



NEWS

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Thanksgiving Help to Homeless & In Need:

As Holidays Approach, ECC Compton Center Helps Homeless, In-Need Students

The holidays can be a difficult time for the homeless and those in need. But El Camino College Compton Center is poised to do all it can for its homeless students and students in need during the holiday season – and beyond.

As ECC Compton Center prepares to host two major Thanksgiving community charity events this week on campus, it has also begun to implement a program to aid homeless students and students in need.

Specifically, ECC Compton Center started a free Shower/Towel/Soap program a few weeks ago that will guarantee students soap and clean towels to wash up in the locker facilities, open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday when classes are in session.

In addition, the Center is sponsoring “A Taste of Thanksgiving” this Thursday at 11 a.m. in the Staff Lounge that will provide free meals and entertainment to students, targeting in particular – but not exclusively – homeless students.

And, though sponsored by many organizations outside ECC Compton Center, the campus is the site Tuesday of the “12th Annual Healthy Family Update and Turkey Giveaway,” which will not only give away thousands of turkeys to families in need but will also act as a health fair.

“I’m proud that we’re making a start to assist this population of students who need a little extra help,” said Junior Domingo, co-chair of the recently formed ECC Compton Center Homeless Student Task Force. Domingo is Interim Director of Student Development & Athletics.

“Anything we can do to help our students and make them successful is what we constantly work toward,” he said. “When they are successful we are successful.”

“I think the Homeless Task Force is doing a fantastic job,” said ECC Compton Center Provost/CEO Dr. Keith Curry. “We’ve started a conversation on how to serve these student populations and we’re getting new ideas out of this conversation. Our people are taking this conversation to a new level.”

The towel and soap service was the first project implemented under ECC Compton Center’s Homeless Student Initiative, which Curry started this academic year.

In a report on his recommendations to address homeless concerns at ECC Compton Center, Curry wrote that Los Angeles County officials estimate that in 2015 there were 46,874 homeless individuals on any given night, up nearly 6 percent from the previous year.

Domingo said ECC Compton Center ordered about 200 towels and a few hundred bars of soap, using money donated for the cause. He hopes that as word spreads – and as homeless students step forward to identify themselves – the number of students taking advantage of the towels and soap will increase.

He also said the task force has started a process to reach out to homeless students and students in need to let them know about Financial Aid, Veterans' assistance and much more that might be available to them. In addition, the task force is examining other ways it might help students, including providing free food through the cafeteria and directing homeless students to food banks, free meal programs and temporary housing.

Meanwhile, this is the second year that ECC Compton Center is providing "A Taste of Thanksgiving." Domingo said the event attracted about 25 students and family members last year, but he hopes that number will increase this year.

The free meal is being made possible by the Mozell Sanders Thanksgiving West Coast Inc., which uses ECC Compton Center as a staging area for distribution of packaged Thanksgiving meals to churches, shelters and other sites throughout the area.

"The organization has been gracious enough to provide those meals to our homeless students and students in need," Domingo said.

Tuesday's turkey giveaway is sponsored by State Senator Isadore Hall, III (D-South Bay), Major League Baseball's Urban Youth Academy, the Los Angeles Dodgers, Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Hospital, Radio Free KJLH 102.3 and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

This free community event will begin at 9 a.m. at Major League Baseball's Urban Youth Academy, which is located on the ECC Compton Center campus.

Now in its twelfth year, the "Healthy Family Update and Turkey Giveaway" is a multi-prong philanthropic collaboration between Hall, local officials and community leaders committed to reducing incidents of obesity and diabetes in underserved communities, discussing legislative issues affecting the community and promoting healthier lifestyles for children and families.

Domingo said ECC Compton Center will set up information tables, distribute campus materials and talk to community members at the event about the benefits of attending the school.

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 university or train for a career. El Camino College Compton Center is located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90221.

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