



NEWS

Compton College | Community Relations
1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90221
310-900-1600, Ext. 2968 | communityrelations@compton.edu

For Immediate Release

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Compton College: Where Every Student is a Success Story!

A Commentary by Compton College President/CEO, Dr. Keith Curry

Growing up in Compton, my earliest memory of Compton College was that it was a great place to play football and basketball with my friends. When I was 12, I was able to be right near the action on the field, as the ball boy for the Compton College Tartar football team. As a kid, I didn't realize the important role Compton College held in the community; I did know it was a college and had classes, sports and other activities. Something for everyone. The same is true today, except now as president/CEO, I am fully aware of how important Compton College is to the community, offering educational opportunities to all.

After much hard work and collaboration, initial accreditation was awarded to El Camino College Compton Center, now known as Compton College, in June 2017. We've also worked to return the governing authority to the elected Compton Community College District Board of Trustees, which was granted in February 2017. The final accreditation hurdle was cleared last month on August 29, 2018 when California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Oakley issued an executive order declaring Compton College will operate as an independent college under the authority of the Compton Community College District Board of Trustees effective June 7, 2019, at 11:59 p.m.

The countdown to a fully independent college is on.

I have been a part of the accreditation process since 2006 when I was the dean of student services. In the years following, the best part of my job has been meeting students who made it happen, who reached their goals. Many students come to Compton College underprepared academically and have other obligations with work and family. Yet they triumph, despite initial doubts that they could afford college or handle the high expectations of college work. Our students' success can be seen in the increasing numbers of students graduating with associate degrees and transferring to four-year universities; it is amazing to hear their stories of victory as they transfer to a university or embark on a high-paying career.

The accomplishments of the past 12 years set Compton College on a course for success that continues today. There are too many milestones to mention here, so I will share the most recent.

For example, in 2006-2007, 26 associate degrees and 11 certificates were awarded. The numbers increased to 741 degrees and 179 certificates awarded in 2017-2018.

Many new and innovative **academic programs** have been added over the past 12 years, complementing existing programs and providing students with greater access to a college education. In collaboration with Compton Unified School District (CUSD), the “Early College High School” program was established in 2015, creating an opportunity for highly motivated CUSD high school students to earn both a high school diploma and two years of college credit toward an associate degree simultaneously. In addition, we recently established the “Compton College Promise” agreement with the Compton Unified School District and Lynwood Unified School District, providing guaranteed admission and one-year of enrollment fees waived to all graduates. In January 2018, we secured a donation of \$299,000 from Molina Medical Healthcare to support the Compton College Promise programs with our feeder high schools.

Other **academic milestones** include the addition of the First Year Experience, Honors Transfer, and the Upward Bound Math and Science programs, which are designed to improve college entry success rates for area high school students. New career programs also include cosmetology, heating, ventilation & air conditioning, and robotics, where students receive hands-on education and training, along with skills that lead to a rewarding career.

Nearly 1,500 class sections are offered at Compton College, a 10 percent increase in class sections from the 2006-2007 academic year. The winter term was also re-established in January 2017.

At Compton College, **supporting students** is also a priority by ensuring they have the tools they need to succeed. From New Student Welcome Day to financial aid awareness fairs, numerous student support programs have been added or expanded. Just last fall, a food pantry for Compton College students opened, offering critical support for those with food insecurities. In addition, the Formerly Incarcerated Student Transition Program (F.I.S.T) program was established in fall 2016 and was honored with the prestigious Dr. John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Awards for Advancing Social Mobility by the Foundation for California Community Colleges just one year later.

Compton Community College District is a **fiscally sound** organization. The Compton Community College District received its 2016-17 Financial Audit Report for fiscal year 2017 with no audit findings for the fourth consecutive year. Additionally, during seven fiscal years, the CCCD has reduced the number of audit findings from 26 in 2010-11 to zero for four consecutive years by implementing internal controls, policies, and procedures. The report showed the District’s general fund ending balance at \$10.5 million, which is above the 10 percent minimum reserve required by CCCD board policy.

Compton College is **transforming the campus with new construction and renovations**. Thanks to the successful passage by voters of two general obligation facilities bonds, the Compton Community College District has achieved significant milestones in facilities upgrades and new construction at the Compton College campus according to its [2012 Facilities Master Plan](#) and [2017 Comprehensive Master Plan](#). In November 2002, the CCCD sought and won voter approval of Measure CC, authorizing the issuance of \$100 million in general obligation bonds to upgrade classrooms, labs, infrastructure, and instructional equipment, while making much-needed health and safety repairs and energy efficiency improvements. In November 2014, voters in the Compton Community College District approved Measure C, a \$100 million facilities bond designed to make technology and safety upgrades campuswide.

Eight major facilities projects were completed since 2013, they include: Utility Infrastructure Replacement Phases 1 and 2 (\$46 million), Library-Student Success Center (\$25 million), Football Stadium and Track (\$2.3 million), Allied Health Building (\$14.3 million), Cosmetology Facility (\$2.2 million), Music Building North Wing & Little Theater (\$3 million), and Student Health Center.

Upcoming facilities projects in the planning stages include:

- **Main Campus Drive Landscaping:** this \$500,000 project will upgrade the landscaping along Main Campus Drive to decomposed granite and drought-resistant succulent plants, which will result in cost savings for maintenance. Estimated Completion: January 2019
- **Public Safety Facility:** a groundbreaking ceremony occurred in July 2018 for construction of a \$4.7 million, all-new building to house the Compton District Police Department. Estimated Completion: Fall 2019
- **Student Services/Administration Building:** a \$20.4 million facility will become a one-stop hub for all student services. The project involves the demolition of the old Library Building, and renovation of the existing Administration Building. Estimated Completion: Winter 2021
- **Instructional Building 1:** the \$17.7 million project includes the removal of Row Building G, half of F, two-thirds of E, and Modular Buildings M1 and M2 (total of six structures) to be replaced with a new, state-of-the-art instructional building. Estimated Completion: Spring 2021
- **Instructional Building 2:** this \$25.6 million project involves the removal of Row Building D, and the remainder of Row E and F buildings, and construction of a second state-of-the-art instructional building on campus. Estimated Completion: Fall 2021
- **Vocational Technology Building Renovation:** the planning for the renovation of this building will begin in fall 2018.
- **MIS/Math Buildings Renovation:** a multiphase project to renovate the MIS office area. The final phase will include renovation of the Math & Science Building.
- **Physical Education Complex and Visual and Performing Arts Projects:** these projects are currently in the initial proposal phase with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

In closing, while we celebrate, much work is yet to be done. I want to thank all Compton College employees, the El Camino Community College District, our local, state, and federal officials, and most importantly, the community, for their contributions to help Compton College students reach their goals. We are all partners in our students' success and they deserve only the best educational programs and support services. As we move forward, please encourage individuals to enroll at Compton College, because **every student is a success story!**

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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.