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Compton College | Public Relations & Marketing Department  
16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506  
Contact: Ann M. Garten, Director, Community Relations  
Telephone: 310-660-3406 | Email: [agarten@elcamino.edu](mailto:agarten@elcamino.edu)

**For Immediate Release**

**August 28, 2017**

## **Compton College's Formerly Incarcerated Student Transition Program Honored with Dr. John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Award**

Compton College was one of two California Community Colleges to receive this year's Dr. John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Award on July 18 at Cocker Art Museum in Sacramento. The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges and the Foundation for California Community Colleges recognized Compton College's Formerly Incarcerated Student Transition (F.I.S.T.) program for its success in promoting student equity, diversity and access.

Founded less than a year ago, F.I.S.T. provides academic, social and economic support for students reentering the community after incarceration. The program helps students develop confidence in themselves and their abilities through regular support meetings, skills training and professional development, career counseling and entrepreneurship exploration, career workshops, and basic skills enhancement.

The program is already yielding impressive results. It is one of the most active clubs on campus, with 54 student members, 16 of whom have GPAs greater than 3.0. Donors are also making generous monetary pledges, which will help Compton College expand the services offered through the program. Specifically, a Compton College scholarship donor has committed to providing 30 scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each (a total donation of \$30,000) during the 2017-18 academic year to F.I.S.T. program participants.

"Compton College is proud to receive the Dr. John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Award," said Compton College President Keith Curry. "The Formerly Incarcerated Student Transition program serves an important segment of our campus community, and the services and educational opportunities we provide to this student population will be significant and life changing."

The Dr. John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Award was established in 2001 and is named in honor of former Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges member Dr. John W. Rice. He was a leader, innovator and spokesperson for equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination in the largest system of higher education in the nation. While on the board, Dr. Rice displayed a strong commitment to multicultural learning experiences for all students.

**Photo available online:**

[www.compton.edu/adminandoperations/publicrelations/images/2017/RiceAward2017.jpg](http://www.compton.edu/adminandoperations/publicrelations/images/2017/RiceAward2017.jpg)

**Photo caption:**

Compton College receives the Dr. John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Award from the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges and the Foundation for California Community Colleges for its Formerly Incarcerated Student Transition (F.I.S.T.) program. Pictured from left, Eloy Ortiz Oakley, chancellor, California Community Colleges; Keith Curry, president, Compton College; Joseph Lewis, Compton College student services adviser and F.I.S.T. adviser; Theodore Somers, Compton College student and F.I.S.T. Club president; Yesenia Lopez, Compton College student and F.I.S.T. Club secretary; Cecilia V. Estolano, president, Board of Governors; Clara Rice, widow of John W. Rice; and Charles Turner, Compton College student and F.I.S.T. member.

**About Compton College**

Compton College is the community's education solution offering a full complement of transfer and degree courses, as well as career and technical education. Students may earn an associate degree or certificate, transfer to a four-year university or train for a career. Compton College is located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90221.

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