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Cal State Los Angeles Students Receive Assistance with Basic Skills Courses at Rio Hondo College

WHITTIER – About 100 students from California State University, Los Angeles are studying at Rio Hondo College this month to complete basic skills courses under the auspices of a two year, \$2 million grant recently received by the community college district.

The grant, one of five totaling \$10 million awarded by the California Community College's Chancellor's Office, provides Rio Hondo College with resources to work with area high schools, adult schools and CSU Los Angeles to improve the chances of college success for students with challenges in English and math.

"We are excited to be hosting these students on our campus and helping them to achieve their dreams," Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. "Rio Hondo College offers a host of services that support students in their quest for a college degree and, with this grant, we will be expanding those services on multiple fronts."

At Cal State L.A., more than 66.1 percent of incoming freshmen test below college level in English or math. This is similar to remedial challenges at Rio Hondo College, which also enrolls a large population of first-generation college students who may lack cultural, familial or financial support. Students at Cal State LA who do not complete remedial classes in a year tend to drop out or are dis-enrolled.

Rio Hondo College is targeting up to 2,500 Cal State L.A. students for remedial instruction, tutoring and other support over the two-year grant period. Students will take summer courses after high school to build skills before freshman year, receive aid in spring of their freshman year to complete remedial programs and enroll in summer classes after freshman year if they need additional help.

The current class of 100 students falls into the latter category – a number Rio Hondo College officials expect will double shortly.

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.

Rio Hondo College will serve the students through a rigorous program of instruction as well as through a trio of intervention programs designed to support them.

For example, Rio Hondo's two-week Summer Bridge program includes an academic workshop that boosts student math preparation. Students can test into more advanced courses at the program's conclusion. The program also provides students with additional tools for managing the transition to college. It serves about 330 students annually.

The college also offers a two-week math booster program called Springboard. Two-thirds of the students involved in pilot programs offered during winter intersession have tested at one to two math courses higher than they started.

Gateway Tutoring, a third program, provides supplemental instruction through peer tutors who assist with in-class activities and hold group-tutoring sessions outside of class. The program serves about 730 students annually.

In addition to offering classes and support services, Rio Hondo College also will work with area high schools and adult schools to ensure that curriculum in English and math aligns effectively with Rio Hondo and Cal State L.A. This will include a review of student academic records.

"This new partnership will offer an avenue of hope to students who face greater challenges than most in their quest for a degree," Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees president Mary Ann Pacheco said. "It is part of our mission to help ensure the students in our community obtain the skills needed to achieve their dreams."

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