustees in July received an update from Professor Mark Littrell on his Spring 2017 sabbatical effort to create videos on math topics

Littrell crafted 37 videos on "pitfall" topics in statistics (22 videos) and college algebra (15 videos). Loaded onto YouTube, the videos provide a user-friendly way for students to learn proper and efficient use of graphing calculators and offer examples for problems that go beyond what can be offered during a class session.

In their first year of use, the videos have been watched 1,700 times, or for 10,200 minutes.

Check out one of the math videos here.



The trustees awarded students for their winning entries in the College's second annual Student Video Contest.

The winning videos were showcased when Marketing and Communications Director Ruthie Retana announced the winners of the second annual Student

Video Contest. The contest's theme was "How has Rio Hondo College prepared you for your future?"

In the videos, students described how they are inspired by their fellow students and College staff, and the support they received from student services and College leaders to succeed.



This year's winners are graphics design major Sergio Rodriguez ([video](#)), followed by Brayan Altamirano ([video](#)) and Michael Khuraibet ([video](#)). The winners received cash prizes during the Board of Trustees meeting and will be recognized on FLEX Day on Aug. 17 – with their videos being showcased to faculty, classified staff and managers.

Boys & Girls Club Members Explore Arts, Sciences at Camp Rio



About 45 members of the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier created electronic escape room games, created relief-prints and composed electronic music during a four-day, project-based summer camp at Rio Hondo College.

Camp Rio was sponsored by the Whittier-based BCM Foundation and Pacific Western Bank as a way to offer project-based learning opportunities to area children ages 11 to 13 and inspire interest in attending college.

Participants not only explored their topics, but enjoyed afternoon sports clinics. On the last day, they celebrated their accomplishments at the Rio Hondo College pool. Rio Hondo College faculty experts taught all classes, with assistance from Rio Hondo students. Children received T-shirts, ball caps and backpacks with material on the benefits of college.

"Camp Rio is a fantastic way for Rio Hondo College to share its wealth of skills and knowledge with the youth of our community," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "It's also an opportunity for us to connect with the children who represent the region's future and learn from them about their passions and interests."

Participants learned skills in workshops from Monday, July 16 through Wednesday, July 18, and applied those skills to group or individual projects. On Thursday, July 19, the children presented their work – electronic games, printed T-shirts and tiles, and musical compositions – to Boys & Girls Club leaders, Rio Hondo College administrators and staff, and the BCM Foundation Board.

Josephine Iniguez, a seventh-grader, worked with a team to create an electronic escape room that required players to figure out a code from clues given by players.

"It's really fun," Iniguez said. "The fun part is that you can choose your characters and the background and the hard part is just making up the words and how you could put it all together."

Another group of children used Logic Pro software to select musical elements, such as percussion and arpeggio, and assembled them to create individual compositions.

Sixth-grader Zelda Zamora-Villa possessed a particularly strong idea for what she wanted her song to sound like, according to camp organizers.

"I wanted it to sound like really nice," Zamora-Villa said. "I wanted to make it big and loud and all over the place, like me."

Click here to View a video about the program.



Zamora-Villa said she has long had a passion for music. She said the composing project allowed her a greater sense of expression than when she plays a single instrument.

"It's almost like you put more of yourself into it. Here, you choose everything and put it in," she said.

A third group of participants explored relief printing, starting with a template for the first letter of their name. Students decorated the template with images to represent their interests, then carved their design, in reverse, on linoleum. Then, they printed the linoleum image onto archival paper using an etching press.

Oscar Hernandez, chief executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier, said the project-based program supports what the students learn during the school year and combats summer learning loss.

"The resources that are provided by the College are just beyond amazing for our kids. It gives them an opportunity to do something they probably wouldn't have a chance to do in our organization or anywhere else," Hernandez said.

Dr. Grant Linsell, Rio Hondo College's dean of arts and cultural programs, said the College hopes to expand the program in 2019. Options include extending it for a second week or offering opportunities to additional youth.



Police Academy Graduates 24 in Class 206

Rio Hondo Police Academy graduated 24 cadets in its 206th academy class during a ceremony held July 12 at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse in San Gabriel.

More than 400 guests attended the event, which featured remarks by Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss.

Of the 24 cadets graduating, 19 were sponsored by 12 area police departments: Alhambra, Arcadia, Bell Gardens, Burbank, Covina, El Monte, Huntington Park, Montebello, Pasadena, Pomona, Santo Paulo and South Gate.



Middle School Students Explore Career Fields during Summer Academy

Standing in a circle, five eighth-graders counted in unison to 30 as classmate Paul Chavez alternated between heart compressions and artificial respiration in a presentation of his lifesaving skills during a special summer class at Rio Hondo College.

When he paused, a partner used an automated external defibrillator to administer an electric shock to the practice dummy's heart, and then Chavez resumed his efforts.

A few doors away, eighth-grader Jerilee Castillo and a partner manipulated crankshafts in a small engine module to shift the position of a piston, noting how the changes altered intake and exhaust valves.

Both classes – as well as others focused on engineering/design and building crystal radios – are part of Rio Hondo College's eighth annual CTE Career Exploration Summer Academy, a weeklong exploration of career and technical education (CTE).

"We expose students not only to STEM topics, but also to the idea that they can be college students," Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said.



The academy focused on health science, engineering and automobile technology – all Rio Hondo College fields of study.

Chavez, who attends Lake Center Middle School, said the program has helped feed his curiosity.

"It's fun because we get to

use all of the tools and stuff," said Chavez, who also noted that he made a 3-D keychain in his engineering/design class. "I like science."

Castillo, who attends North Park Academy of the Arts, said the class has augmented other courses she has taken.

"I've always wanted to build stuff. I want to know more about options for my career," she said.

The program has grown from 30 middle school students in its first year to 110 this year. Students hail from Bassett Unified, El Rancho Unified, Little Lake City, Mountain View and Valle Lindo school districts.



Each day includes hands-on activities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). For example, in the small-engine project, students break down and assemble a car engine. Along the way, they learn electrical theory, calculations and application. In a structural design class, they construct and test the strength of bridges.

View of a video of the CTE Academy:



Interim CTE Counselor Claudia Romo, who oversees the program, said students also learn to see themselves differently.

"We see a lot of students who, even at this age, don't expect to attend college. But after being on a college campus, they see themselves as future college students. That's our primary mission and we're proud of that fact," Romo said.

The academy culminated Friday, July 20, when the students presented their projects, toured the Rio Hondo campus and received information on college and career success.



Summer Bridge Programs Guide Incoming Students

A group of incoming students seated around a long table in the Rio Hondo College's Campus Inn called out advice they received during their two-week Summer Bridge orientation:

- ▶ **“Don't be afraid to try new things,”** said one student.
- ▶ **“It's up to you – if you like something, just keep doing it,”** shared another.
- ▶ **“Even classes you don't like teach you something,”** another added.

The discussion, led by two student mentors, was one of several designed to help the 150 incoming students attending one of three Rio Hondo College Summer Bridge sessions focus on how to get the most from their college experience.

The gatherings are a key element of the eight-day Summer Bridge program, which includes presentations from panels of students, faculty and deans, math and English workshops, a campus tour, scavenger hunt and other activities.

Summer Bridge sessions are highly popular – by the end of May, more than 1,000 students applied for the 450 slots available at the three sessions.

Katherine Christopherson, a 2018 La Serna High School graduate, said she chose Rio Hondo College because she wanted to be prepared before starting a four-year university. Summer Bridge has helped her start that journey.

“I feel like I've learned to open my window and to branch out and get out of my comfort zone, because I came with a very strict mindset for what I wanted to do. I've learned it's more important to follow your journey,” said Christopherson, who plans to study child development. “It's not just getting through the program, but actually fulfilling what you want to do.”

Mountain View High School graduate Hadasa Silva said she is the first in her family to attend college. A counselor suggested she take Summer Bridge to get a head start on registration for classes.

“I got a really broad understanding of how this College in particular works. You don't know. You're just a freshman. Nothing really makes sense because high school is a lot more different than college,” said Silva, who wants to study 3-D animation. “I think I got an understanding of what it's actually supposed to be like.”

Abraham Garcia, a Sierra Vista High School graduate, said he chose Rio Hondo College because college is an uncharted area for his family.

“I'm kind of scared of college so I wanted an easy transition from high school to college. I'm the first generation, so I don't really know where to start. And Rio Hondo has been helping me a lot,” said Garcia, who wants to be an electrical engineer.

Through Summer Bridge, he also joined Rio Hondo College's Avance program, which guides students throughout their first year, offering a dedicated faculty/staff support network and enhanced Counseling and First-Year Seminar courses to help with study and college success skills in addition to exploration and field experiences in a broad academic discipline area in order to decide their specific chosen majors.

Rio Hondo College student Alex Lopez said this is her second year as one of the program's 10 mentors – a task she chose after going through the program herself.

“I love helping the students and I love giving them the information they needed,” said Lopez, who is studying sociology and anthropology with plans to transfer to a four-year college. “I think this really gives me an idea of what I want for my future, because I feel like I would want to work with students.”

The first two sessions ran in July. The third runs through Thursday, Aug. 9. Rio Hondo College's fall classes commence Saturday, Aug. 18.

View a video of the Summer Bridge program: 



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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



Saturday, Aug. 18:

Fall semester begins

Monday, Sept. 3:

Campus closed for Labor Day

6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 12:

Board of Trustees meeting,
Rio Hondo College

Rio Hondo College Welcomes Freshmen

Rio Hondo College student mentors guided dozens of new students across campus during Freshman

Welcome Days, held
July 18, 19 and Aug. 2.

The event included a financial aid workshop, tips on succeeding during the year, the basics of transferring to a four-year university and a tour of the campus.



Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss informed students that their decision to embark on a college journey will open doors to new opportunities for their futures.

"Our Rio Hondo College family of counselors, faculty, staff and administrators are here to help you, every step of the way in your educational journey," Dreyfuss said. "Congratulations once again for making Rio Hondo College your community college of choice!"

