Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

When Sister Amelia Maria graduated from Riverside Junior College in 1920, she was known by her birth name of Natalie Goethals. A Riverside native, she graduated from the Girls High School here in town at a time when the boys and girls attended separate high schools. RJC was only two years old when she became a student in 1918. While at the college she was a Student Body Officer.

In the photo below (from the 1920 “Tequesquite” yearbook), she can be seen in the top row, third from the left.

Upon her graduation from RJC, Nathalie Goethals took examinations for teaching in the Riverside County Schools. She taught third grade one year at Casa Blanca School in Riverside before beginning a two-year novitiate and becoming a nun in 1923 as a member of the Sisters of Holy Names. She took the name Sister Amelia Maria. She continued her education, earning baccalaureate and master's degrees from the University of California at Berkley and did additional study at Fordham University. After teaching at the grammar school level for five years, Sister Amelia Maria taught at Saint Monica's High School in Santa Monica, California. She was subsequently named principal of the Ramona Convent School in Alhambra, California, eventually moving on to the College of Holy Names as a biology teacher, where she was later named assistant superior. She retired in 1969 but was called back by the College of Holy Names to develop a special course for foreign college students in the biological sciences.
In 1972 she was named the RCCD Co-Alumnus of the Year (along with 1928 RJC graduate Rupert Costa, who was profiled last week). The photo below left is from the 1920 “Tequesquite” yearbook and the photo below right was taken around the time she was honored by the District.

It is 3 years and 33 weeks until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC’s 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college.

Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote “the book” about RCC’s history. “Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History” is available in the RCC Digital Library.

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