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El Camino College Compton Center | Public Relations & Marketing Department
16007 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90506
Contact: Ann M. Garten, Director, Community Relations
Telephone: (310) 660-3406 | E-Mail: agarten@elcamino.edu

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El Camino College Compton Center Graduates Transfer to Four-Year Universities to Follow Their Career Aspirations

On June 10, 168 students received their diplomas at the El Camino College Compton Center commencement ceremony. Now, they begin the next chapter of their lives. Whether it be transferring to a four-year college or university or starting a career, each student has a unique and inspirational story to tell.

El Camino College Compton Center is proud to highlight some of the student success stories about the graduates from the class of 2010.

Rashad Lowery

University of California, Irvine Transfer Student

Upon graduation with an associate degree from El Camino College Compton Center, Long Beach, Calif., resident Rashad Lowery will begin his next chapter as a transfer student at University of California, Irvine, where he will major in English. He is one of 12 students from his class that will transfer to a University of California institution this fall.

Initially, Lowery chose to attend El Camino College Compton Center because he was living in Compton at the time and the location was convenient, but he really credits the Transfer Center and Elizabeth Martinez, ECC Compton Center Transfer Center Coordinator, with motivating him and helping him realize he could attain his life goals. "The Transfer Center really helped me out, from instructing me on what classes to take to encouraging me to go on university tours to check out school campuses, to walking me through the whole process of filling out college applications," he said.

In addition, Lowery says the Financial Aid office helped make things easier in terms of costs. He was able to take advantage of the Board of Governor's fee waiver and benefits of the Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOP&S).

Lowery is still weighing his options in terms of a future career. Combining two things he likes to do, writing and playing sports, he is considering a career as a sports journalist. He also has an entrepreneurial spirit and wants to own his own business someday. "I'd really like to produce and publish entertainment software such as video games," he said.

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ECC Compton Center Graduates Transfer 2-2-2-2

Dakota McMahand

Biola University Transfer Student

Fellow graduate and Presidential Scholar Dakota McMahand says that attending El Camino College Compton Center helped her get accepted to the college of her choice and “has given her the opportunity to be the first person in her family to graduate from college.” This fall, she will transfer to the private Christian institution Biola University in La Mirada, Calif., which is ranked by *U.S. New & World Report* as one of the “2010 Best Colleges in America.”

The Lynwood, Calif., resident believes her education at El Camino College Compton Center has revealed the “Jonathan Livingston seagull” within by helping her find, as Richard Bach wrote in his acclaimed novel, “a reason to live—to learn, to discover, to be free.”

Her professors have helped her broaden her intellectual capabilities and inspired her to consider how she can share her newly acquired knowledge in the world, she says. “The professors have motivated me to remove the limitations that influence and hinder the thinking process and encouraged me to discover and pursue perfection,” McMahand said. “El Camino College Compton Center has given me so much that I simply can not express the tremendous gratitude and humility I have for being selected as one of this year’s Presidential Scholars.”

In addition to attending ECC Compton Center, McMahand values the importance of giving back to her community and works as a piano instructor at the Watts Towers Arts Center in Los Angeles. She was first introduced to the Arts Center at the age of 13, and in 2009 she was offered the position as the center’s Jazz Mentorship piano instructor. “This position allows me to instruct, inspire and transform the lives of many underprivileged youth who otherwise would never have such an experience,” said McMahand.

She also studies music at the Torrance Music Academy where continues to develop as a pianist and credits music as helping to transform her introverted personality. She has been recognized for her musical abilities with several awards and honors including acceptance to the California State Summer School for the Arts, being invited to perform at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and receiving the California Governor’s Award.

About El Camino College Compton Center

El Camino College Compton Center 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 college or university or train for a career. Many classes are available and offered at an affordable price—fees are only \$26 per unit. The catalog and class schedule for day, evening, weekend and online courses is available on the website at www.compton.edu or may be picked up at ECC Compton Center located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA. For more information, call 310-900-1600.

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Editor’s Note: Photos of students available upon request.