

# DEEP RIVER

A Newsletter of the Rio Hondo College Academic Senate & Faculty Association

## Message from the Academic Senate President

We are on the verge of a new academic year, and we are all getting ready to start new classes with new students. I want to welcome you all to this new beginning and to take a bit of your time to introduce myself. As your new Senate President, I am on a steep learning curve and have been involved in a number of meetings this summer as well as representing the Senate at the summer Board meetings. I have been teaching Biology here at Rio since 1996, so I am starting my twentieth year. That is a startling fact for me as it feels as if I just got here.

As we enter this new academic year, we are faced with new challenges concerning a decline in enrollment. I am confident that we can face the challenge and that we will do so working together. Enrollment is everyone's concern, and we all have our part to play. It is important that each of us remembers that we do valuable work educating the emerging citizenry and workforce of tomorrow.

During the summer I attended a state-wide Senate Leadership Conference, and it reminded me that we are not alone in our struggles, but we are uniquely staffed to meet and overcome them. So with renewed conviction and restored energy let us go forward to meet the challenges of this coming year. Let us work together to have a great and successful year.

- Robert Bethel

## Summer Bridge to Success

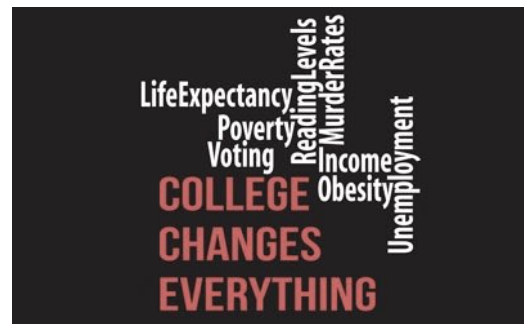
By Michael Koger,  
English Instructor and Summer Bridge Coordinator

The first day of the semester is always an exciting time for faculty, but for new students it can be beyond nerve-wracking. If there is anything a college can do to ease the transition for new students, the help is beyond measure. For the past five weeks, the Summer Bridge staff and peer mentors have been working with students from local high schools who will be attending Rio Hondo College this fall to make that

transition as easy and seamless as possible. We have introduced the students to the various resources available on campus and invited guest speakers from across campus, including President Dreyfuss, to speak to the students. This helps develop a connection to other students, faculty, and the campus itself. This is integral for their success as first year students.

There have been recurring themes throughout our discussions over the past five weeks, such as being an advocate for yourself, asking questions, and taking advantage of resources. We encourage students to become active participants in their own success. We encourage students to set practical goals and discuss how to reach those goals. We encourage them to reject complacency and mediocrity and instead cultivate enthusiasm and a good work ethic. Summer Bridge experience mimics the experience of many first year students. On the first day, the students are nervous and apprehensive. With each day, they gain confidence, and by the end of the week, they feel more prepared and organized. They carry these feelings into the classroom and are willing to participate and succeed.

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## Message from the Faculty Association President

I want to thank you for all your hard work and dedication to Rio Hondo College students year after year. I also want to welcome you back from a much needed vacation. And I want to extend my welcome to all the new faculty hired within the last couple of semesters.

Rio Hondo College Faculty Association executive board wants to make sure that the 2015-2016 academic year will be full of opportunities and successes for our college community.

This summer has been very busy for our RHCFA executive board as we are gearing up for the new academic year. We had a joint RHCFA negotiations team and District negotiations team training that we feel is going to help us settle on a new contract much faster than in past years. We had a RHCFA executive board training focusing on membership recruitment, increasing member awareness, and setting year long-term goals.

We want to encourage you to attend our RHCFA monthly meetings, the third Thursday of each month. The first meeting will take place on September 17, 2015, from 12:45pm-2:00pm in the Board Room. We want to hear from you; we welcome involvement and feedback from all faculty.

On behalf of the RHCFA executive board, I welcome you back and wish you a happy, productive and successful 2015-2016 academic year. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at (562) 463-7611 or via email at [sergio.guzman@riohondo.edu](mailto:sergio.guzman@riohondo.edu).

- Dr. Sergio Guzman

### Faculty Association Meetings

Join us 12:45- 2 pm, for Lunch and a Meeting

3rd Tuesday of the month

Sept 17 • Oct 15 • Nov 19

Dec 3 (holiday luncheon)

## Summer Bridge to Success

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From a faculty point of view, this helps me. When I enter the classroom and see students that are on time with their materials and ready to learn, it makes my job easier. I can spend less time going over logistics and minor issues and get to the good stuff: deep education. By interacting with faculty and staff before entering the classroom, the students are better prepared when they enter the classroom.

## Contract 101

By Kathy Pudelko,  
Past Faculty Association President  
and Grievance Officer



Everyone wants to know about the basic Grievances or Grievance Procedures. The definition can be found in your contract: 16.1.1. "A grievance is a formal, written allegation by a unit member or by the Association on behalf of a unit member that he/she has been adversely affected by a violation of a specific provision of this Agreement." The Agreement refers to our current contract.

Before the written allegation there are several steps we go through. I will not bore you with all that information, but let's take a look at one more part of the Article 16, 16.2.1. "The grievance procedure shall not be used to challenge or change policies, regulations, or procedure of the District of the District application and/or interpretation of laws which are not included in the Agreement."

Keep a log of all occurrences. This helps your current grievance officer to represent you. And remember, you never have to go into a meeting alone. You have the right to bring another faculty member or Faculty Association Board member with you.

So how does one become the grievance officer? Volunteer. There is release time involved to do the required research. The skills are the same skills we use everyday: research the situation, talk with people, make notes, work in small group. Did I mention talk with people and ask questions, lots of questions.

The contract and the Faculty Association are here to help, so if you have questions or concerns let your executive committee know.

# The Supreme Court Case Threatens Union Functioning

By Adam Wetsman, Ph.D., Professor of Anthropology and Board member of the Community College Association

The United States Supreme Court has accepted for review Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association.

At issue is whether states can ensure that all potential members of a collective bargaining unit pay their fair share for the valuable benefits and protections negotiated on their behalf. While some states allow free riders to receive union benefits without paying for them (sometimes referred to with the misnomer “right to work”), places like California acknowledge the importance of all members contributing to the common good.

No one is forced to join the union, however, all must contribute their fair share. Rio Hondo provides a good

example. Members of the Rio Hondo College Faculty Association pay dues, making them part of the local union, the Community College Association, the California Teachers Association, and the National Education Association. People are free to opt out of being a member, but still must pay dues since they benefit from the contracts negotiated by the RHCFA, along with other benefits of representation.

Friedrichs attempts to reverse a 1977 Supreme Court decision which allowed states to require people to pay their fair share of the costs incurred in negotiating and administering a collective bargaining agreement. Legal experts expect a very close vote, which should come down in June, 2016. If Friedrichs wins, it would severely limit union functioning since many members would choose not to pay dues while still receiving union benefits.

## Teachers Helping Students

Support the faculty scholarship fund, *Teachers Helping Students*. The RHC Foundation handles the fund without charges or fees and all donations are tax deductible.

This past year we sold theater tickets, faculty members donated money, and the 2014 Holiday Luncheon ticket sales went into the fund. We have raised over \$5,000 and awarded the first scholarships this past spring. Now it’s your turn. Donate something toward our scholarship fund. Write a check to the “RHC Foundation,” send it to the Faculty Association (Attn: Sergio Guzman), or even better, fill out the foundation payroll deduction form and have your donation automatically deducted from your paycheck every month. Just be sure to indicate on the form your donation is for the *Teachers Helping Students Faculty Association Scholarship Fund*. It’s fast, easy, and helps our students. It’s also fully deductible, and you’ll feel better for it too! *Thank you for your support.*

## The Spring 2015 Awards

This spring ten Rio Hondo students were awarded our first scholarships. Each student received a bookstore credit of \$200. The award may be used for any classroom needs, including books, art supplies, calculators, and tools.

We congratulate our first *Teachers Helping Students* awardees:

- Camille Artech* • *Cesar Ascencion* • *Lilian Flores*
- Yolanda Geronimo* • *Davita Gruber* • *Dianka Lobay*
- Arlene Lopez* • *Carlos Ortiz* • *Jonathan Reyes* • *Dat Trang*

### Teachers Helping Students Fund Balance

Fund as of 4/2015	\$5,068.
Awarded 5/2015	(2,000.)
Fund Balance 8/2105	\$3,068.





## News From the Academic Senate

Being a few months removed from my term as Senate President affords me a perspective to say the Senate accomplished quite a bit last year. I want to write of a few highlights.

In conjunction with RHCFA, we began this newsletter. We had

significant input on several areas – Student Success Support Program, Student Equity, and the Common Assessment and Multiple Measures initiative to name three. We played and will continue to play a key role in the development in the auto tech baccalaureate degree. In revising the administrative procedure on program discontinuance, we ensured that the Senate 10+1 role was included. What I am most proud of is the new board policy on academic freedom. Trustee and former faculty member Mary Ann Pacheco mentioned at a board

meeting that when she attended a conference session on this issue she was quite proud to tell others that Rio Hondo College is at the forefront of academic freedom.

Let me end with thanking all the Senators, and especially my fellow officers, Robert, Katie, Kevin, Sheila, John, Kathy, and Adam. I wish Robert much success in his first term.

- Vann Priest,  
Past President, Academic Senate

## Moving up at Rio!

Remember your first semester at Rio? Who was the first person you met? How were you welcomed? Now its your turn to offer a welcome to our newest members and also to congratulate others who have moved into new positions, from classified to faculty, instructor to coordinator, or into tenure track. Look for them on campus, say hello, invite them to a meeting, remind them to fill out their union membership form, and tell them we have a free RHCFA tee shirt for them (see Sergio Guzman).

**Jose Arroyo**, Learning Disability Specialist

**Arely Castaneda**, Counselor/Veterans'

**Janet Cha**, Accounting Instructor

**Vanessa Chavez**, Counselor/Coordinator SSSP

**Kellori Dower**, Vocal/Choral Instructor

**Laura Garcia**, General Counselor

**Yunior Hernandez**, General Counselor

**Jupeí Hsiao**, Math Instructor

**Moises Mata**, LAC Coordinator

**Rosa Praso**, Counselor/Coordinator EOPS

**Marisela Saenz**, Counselor/Coordinator Foster Care

**Rudy Santacruz**, Counselor/Coordinator

**Tep Thoeurb**, Counselor/DSPS



## Faculty Association 2015-16 Officers

President - Sergio Guzman  
 VP/President Elect - Jill Pfeiffer  
 Secretary - Marie Eckstrom  
 Treasurer - Jeannie Liu  
 At-Large-Rep - Ada Pullini Brown  
 At-Large-Rep - Rudy Rios  
 Part-time Rep - Martha Carreón  
 Past President and Grievance Chair - Kathy Pudelko  
 PAC Chair - Colin Young  
 Lead Negotiator - Adam Wetsman

## Academic Senate 2015-16 Officers

President - Robert Bethel  
 First Vice-President - Dr. Kevin Smith  
 Second Vice-President - Katie O'Brien  
 Secretary - Michelle Bean  
 Parliamentarian - Sheila Lynch  
 ASCCC Rep - John Frala  
 Past President - Dr. Adam Wetsman  
 RHCFA President - Dr. Sergio Guzman