

# PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

OCTOBER 2018



## President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

Rio Hondo College continues to expand the programs we offer to support students as they pursue the dream of higher education. In October, we accepted a grant that will expand programs serving undocumented students, who face so much uncertainty as they pursue their degrees.

It's exciting to know Rio Hondo College is one of just 32 campuses across all three branches of California's higher education community to be selected for this funding, which arrived shortly before our Undocumented Student Week of Action that helped students find their voices to advocate on this issue.

We also took a moment to celebrate our Fire Academy's 50th year of training firefighters and emergency responders. This public safety program, which includes training for wildland firefighting and EMTs, is highly regarded across the nation, and is a true gem for Rio Hondo College.

Finally, I would like to invite the entire community to participate in the upcoming search for a new superintendent/president effective July 1, 2019. This is an opportunity to express your desires for the leader who will help Rio Hondo College continue the academic and student growth we have dedicated so much time to over these last years.

## Week of Activities Supports Undocumented Students

Rio Hondo College marked Undocumented Student Week of Action – held Oct. 15-19 – with daily programs aimed at assisting undocumented scholars secure a college education, connect with other students and advocate for a permanent solution for undocumented students brought to the country as children.

Events included programs on ways to advocate, webinars on filling out aid forms, knowing your rights, entrepreneurship and mental health; an UndocuFamily Night of workshops, a documentary on the life of an undocumented individual, and a Dreamers Panel.



**RIO IN THE NEWS:** Read more about Rio Hondo College's Undocumented Student Week of Action in:

▶ [Edsource](#)

Watch coverage on Univision:

▶ [Univision](#)



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# Board Update

Rio Hondo College's Board of Trustees on Oct. 10 hired PPL, Inc. to conduct a search for a new superintendent/president to succeed leader Teresa Dreyfuss, who is departing at the end of the 2018-19 academic year.

The search is expected to take about six months and cost about \$31,000. Dreyfuss gave the Board advance notice of her retirement plans in August 2018 to ensure the College would have ample time for the search.

PPL, Inc., a firm whose team includes former college educators, has a long history of assisting California Community Colleges in finding campus and district leaders. The firm is one of four to submit proposals and one of two reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

"PPL's team of experts will provide Rio Hondo College with a solid foundation for our search for a successor to Teresa Dreyfuss, someone who can build on her accomplishments and guide Rio Hondo College as we navigate the challenges of the next decade," Board of Trustees President Madeline Shapiro said. "It won't be easy to replace Teresa, but we've got a strong, community-focused plan in place that should result in the strongest possible options."

The firm will help the College outline the qualities desired in a superintendent/president, create a website with application materials, organize advertising, seek candidates through its network of educators, and guide the Rio Hondo College Presidential Search Hiring Committee as it screens up to 50 candidates and identifies finalists for consideration to the Board of Trustees.

The firm will also conduct extensive background checks on finalists, often reviewing as many as 15 individuals with perspective on each candidate. It also will advise the Board of Trustees as it conducts a review of the finalists.

The Board of Trustees also determined the composition of the Rio Hondo College Presidential Search Hiring Committee to be seven faculty members, four classified staff members, four managers, three students and five community representatives.

A similar process was followed when the Board hired Dreyfuss in 2013. She joined the College as an accountant in 1987 and rose through the ranks to become interim superintendent/president in 2012. Her last day will be June 30, 2019.

"Rio Hondo College has a strong commitment to its community – on campus and in the neighborhoods we serve," Dreyfuss said. "The makeup of this committee and the extensive search efforts that are about to begin testify to that commitment and dedication to quality. I know the Committee and Board will select someone truly extraordinary to lead Rio Hondo College in the years to come."

In other action, the Board of Trustees approved the following employment: Dr. Caroline Durdella as dean of institutional research and planning and Diego Silva as counselor coordinator of CalWORKS- Categorical.



## Rio Hondo College Expands Support for Undocumented Students, Families

Rio Hondo College is expanding and creating programs to support undocumented students and their families so that more people will be able to realize their full potential.

The College is one of 32 campuses across California that received support this academic year from the new California Campus Catalyst Fund. To date, the Catalyst Fund has raised nearly \$10 million for this three-year initiative, which was founded by educators, funders and advocates. Rio Hondo College will receive \$125,000 in the initiative's first year.

The Fund increases support for undocumented students and their families on campuses representing the state's three public higher education systems: California Community Colleges, California State University and the University of California.

"Rio Hondo College is pleased to be among the 32 campuses in California to receive support from the Catalyst Fund, which will help us to serve our students and community," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Together, we are sending a message of inclusion and support to some of the most vulnerable students across the state."

Rio Hondo College has enrolled 799 students who have self-identified as undocumented. The College is committed to the following goals:

- **Engagement services:** Educate undocumented students, their families and the community about educational and career opportunities;
- **Success services:** Empower undocumented scholars with the academic opportunities to actualize their higher education and career goals; and,
- **Campus climate:** Educate and improve campus climate to support serving students from undocumented backgrounds.

To achieve these goals, Rio Hondo College has pledged to enhance and improve current services through providing support with applying to and navigating RHC; providing California Dream Act and Scholarship support; providing culturally and contextually relevant counseling; facilitating healing circles; sponsoring a Dreamers Conference and seminars; expanding the UndocuTextbook Loan Program; providing academic success coaches; and increasing external partnerships.

RHC has also committed to build new innovative resources through career exploration and a life planning course; evaluate practices to better serve students; create events utilizing satellite campuses; and enhance professional development and support via training.

The programs of Rio Hondo College and other Catalyst Fund grantees build on the work of students, educators, community leaders and policymakers around the state in providing undocumented students with the resources they need to succeed. In recent years, California has expanded in-state and state-based financial aid, and undocumented immigrants now qualify for career licensing in law, medicine, real estate and 37 other professions.

"Undocumented young people and their families are integral to the social, economic and cultural fabric of California, and as such, support for them needs to be woven into our state's higher education system," said Victor Garcia of Immigrants Rising, a San Francisco-based nonprofit that is administering the Fund.

Supporters for the Fund include the Chavez Family Foundation, College Futures Foundation, Grove Foundation, Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Ginnie and Peter Haas Jr. Fund, Heising-Simons Foundation, Hellman Foundation, James Irvine Foundation, Michael Moritz and Harriet Heyman, NextGen America, and Weingart Foundation.

# Fire Academy Celebrates 50 Years

Rio Hondo College's Fire Academy hosted a 50th anniversary celebration on Oct. 20 featuring more than 200 alumni from across the country, a Bucket Brigade Challenge between alumni and staff, a display of 25 fire engines, a helicopter fly-over, live music, food and videos of past academy classes.

"Commemorating 50 years of producing cadets for local and regional fire departments is a good reason to celebrate," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "We are very proud of the last 50 years of our Fire Academy, our cadets and alumni, whose mission in life is to train the best and to save lives!"

U.S. Rep. Linda Sanchez presented a proclamation recognizing the academy's 50 years of contributions to firefighting.

Returning alumni included a member of the Academy's first class, held in 1968, as well as former cadets from Utah, Texas, Nevada and across California.

Rio Hondo College Fire Academy is considered one of the premier training programs for urban firefighters, wildland firefighters and advanced training for mid-career firefighters.



## Connect with Us on Social Media

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 **Rio Hondo College YT Channel**

 **bit.do/riohondocollege**

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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



**Thursday, Nov. 22, Friday, Nov. 23:** Rio Hondo College closed for Thanksgiving holiday

**10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27 to Thursday, Nov. 29:** Holiday student art sale, RHC Art Gallery

**7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 28:** Workman Mill Industrial Orchestra concert, M109

**8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 29, Friday, Nov. 30, Saturday, Dec. 1, Sunday, Dec. 2, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2:** "Brown Baby," a play exploring underground adoption and smuggling across the U.S./Mexico border, Wray Theater

**7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 4:** Electronic Music Showcase concert, M109

**1 and 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9:** Rio Hondo College Dance Collective presents "The Nutcracker," in association with local schools, Wray Theater

### RIO HONDO COLLEGE ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS CALENDAR:

Check out the full list of 2018-19 events.



## College to Honor World War II Veteran Yoshio Nakamura during Veterans Day Events



In celebration of Veterans Day, Rio Hondo College will recognize World War II veteran Yoshio C. Nakamura and honor all veterans who have served in America's armed forces from 1 to 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 13 at the Veterans Memorial, Lower Quad.

Nakamura was a member of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team composed of Americans of Japanese ancestry that became the most highly decorated unit in U.S. military history for its size and length of service.

After the war, Nakamura earned BFA and MFA degrees from USC and began teaching at Whittier High School. When Rio Hondo College was launched, he was hired as the founding instructor and chair of the Fine Arts Department. He retired as vice president of Rio Hondo College in 1992.

The Veterans Day Celebration will include a color guard, the Rio Hondo College Choir, special guest speakers, recognition of Nakamura, presentation of the Rio Hondo College Veteran Memorial Coin to attending veterans, food, display of military vehicles and other activities.

**RIO IN THE NEWS:** Read more about Rio Hondo College's Veterans Day Program in the **Whittier Daily News**