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RELEASE DATE: **June 10, 2021**

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Río Hondo College receives Aspen Institute Grant to Support Student Success

WHITTIER – Río Hondo College Latinx students will receive increased support to complete transfer level math courses in their first year of school, providing a pathway for more Latinx students to complete their degrees and transfer to four-year universities, thanks to a \$65,750 grant from the Aspen Institute.

The Río Hondo College Excellence Program’s primary beneficiaries will be students enrolled in Math 130 Statistics courses. During the 2020-21 school year, nearly 1,600 students were enrolled in the course. The grant allows Río Hondo College to hire additional math instructors to facilitate an increased participation of students. The program is expected to begin in Fall 2021.

The Aspen Institute is a partnership between the Washington D.C.-based nonprofit that promotes equity in education, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, and the Foundation for California Community Colleges. The award is the product of the CA Trustee Fellowship Intersession Project, of which Río Hondo College Board of Trustees President Rosaelva Lomeli and Trustee Oscar Valladares are fellows.

“We are proud to announce this exciting new partnership with the Aspen Institute, which provides support and resources to allow our students, many of whom are first-generation college students, to successfully complete the crucial first step in their dream to attend a university,” Lomeli said.

To enhance the math program, the faculty will develop specific practices aimed at bolstering student engagement in the classroom and establishing rapport between the students and their instructors by reflecting on culture and life experiences, while being flexible on assignment deadlines. Contextualized learning will build on student experiences to create engaging lessons, assignments and assessments.

“Developing discipline-specific, culturally relevant strategies to increase student success in transfer level math courses is another example of Río Hondo College’s ongoing commitment to increasing transfer rates for Latinx students, and fulfilling the College’s commitment to social justice, equity and anti-racism,” Río Hondo College Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said.

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.