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## MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### ***Rio Hondo College to Unveil Veterans Memorial***

Monument will be Dedicated during a Special May 20 Ceremony

**WHITTIER** – Rio Hondo College will celebrate the completion of its long-awaited Veterans Memorial at a special ribbon-cutting ceremony from 10:30 a.m. to noon Wednesday, May 20 in the College’s mid-quad.

The program will include College leaders, members of the Board of Trustees and veterans groups from the college and surrounding community.

“This memorial stands as a tribute to the contributions of America’s armed forces and helps to celebrate the warm relationship between the College and the veterans in its student body,” said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss.

The memorial includes several elements: A concrete monument that stretches 8 feet long and rises 3 feet high topped with a brass plaque and bearing discs for each of the five branches of the U.S. military; a bench where students and guests may reflect on the contributions of the nation’s veterans; and three flags – U.S., California and Rio Hondo College.

The idea for the memorial began with Trustee Gary Mendez as a way to remember and thank veterans for their service. In fall, 2013, a campus task force was created to develop the idea. After a wide-ranging discussion, the group settled on the monument design and location within Rio Hondo’s mid-quad area.

“This memorial is significant not only because of what it stands for – honoring our veterans – but also because how our campus came together to create it,” said Board of Trustees President Madeline Shapiro. “The unity involved in that effort speaks to the great collaborative spirit shared by our entire community – a unity of mission expressed in so many wonderful ways.”

During the ceremony, each of the three flags will be raised.

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U.S. Rep. Linda Sanchez's office provided the American flag, which flew over the Capitol Building on President's Day on Feb. 16, 2015. California State Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia's office provided the state flag, which flew over the State Capitol in Sacramento.

To celebrate the monument's completion, the College also is issuing 150 specially minted Challenge Coins, available on a first-come, first-serve basis at the ceremony. Challenge Coins are part of a long-standing military tradition, custom made for military units and depicting symbols and mottos unique to each unit. Issuing a Challenge Coin has become popular at civilian functions, especially events that commemorate public safety programs.

The Rio Hondo College memorial coin was designed by Dr. Ygnacio "Nash" Flores, Dean of Public Safety Academic Programs, and Don Mason, Associate Dean. One side features the College logo and dedication date; the other bears an inscription of the memorial site and the three flag poles erected for the memorial.

"It is an honor to contribute to this memorial and salute our brave and heroic veterans," said Flores. "We want all veterans to know we appreciate all they have done to keep us safe. They have a home here at Rio Hondo College and we welcome them."

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