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Río Hondo College Awarded Nursing Education Grant to Implement VR Technology, Simulation

Whittier, California – Río Hondo College's (RHC) innovative approach to nursing education has garnered a prestigious spot as one of only four institutions statewide to receive the 2024 Nursing Education Investment Grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges (Foundation CCC) on June 24.

RHC will receive a share of Foundation CCC's 2024 Nursing Education Investment Grant, which totals \$450,000. The College will utilize the funds to partner with UbiSim, a virtual reality (VR) platform for nursing simulation, to equip its lab with immersive VR technology to enhance the clinical experience for its students.

"It is a challenge for all students to be able to experience patient conditions in the hospital setting, and this technology provides students with experiences they may not otherwise have and is a space for them to make mistakes safely and learn from their actions in real-time," Health Science and Nursing Division Dean Dr. Katherin Brandt said. "The goal is to increase self-confidence, which will result in decreased stress and anxiety in the clinical setting."

As an official Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designated by the U.S. Department of Education, Río Hondo College is focused on using the funds to address the unique needs and challenges of Hispanic nursing students by promoting cultural representation, empowerment, positive role modeling and supportive feedback.

RHC's Health Science and Nursing Division already uses simulations, with high-fidelity simulators and actors, to help prepare its students. The UbiSim VR technology expands on these simulations and is equipped with 52 pre-programmed simulations that make students an active participant in a virtual scenario as opposed to acting in a scripted situation, Dr. Brandt said.

"Río Hondo College strives to be on the cutting edge to ensure our students are best prepared for their education and career, and this grant will empower our nursing program to provide our students with all the tools they need to succeed," Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores. "This initiative will not only enhance the educational experience of our students but also address critical gaps in clinical training and contribute to the diversity of the nursing workforce and create equity in achievement."

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PHOTO CAPTIONS

NURSING1: Río Hondo College's innovative approach to nursing education has garnered a prestigious spot as one of only four institutions statewide to receive the 2024 Nursing Education Investment Grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges on June 24. The College will utilize the funds to equip its lab with immersive virtual reality technology to enhance the clinical experience for its students.

NURSING2: Río Hondo College's Health Science and Nursing Division will use funds from the 2024 Nursing Education Investment Grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges to partner with UbiSim to provide its nursing students with virtual reality patient care simulations.

NURSING3: Río Hondo College will receive a share of the \$425,000 included in the 2024 Nursing Education Investment Grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges to partner with UbiSim, a virtual reality (VR) platform for nursing simulation.

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