

Association Notes



September / October 2008

Welcome Back!

As we begin the 2008-2009 school year, the Faculty Association leadership would like to wish everyone the best for the school term.



Members of the Executive Committee:

Back row from left to right: Martha Carreon (Campus Relations Chairperson), Matt Koutroulis (Treasurer), Mary Ann Pacheco (Finances Chairperson)

Front row from left to right: Adam Wetsman (Vice-President), Jennifer Fernandez (President), Colin Young (Secretary)

Not pictured: Jim Newman, Past President

A Message from the President

Welcome everyone to the 2008-2009 school year. As the new president of the Rio Hondo College Faculty Association, I look forward to working with the executive committee to make your working conditions as smooth as possible. I am also excited about a number of new endeavors we will be undertaking this year.

One of my main goals is to make the union experience as pleasant as possible. We are going to streamline monthly meetings, holding them to an hour in length. Several new social events are planned for this year and I look forward to seeing all of you in several informal settings. In addition, Adam Wetsman, the Vice-President, has

pledged to visit as many faculty members as possible during their division meetings this year.

In terms of union business, we are committed to working cooperatively with the District, while still being firm when necessary. I plan to increase direct communication with the Board of Trustees so they can hear our concerns first-hand. We are still in the process of negotiating our contract and will keep you posted as things develop.

If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Jennifer Fernandez

Important Dates



Association Meetings

September 18th at 1:00

October 16th at 1:00

November 20th at 1:00

Social Events

Sept. 18th - Camacho's 4:00-8:00

Oct. 18th - Wine Tasting in Temecula*

Nov. 16 - Kings vs. Ducks*

Dec. 4 - End of Year Celebration*

* Tentative - Details will be provided in the future

Board Meetings

October 8th

November 12th

December 10th

Other

September 25th - Faculty Survey Due

Show Union Pride - RHCFA Shirts

By the middle of October, we are going to be offering union-made Association shirts to you for only \$10.00. We will update you once they arrive. Thank you Jim Chandler for your help with this endeavor.

RHCFA goes Social

Angela Medina from Communications is going to be organizing several social gatherings for the Association. The first one is this Thursday (9/18) at Camacho's, located just down the road from Rio Hondo at 13101 Crossroads Parkway. We will be welcoming new faculty and visiting old friends. Appetizers will be served between 4 and 8. And yes, there will be a no-host bar.



Meetings Streamlined

We would like to offer an apology to those who like to discuss the merits of such issues as a \$300 scholarship for a half-hour at Association meetings. This year, meetings will be streamlined with the goal of getting all business settled in about an hour, leaving more time to visit with your colleagues.



Other Information

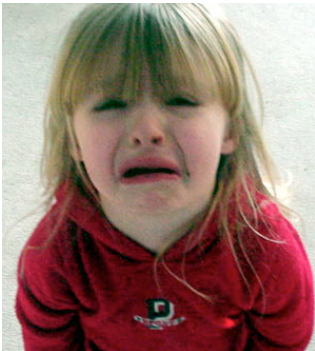
Bargaining News

The bargaining team has added new members including Dennyse Clark (Counseling), Cameron English (Math), and Kathy Pudelko (PE), along with Mark Littrell (Math) as an alternate. They join Doreen Kaller, Jim Chandler, and Adam Wetsman. In addition to salary increases and health care benefits, they will bring two other issues to the table this fall, to be decided by a faculty survey.

Speaking of the survey, you should already have received a notice to participate. Please let your views be heard so that the team can best represent the desires of our members. The survey must be completed by September 25th. Bargaining should start in the middle of October, once the issues have been presented to the Board of Trustees.

Start “Weining”

Did you know that you have the right (based upon the Supreme Court case of *NLRB v. Weingarten*) to have a union representative with you during any meeting with a supervisor if you reasonably believe that discipline may ensue?



Endless Grievances



Jennifer Fernandez and our grievance chairperson, Jim Chandler, have been working feverishly to resolve numerous issues with the District. Several problems arose last year that are still being processed, including the transfer rights of a few faculty members in the counseling department, the failure to rehire a contract faculty member even though his grant was renewed, and whether counselor follow-up and preparation time needs to be done on campus.

Difficulties have continued this year. New hires were originally mandated to attend a series of about five seminars on Friday. Jennifer and Jim got the District to make the meetings optional. Another problem impacts part-time faculty. The District has not provided them the compensation due under the contract for partial coverage of health care costs. The Association is still working on the “mandatory” emergency training sessions scheduled this Fall. More information on this last issue will be provided when it becomes available.

Getting Organized

The Faculty Association leadership has taken steps to organize the faculty to a greater extent. This is in response to the steady rise of grievances over the last year and difficulties we have experienced with bargaining. Robert Bethel (Biology) has graciously accepted the lead role in this effort. We need your help! Keep up to date with Association announcements and be prepared to attend meetings and to assist in other efforts. Only together can we successfully achieve our goals.



Financial Matters

Obviously the state budget is in shambles, but Rio Hondo is in very good shape. Between the 2004-2005 and 2006-2007 school years, the income of the college increased by close to \$16 million. Income increased last year as well. Did you know that between 2004-2005 and 2007-2008, faculty salary went up about 17% while the income of the District went up over 26%? Based upon research by the Community College Association, last year Rio Hondo faculty ranked 22nd (out of about 70 districts) in average salary. By the way, the administration ranked 10th!