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Río Hondo College to Celebrate Graduates with a CARmencement Ceremony

WHITTIER – Río Hondo College will host a festive CARmencement ceremony, welcoming graduates onto campus for a drive-thru event where they will receive their diplomas from the College’s board of trustees, to celebrate their milestone achievement alongside family members, faculty, staff and administrators on May 28.

This year, 1,778 students earned Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. Of those degrees, 1,203 are Associate Degree for transfer, meaning they are eligible for admission to the California State University system.

This year, the College has two valedictorians: Alanya Chanvongnaraz, a civil engineering major who will attend California State Polytechnic University, Pomona in the fall; and Grant Lopez, a sociology major and student leader for Río Hondo College’s RISE Scholars Department. Chanvongnaraz and Lopez are this year’s Marie I. Pellisier Award recipients.

The day’s events will include virtual remarks from Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss, Board of Trustees President Rosaelva Lomeli, Associated Students President Jason Reyes and the announcement of the Marie I. Pellisier Awards by Academic Senate President Kevin Smith.

“We are so excited to host a drive-through graduation ceremony because it allows our students yet another chance to be creative with decorating their vehicles to show off their Río Hondo College pride,” Dreyfuss said. “The entire Río Hondo College community is eager to celebrate our graduates and give them a big send off before they attend four-year universities and start their careers as leaders.”

Lomeli will also honor the late Shari Magnus as the 2021 Fellow of the College – the highest honor that Río Hondo College awards employees who have had a profound impact on the community.

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.

Magnus, who worked at the College for 43 years before her retirement in 2016, started as a clerk and then worked in the Office of Human Resources, where she was responsible for the hiring of thousands of employees. She also worked with constituency groups to develop policy and hiring procedures and worked closely with the Academic Senate on hiring matters.

The event is being held in lieu of the traditional ceremonies because of COVID-19 concerns. Río Hondo College is following safety protocols to ensure that students are safe while celebrating their graduation. Students are encouraged to decorate their vehicles with balloons, signs and posters for the event.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

RHC_GRADRHC 1: Río Hondo College valedictorian and Marie I. Pellisier Award recipient Alanya Chanvongnaraz is a civil engineering major who will attend California State Polytechnic University, Pomona in the fall. Chanvongnaraz will join her peers for a drive-through CARmencement event to highlight the class of 2021.

RHC_GRADRHC 2: Río Hondo College valedictorian and Marie I. Pellisier Award recipient Grant Lopez is a sociology major and leader for Río Hondo College's RISE Scholars Department. Lopez will be celebrated for his academic success along with the College's other graduates during a drive-through CARmencement event on May 28.

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