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Río Hondo College Police Academy Director Receives Leadership Award for Anti-Hate Work

WHITTIER – Río Hondo College Police Academy Director Walter Allen III has worked to combat prejudice and stamp out pro-hate tactics during his more than four decades in law enforcement, an effort that has earned him the Huff Strategies – ACT Against Hate Alliance (AAHA) – inaugural Leadership Award.

The first-ever Huff Strategies-AAHA Leadership Award was presented to Allen and eight others during an Aug. 17 ceremony in Rowland Heights. Allen has fought against implicit bias throughout his personal life and storied career in law enforcement, which includes his tenure at the Río Hondo College Police Academy and across California’s criminal justice and correctional systems.

The AAHA has engaged in statewide collaboration to make identifying solutions against hate crimes in California an immediate priority since it was established by former California State Senator Bob Huff and Mei Mei Ho Huff in August 2022. Allen has shared his expertise as a speaker at AAHA’s monthly media events, which focus on solutions to stop the rise in hate crimes.

“Walter has articulated a vision for selecting, training and retaining police officers that helps ensure they will be effective advocates for the communities they serve,” Bob Huff said. “He has made a difference in law enforcement programs in California and has identified education as one of the most important factors in stopping the rise in hate crime.”

Allen has also served as a state-wide leader in law enforcement, with more than 46 years of experience in the field. He is the former California Youth Authority director and chief of the State Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Law Enforcement Office of Correctional Safety. He has participated on the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training and served as deputy commissioner for the Board of Parole Hearings.

Allen has spent the last 10 years as the Río Hondo College Police Academy Director, and was a graduate of the Academy’s Class No. 36 in 1976. The Academy follows a teaching philosophy known as Principled Policing, which addresses cultural diversity, prejudice, discrimination, hate crimes, investigative profiling vs. racial profiling, as well as the tenets of procedural justice.

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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.

“It has been a privilege to serve as Río Hondo’s Police Academy director,” Allen said. “As I continue serving in this role, we will continue utilizing cutting-edge cultural diversity and procedural justice training to ensure that we are producing the guardians of society, who will be our champions of fairness, transparency and impartiality.”

In addition to his law enforcement background, Allen is currently fulfilling a fifth term on the Covina City Council, including his fifth stint as Mayor of the City of Covina. He has also sat on numerous boards and currently holds positions on the Ettie Lee Youth and Family Services board and the League of California Cities Public Safety Committee.

“Walter Allen’s expertise and leadership are invaluable not only within Río Hondo College’s Police Academy but in the region and across the state, and he is well deserving of this honor,” Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores said. “His commitment to anti-racist practices make him a perfect match here at Río Hondo College – an institution that prides itself on equity, inclusion and social justice.”

PHOTO CAPTION:

ALLEN1: Río Hondo College Police Academy Director Walter Allen III is one of nine leaders selected to receive the inaugural Huff Strategies – ACT Against Hate Alliance Outstanding Leadership Award, recognizing his work to combat prejudice throughout his life and storied career in law enforcement and local government.

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