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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***Río Hondo College Supports DACA Recipients during Upcoming Annual UndocuScholars Conference***

**WHITTIER** – Río Hondo College will welcome undocumented students, Dream Act advocates and civil rights activists, championing its support for a pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients, during its 2021 Virtual UndocuScholar Conference on Friday, April 30.

With a theme of “Together We Dream,” the UndocuScholar Conference will provide students with resources, advice and encouragement from Río Hondo College administrators, civic leaders and Río Hondo College alumni, focusing on the undocumented experience, the restitution of the Dream Act and the multitude of services for UndocuScholars at Río Hondo College.

The conference will feature two keynote speakers, California 40th District Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard and California Dream Network youth organizer Melody Klingenfuss Arteaga, and remarks from Río Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, Río Hondo College Board of Trustees President Rosaelva Lomeli, Trustee and former Dreamer Oscar Valladares, an UndocuPanel, an immigration attorney, and a mental health expert.

“One of the Board’s legislative priorities this year is to support our undocumented students at Río Hondo College,” Lomeli said. “Earlier this year, I attended virtual meetings with federal representatives, advocating for a clean Dream Act. Our Board of Trustees has unanimously passed board resolutions affirming our institutional commitment to our undocumented student community.”

Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, the first Mexican American woman to be elected to Congress and the co-author of the original Dream Act in 2001 (previously introduced as the Student Adjustment Act), will deliver a keynote speech that touches upon the continuing struggle to bring equity to thousands of immigrant children who came to the United States without documentation.

**MORE**

*Río Hondo College is an educational and community partner committed to advancing social justice and equity as an antiracist institution that collectively invests in all students’ academic and career pathways that lead to attainment of degree, certificate, transfer, and lifelong-learning goals. For information on the College or its programs, please call 562-692-0921 or visit [www.riohondo.edu](http://www.riohondo.edu).*

“In March, the House passed the American Dream and Promise Act with the goal of establishing a pathway to permanent resident status for all Dreamers. This pathway will open doors for academic and career opportunities for Río Hondo students,” said Rep. Roybal-Allard. “My message to you is to continue your education, fight for your rights, and stand proud as Americans.”

Dreyfuss will emphasize the College’s commitment to providing high-quality education and services to UndocuScholars, her experiences as an immigrant who worked her way up from professor and business manager to becoming Río Hondo’s top administrator, and the fear she feels as an Asian-American woman.

“To our UndocuScholars, you are not alone. Río Hondo College is here to support you. We are committed to providing you with the resources and services you need through our Student Success and Dream Center. Río Hondo College stands for advancing social justice and equity for all, including our undocumented students,” Dreyfuss said. “As an immigrant from Taiwan, I’d like to share that the struggle and fear is real.”

The conference will feature an UndocuPanel consisting of three Río Hondo College alumni, as well as alumni from Cypress College and Ventura College. The panel will discuss cultural shock, imposter syndrome, the transfer process, DACA, internal and external struggles and the entrepreneurial spirit of immigrants.

Frances Davila, an immigration attorney for the Central American Resource Center, will discuss the legal challenges facing DACA students. A mental health expert, Río Hondo therapist Glenn Heap, will touch upon the importance of self-care.

The conference will conclude with a keynote speech from California Dream Network Statewide Youth Organizer Melody Klingenfuss Arteaga, who found her identity by empowering others in her community through her educational and personal justice journey.

Event Zoom link: <http://bit.ly/UndocuConference2021>

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