



# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Compton College Alumna and Aspiring College Professor Has Affinity for Scholarly Research**

“The professors at Compton College have inspired me to take the route of becoming a college professor,” said Claudia Blandino, a 2021 graduate of Compton College who transferred to California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) to continue her studies as a sociology major. Blandino is a non-traditional student who, after 13 years of working in restaurants and raising her children, returned to school by enrolling at Compton College in summer 2018. She graduated in June 2021 with three associate degrees in sociology, social and behavioral science, and liberal studies teaching preparation.

Prior to transferring to CSUDH, Blandino began working on a sociology research project under the guidance of Compton College sociology instructor Corina Diaz. Blandino appreciated having a mentor similar to herself. “Professor Diaz is a first-generation college student like me,” she said. “Most first-generation students don’t really have a support system or guidance and don’t always know what steps to take to achieve our goals in higher education. We can make mistakes and can get set back. It is really helpful to have a mentor who has a similar background and has been through this situation and fully understands the challenges.”

Sociologists rely on a systematic scientific process to collect data and then evaluate social behavior. Blandino’s research project is titled “First-Year Pandemic: Virtual Learning Experiences in the K-12 System” and focuses on the effects of the first full year of virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 on K-12 students. The purpose of the research was to determine what outcomes transitioning to virtual learning had on students. As part of her research, she interviewed a small, diverse sample of families from different school districts. After just two months, she had completed nearly a year’s worth of research. In November 2021, she was invited to present her research findings to the California Sociological Association.

Encouraged by Diaz, Blandino then applied to present her research at CSUDH’s annual Student Research Day, which is a CSU-wide competition to promote excellence in research by recognizing outstanding students’ accomplishments across the disciplines. She submitted her application not realizing it was a competition and not only was her research project selected, but Blandino also won first place in her category: “Behavioral & Social Education and Social Sciences - Virtual - Undergraduate.” Upon her win, she was one of just 10 presenters invited to the statewide CSU Student Research Day competition where she presented her research findings virtually at an event in late April 2022. “In simple terms, one key finding of my research is that low-income families suffered more than higher-income families in the transition to virtual learning. Twenty percent of the students’ surveyed had learning loss, and 28 percent of districts surveyed took three weeks or more to deliver online

learning,” she said. Blandino plans to conduct further research and will submit her proposed research to the Institutional Review Board in order to extend the research since it involves children. Institutional Research Boards are charged with providing an independent evaluation that proposed research is ethically acceptable, checking clinical investigators’ potential biases, and evaluating compliance with regulations and laws designed to protect human subjects.

Her winning research project was inspired by her own children. Blandino is a mother to 5 children and her blended family had their own significant struggles during the first year of the pandemic and the transition to virtual learning. Her job also provided inspiration for her research. After graduating from Compton College, she secured a job as a behavioral therapist at a K-12 district, thanks to the certificates she earned at Compton College. The position has offered her a unique perspective on how students have been affected during the pandemic.

Blandino found that doing research has opened doors to opportunities that were a perfect fit for someone with a goal of becoming a professor. Research can benefit the universities faculty members work at, offers financial stipends, and in a competitive field, it helps scholars get noticed.

After she earns her bachelor’s degree, Blandino hopes to enter a dual graduate degree program to earn a master’s and doctorate simultaneously. If she is unable to find a suitable dual graduate program, she plans to earn a master’s degree and then begin her career as a professor of sociology. “My professors at Compton College were an inspiration to me,” she said. “I witnessed their passion and the fact that students were so engaged in my classes.”

Compton College provided a strong foundation for Blandino’s success. She took advantage of the great tutors at the Student Success Center, received Financial Aid, and other free resources offered by the college. She also enrolled in Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), a state-funded program for underserved students that provides extra guidance and financial support. “The Compton College EOPS Office has an exceptional staff,” she said. “Use this program if you are eligible and you will for sure graduate. The EOPS counselors are very comprehensive, guide students every step of the way, and will ensure you earn your degree and graduate.” She credits the EOPS program for helping her get accepted to all four universities she applied to.

“Compton College did so much for me by helping me realize I can actually do something in life and be successful. I’m a more confident person after attending Compton College,” she said. “Nothing has been handed to me and I’ve had it rough, but I need to stop and look at what I have accomplished.”

**Photo Available Online:**

[Blandino\\_Claudia.jpg \(1000×1396\) \(compton.edu\)](#)

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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.