

FOCUS ON RÍO

June 2020

President's Message



Dr. Arturo Reyes

Just as the academic year ended, our communities were shaken anew by the death of George Floyd and subsequent protests over the issue of equality in America. This tragedy goes to the heart of our commitment at Río Hondo College to ensure all our students – especially those facing significant barriers to success – have the opportunity to pursue their dreams of a future free from fear based on who they are, what they look like or what they believe.

These protests have shined a light not only on the inequities in our communities, but also on what our communities are willing to do to correct those issues.

For that, I am filled with pride.

In the pages that follow in this month's Focus on Río, you will see how our Board of Trustees asserted its support for Black Lives Matter and for all groups facing prejudice and discrimination, including our Asian/Pacific Islander students, and our students who are undocumented.

You will also see praise for Río Hondo College's innovative educational structure and for its success in assisting students pursue their educational dreams at four-year universities. Finally, you will meet our new student trustee, Marcela Rodas, who is committed to ensuring our student voice is heard loud and strong as Río Hondo College forges its future.

We stand at the brink of a new day, one filled with the promise of possibility and driven by the determination of our youth not to let the mistakes of the past prevent us from obtaining a better future.

Mensaje del Presidente

Justo cuando terminó el año académico, nuestras comunidades se vieron conmovidas de nuevo por la muerte de George Floyd y las subsecuentes protestas sobre el tema de la igualdad en los Estados Unidos. Esta tragedia va al corazón de nuestro compromiso en el Colegio de Río Hondo de asegurar que todos nuestros estudiantes - especialmente aquellos que enfrentan barreras significativas para el éxito - logren, sin temor, perseguir sus sueños de un futuro libre sin importar quiénes son, cómo se ven o en lo qué creen.

Estas protestas han sacado a luz no sólo sobre las desigualdades en nuestras comunidades, sino también sobre lo que nuestras comunidades están dispuestas a hacer para corregir estos problemas.

Por eso, estoy muy orgulloso.

En las páginas que siguen en el Focus on Río de este mes, verán cómo nuestra

Mesa Directiva afirmó su apoyo a Black Lives Matter y a todos los grupos que enfrentan prejuicios y discriminación, incluyendo a nuestros estudiantes asiáticos y de las Islas del Pacífico, y a nuestros estudiantes indocumentados.

También verán elogios por la innovadora estructura educativa del Colegio de Río Hondo y para por su éxito en ayudar a los estudiantes a perseguir sus sueños educativos en universidades de cuatro años. Finalmente, conocerán a nuestra nueva representante estudiantil, Marcela Rodas, quien se ha comprometido a asegurar que la voz de nuestros estudiantes se escuche en voz alta y fuerte mientras el Colegio de Río Hondo forja su futuro.

Estamos al borde de un nuevo día, uno lleno de la promesas de posibilidades e impulsado por la determinación de nuestra juventud de no dejar que los errores del pasado nos impidan obtener un futuro mejor.

RIO
HONDO
COLLEGE
 INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE

Río Hondo Named a 2020 Top Online Community College of California	2
Class of 2019 Students Pursue Academic Dreams at UC, Cal State	3
District Update	4
College Leaders Praise Supreme Court Ruling to Maintain Federal DACA Program	5

Student Trustee Shares Perspectives on Pandemic, Protest and Education	5
Police Academy's 'Principled Policing' Approach Emphasizes Guardianship, Respect for Diversity	6
Former Dean of Public Safety Advocates for Leadership	6

Faculty Member Releases Book on Civil Rights Activist Rosa Parks	7
College Partners with Volvo on Auto Tech Program	7
Save the Date	7

RIO IN THE NEWS:

College Named a 2020 Top Online Community College of California. [See the List](#)

Río Hondo Named a 2020 Top Online Community College of California

Río Hondo College has been named a 2020 Top Online Community College of California by *Guide to Online Schools*, a free resource aimed toward helping students achieve optimal online learning.

Río Hondo joins 20 other community colleges throughout the state to receive the honor.

"Río Hondo is honored to be recognized as one of the top online community colleges in California," Superintendent/President Dr. Arturo Reyes said. "This is a real tribute to our dedicated Distance Education team and our faculty's commitment to creating a robust learning environment."

The selected schools – all part of California's 115-campus community college system – were evaluated on whether all classwork could be conducted completely online, graduation rate/student retention and number of associate

degree programs offered. In addition to six unique online certificate programs, Río Hondo offers five associate degree programs, including business administration and business marketing.

In addition to those programs, Río Hondo College radically expanded all online instruction options for all courses in spring 2020 as part of its response to the COVID-19 epidemic. The College will continue to provide online access to courses in summer and spring, as well as to a host of support services. Services include remote counseling, online tutoring and access to local, community-based support.

"Río Hondo College understands the critical need for accessible, equitable online learning. We will continue to serve a diverse student body and provide them the tools they need to succeed," Reyes said.



Class of 2019 Students Pursue Academic Dreams at UC, Cal State

Graduates of Río Hondo College's Class of 2019 are pursuing their dreams of higher education at some of the best four-year universities in the state, with 970 students attending such universities as UCLA, UC Berkeley and Cal State Los Angeles.

Over 640 students enrolled at Cal State University campuses and 109 enrolled at University of California campuses in 2019-20, according to data recently released by the University of [California Information Center](#) and the [California State University Data Center](#).

Overall, the number of students matriculating at the California universities and other four-year colleges has climbed 75% over the last 10 years.

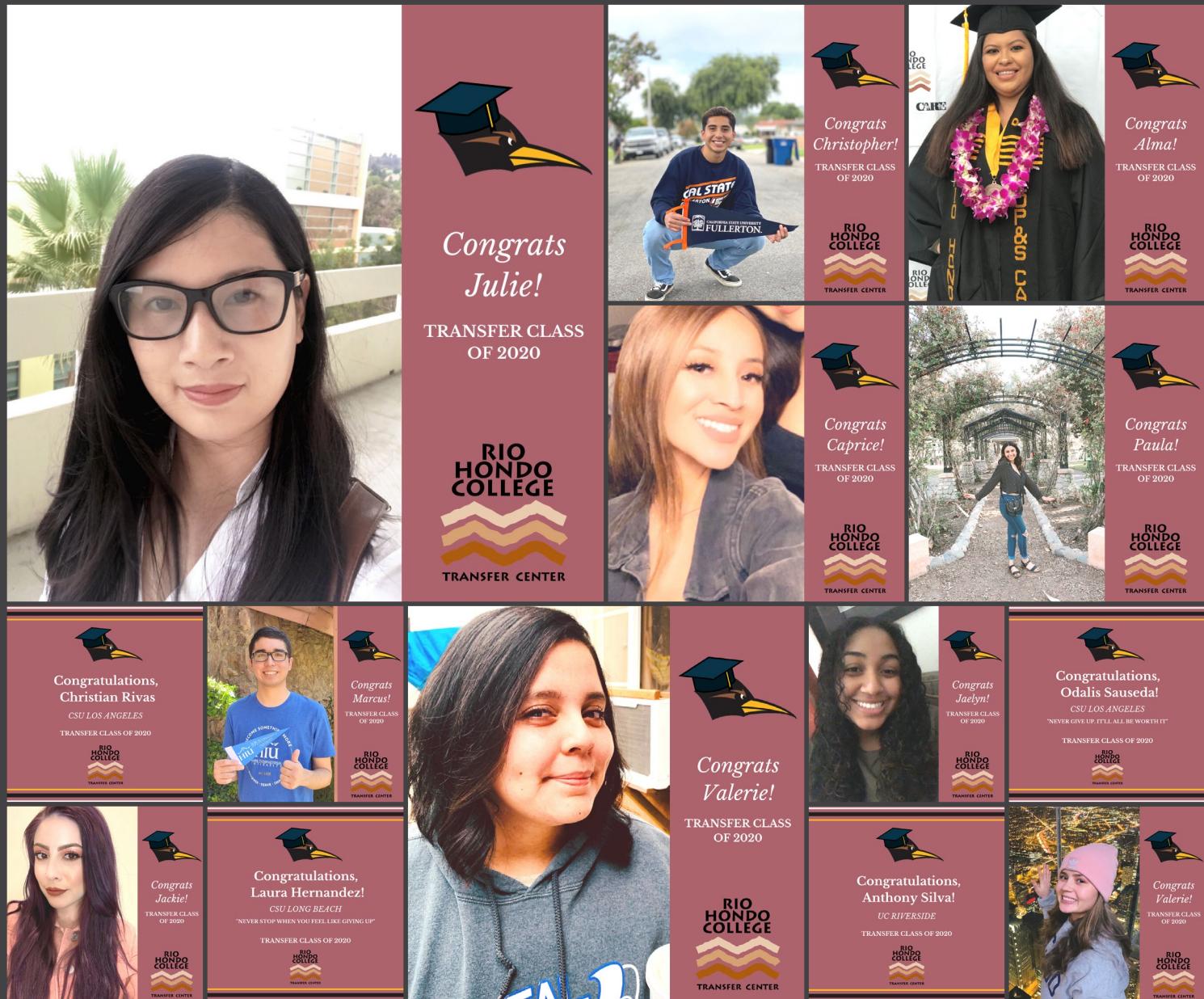
"We are exceptionally proud of our Río Hondo students for going on to

achieve their dreams at four-year colleges," Superintendent/President Dr. Arturo Reyes said. "We wish them the best on the next step of their educational journey."

At the UC level, 28 students are attending UCLA - currently ranked as the world's top public university - while 218 students are enrolled at Cal State Los Angeles, 92 at Cal Poly Pomona and 75 at Cal State Long Beach.

Río Hondo students also enjoyed high acceptance rates at both systems. For example, of 1,130 students who applied to CSUs, 1,026 were accepted, achieving a 90% admittance rate. Of 211 students who applied to UCs, 165 were accepted, achieving a 78% admittance rate.

Information detailing the transfer class of 2020 will be available in spring 2021.



District Update

Río Hondo College's Board of Trustees on June 10 adopted a resolution affirming its "passionate support" for Black Lives Matter and bid farewell to retiring staff.

The resolution acknowledges that the College's student body is nearly 90 percent students of color who look to the Board of Trustees to "stand and kneel in solidarity with all whose lives are affected by the effects of racism."

The action was adopted unanimously, including by newly named student trustee Marcela Rodas.

"This is not a moment – this is a movement," Rodas said.

The trustees said the resolution stems from their role as public servants whose employees represent myriad ethnic backgrounds and life experiences as well as a community rich in diversity.

In addition to the death of George Floyd while in the custody of Minneapolis police officers – the latest in a series of deaths of African Americans involving police action – the resolution also lists the separation and detention of migrant families at the U.S.-Mexico border, the mass shooting in El Paso that targeted Latinos and xenophobic attacks on the Asian/Pacific Islander community.

"We are saddened by the murder of George Floyd and we intentionally use this grief as strength for a renewed commitment against hate, white supremacy, and fear that distort a vision of common humanity," the resolution states. "The deep-seated racism has infected our socio-political structures, poisoned our discourse and has a long-lasting, far-reaching impact on the inequalities that persist today, some of which are visible at Río Hondo."

The resolution states that the trustees were compelled to act because of their commitment to "transformative education as an equalizer."

Río Hondo College, for example, provides a host of student services designed to ensure equitable delivery of education options to under-represented minorities, veterans, people impacted by the justice system, foster youth, single parents and others facing significant barriers to academic and career success.

"Our mission is to realize the success of our diverse students and communities by providing dynamic educational opportunities and resources, which includes a responsibility to oppose racism, colonialism, and White supremacy."

"Our mission is to realize the success of our diverse students and communities by providing dynamic educational opportunities and resources, which includes a responsibility to oppose racism, colonialism, and White supremacy – all insidious forces that exclude, exploit, and harm diverse students and communities," the resolution states.



Nanci Parker



Armando Ayala



Henry Gee



Steve Hebert

Trustees also bid farewell to six retirees who have served the College for decades.

Nanci Parker, an Instructional Division secretary in Mathematics, Sciences and Engineering, was hired as a clerk typist in 1986. She retires with more than 34 years of service to the College.

Yolanda Ramirez, a secretary in Mathematics, Sciences and Engineering who was hired in 2004, has retired after nearly 16 years of service.

Retiring faculty members include Sharon Bell, a professor of reading initially hired as a part-time faculty member in 2007. She retires with 13 years of service.

Armando Ayala, a professor of kinesiology hired in 1988, retired after 32 years of service.

Henry Gee, vice president, student services and interim director of the Río Hondo College Foundation, also said goodbye. Gee was hired in 2004 and worked for the College for nearly 16 years.

Steve Hebert, dean of Kinesiology, Dance and Athletics, is retiring after 19 years of service. Hebert was originally hired as a professor of physical education and as a basketball coach. He served in both posts until 2010, when he became interim dean. He returned to both positions later that year until 2013, when he was named the permanent dean.

College Leaders Praise Supreme Court Ruling to Maintain Federal DACA Program

Río Hondo College leaders in June declared their support for a Supreme Court ruling that has upheld President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order that offers protections against deportation for children brought to America.

President Trump has been fighting since 2017 to end the program, which shields some 700,000 young immigrants known as "Dreamers" and allows them to work. More than 200,000 of those immigrants attend U.S. colleges and some 70,000 undocumented students attend the California Community Colleges system.

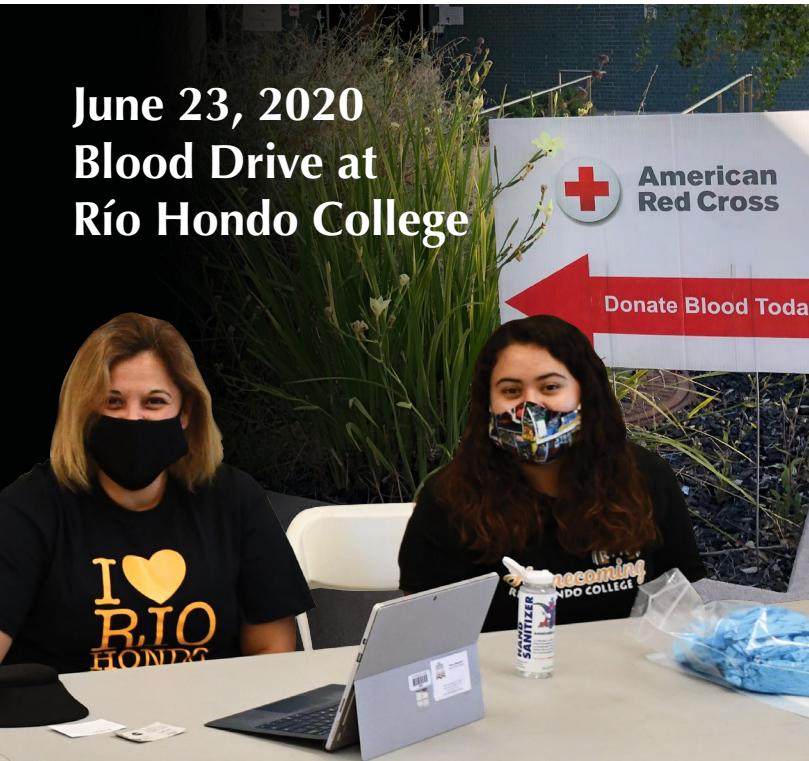
"Río Hondo College is unwavering in its commitment to providing educational access to all of our students, including our Dreamers who face the greatest barriers to pursuing their educational goals," Superintendent/President Dr. Arturo Reyes said. "Today's ruling really gives new life to our efforts to provide services to students who bravely pursue their dreams despite the fear of deportation and separation from their families."

The College has supported DACA students throughout the program's history, including supporting events to lobby legislators over preserving the protections for Dreamers and panels to share details of the life experiences of undocumented students.

The College will hold two events to mark the Supreme Court decision.

The first, a "virtual healing circle" via Zoom, was held on June 18. The second, a DACA Post Decision Panel, was held June 20.

June 23, 2020 Blood Drive at Río Hondo College



Student Trustee Shares Perspectives on Pandemic, Protest and Education

Río Hondo College student Marcela Rodas, who is studying English and psychology, has been elected as the 2020-21 student trustee by the Río Hondo College student body.

Rodas, a 2017 graduate of Los Altos School in Hacienda Heights, said her goal is to provide the perspective of students to the Board, which governs the Whittier-based community college district.



"My goal is to bring a student voice on the important issues that are facing Río Hondo College, including equity, the pandemic and our budget-related challenges," Rodas said. "We're all in this together."

Rodas has attended Río Hondo College since fall 2017. In 2019-20, she served as senator a-large for the Associated Students of Río Hondo College. Her work included assisting with ASRHC events. She is also a member of the College's Extended Opportunity Program & Services, which provides support to students who face economic barriers to their success. In the coming year, she also hopes to participate on the College's award-winning Forensics Speech and Debate Team.

"My goal is to bring a student voice on the important issues that are facing Río Hondo College, including equity, the pandemic and our budget-related challenges."

Rodas said she was inspired to seek the position by Diana Laureano, who was student trustee in 2018-19. Rodas expects to receive her Associate of Arts degree in 2020-21 and transfer to a four-year university. Among her top choices are UCLA and UC Santa Barbara.

"We are extraordinarily fortunate to have a person of Marcela's caliber joining our Board of Trustees," Superintendent/President Dr. Arturo Reyes said. "She will bring a voice representing so many of our students who have overcome significant barriers in their pursuit of their education, and ensure we continue to do our utmost to provide them with the support and services they need to succeed."



RIO IN THE NEWS:

Read more about the Academy at [MyNewsLA.com](#) and in [Community College Daily](#) and watch this report on [Spectrum News](#).

Police Academy's 'Principled Policing' Approach Emphasizes Guardianship, Respect for Diversity

Río Hondo College Police Academy is a leader in progressive police training, following a teaching philosophy known as Principled Policing that encourages strong community relationships, respect for diversity and an understanding of constitutional rights.

"It's critical, now more than ever, that we stand up for the tenets of a training system that values the personal relationships police officers should forge with members of diverse communities, guards the sanctity of life and upholds the constitutional rights of all," Academy Director Walter Allen III said. "At Río Hondo College, we train guardians, not warriors."

College leaders are providing insight into the police training program in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers and subsequent demonstrations over treatment of African Americans by law enforcement.

Allen, who has led the Academy since 2014, is considered a titan in the field of law enforcement. Over more than 43 years, he has guided efforts to improve the criminal justice system. He has led the California Youth Authority, guided improvements to the state Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, served on the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and served as the assistant chief for the California Department of Justice, conducting statewide multi-jurisdictional criminal cases.

The Río Hondo Police Academy has trained police officers since 1964, placing them with agencies throughout Southern California. Some 20 police chiefs who graduated from the program are currently serving in the area.

The academy's Principled Policing approach addresses cultural diversity, prejudice, discrimination, hate crimes, investigative profiling vs. racial profiling, as well as the tenets of procedural justice, which speak to providing a voice and listening with empathy and compassion to the community, being neutral in decision-making and behavior, treating people with dignity and respect, and showing concern for others to build and demonstrate trustworthiness.

The program includes training conducted in collaboration with the Museum of Tolerance and a panel discussion with members of surrounding communities who offer their perspectives on law enforcement.

"Principled Policing recognizes how implicit bias can influence perceptions, decisions and actions and how recognition of such bias can lead officers to

behaving with the highest integrity and value," Public Safety Dean Mark Yokoyama said. "We are committed to improving our curriculum to incorporate a better understanding of systemic racism and its relation to policing and will be seeking other opportunities to advance the academy curriculum."

Cadets learn constitutional law, criminal law, domestic violence, traffic enforcement, emergency vehicle operations, tactical first aid and CPR, mental health, lifetime fitness, firearms, among other subjects mandated by POST. They learn techniques for de-escalation and use of force options.

The six-month training is considered one of the most intense available.

Many of the academy graduates in recent years have been minority and female officers, mirroring the makeup of the communities where they will work.

"Our graduating cadets represent the best of the best," Superintendent/President Dr. Arturo Reyes said. "We put our cadets through a rigorous program because we know the incredible responsibility they will shoulder on our behalf."

California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley has called for a review of police training in the across the 115-college system, which provides training to about 80 percent of the state's police.

"We welcome the chance to demonstrate the progressive and principled approach pioneered by the Río Hondo Police Academy in hopes of providing a model for others as we forge a path together for a stronger, more unified community," Reyes said.

Former Dean of Public Safety Advocates for Leadership

Former Río Hondo College Dean of Public Safety Dr. Ygnacio "Nash" Flores has called on law enforcement officials to lead a revolution in law enforcement reform in an article in the [PA Times](#), published by the American Society for Public Administration.

Connect with Us on Social Media

 **RHCRoadrunners**

 **RioHondo_College**

 **RioHondoCollege**

 **Rio Hondo College YT Channel**

 **bit.do/riohondocollege**

 **rhcroadrunners**

Serving the communities of

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

and portions of:

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

*Unincorporated communities within our District

Mission Statement

Río 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.

Faculty Member Releases Book on Civil Rights Activist Rosa Parks

Río Hondo College speech Professor Dr. Angela Sadler Williamson is releasing a children's book about her aunt's relationship with civil rights activist Rosa Parks. The book, titled "My Life with Rosie: A Bond Between Cousins," has been named to a list of the Best Kid's Books about Black History Month by Mothering magazine.

The book shares a story originally told in Williamson's award-winning documentary, "My Life with Rosie," which chronicled Parks' relationship with Carolyn Williamson Green, Williamson's aunt by marriage.

Williamson said she crafted the book to reach a younger audience.



College Partners with Volvo on Auto Tech Program



Río Hondo College is partnering with Volvo and San Bernardino Valley College to create electric vehicle repair and service technician programs for battery-electric freight trucks.

The partnership, which builds on Río Hondo College's well known alternative energy automotive program and its groundbreaking partnership with Tesla, will include a training program for fire departments in Inland Empire communities for handling collisions involving heavy-duty battery electric vehicles.

As part of the rollout of the vehicles, Volvo Trucks North America deployed a pilot vehicle as part of a collaboration with the South Coast Air Quality Management District and other organizations.

RIO IN THE NEWS:
Read more about Río Hondo College's partnership with Volvo in [Green Car Congress](#).



Save the Date

Through Friday, Aug. 7:
Summer session remote instruction

Through Friday, Aug. 14:
Fall Semester registration

6 p.m. Wednesday, July 8:
Board of Trustees regular meeting via Zoom, Río Hondo College

Monday, July 13:
Virtual First Year Family Night at <https://tinyurl.com/RHCFYFN2020>

Monday, July 13:
Virtual Freshman Welcome Day at <https://tinyurl.com/RHCFWD2020>

8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, Aug. 14:
Fall FLEX Day, Río Hondo College

Saturday, Aug. 15:
Fall Semester begins