



# START RIO...GO ANYWHERE

## MEDIA RELEASE

3600 Workman Mill Road / Whittier, CA 90601

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CONTACT: Ruthie Retana  
(562) 463-3145

### ***Río Hondo College Serves Hundreds at Drive-through Pantry; Provides 400 Chromebooks to Assist Students, Faculty, Staff***

**WHITTIER** – Río Hondo College is serving hundreds of meals through a drive-through food pantry and is providing 400 Chromebooks to assist students, faculty and staff during the COVID-19 health crisis that forced a shift to online instruction and remote student services.

The services are one piece of a massive expansion of student support launched by the College since shifting to online instruction on March 16. The College now provides online services across all student groups, including special programs structured for single mothers, economically disadvantaged students, former foster youth, veterans and others.

“Unwavering commitment to provide extraordinary support during this crisis typifies our remarkable College culture of care and personifies our mission,” Superintendent/President Dr. Arturo Reyes said. “As we endure this ordeal together, I am convinced our collective will and dedication will prevail above all adversity and any future challenges.”

The College launched the drive-through pantry from its RíoSource Room, a one-stop resource for students who struggle with food insecurity. The pantry is offering weekly service from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesdays. More than 350 students were served with grocery bags on just the first two days of the drive-through service.

Chromebook loans, including backpack cases, are designed to assist students continue their studies. The College has loaned 37 Chromebooks to faculty and staff to allow them to continue their work remotely. The College also is moving forward with plans to provide mobile hotspots as soon as they become available.

In addition, staff who work with single mothers served by the Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE) announced \$20,000 in aid from Soroptimist International of Whittier. The organization offers annual “Live Your Dream” scholarships to single mothers.

## MORE

*Río Hondo College, located in Whittier, California, 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. For information on the College or its programs, please call 562-692-0921 or visit [www.riohondo.edu](http://www.riohondo.edu).*

Earlier this month, the group delivered \$15,000 in scholarships to five winners at their homes, along with food gift cards. Ten additional scholarship applicants from the College shared a \$5,000 donation given to the Soroptimist organization to assist with their needs.

“Working collectively, collaboratively and cooperatively, our dedicated team at Río Hondo College continues to make a difference in the lives of each and every student,” Reyes said.

California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley praised the system’s Colleges for their support of students during the health crisis, calling out Río Hondo College by name.

“I want to thank the faculty, the staff and all of the administrators who are ensuring that our students can reach their educational goals and that's critically important right now,” Oakley said during the Chancellor’s Office Zoom webinar on April 1. “You're ensuring that the continuity of instruction is there. You're ensuring the students supports are there for our students, many of which are really struggling right now.”

The College announced today the extension of its online instruction and remote student services through summer session, with plans to return to campus-based instruction and services for fall 2020.

## **PHOTOS**

**RHC\_Pantry\_1:** College managers provide meals to students through a drive-through pantry assembled the week after Río Hondo College’s spring break. The weekly service served more than 350 students in just the first two days of providing drive-through service.

**RHC\_Pantry\_2:** Río Hondo College managers and volunteers assemble grab-and-go groceries for hundreds of students who face food insecurity during the COVID-19 health crisis. The pantry is available from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesdays.

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