Río Hondo College has been named a 2021 Equity Champion for Higher Education by the Campaign for College Opportunity, which recognized the College’s Associate Degree for Transfer program as an exemplary supporter of Latinx students.

Río Hondo College received the award during a virtual ceremony on Nov. 16, alongside other esteemed community colleges who support Black students, Latinx students, and Black and Latinx students through Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) programs. By earning an ADT, students meet all of the general education requirements at a four-year university and are guaranteed acceptance to a California State University.

“At Río Hondo, we invest in students and invest in the community,” Río Hondo College Dean of Counseling Lisa Chavez said. “Latinx is one of the largest growing communities in the United States and we want that community to thrive and flourish. By pursuing an ADT at Río Hondo College, students can go on to achieve a higher level of education and the benefits that come with that - like job stability, security and healthcare.”

In order to earn their ADT and begin the transfer process to a four-year university, Río Hondo College students’ partner with their counselors to create an education plan, attend state-wide university tours and review financial aid awards from their chosen schools. These services are especially helpful to members of the Latinx community who are first-generation college students or are unfamiliar with local universities.

“Everyone at Río Hondo College plays a role in student success,” Chavez said. “Our faculty provides mentorship that will help students choose their careers and prepare them for the college experience. With our help, Latinx students can see a future for themselves that they may not have seen. As we say in our

Continued on page 2
Río Hondo College Named 2021 Equity Champion for University Bound Latinx Students

Continued from page 1

Transfer Center, and at Río Hondo College, "Start Río, Transfer Anywhere!"

In addition to educational assistance and college-career counseling, Río Hondo College also provides 'Transfer Jitters,' a program that helps students cope with transfer anxiety and separation from their families.

"At Río Hondo College, it is our mission to provide a strong college education foundation for our students and help them transfer to four-year colleges and universities," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "We are proud to have been named Equity Champions by the Campaign for College Community because it shines a light on the work we've done to encourage our Latinx population. We will continue to proudly support our Latinx students in their pursuit of knowledge and success."

Río Hondo College Named 2021 Equity Champion for University Bound Latinx Students

Longtime Río Hondo College Graphic Designer Honored During Board Meeting

Río Hondo College Graphic Designer Crystal Maes bid the College and her colleagues farewell as she delivered a retirement speech during a recent Board of Trustees meeting, ending her career after more than 22 years of service in the Marketing and Communications Department.

The Board of Trustees thanked Maes for her years of service, dedication and overall spirit with a chorus of warm goodbyes and a plaque to honor her commitment to the Río Hondo College community.

Maes thanked the Board and her team with a heartfelt speech.

"I just wanted to say that 22 years ago, I graduated with a degree in graphic communications and illustration and at that time, I started looking for my perfect job: which would be part-time graphics at a college," Maes said. "I saw an ad for Río Hondo College, applied, was hired and it was my lucky day because I started working with Sylvia Viramontes and we have been a team ever since. I had the opportunity to work with so many different departments, but mainly with the athletic, dance, art, theater and music departments among others. It was such a pleasure working with all of these people and I have enjoyed being here so much – having the opportunity to be creative and actually seeing my work around campus. I'm sad to leave, because I've loved it here and I will miss the great team in marketing: Ruthie, Sylvia, Albert and Gracy. But it's time for me to move on and I look forward to new adventure. I just wanted to say thank you to everyone and God bless you. Thank you."
The phrase “it takes a village to raise a child” echoed loudly through the Child Development Center as the community came together for Río Hondo College’s Child Development Center Fall Festival. The Child Development Center hosted a socially distanced, family friendly, fall themed event outdoors for its current families.

“I think I had more fun than my daughter,” said Christina Hernandez, Río Hondo College student and parent. “It is her first experience in a school setting and it makes me really happy to see her happy. Everything at the festival was great.”

The Annual Fall Festival would not have been possible without the collaboration between the families, the Río Hondo College community that donated pumpkins and the surrounding community that also donated items such as decorations, flowers and goodies for the children. In addition, Associated Students of Río Hondo College were among this year’s volunteers that helped throughout the event.

“Thank you to everyone who helped in any way to put a smile on our youngest RHC students’ faces,” said Cindy O’Neill, Child Development Center director.
Río Hondo College Hosts Dual Superintendent/President Profile Development Forums

Río Hondo College hosted two forums, allowing community members and students to provide their input on qualities, experiences and skills of the next Superintendent/President as well as a list of challenges and opportunities that should be addressed.

The event also featured discussion on a variety of topics, including diversity, equity, management, the COVID-19 pandemic, technology, mental health, 5- and 10-year plans for the College, building improvements and community culture.

View the Presidential Profile here: https://www.riohondo.edu/presidential-search/profile/

Río Hondo College Announces New Study Abroad Partner During Indo-Pacific Research Center Forum

Río Hondo College students, staff and administrators gave firsthand accounts of how studying abroad can expand one’s mind, provide language immersion and teach cultural diversity during an experience exchange forum, hosted by the Indo-Pacific Research Center on Nov. 30.

The forum, held at the Courtyard by Marriott Los Angeles Monterey Park, featured Río Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, Computer Science Professor Dr. Shin Liu and 10 students to talk about the College’s partnership with the Taiwanese government for its study abroad program.

The event also featured government and business partners, who are in support of global cultural exchange programs.

During the forum, Dreyfuss announced a new study abroad partner for the College, the Global Federation of Chinese Business Women, Greater Los Angeles chapter (GFCBW-GLA). The GFCBW-GLA will provide Río Hondo College students with career mentorship, by connecting them with industry professionals, to make them more competitive in the job market.

Liu, who created the College’s Taiwan study abroad program, said the new additions to the program will continue transforming Río Hondo College students into global citizens who are ready and able to enter the workforce, thanks to their rich cultural experiences.

Río Hondo College student Jing Chen, who visited New Taipei City in 2018, said her study abroad trip improved her Chinese-speaking skills and fully immersed hers into a new culture.
The Los Angeles County Assessor's Office has partnered with two local community colleges to create a job-training program aimed at funneling students into good paying county jobs.

The Real Estate Appraiser III Certificate Program at West Los Angeles College and Appraiser Assistant Training Program at Río Hondo College are tuition-free and will help the Office backfill the 30 some openings that occur in the department each year through retirements, relocations and other factors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the staffing shortage and increased the need to recruit qualified candidates.

Entry-level pay for the jobs the programs prepare students for range from around $40,000 to $55,000 a year, according to Steve Whitmore, a spokesman for the Assessor’s Office.

“This program creates a direct pathway to a county job with great benefits, including medical, dental and retirement,” Whitmore said. “It’s a pathway to economic stability.”

Steve Veres, president of the LA Community College District Board of Trustees, is excited about the partnership.

“This program is an accessible way to provide valuable and durable skills that will create lifelong employment opportunities in a high-growth market sector,” Veres said in a statement. “The Los Angeles Community College District continues to look for innovative and inclusive ways to provide opportunity to the diverse students we serve.”

The Real Estate Appraiser III Certificate of Achievement Program is for people already hired by the Assessor’s Office. The advancement curriculum has traditionally been taught all in-house, but this year three courses are being conducted in-house with the final two at West Los Angeles College.

The Appraiser Assistant Training Program at Río Hondo includes four tuition-free, noncredit courses: Real Estate Principles, Real Estate Appraisal, California Property Taxation & Assessment, and Career Preparation: 21st Century Skills.

Upon completion of the program, students receive a noncredit certificate in California Property Taxation and Appraisal, and an opportunity to apply for employment at the Assessor as an appraiser assistant.

An estimated 50 students have already enrolled at Río Hondo for the Appraiser Assistant program. Graduates will qualify to immediately fill 16 positions in the Assessor’s Office, and eventually, they’ll learn the skills to become candidates for appraiser positions with numerous opportunities for upward mobility.

When Jeffrey Prang was elected Los Angeles County Assessor in 2014 he quickly identified the challenge in attracting and retaining qualified job candidates to the department. After reaching out to outside agencies for help, he learned that the Los Angeles Community College District and Río Hondo College were willing to help.

In August 2020, L.A. County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, who leads the Board of Supervisors’ efforts on workforce development initiatives, asked the county’s Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services, in collaboration with the Assessor, to develop a review of training programs and curriculums that were currently offered at local colleges.

After the review was completed, and after much discussion and collaboration, the new training program was established.

Otto Solórzano, acting director for the Department of Workforce Development, Aging & Community Services, calls it a win-win.

“We are getting our residents into good county jobs that lead to even better jobs and careers,” he said. “I am grateful to Supervisor Solis and the Board of Supervisors for envisioning this initiative, and to Jeff Prang for his leadership and commitment to make it happen.”

The Assessor’s Office is exploring the option of adding additional positions to the program that require extended specialized training.
Mission Statement

Río Hondo College is an educational and community partner committed to advancing social justice and equity as an antiracist institution that collectively invests in all students’ academic and career pathways that lead to attainment of degree, certificate, transfer, and lifelong-learning goals.