President’s Message

Hello Río Hondo College community,

As we start our fall semester at Río Hondo College, I am filled with a strong sense of purpose and joy to be your new leader. It is awe-inspiring to see so much achievement in one place and I count myself lucky to be here at Río Hondo. Even though the semester has just begun, one of my biggest goals is to inspire and support everyone I meet – and I can see that everyone on campus has aspirations that are just as big as mine.

I see that our faculty, staff and administrators are not just here to do a job – they are here to shape the minds of scholars and support their journeys. Students are not just here to save money and transfer out – they are here to find themselves and build their dreams.

At Río Hondo College, we are here to build up our community and make it a better place.

Together, we can make fall 2022 one of our most rewarding semesters yet in our College’s long and impressive history.

Thank you.

Dr. Marilyn Flores
Superintendent/President

Alejandro Fernández Gifts Part of His ‘Amor y Patria’ Tour Proceeds to Undocumented Students at Río Hondo College

Several undocumented Río Hondo College students will soon receive scholarships, thanks to a pledge from Mexican singer Alejandro Fernández to donate a portion of concert proceeds from his “Amor y Patria” tour this fall.

Fernández will donate partial proceeds from his exclusive and limited “Amor y Patria” run in September to Río Hondo College as a means of funding the education of undocumented students under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), also known as ‘Dreamers.’

To be considered for the scholarship, students

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Alejandro Fernández Gifts part of his ‘Amor y Patria’ Tour Proceeds to Undocumented Students at Río Hondo College

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need to submit a Río Hondo College Foundation Scholarship Application.

Río Hondo College, which is the only Southern California organization receiving the donation, plans to utilize this gift to provide five ‘Dreamers’ with scholarships for the 2022-23 academic year, with additional awards to be confirmed.

In his search for local organizations that help immigrant families, Fernández learned of the resources provided by the Student Success and Dream Center at Río Hondo College, where undocumented students receive registration assistance, success coaching and educational counseling services to help them achieve their goals.

The “Amor y Patria” tour will start on September 9 in Tucson, Arizona and will end with a performance in Pico Rivera, California at the Pico Rivera Sports Arena on September 18.

AMOR Y PATRIA DATES:
September 15 – Las Vegas, NV – MGM Grand Garden Arena (Alex Fernández)
September 17 – Las Vegas, NV – MGM Grand Garden Arena (Alex Fernández)
September 18 – Pico Rivera, CA – Pico Rivera Sports Arena

Río in the News: Read more about the donation to Río Hondo College students here: San Gabriel Valley Tribune, Spectrum News 1, Telemundo 52, and Whittier Daily News.

Río Hondo College Transfer Rate to UCLA Reaches 81%

Río Hondo College’s (RHC) Honors Transfer Program is celebrating an 81% transfer rate to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), with nearly 100% of all students that complete the program being accepted to four-year colleges or universities, according to the latest data reported by the program’s coordinators.

Honors Transfer Program Coordinator and Professor of Sociology Melissa Ríñone Juárez said this transfer rate is exceptional, noting that UCLA is one of the most prestigious colleges in the world.

“The RHC Honors Program is designed to challenge, enrich and prepare academically talented and highly motivated community college students seeking transfer to a four-year university,” Ríñone Juárez said. “Several partner universities give priority consideration for admission to Honors Students. Although there is not a guarantee of admission, the UCLA data certainly demonstrates the increased acceptance rate of students in the program.”

Ríñone Juárez said the high transfer rate is due to the program’s hard-working staff members, including Honors Counselor David Tieu, who provides ongoing support and guidance for transfer success. She also credited the students who enroll in the program for being steadfast and committed to their educational goals.

“The program is available to all students at Río Hondo College,” Ríñone Juárez said. “Our goal is to cultivate Honors Scholars so wherever you might be in your educational journey, we are here to support your transfer goals and to and surround you with a community of committed student learners.”

Ríñone Juárez said the Honors Transfer Program also offers opportunities for student engagement beyond the classroom experience. Ríñone Juárez, who has worked at Río Hondo College for 26 years and has been the Honors Coordinator since 2017, also noted that Honors Transfer Program students regularly gain acceptance to colleges such as California State University, Fullerton, the University of California, Irvine and the University of California, Berkeley.
A Conversation with Río Hondo College’s Superintendent/President

Newly appointed Río Hondo College Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores discusses why community college is such an important educational resource, the role community college plays in supporting underrepresented students, the opportunities for middle and high school students to get a head start in higher education, conducting a listening tour to meet her new colleagues, and how school districts and parents can best prepare their students for college.

To listen to this episode, click here.

Congresswoman Sánchez Visits Río Hondo College

On August 30, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez visited Río Hondo College for a meet and greet with Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores and other College leaders.

Joining Dr. Flores were Vice President Dr. Don Miller, Vice President of Student Services Dr. Earic Dixon-Peters, Vice President of Human Resources Tina Kuperman, Government and Community Relations (GCR) Director Dr. Russell Castaneda Calleros, Marketing and Communications Director Ruthie Retana, and GCR/Marketing Clerk Typist III Griselda Hernandez.

After Dr. Miller and Dr. Dixon-Peters shared updates of their ongoing work in academic affairs and student services, Congresswoman Sánchez also shared key legislation updates. Dr. Flores expressed deep gratitude for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF) funding to support students’ basic needs such as childcare, housing and food insecurity, which Congresswoman Sánchez voted for as part of the American Rescue Plan.

The group then visited the Arts Gallery and the Extended Opportunity Program and Services and Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (EOP&S/CARE) Office. Both locations gave participating campus leaders and staff an opportunity to share information on the type of programming that takes place in the Arts & Cultural Programs and the type of services offered by the EOP&S/CARE Office. Congresswoman Sánchez said she enjoyed her visit and reminded Dr. Flores that she continues to be available to help the College any way she can.
Río Hondo College held its Fall 2022 FLEX Day celebration with the theme “From Words to Action: Living Our Mission” for the College’s faculty, staff, Board of Trustees, administrators and student leaders on August 19 before the start of the semester.

The day’s events included remarks from Board President Vicky Santana, College updates from Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores, the four Vice Presidents and the Presidents of each constituency group, and a question-and-answer session for Dr. Flores. There were also breakout workshops (such as the “Supporting Success Through Student Services” workshop pictured below), department check-ins, and mingling sessions to bring campus employees together.

Dr. Flores’ speech welcomed new employees and managers to campus and thanked the community for receiving her so graciously during her first seven weeks as superintendent/president. She said her goals going forward would be to make sure that Río Hondo College continues to become a more inclusive campus, while also improving a solid work/life balance of employees. Dr. Flores said that she was deeply honored to be leading the College as it will enter its 60th year of offering classes to the community in 2023.

Río Hondo College baseball head coach Mike Salazar announced that 2022 All-State catcher Rafael Flores signed an undrafted free agent deal with the New York Yankees.

Flores, out of Katella High School, had an impressive sophomore season for the Roadrunners this past spring. He racked up the postseason honors, being named All-State and first-team All-South Coast Conference while also earning the California Community College Baseball Coaches Association (CCCBCA)/Rawlings Gold Glove Award. Overall, Flores earned a .380 batting average and totaled 63 hits, 16 doubles, 9 home runs, and 36 RBI in 39 games for the Roadrunners.

According to Salazar, the Yankees had originally planned to select Flores during the mid to late rounds of the 2022 MLB Draft in July, but for whatever reason, that fell through.

“The MLB Draft only had 20 rounds this year,” said Salazar. “He was supposed to go in the 8th-12th round, but it didn’t happen. As soon as the draft was over, they signed him.

“Flores most recently played for the Alaska Goldpanners, a collegiate summer league team in Fairbanks. Before signing with the Yankees, Flores was hitting .348 over 28 games with 36 RBI and 20 runs.

Former Río Hondo Roadrunner Rafael Flores signs with New York Yankees

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The Yankees flew him out to New York to sign his contract. He is now in Florida at their player development center, waiting to be sent to a minor league team.”

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Río Hondo College’s Entrepreneur Camp Río Teaches Students to Become Young Business Owners

Seventeen high school students put their business skills and passion into action at Río Hondo College’s annual Entrepreneur Camp Río, a two-week camp that teaches students how to achieve success as young entrepreneurs.

The camp was led by Río Hondo College faculty members certified by the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE). Students learned how to identify business opportunities, construct a financial model and create a marketing and sales strategy. The camp welcomed students from seven schools in the area including Arroyo, El Monte, El Rancho, Gabrielino, Glen A. Wilson, La Serena and Mark Keppel high schools.

“I was highly impressed with every student that attended Entrepreneur Camp Río,” said Marissa Young, business management instructor at Río Hondo College. “They were completely engaged and excited about innovation and entrepreneurship.”

The camp culminated with students developing and pitching an original business plan in hopes of winning cash prizes donated by Río Hondo College’s Dean of Business, Gita Runkle. Competition judges included representatives from Lemelson-MIT, UC Berkeley, UC San Diego, and the Michelson Institute for Intellectual Property.

Mark Keppel High School sophomore Xiushan Lu won first place for the project “Earth’s Paints,” which are tubes of eco-friendly acrylic paint that combine Lu’s passion for art with a desire to reduce pollution.

“At the time, I had recently come out of a class that really went over the effects of pollution and how serious the problem has become,” Lu said. “I thought that doing a project that worked to reduce pollution would bring attention to the severity of the issue.”

Mark Keppel High School junior Joleen Wong won third place for her development of “Costno,” a nonprofit organization that would ship free school supplies to teachers and low-income students to help with school performance.

Wong loved her time at Entrepreneur Camp Río, particularly because of the one-on-one mentorship opportunities that helped her explore new ideas and kept her on track.

Students were eligible to participate in the camp for free thanks to funding from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office Strong Workforce Program.

The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) is a global nonprofit organization that provides high-quality entrepreneurship education to middle and high school students from under-resourced communities, as well as programs for college students and adults. NFTE reaches 50,000+ students annually in 30 states across the U.S. and offers programs in 19 additional countries. They have educated more than a million students through in-school, out-of-school, college, and summer camp programs, offered in person and online. To learn more about how they are promoting inclusive capitalism and building the next generation of diverse entrepreneurs, visit www.nfte.com.
Guardian Scholars Hosts Welcome Back Event

Rio Hondo College’s Guardian Scholars program hosted a Welcome Back Fall 2022 event for new and returning students to kick off the semester, with special remarks from Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores and keynote speaker, Guardian Scholar alumnus and author, Demontae Thompson. Following the speakers, guests enjoyed a program orientation, supplies and book distribution, and a campus tour.

The event, held August 16, introduced students to the Guardian Scholars Team to showcase the academic support available to them throughout their College journey as they obtain a degree/certificate and/or transfer to a four-year university.

For more information about the Guardian Scholars program, [click here](#).

Roadrunner Family Night

The Rio Hondo College Student Success & Dream Center and Outreach Department hosted its seventh annual Roadrunner Family Night on August 31 with the theme “Reconnect with Rio” to introduce students to academic programs, student services programs, professors, administrators, staff and resources.

Students and families were welcomed by Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores and Vice President of Student Services Dr. Earic Dixon-Peters. They learned about the Five Tips for Success from student leaders. They visited information booths hosted by a variety of College programs, participated in drawings for prizes and had the option to attend a free showing of the exhibit “Black Kats and other Creatures” at the Rio Hondo College Art Gallery. They also enjoyed a free dinner.
Focus on Río

We are here to help you reach your goals and achieve your dreams.

We Offer

- Services in person and online.
- Free or low-cost tuition for credit courses.
- Tuition free noncredit classes and certificates.
- Transfer degrees/classes that meet both CSU and UC requirements.
- Career and workforce education programs that can help you get high-paying jobs.
- More than 200 degree and certificate programs to choose from.

Río Hondo College
3600 Workman Mill Rd.
Whittier, CA 90601

www.riohondo.edu

Classes are offered on the main campus, fire academy, police academy and Educational Center at Pico Rivera.

Classes and programs are available on-campus, hybrid or fully online.

Río Hondo College to Host Golf Tournament Fundraiser

WHAT:
The Río Hondo College Foundation will host a golf tournament to raise funds for scholarships, programs, equipment and projects that meet the needs of the College’s diverse student population.

WHEN:
7:30 a.m. check in; 8:30 a.m. shotgun start, Monday, September 26, 2022.

WHERE:
Candlewood Country Club
14000 Telegraph Road
Whittier, CA 90604

DETAILS:
All participants will be given entry, access to a golf cart, a golf shirt, a gift bag, breakfast, lunch and beverages and snacks throughout the tournament. Sponsorship opportunities are available ranging from $300 - $15,000. For more information, visit Río Hondo College Foundation or the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce.
The Nisei Week Foundation is excited to announce the 2022 Nisei Week Pioneer Spirit honorees, who were recognized during the 80th Nisei Week Japanese Festival (August 13 - 21) in Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo.

The six Pioneer Spirit Award recipients are dedicated leaders and outstanding members of the greater Los Angeles Japanese American community. They were honored at a special 2022 Pioneer Spirit Luncheon at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel on August 17.

The 2022 Nisei Week Pioneer Spirit Honorees are: Kenneth Sadao Hayashi, Masao Morisaku, Mike Ichiro Murase, Yoshio “Yosh” Nakamura, Heizaburo Okawa and Mario G. Reyes.

Yoshio “Yosh” Nakamura – Nominated by Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council

Nakamura is an influential man in many areas of his life, including his honorable service to the U.S. military, involvement in the creation of numerous key establishments, and in the arts.

In 1944, Nakamura was inducted in the Enlisted Reserve and reported for active duty from Gila River. After training at Camp Blanding in Florida he was sent to France to join the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and saw military action in southern France and later in Italy to break the Gothic Line.

He received numerous recognitions for his military service such as the Bronze Star Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, Presidential Unit Citation with Oak Leaf Cluster, Congressional Gold Medal, European African Middle Eastern Ribbon with Three Battle Stars, Good Conduct Medal, Victory Medal, and French Legion of Honor Medal. He was one of five Nisei veterans chosen to ride on the “Go For Broke” float in the 2015 Rose Parade.

After his military service, under the G.I. Bill, Nakamura attended the University of Southern California and received his B.F.A. (Magna Cum Laude), and M.F.A. After receiving his degrees, he began his career as an educator. He started as an art teacher in the Fine Arts Department at Whittier High School and then went on to Rio Hondo College as a professor. At Rio Hondo, he was the founder of the Visual and Performing Arts Department, and went on to serve as an administrator and vice president. As in other areas of his life, he has received many recognitions and commendations as an educator, such as Teacher of the Year, Outstanding Educators of America, and Fellow of the College.

Nakamura and his wife, Grace, have also been active in the Japanese American community. They were active members of SELANOCO (South East Los Angeles and North Orange County) JACL. He helped host the initial formation meeting of the SELANOCO Chapter at Rio Hondo College. He was also a founding member of the Go for Broke National Education Center and the Japanese American National Museum.

As an artist, he is represented in over 175 private, corporate and public collections, including the Joseph Hirshhorn Collection of the Smithsonian Institute.

Río IN THE NEWS: Read more about the Pioneer Spirit Awardee at The Rafu Shimpo.

Río Hondo College’s Theater Department held a production of “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,” a musical about the hijinks surrounding a spelling bee competition.

The musical, which premiered on August 4 in the College’s Wray Theater, marked the return of in-person musicals for Río Hondo College since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Four shows were held through August 7 and included audience participation.
Volvo LIGHTS Ends – A New Era Dawns

During a ceremony at the Ontario Convention Center in California, Volvo Trucks North America formally declared the end of its innovative Volvo LIGHTS collaborative battery-electric truck partnership after a successful three-year run.

Established in 2019, Volvo LIGHTS was a first in the trucking industry. It was an effort headed by the truck OEM that brought together 14 public and private partners to design and implement a blueprint for the robust support ecosystem necessary to deploy battery-electric trucks and equipment at scale.

VTNA President Peter Voorhoeve spoke to representatives from all the Volvo LIGHTS partners during his opening remarks at a day-long event detailing the project’s successes, which included visits to TEC Equipment, Volvo Trucks’ largest West Coast dealership, and NFI’s Cinco distribution center. NFI is currently running electric trucks in drayage operations out of the Port of Long Beach. Other events included round-table discussions with Volvo LIGHTS partners and a one-on-one interview between Voorhoeve and industry journalists attending the event.

During the project, which ran from 2019 to 2022 in California’s South Coast Air Basin, Voorhoeve noted that Volvo deployed its first Class 8 pilot Volvo VNR Electric trucks to fleet operators in order to collect real-world operating data and customer feedback ahead of announcing its commercial model in December 2020. The project was driven by the need for real-world information on the use of battery-electric trucks as they neared scale production and deployment in fleet operations.

“By working closely with an extraordinary group of public and private partners through the Volvo LIGHTS project, we were able to validate key processes around Class 8 battery-electric truck adoption for commercial transport segments and identify challenges that needed to be addressed for widespread market introduction,” Voorhoeve said during his remarks. “The most valuable takeaway for our team was really experiencing the value of close cross-functional and cross-organizational collaboration as we continue to drive innovation and develop new solutions for sustainable transport.”

The Volvo LIGHTS project was led by VTNA and California’s South Coast Air Quality Management District, and included NFI, Dependable Highway Express, TEC Equipment, Shell Recharge Solutions (formerly Greenlots), the Port of Long Beach, the Port of Los Angeles, Southern California Edison, Calstart, the University of California, Riverside CE-CERT, Reach Out, Río Hondo College, and San Bernardino Valley College.

Río Hondo College to Host Installation Ceremony for New Superintendent/President

Río Hondo College and the Board of Trustees will host an installation ceremony for Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores starting at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, October 14 in the upper quad and breezeway of the L tower at the College.

Please RSVP online at https://gorio.page/reception-rsvp by Friday, Oct. 7. Free parking will be available in Lot B. Hors d’oeuvres will be served and wine will be available by the Río Hondo College Foundation.
Río Hondo College to Offer Study Abroad Program in Madrid, Spain

WHAT: Río Hondo College students will have the opportunity to expand their horizons through the new study abroad program, which gives students enrolled in 12 or more units the opportunity to study in Madrid, Spain during the 2023 spring semester.

Study abroad students will enroll in general education classes, taught by faculty from Río Hondo College, Citrus College and Cuyamaca College and will live alongside students from 11 other local California community colleges.

WHEN: Feb. 16, 2023 – May 13, 2023

WHERE: Madrid, Spain

DETAILS: For more information, please contact Professor Rebecca Green at rgreen@riohondo.edu.