

FOCUS ON RÍO

October 2020

President's Message



Teresa Dreyfuss

Río Hondo College continues to thrive despite the many challenges facing us. Not only are our educators engaging students effectively through online instruction, but the campus is enjoying notable national recognition, engaging in innovative explorations of new instructional support and supporting our community.

It's been quite a month.

I'd like to thank the entire campus community for their efforts on behalf of our students, which are being recognized nationally with a No. 15 ranking by Hispanic Outlook on Education magazine. The magazine lauded our service to our Hispanic students overall as well as ranking us third in the nation for awarding Consumer Science/ Human Sciences degrees.

This news arrives just as we also learn about Río Hondo College's exciting role in groundbreaking research to expand the pipeline to teaching careers. Our work will focus on mentoring students as they pursue their dreams.

Finally, during the waning days of the month, Río Hondo College opened its campus as one of nearly a dozen Vote Centers in Whittier, providing our community with an option for casting their ballots in what has turned out to be a historic election.

This month also saw Río Hondo College adopt a 2020-21 budget that is not only balance, but preserves jobs, supports students with financial aid and bolsters our reserve accounts.

Of course, so much else is taking place both on our campus and remotely in our classrooms. It's a remarkable time for education not only because of the challenges we face, but also because of the many accomplishments we are seeing despite those challenges.

College Ranked 15th in Nation for Serving Hispanic Students



Río Hondo College has been ranked the 15th best college in the nation overall for serving Hispanic students and third for awarding Family and Consumer Sciences/ Human Sciences Degrees by [Hispanic Outlook on Education magazine](#).

The rankings, announced on Oct. 12, mark Río Hondo College's latest appearance in the list of Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics, which is published annually by Hispanic Outlook on Education. The list charts the

national progress of Hispanics in higher education and recognizes institutions committed to serving Hispanics' educational needs.

"We are incredibly honored and humbled by this recognition of our service to our community," Acting Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Río Hondo College is deeply committed to all of our students, many of whom face incredible challenges as they pursue their dreams of higher education."

Río Hondo College's No. 15 ranking is based on a combination of factors

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RIO HONDO COLLEGE

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College Ranked 15th in Nation for Serving Hispanic Students

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derived from 2018-19 data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, both maintained by the U.S. Department of Education.

The College is a Hispanic Serving Institution, with 79.2 percent of students of Hispanic heritage. Students identifying as Hispanic earned 2,924 degrees and certificates in 2018-19. (The College, which offers a Bachelor of Science in automotive technology, is ranked with four-year colleges along with several other California community colleges with four-year degree options.)

The No. 3 ranking in Degrees by Major is based on a 94 percent rate of Hispanics among degree holders in Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences Degrees. The ranking is among both community colleges and four-year institutions.

STUDENT SUPPORT

The College provides a broad array of support services to students, including some programs targeted at Latino students:

- **Puente Project:** The Puente Project strives to boost the number of educationally disadvantaged students who enroll in four-year colleges and universities, earn degrees and return to their communities as mentors.
- **LEGACIE:** A mentorship program entitled Latinos Empowered, Guided and Cultivated in Education strives to develop relationships with Latino men to cultivate their sense of belonging on campus and contribute to improved educational success.
- **Student Success and Dream Center:** Home to the UndocuScholars program and services for undocumented students. Undocumented students are supported with academic needs, Dream Act applications and completing their educational goals. UndocuScholars is a specialized cohort program that provides comprehensive support and peer mentorship for undocumented students. In the fall, a special counseling course is offered for undocumented students.
- **Legal Services for Undocumented Students:** Free legal services are provided to students.
- **Students without Borders:** Student organization for undocumented students.
- **Río Raices:** This is a new Latinx association open to all Río Hondo College equity-minded staff, faculty and managers.

District Update

Río Hondo College's Board of Trustees in October approved a resolution authorizing a special election in spring 2021 to fill a vacant Board of Trustees seat and approved a 2020-21 budget that strengthens College reserves.

The vacancy in Trustee Area 1 – representing the City of El Monte – was created when trustee Norma Edith García stepped down in July. Her term would have run through December 2022.

"Having a special election as soon as legally possible will enable the residents of Area 1 to have direct representation on the Board," the Oct. 14 resolution states. "This board resolution communicates to Area 1, the Río Hondo Community College District, and the surrounding areas that the Board is resolute in filling this vacancy as soon as possible."

The resolution officially launches the election process. The special election will be held with the state's spring election, on Tuesday, March 2, 2021.

The board adopted its new budget on Oct. 29, setting aside more than \$6.2 million for student financial aid from the Restricted General Fund and \$25.7 million from the Financial Aid Fund. The 2020-21 adopted budget avoids the loss of staff and increases both Unrestricted and Restricted General Fund reserves to \$31.3 million despite state budget shortfalls created by the pandemic.

"Río Hondo College is fiscally strong and stable as we continue to innovate new ways to serve our students amid the myriad challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic," Acting Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said.

The unrestricted general fund budget estimates \$92.2 million in revenue and \$91.4 million in expenditures. The budget increased its reserves to \$31.3 million.

California's Student Centered Funding Formula provides colleges with 70% of their funding based on full-time equivalent student (FTES) numbers, 20% as a supplemental allocation and 10% as a student success allocation.

Río Hondo College has anticipated no increases from the state in funding over 2019-20 levels based on 13,000 FTES. The College will receive no cost-of-living adjustment or other growth in the state's general apportionment.

The College also budgeted for retirement costs, paying 16.15% for faculty members and 20.7% for staff into the state's underfunded retirement systems. The College set aside a trust fund of \$62.3 million for other retirement benefits, fully meeting Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) obligation. Another trust fund designed to ensure pension escalation costs are met currently has \$6.7 million.

In addition, the budget includes annual increases in pay for staff based on step and column increases as well as a 1% raise for Río Hondo faculty. District Administration is currently engaging contract negotiations with classified staff representatives.

Dreyfuss credited innovative administrators and dedicated faculty and staff for ensuring Río Hondo College meets the needs of students during this unprecedented time with solid financial resources.

Partnership to Promote Teaching Careers



Center for Collaborative Education

Transforming schools for student success

Río Hondo College is launching a partnership with the [Center for Collaborative Education](#) (CCE) and other area education institutions to strengthen the pathway teaching careers for local residents.

Known collectively as the Community Partnerships for Teacher Pipeline (CPTP), the group is leveraging a three-year \$2.9 million federal Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Program grant for the effort.

The project aims to redress the shortage of diverse teachings in the community by developing a teacher mentoring program that guides individuals through the entire career development pathway.

Other partners include El Camino College and Cerritos College as well as members of the Teach Los Angeles Regional Collaborative.

"Río Hondo College is eager to launch its partnership with CCE and area schools to boost mentoring, advising and career development activities designed to strengthen the pathway to teaching careers," Acting Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said.

"Our communities are rich in diversity as well as skills in math, science and computer science that -- if directed into the teaching profession -- can immeasurably enrich our children's education," Dreyfuss said.

One-on-one support and the mentoring program will provide opportunities for participants to build positive personal relationships and develop employment knowledge and skills.

The College will work with local school districts, California State University campuses, as well as STEM and community organizations to build and scale teacher preparation pipelines with a community development approach.

Río Hondo College and each partner will receive about \$380,000 each year during the program.

CDC Fall Festival

Río Hondo College's Child Development Center held a Fall Festival Walk on Oct. 30, providing children with a chance to celebrate the season safely. Students received goodie bags with organic food snacks. Members of the campus community came together to provide pumpkins, flowers, hay bales and balloons for the event



Activities Support Undocumented Students

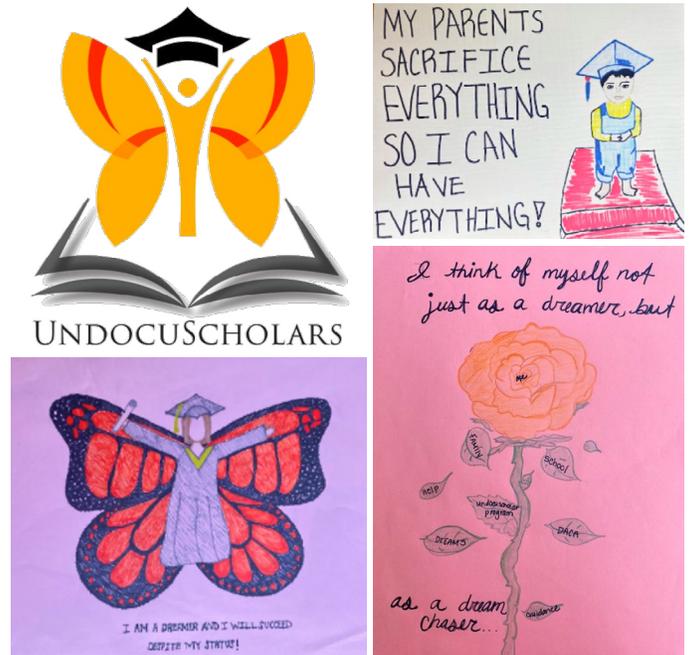
Río Hondo College's Student Success and Dream Center hosted a Virtual Undocumented Student Week of Action from Monday, Oct. 19 to Friday, Oct. 23 that carries the theme of "Dream to Believe."

This is the fourth annual celebration of the week, which is designed to build connections within the community of undocumented students, strengthen connections with the greater college community and advocate for community and government support.

Many of Río Hondo College's undocumented students are shielded from deportation, allowed to work and attend college under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order issued by then-President Barack Obama.

The event also kicked off an effort to raise \$10,000 by Friday, Dec. 18 to assist these undocumented students with scholarships and expenses. Donations can be made at bit.ly/RHCUndocuScholarDonation.

The week's programs focused on sharing the experience of undocumented students: a virtual mixer, virtual art gallery, an evening of talks that included an immigration attorney and two discussions with College graduates.



College Hosts Vote Center

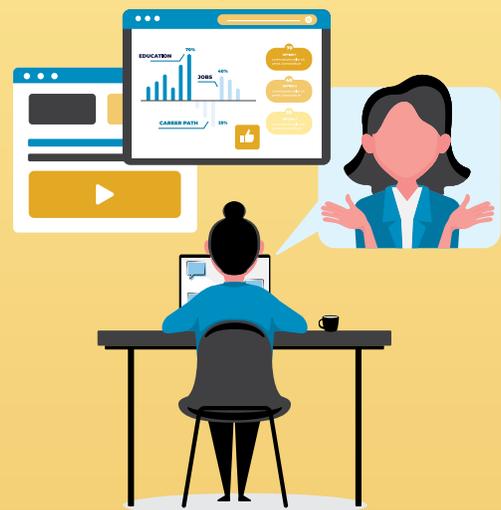
More than 22 voters cast ballots and 200 more dropped off absentee ballots at a Vote Center hosted by Río Hondo College from Oct. 30 to Nov. 3. The center, one of nearly a dozen in the Whittier community, helped provide a convenient location for people to vote during the November Presidential Election.

The College partnered with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office to host the Vote Center as part of the Los Angeles County-funded Voting Solutions for All People (VSAP) program.

The center represented an on-campus collaboration among the Office of the Superintendent/President, Custodial Services and Facilities, Security, Sign Production, Marketing and Communications, Informational Technology and the Office of Government and Community Relations.

Student Support Efforts Highlighted

Río Hondo College's Student Success Teams initiative, kicked off this fall, has been highlighted by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The initiative aims to boost student success by giving them access to an online career coach and websites devoted to detailing programs of study.



RÍO IN THE NEWS:
Read more at [California Community Colleges](https://www.calcc.edu/)

Women's Soccer Earns 8th Consecutive U.S. Coaches Team Academic Award

Under the direction of head coach Jennifer Tanaka-Hoshijo, Río Hondo's women's soccer team has received its eighth consecutive [Academic Team Award from United Soccer Coaches](#).

Río Hondo has earned the Team Academic Award every year since 2013 – the second-longest streak in the nation for community colleges. Seven California community college women's soccer teams received the award in 2020.

"It is an honor to be recognized by the United Soccer Coaches Association for a record eighth consecutive year as a Team Academic Award winner," Tanaka-Hoshijo said. "To achieve our team's regular goal to be nationally ranked in the top-20 for our play on the field and one of the top-two most recognized academic community college teams in the country is a credit to our student-athletes and the long days they spend studying, working and training to earn this success on and off the field."

United Soccer Coaches, the largest soccer coaches association in the world, annually celebrates the academic achievements of high school and college soccer teams whose student-athletes collectively demonstrate a commitment to excellence in their studies over the course of a full academic year.

College Team Academic Award recipients are active members of the United Soccer Coaches College Services Program with a composite grade point

average of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale for all players on the roster.

Six members of the 2019 women's soccer team transferred to four-year programs: Serina Vargas (Cal Poly Pomona), Serena Rosas (Cal State L.A.), Vivian Viramontes (Cal State L.A.), Taly Jimenez (Cal State Northridge), Janelle Piriano (Texas), Tori Galindo (Eastern New Mexico University).

The Roadrunners, who were ranked as high as No. 10 in the nation, closed the 2019 season with a 15-2-3 overall record and went a perfect 8-0 in South Coast Conference (SCC) play to capture the division championship. Last fall, Río Hondo made its sixth consecutive postseason appearance.



RÍO IN THE NEWS: Read more in the [Greenleaf Guardian](#)

Top Athlete, Coach Honored

Río Hondo College's athletic coaches have honored two-year standout Serina Vargas as the College's Female Athlete of the Year for 2019-20 for her combination of on-field and classroom prowess.

Vargas, a forward, helped lead the team to a South Coast Conference championship (8-0) before earning an associate degree in criminal justice with a 3.89 GPA. She now attends Cal Poly Pomona.

"I'm star-struck and didn't know I was nominated," Vargas told the Greenleaf Guardian. "There are so many other sports and it's crazy to me. I really did work hard."



Head Coach Jennifer Tanaka-Hoshijo Named SCC Fall Woman's Coach of the Year

Tanaka-Hoshijo, who guided her team to a No. 10 national ranking and the Southern Coast Conference (SCC) championship, has been chosen Woman's Coach of the Year by the athletic directors of the SCC member colleges.

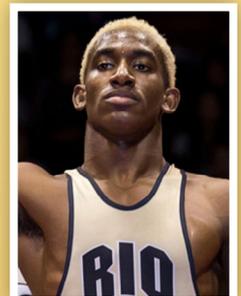
This is her 13th year as head coach.

"We have a great coaching staff and I am very proud of that," Tanaka-Hoshijo told the Greenleaf Guardian. "The recognition is great, but it's about the team."

RÍO IN THE NEWS: Read more in the [Greenleaf Guardian](#)

Wrestler Named Male Athlete of the Year

Wrestler Kahlil Tucker, who earned the 2019 state champion in the 113-pound weight class, has been named the College's Male Athletic of the Year. Tucker is the fifth consecutive wrestler to earn the title.



Coaches praised Tucker, who arrived at the College without having previously placed in his high school competitions, for developing his skills to take the state championship in just over a year. He now attends Texas Wesleyan on a full-ride scholarship.

Connect with Us on Social Media



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.

RÍO IN THE NEWS: Read more in [Fleet Equipment Magazine](#)

Partnership Praised for Green Tech Promotion

A public-private partnership that includes Río Hondo College is being praised for its efforts to promote green technology as the winner of the 2020 Innovation Award by Breathe Southern California, a nonprofit that advocates for better air quality.

The Volvo Low Impact Green Heavy Transport Solutions (LIGHTS) project aims to introduce electricity-driven trucks and equipment to the Southern California market. The partnership includes 15 public and private groups, including Río Hondo College, which is known for its automotive technology program's focus on alternative energy vehicles.

Save the Date

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18:

Grab & Go Grocery Drive,
www.riohondo.edu/riosource/food-pantry/

10 a.m. to noon Friday, Nov. 20:

TransVisibility Streaming Party

Tuesday, Dec. 8:

Student Equity Summit

6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9:

Board of Trustees meeting, virtual

6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 16:

Board of Trustees Annual Organizational Meeting



Altar-building, Crafts, Talks Celebrate Día de Los Muertos

Esteemed *altarista* Ofelia Esparza is a Chicana artist from East Los Angeles whose stunning and deeply meaningful *ofrendas* over the past four decades have earned her recognition as an NEA National Heritage Fellow. Alongside her daughter, artist Rosanna Esparza Ahrens, Esparza has shared her knowledge and art about el Día de Los Muertos with communities nationally and internationally.

Río Hondo College welcomed back Esparza and Esparza Ahrens build an *ofrenda* on campus in October to honor those in our community who have died. In addition, the College hosted a talk with Esparza on Oct. 8 her work and the traditions surrounding el Día de Los Muertos.

Río Hondo College also hosted a lecture honoring the holiday by artist Martha Carrillo sponsored by Self Help Graphics & Art addressing the art of papel picado, a form of Mexican folk art.