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**For Immediate Release**

**October 23, 2017**

## **Compton College Sets Path to UCLA for Former Foster Youth**

Statistics show that young men of color are less likely to enroll in and graduate from college than their peers of other ethnic origins. In fact, only 7 percent of black men in the U.S. earn an associate degree, and 17 percent have a bachelor's degree. Compton College alumni and political science major Dayshawn J. Loudon aims to help improve those statistics through leading by example.

Loudon is a former foster youth from Carson, California, who was in the inaugural graduating class of New Millennium Secondary School in 2012. He graduated with an associate degree from Compton College in June 2017. He is now studying at the University of California, Los Angeles as the recipient of a Chancellor's Blue and Gold Scholarship, which covers his next two years of university expenses. He started off his university experience on the right foot by completing three classes via UCLA's seven-week Summer Transfer session offered through the university's Academic Advancement Program. The Summer Transfer program gives students experience with the academic demands of UCLA, different aspects of student life, and helps them become comfortable as a UC student.

Upon graduation from Compton College, Loudon was accepted to all of the four-year colleges and universities he applied to, but UCLA fit his future goals the best. Loudon specifically selected UCLA because he hopes to help young men like himself who have historically lacked resources and access to educational opportunities. He is particularly interested in working with Compton native and UCLA professor Tyrone Howard, who is UCLA's Associate Dean of Equity & Inclusion and authored the book "Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools." Loudon, who is minoring in education policy, plans to continue his studies to earn a master's degree and his doctorate. He hopes to one day establish an "innovative middle school that is successful in closing the achievement gap."

He credits Compton College with helping him be successful in his own academic endeavors. "Compton College gave me the confidence to move beyond a feeling of inferiority to the realization that I am very capable," said Loudon. "The faculty and staff provide the tools and resources to help students succeed. They help instill confidence in students; they helped me realize I am important and valuable."

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## **Compton College Student Transfer to UCLA 2-2-2-2**

While at Compton College, Louden served as vice president of the Associated Student Body alongside Joshua Jackson, who served as ASB president and also transferred to UCLA after graduating from Compton College in June 2017. He believes the many available resources helped him build a solid foundation to reach his academic goals and beyond. He took advantage of the Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), the Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success program for foster youth, and the Transfer Center. He says the Welcome Center staff was especially helpful in assisting him with the UC and CSU application process. EOPS is a particularly valuable resource for many Compton College students. The state-funded program offers a variety of services to assist low-income and educationally disadvantaged students such as counseling, workshops, book vouchers, transportation assistance, meal vouchers, and more.

Louden applauds Compton College for going above and beyond in helping students from underserved populations. “Compton College helps limit the excuses – there is help and support for single mothers, veterans, the formerly incarcerated, and the homeless. Compton College doesn’t allow your circumstances to get in the way of your education.”

Empowered by the strong base of knowledge, leadership skills, and increased confidence he acquired while at Compton College, Louden is on a path to exact change and pay-it-forward. He hopes to help break the pattern and increase high school and college graduation rates for men of color.

“Compton College believes in its students,” said Louden. “The professors will stay longer during their office hours, are quick to offer feedback, and will find out how to help you if you seem down or discouraged. I urge students to push and challenge themselves and see how far they can go. Do not be afraid to fail; you grow from mistakes – this is what Compton College taught me.”

**Photo available online:**

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

### **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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