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President's Message



Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr.

It is always a pleasure to celebrate advances in the way this College serves students! This month we held a grand opening ceremony for the new Student Services Building and Student Union, and the newly-configured Quad area. Since the demolition of the former Putnam Center to make way for the new Learning Resource Center, our students have been without a real place to gather and to plan student activities. Our Student Services departments were scattered all over campus --- now students have a true 'one-stop' shop.

The new Quad(s) --- upper, middle, and lower, provide attractive new outdoor spaces for students and the campus community to traverse and enjoy. The improved vista of the new grand staircase will be an ideal photo backdrop and activity staging area. The new digital message board has quickly become an essential element in the new heart of the campus, with up-to-the-minute time and temperature information, along with electronic messages about activities and events.

Spaces vacated by various Student Services units will be re-allocated for other purposes, or as 'swing' space, as construction continues. Thanks again to our Facilities crew for assisting with the logistics of moving whole departments and assisting with occupancy issues that occur in any new building.

We have just received more discouraging news about the State funding for California community colleges statewide, which are being hit by a February 'surprise' and unexpected additional \$149 million budget cut. Our board will soon consider advocacy efforts to help minimize the impact of these unanticipated new cuts, which amount to nearly \$1.7 million for Rio Hondo College. Please remember to conserve funds in every possible way as we continue to deal with the realities of the current State budget on our students and our community.

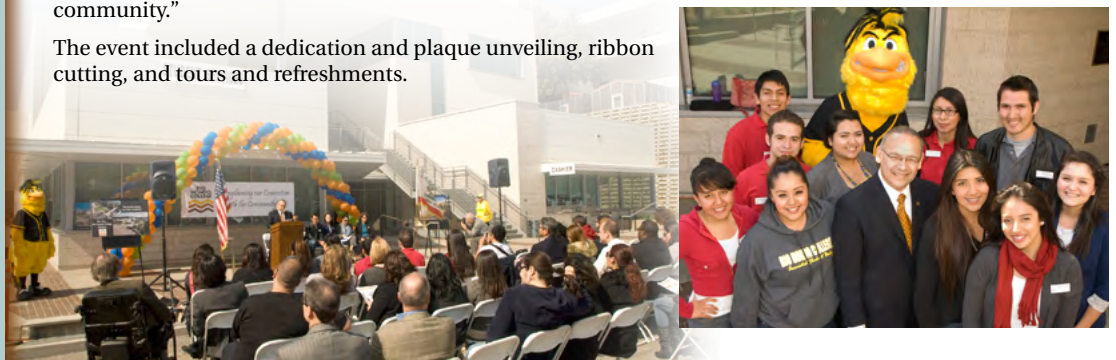
Please plan to join us April 20, for a Foundation-sponsored event, "A Taste of Rio" in the new Rio Café and Quad area at 6 p.m. We will dedicate Putnam Plaza, and launch the 50th Anniversary celebration. It promises to be a festive event to benefit student scholarships.

A Grand Opening for Student Services Center Complex and Quad

Students, faculty, staff, joined trustees and special guests for a building dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Student Services Complex & Quad on a beautiful Leap Year afternoon on February 29. President Dr. Ted Martinez, Jr. welcomed the audience and proclaimed the facility "the new heart of the campus."

Associated Student Body President Zeus Galindo said, "This is a real place for fellow students to hang out, to do homework, and to learn how they can be more involved in our school community."

The event included a dedication and plaque unveiling, ribbon cutting, and tours and refreshments.



Board Meeting



Jacqueline Wilvers, Director of the Grant Development and Management Office, gave a presentation at the February Board Meeting that outlined how the office enhances student success by assisting College faculty and staff to pursue and secure external funding opportunities.

The office works closely with faculty and staff to develop and manage grants; it provides alerts about funding possibilities, cycles, and deadlines, and assists with research, development, and submission of proposals. The office also supports the monitoring, reporting, and renewing of existing grants. Rio Hondo College had secured just over \$3.7 million in new and continuing grants last year.

It was announced during the meeting that the City of El Monte, through its Public Works Department, granted \$5,000 to Rio Hondo College "GO RIO" Program so that El Monte residents continue to have maximum access to the College through its Go Rio Bus pass program.

JoAnna Downey-Schilling Appointed Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs



Dr. JoAnna Downey-Schilling was appointed Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs for Rio Hondo College by the Board of Trustees at its February

meeting. Downey-Schilling came to Rio Hondo in 2006 to serve as the Dean of the Arts & Cultural Programs. In this role she also served as Interim Dean of the Continuing and Contract Education.

"It's an honor to be appointed to this position," says Downey-Schilling. "I am fortunate to have a wonderful group of instructional deans, faculty and staff to work with."

Downey-Schilling has a Ph.D. in Education from Oregon State University, an M.F.A. in Playwriting from Carnegie Mellon University, and a B.A. in English from Smith College.

Black History Month Celebrated

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month." The tradition as it evolved through the 20th Century serves as an important reminder of the contributions of African-Americans to this country.

Throughout this past month, the Associated Student Body (ASB) along with Rio Hondo College administrators, faculty, and staff held several events to celebrate Black History Month, including a kick-off celebration on February 8 in the Middle Quad.



College Is Finalist In Bellwether Competition

Rio Hondo College was named as a finalist in the prestigious 2012 Bellwether Awards for its El Monte Union High School District Pledge Compact Project. The Community College Futures Assembly sponsors the awards that recognize outstanding and innovative programs and practices that are successfully leading community colleges into the future.

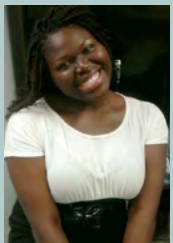
The Bellwether Awards are given annually in three categories to colleges with outstanding and innovative programs or practices: Instructional Programs & Services; Planning, Governance & Finance; and Workforce Development.

Rio Hondo College was one of ten finalists in the Instructional Programs & Services category. Rio Hondo and the El Monte Union High School District began the collaboration in 2010 to provide even more incentive for local youth to pursue higher education. The El Monte Union Pledge Compact includes University of California, Irvine (UCI) and Cal State Los Angeles as partners in the development of a seamless pipeline from high school to college and university.



In 2009 Rio Hondo College won first place in the Planning, Governance and Finance category for its Go Rio program. Go Rio offers universal access through mass-transit for all students who are registered full-time at Rio Hondo College.

Student Clarissa Jessica Young to Attend Disney College Program in Orlando, Florida



Clarissa Jessica Young is eagerly anticipating traveling to Orlando, Florida, this May to attend the Disney College Program. As part of the eight-month program, the 20-year-old Rio Hondo College (RHC)

student will take classes, serve as an intern at one of the theme park's hotels and work as a lifeguard at a resort pool.

Young is especially looking forward to the marketing and communications classes that she'll take. "The experience will help me to reach my career goal of working in theme park management," she says.

Young is the first RHC student to participate in the Orlando, Florida program, though several Rio Hondo students have participated in the Disney College Program in Anaheim.

Young, who went to Santa Fe Springs High School, says that she applied for the program online and underwent a web and telephone interview before she was accepted. When Young returns to RHC, she will work as a recruiter for the Disney program to help other interested students participate as well.

Rio Hondo College Hosts Community Educational Forums

Rio Hondo College will host five Community Educational Forum Sessions starting on March 15 and running through April, one in each of its Trustee Areas. The forums will provide community members, and especially parents of high school students, the opportunity to learn more about Rio Hondo College and the new State recommendations to promote student success. As well, the College and its Board of Trustees is seeking community feedback to help guide its future direction.

The forums will include a brief presentation about the College, a synopsis of the new State recommendations, and an update of the College's current priorities. Participants will break into small discussion groups where they can share feedback and ideas. Simultaneously, high school seniors can learn more about enrolling and attending the College from current Rio Hondo students.

Refreshments and prizes will be underwritten by the campus Follett Bookstore.

The Forums will begin at 7 p.m. on the following dates at these locations:

**March 15: Whittier High School Library, 12417 E. Philadelphia St. Whittier, CA 90601
– Trustee Area 3 (Angela Acosta-Salazar)**

**March 22: El Monte High School, 3048 Tyler Avenue, El Monte, CA 91731
– Trustee Area 1 (Norma Edith García)**

**April 12: El Rancho High School, 6501 S. Passons Blvd., Pico Rivera, CA 90660
– Trustee Area 2 (Vicky Santana)**

**April 19: Santa Fe High School, Café West, 10400 S. Orr and Day Rd., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
– Trustee Area 4 (Gary Mendez)**

TBA – Trustee Area 5 (Madeline Shapiro)

SAVE THE DATE APRIL 20

A special event "A Taste of Rio" takes place on April 20 to launch the College's 50th Anniversary Celebration. The event will take place at 6 p.m. in the New Student Union Rio Café.

Brown Bag Lunch Series

Sponsored by the RHC Chicano Studies Program, History Department, and the Rio Institute for Student Success & Equity (RISSE)

Join in these important conversations. Bring your lunch – dessert and discussion provided.

Making "It" All Relevant

Thursday, March 8
Noon - 1 p.m.
RM (TBA)

We define the "it" and ask if any of "it" makes any difference in our teaching styles, course content or personal perspectives.

Does "It" Matter?

Thursday, March 22
Noon - 1 p.m.
RM (TBA)

An honest dialogue about us as educators and how much more of ourselves we are willing invest in our students' lives.





Five Transit Agencies Join at Spring Transit Fair

The College sponsored a Transit Fair in the Mid Quad Wednesday, February 1 and Thursday, February 2. The Fair was an excellent opportunity for students to obtain transit schedules, brochures and any information on available incentives to utilize transit. Five transit agencies, which serve Rio Hondo were present: Foothill Transit, Metro Transit, Montebello Bus Lines, Sunshine Shuttle, and Norwalk Transit.

Rio Hondo Attends National Legislative Summit in Washington D.C.

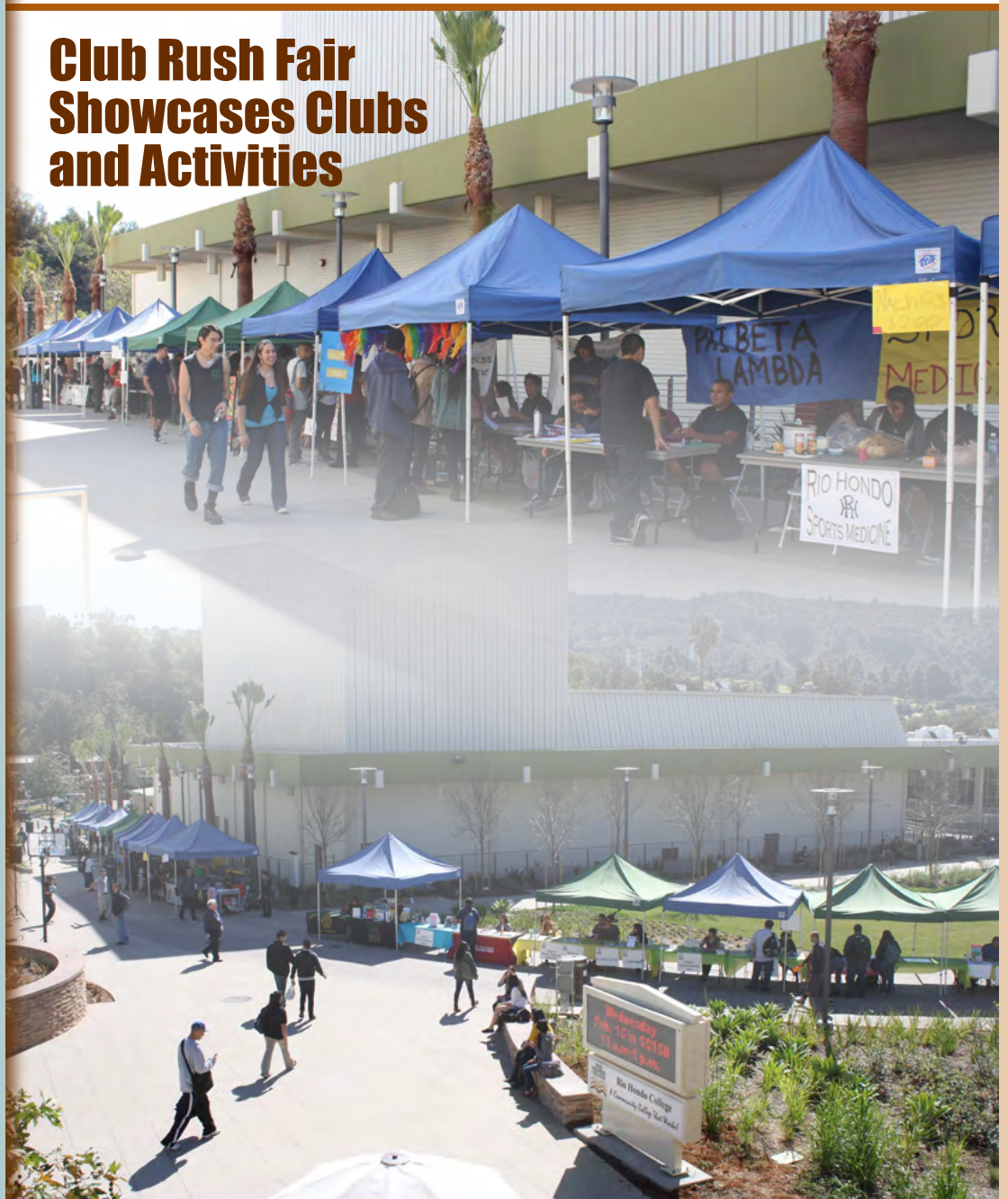
Russell Castaneda-Calleros, Director of Government and Community Relations at Rio Hondo College, was joined by Trustee Gary Mendez and Student Trustee Julianna Ojeda at the National Legislative Summit in Washington D.C. from Feb. 13 to 15.

Sponsored by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), the summit drew nearly a thousand community college trustees, presidents, students and other advocates to the nation's capital to make the case for community colleges.

Attending this conference and these meetings enabled Castaneda-Calleros, Mendez and Ojeda to update Congress members and their staff representatives on key issues such as supporting President Obama's new three-year \$8 billion Community College to Career Fund, supporting funding for Veteran Student Centers, and passing the DREAM Act, says Castaneda-Calleros.

While at the conference the Rio Hondo College contingent met with various federal representatives, including Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and Congresswomen Linda Sanchez, Grace Napolitano and Judy Chu, in an effort to build support for community colleges.

Club Rush Fair Showcases Clubs and Activities



Construction Alert!

As part of the continuing construction upgrades for the campus, a portion of the asphalt parking stalls on Levels 4, 5 and 6 were removed February 24 in preparation for the construction of a stairway between these levels and West Road. Vehicle access from College Drive, North Road and Tram Way will remain unaffected as will the pedestrian pathway to West Road from level 6. The removed areas will be cordoned off with caution tape and safety cones. Construction of the stairs themselves will begin in May and last through the summer session. Look for further information as the construction start date draws near.