



# START RIO...GO ANYWHERE

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***Rio Hondo College Conference Promotes Women's Success***

**WHITTIER** – Rio Hondo College's second annual *Just Us Girls!* Conference on Friday, Oct. 16 will feature as keynote speaker a Rio Hondo nursing program alumna who went on to get her doctorate and earn recognition as an expert in health care training programs.

Dr. Sandra Castillo, now nursing program director at Contra Costa College, is the author of a book on teaching strategies and a guide for nurses on calculating drug dosages.

She will share her academic and professional experiences during the daylong event, created in 2014 as a way of helping female students to build relationships, create support networks and find mentoring opportunities.

"We are extremely fortunate to secure a speaker of Dr. Castillo's caliber," said *Just Us Girls!* Founder Dr. Denna Sanchez, Rio Hondo's Psychological Services Coordinator. "She understands firsthand the struggle female students may face at every level and can share her strategies for overcoming obstacles."

"We are indebted to Dr. Sanchez for bringing this extraordinary program to Rio Hondo College," said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. "She is helping to provide a resource for our female students that can help them succeed not only in their academic careers, but in their personal and professional interactions."

Sanchez modeled *Just Us Girls!* after *Latinas Juntas*, a program she started at CSU Dominguez Hills a decade ago with colleague Dr. Monica Rosas-Baines, who is co-hosting the conference.

The duo said *Latinas Juntas* grew from their understanding as psychologists of the pressure, anxiety and insecurity female students often feel. In the last decade, the program helped more than 1,000 female students attend graduate schools, attain degrees and secure successful careers.

"Mentoring programs like *Just Us Girls!* can play a highly valuable role in helping students see the potential in themselves and then take steps to tap that potential to achieve their goals," said Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees President Madeline Shapiro.

The conference will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Learning Resource Center Room 128, Rio Hondo College, 3600 Workman Mill Road, Whittier.

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