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3600 Workman Mill Road / Whittier, CA 90601

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CONTACT: Ruthie Retana  
(562) 463-3145

### ***Rio Hondo College Students Selected to Visit NASA in October***

**WHITTIER** – Four Rio Hondo College students are among 319 community college students across the U.S. selected to travel to NASA’s Stennis Space Center this fall to participate in the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars (NCAS) onsite experience.

The selected students – Jashandeep Anand, Corrine Rivera, Albert Ramirez and Charinamae Blank – will participate in a five-week NASA online program, which will culminate with a four-day onsite event at a NASA Center.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for our students,” Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. “We are proud of their accomplishment and thrilled to discover what they learn from the program.”

The program offers students the opportunity to interact with NASA engineers and others as they learn more about careers in science and engineering. While at NASA, students form teams and establish fictional companies interested in Mars exploration. Each team is responsible for developing and testing a prototype rover, forming a company infrastructure, managing a budget and developing communications and outreach.

The onsite experience at NASA includes briefings by NASA subject matter experts, information on how to apply for internships and a tour of NASA’s unique facilities.

Blank, a physics major in his third year at Rio Hondo College, plans to transfer to UC San Diego as an electrical engineering major.

“The thing I’m most excited about this experience is that we’re going to be collaborating with NASA and 3-D print a rover that we will be designing at the site,” Blank said. “From this experience, I hope to gain more opportunities in working with NASA in the future. This is going to be the first step toward that goal, and I cannot wait for more.”

## MORE

*Rio 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).*

Anand, also a physics major, plans to transfer next fall to UCLA and pursue a doctorate in physics. He said he is looking forward to speaking with NASA engineers and scientists.

Rivera, an engineering major, plans to transfer next year to UC Santa Cruz to continue her studies in electrical engineering.

“The thing that interests me the most is being a part of a professional environment,” Rivera said. “I am hoping to meet someone who is willing to mentor me and guide me throughout my educational journey.”

NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars is funded in part by the Minority University Research and Education Program, or MUREP, which is committed to engaging underrepresented and underserved students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in authentic learning experiences to sustain a diverse workforce.

“Rio Hondo College is committed to providing our students with a diversity of experiences and opportunities to guide them along their higher education journeys,” Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees President Madeline Shapiro said. “I am extraordinarily pleased to see these three students selected to join an elite group of students to explore their passions.”

With this activity, NASA continues the agency’s tradition engaging the nation in NASA’s mission.

“NCAS not only inspires community college students to advance in STEM fields, but it also opens doors for future careers at NASA. NCAS has a legacy of alumni moving from NASA internships to and ultimately entering the NASA workforce. It is rewarding to see the progression of a student from NCAS participant to NASA colleague,” MUREP Manager Joeletta Patrick said.

For additional information, please contact NCAS by email at [JSC-NCAS@mail.nasa.gov](mailto:JSC-NCAS@mail.nasa.gov) or by phone at 281-483-0493. For more information, visit: [ncas.aerospacescholars.org](http://ncas.aerospacescholars.org). For more on MUREP visit: [www.nasa.gov/education/murep](http://www.nasa.gov/education/murep).

## PHOTOS

**RHC\_NASA:** Rio Hondo College students (l-r) Albert Ramirez, Corrine Rivera and Jashandeep Anand are among 319 community college students across the U.S. selected for a five-week online NASA program and a four-day onsite event at a NASA Center. Not pictured: Charinamae Blank.

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