

El Camino College Compton Center Transitions to Success *"Every Student is a Success Story"*

Compton Community College was established in 1927 as Compton Junior College, a component of the Compton Union High School District. Today the El Camino College Compton Center is a college in transition seeking to regain its accreditation and standing among California's community colleges. The last few years have been a time



of turmoil. Following allegations mismanagement and embezzlement by a trustee, this institution was left without direction and lost its accreditation. In a community that was already facing many challenges, Compton was faced with the prospect of losing its college, which has been known throughout its history for producing some of the nation's outstanding scholars and athletes. The College serves the cities of Carson, Compton, Lynwood and Paramount as well as the Willowbrook area. Given the socio-economic conditions of black and brown people in all of these communities, the loss of the college and opportunities for quality higher education could be devastating.

In 2006, following the former Compton College's accreditation being revoked, the El Camino Community College District agreed to partner with the Compton Community College District to provide academic programs and student support services. Many people in the Compton community felt that the relationship with El Camino infringed on community pride in Compton and there was a feeling of hurt because an institution that had been such a symbolic part of the history and legacy of the Compton community was no more. What was Compton College is now El Camino College Compton Center and many longtime Compton residents take pride in the college and refuse to call it anything but "Compton College".

At the August 22, 2006 meeting of the Compton College District Board of Trustees, a state appointed Special Trustee approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with El Camino College District to solidify the partnerships between the two districts. Under this MOU, the campus became a center of El Camino College. The Office of the President/Superintendent was replaced by the Office of Provost/Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The center is officially established as the Compton Community Educational

Center. Its overall goal is to assist the Compton campus with recovery and full accreditation as a two-year public college within the next eight to ten years.

Today, in spite of continuous calls for autonomy by local residents, the partnership is working. There are some definite signs of progress and it has become a win- win situation. City Pride Magazine had an opportunity to sit down with Chief Executive Officer Dr. Keith Curry and hear about some of the progress that has been made at this college. When asked about how people in the community felt about losing their college Dr. Curry stated "When working my doctorate at UC Irvine, my research lead me to believe that the revocation of Compton College's accreditation, hurt this community. It certainly has had an impact. When individuals who have known Compton College for so long found that the accreditation has been revoked they were hurt and it takes time for that hurt to heal. We want people to know that it might not have the same name that people want it to have but we are still providing quality educational services.

That's what is important, and one of my jobs is to get the word out in the community about what we are doing and the new programs we are offering. People in the community have not heard about all the positive new things happening at the college like the one million dollar increase in financial aid and the new First Year Program".



Dr. Curry (pictured) is very enthusiastic about the progress at the Compton Center and is committed to making the transition a success especially for the students. "It's important for people to know that nothing has been lost and that many services have gotten better. We want people to know that because of this partnership with El Camino College the gates are open. Where would 19 and 20 year olds go if the gates were not open? At the end of the day we are providing quality education to the community. We have enhanced a lot of our services, provide better financial aid, online registration and online grades." stated Dr. Curry

The First Year Experience program is designed to help students new to college find the resources they need to succeed. Students learn how to study independently and in groups; choose a major and create a career plan; as well as access and manage electronic information, such as email, Internet, and library databases. First Year Experience (FYE) offers:

- FYE bilingual counselor
- FYE faculty
- Field trips to UC, CSU, & private universities
- Early Group Registration
- Learning community courses
- Orientation
- Peer mentors
- "Strategies for Success in College" course

Every student is a success story at El Camino College Compton Center. Student achievements are evident through the various scholarship awards, academic activities, and athletic endeavors. The ongoing "Need Cash for College?" financial aid awareness campaign has shown positive results. In 2011, 3,244 students submitted Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms, a 12 percent increase from the year before. The campaign included workshops, "Cash for College" fairs, and outreach to high school students.

The El Camino College Compton Center Aerospace Fastener Program was introduced in fall 2008 as the first college level training program of its kind in the western United States, quickly becoming a high-demand program with an extensive waiting list.

In a recent survey conducted at El Camino College Compton center 85 percent of students and 71 percent of community members believe an education received at Compton Center is as good as or better than at other institutions. Students report a high level of satisfaction with their experience at Compton Center and they rate the courses offered, the instructors and the availability of classes as the top reasons for attending El Camino College Compton Center.

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UC admits more foreign, out-of-state students

By Larry Gordon, Los Angeles Times

April 18, 2012

The university offers fall entrance to 43% more non-California freshmen than last year. Such students would each pay an extra \$23,000 a year, helping plug budget gaps caused by reductions in state funding.

The University of California admitted 43% more out-of-state and international freshmen than last year, significantly boosting its controversial efforts to enroll those higher-paying students, according to data released Tuesday.

As a result, officials said they expected the share of the upcoming freshman class from outside California to be somewhat higher than the 12.3% this school year but said the actual proportion remains uncertain because non-Californians are less likely to enroll than resident students.

UC offered fall entrance to 61,443 California students to at least one of its nine undergraduate campuses, an increase of 3.6% from last year.

It also admitted 18,846 students from other states and countries, up from 13,144 the previous year. Those students would each pay an extra \$23,000 a year and help plug the budget gaps caused by reductions in state funding. Students have until May 1 to decide whether to enroll.

UC hopes to raise the overall enrollment of non-Californians to 10% of all undergraduates in a few years, up from the current 6.9%, although [UCLA](#) and [UC Berkeley](#) already have much higher shares of out-of-staters.

Kate Jeffery, UC's interim director of undergraduate admissions, said Tuesday that more California students "are being squeezed out" of their first- or second-choice campuses, and she blamed cuts in state funding, not the rise in out-of-state admissions. However, she insisted that all students who meet UC's academic requirements are being offered a space somewhere in the system, with UC Merced as the backup if all other campuses have rejected them.

Because applications from state residents increased substantially and enrollment is not expanding much, it got harder for Californians to find a spot in UC. The situation may have been inadvertently worsened by changes this year in UC admissions criteria that were approved before the state budget crisis and were intended to expand the application

pool; those reforms included dropping the requirement that students take two supplemental SAT subject exams, although the main SAT or ACT tests are still mandatory.

Overall, the admissions rate for California students declined from 69.7% last year to 65.8% for fall 2012. And non-Californians faced a similar trend: 53.9% of out-of-state students in the U.S. were admitted, down from 60.7% last year, and about 61.3% of foreign applicants, compared to 64.1% in 2011.

UCLA again was the hardest UC campus to crack for Californians, with only 17.7% offered entrance at the Westwood school. Next came Berkeley, 22.7%; San Diego, 32.1%; Irvine, 33.6%; Santa Barbara, 41%; Davis, 44.5%; Riverside and Santa Cruz, both 61.6%; and Merced, 76.5%.

When non-Californians are included in the acceptance rate, UC Berkeley had a slight edge for being the most selective UC campus, offering a spot to 21.2% of all applicants compared with 21.3% at UCLA.

California families are right to be outraged to see their high-achieving children turned down at some campuses while non-residents are getting in, said Patrick Callan, who is president of the Higher Education Policy Institute, a think tank in San Jose.

As California residents and state legislators come to feel less connected to the university, UC will be less likely to have its funding boosted when the economy improves, he said. "It's a mistake and it's a disservice to the people of California," Callan said of the rising ranks of out-of-state students. "I think it is a short-term benefit that really does compromise the university in the long term." Instead, UC should cut duplications in graduate academic programs, he said.

Jeffery, however, noted that the proportion of non-Californian undergraduates at UC "is still very small and certainly small compared to some other public institutions in other states." She added that out-of-staters and foreign students add cultural diversity and different perspectives to campuses.

Eight campuses increased their number of admissions offers to non-Californians. Only UC Berkeley, which already attracted controversy for enrolling 30% of its current freshman class from out-of-state, pulled back, cutting those admissions by 12.5%.

UCLA and [UC Irvine](#) took in more freshman than anticipated last year and decided to reduce their numbers of admissions offers to California freshmen to compensate for that, officials said. UCLA cut in-state freshman admissions by 15.1% and Irvine by 16.2%, making Irvine appear noticeably more competitive than in the past.

The proportion of Latinos and blacks offered admission to UC rose slightly from last year, to 27.3% and 4.4% respectively. Asian Americans kept nearly the same share, 36.3% while whites declined, reflecting state demographics, from 30.6% to 28.2%.

From 'boom town' to bust at the community colleges

<http://www.scpr.org/blogs/education/2012/04/19/5702/boom-town-bust-community-colleges/>

April 19, 2012 | By Tami Abdollah

The public community college has transfer arrangements set up with 10 historically black colleges and universities. In general transfers out of El Camino have become more difficult as budget cuts have decreased course offerings.

When Sean Donnell began teaching at El Camino College in 1998, it was "boom town." The community college system was growing, teachers were receiving a cost-of-living allowance (now frozen), and students were flocking to enroll.

"We all know what happened," Donnell said. The recession.

"And community colleges in particular get hit very hard because its kind of hard to justify taking money away from a kid going through compulsory K-12 education and its funded through the same money. But out of all the higher education systems in the state, we serve the most, we serve more than UC and CSU combined."

Donnell is not only an English professor at the college, but he is also the chief negotiator for the El Camino College Federation of Teachers, Local 1388.

These days, on the first day of classes, Donnell is used to now seeing a line 30 students deep outside his class hoping to get in — inside sit the other 30 students already signed up.

"In the last year, at the beginning of my classes, every single one of them, day class, night class, it doesn't matter, I'll have anywhere from 10 to 30 students looking to add," Donnell said. "And I have to send them away. I literally can't service that many students. The limit on a composition class is 30, and a lot of times I'll even add a couple over [but] I'm doing them a disservice if I add like 50 students to a class. It's hard to grade that many papers."

Donnell has taught two winter session classes every year it was offered by the college since he started teaching at El Camino. This will be the first year he does not teach the winter session because budget cuts have forced the college to pare down significantly. Next year there won't be a winter session.

Though El Camino College is called a two-year public college, it has often taken students longer to graduate even before budget cuts hit, Donnell said. But the cuts do impact them more so now.

"A lot of times they're just going to have to wait, they're going to have to be pushed back," Donnell said. But he also said the budget toll has not only been felt among students.

"As much as I feel for the students, do you have any idea the number of colleagues I've lost as a part of this?" Donnell said. "Part time employees are always hardest hit. They don't have any rights under contract. They're at-will employees."

Donnell said the college has shed "scores" of adjunct professors in the last four years. "A lot of people have lost their jobs."

"We've got this row of mailboxes, and they're all full," Donnell said. "You look at them now, and there's another empty space, there's another empty space, there's another empty space."

A group of students are proposing administrators take a salary cut to help even out the pain of the budget crisis. But Donnell said that wouldn't be fair.

"Everybody is suffering from this, from the top to the bottom...If there's an across-the-board cut, then I could see it, but I think it would be unfair to ask administrators to take a cut in pay just as a group. They do their job."

Donnell said a roughly \$250,000 savings would perhaps translate to three or four faculty members and maybe 20 sections.

"I understand a quarter of a million sounds like a lot of money, but when you're dealing with tens of millions of dollars..." Donnell said. "It definitely wouldn't help that many students graduate in two years."

Cost of public retiree health care soars in Calif.

SacBee

By JUDY LIN
Associated Press

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SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- As Stockton contemplates a bankruptcy filing, cities, counties and school districts throughout California are grappling with the same issue that has led the delta port city to the brink of insolvency - soaring costs for retiree health care.

San Francisco, which once allowed its public employees to qualify for full retiree medical benefits after working just five years, is projected to pay \$153 million in retiree health care costs this year, about 5 percent of the city's general fund.

The Ventura County city of Thousand Oaks capped its contributions for retiree health care at \$435 a month but still faces a \$12.6 million unfunded liability for the perk, an amount equal to about 18 percent of the city's general fund budget.

The Los Angeles Unified School District, the nation's second largest school district, promises 100 percent lifetime health benefits to retirees, their spouses and dependents. It now faces \$10.3 billion in long-term unfunded liabilities for the benefit, 1 1/2 times the district's annual budget.

And at the state level, retiree health care costs have ballooned from \$560 million annually a decade ago to a projected \$1.7 billion in the coming fiscal year, almost 2 percent of general fund spending.

The benefits' costs are expected to double for the state and local governments over the next 10 years.

"The problem with (retiree medical benefits) is that these promises were made back when insurance for medical cost \$200 a month, and those costs have now quintupled. And nobody even put away a nickel," said Girard Miller, a public finance consultant based in Southern California who has testified about retirement funding before state panels.

The looming crisis in providing health care for government retirees is similar to the one involving public employee pensions. The difference is that the state, counties, cities and other entities have been pre-funding pension obligations, even though the benefits promised in most cases far outstrip the pool of money available to pay them.

Retiree health care has largely been handled on a pay-as-you-go basis, meaning the state and municipalities pay whatever bills come due each year. In each case, taxpayers are on the hook for tens of billions of dollars in unfunded obligations.

Both types of retirement benefits - guaranteed pensions for life and family health care coverage after retirement - are increasingly rare in the private sector.

In 2007, the year the recession began, Credit Suisse estimated that states and local governments nationwide were carrying \$1.5 trillion in unfunded liabilities for retiree health care costs.

It's hard to know exactly how much California cities, counties and school districts owe. Governments have had to report their long-term liabilities since 2008 under changes made by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, but the state controller's office says it tracks only the state government's obligations. It does not track the patchwork of retiree health benefits provided by local governments.

The only comprehensive survey of the benefits was completed in 2008 by the California Public Employee Post-Employment Benefits Commission, a panel convened by former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger as the new reporting standard was taking effect.

The commission estimated that the state, cities, counties, school districts and other governmental entities in California faced at least \$118 billion in unfunded liabilities for retiree medical benefits - about twice the amount taxpayers owed on public pensions at the time. Today, the unfunded liability for California's two main public pension funds is about \$150 billion.

"I don't think people recognized how much exposure there was for government on this front, and also the fact that none or very little of this was pre-funded," said Anne Sheehan, who served as executive director of the Schwarzenegger commission.

Stockton City Manager Bob Deis said the city of 290,000 had not set aside any money to pay for lifetime health care coverage for its workers. His office estimates the city will spend \$9 million of Stockton's \$165 million general fund to cover health insurance for about 11,000 city retirees. That's compared to \$8 million the city will spend on health care for more than 12,000 current workers.

Deis, who inherited the contracts when he took the job in 2010, wants them renegotiated as part of a required mediation process that is taking place as the city tries to avoid bankruptcy. If Stockton files for Chapter 9 protection, its public employees might look to the eastern San Francisco Bay area city of Vallejo for an example of what it could mean for them.

Vallejo provided full health care coverage to its retirees but reduced that to a monthly stipend of \$300 after it filed for bankruptcy in 2008. Retired city workers say they were blindsided.

"If I had thought this was even a possibility for the last 26 years, maybe I would have been pre-planning some kind of health care strategy," said former fire chief Vincent Sarullo.

Sarullo, 57, has an annual pension of \$135,902 and counts himself among the luckier ones who have been able to absorb the expense. Some public employees, like Sarullo, are not eligible for Medicare or Social Security.

While many government workers can look forward to receiving medical, dental and vision benefits after they retire, such benefits are rapidly disappearing from the private sector.

In 1988, 66 percent of all companies with 200 or more workers offering health benefits to active workers also offered retiree health benefits, according to a 2011 Kaiser Health Foundation survey of employers. That dropped to 26 percent by 2011.

The opposite is true for California governments. According to the survey by the post-employment benefits commission, 86 percent of cities, 91 percent of counties and 89 percent of school districts offer retiree health benefits.

Many government workers can collect their full pensions before age 65, the eligible age for Medicare. Some governments provide retirees health care coverage as a bridge to Medicare. Once the employee is eligible, the retiree benefit becomes secondary to help them fill any Medicare coverage gaps.

A few local governments have begun to make changes. Thousand Oaks was the first city to contract with the state pension system to prefund retiree health care and has capped monthly benefits at \$435.

Until a few years ago, employees could work for San Francisco for five years, leave and start claiming full retiree health care benefits once they turned 55. Under Proposition B in 2009, voters changed the rule so new workers have to contribute to a trust fund and must work 20 years to qualify for full benefits.

The city still faces a \$4.4 billion long-term liability.

Most state workers have to work 20 years to qualify for full retiree health benefits, but tens of thousands of employees of the California State University system, the courts and Legislature have to work only five years to qualify.

As part of his retirement-reform package, Gov. Jerry Brown wants all new state and local government employees to work 25 years before qualifying for full retiree health care coverage.

"We didn't get into the mess overnight and we're not going to get out of it overnight," Brown said. "I'm doing my best to push it."

Long Beach City College board votes to lay off 55 LONG BEACH PRESS TELEGRAM, APRIL 24, 2012

By Kelly Puente, Staff Writer

LONG BEACH — In one of the largest reductions in Long Beach City College's recent history, its board on Tuesday unanimously approved a plan to lay off 55 employees and reduce contracts for 96 positions for a savings of \$5.1 million.

More than 200 students, faculty and staff attended the Board of Trustees meeting to protest the college's latest plan for budget cuts.

Holding signs that read "stop the war on education," students voiced their concerns about staff layoffs, tuition hikes and reductions to summer courses.

"These faculty and staff have been critical in helping students achieve," said student Patrick Harper. "We don't want to see any more layoffs. It's hard enough to get classes."

The latest layoffs will largely affect the college's classified staff.

Classified staff are employees who aren't required to hold teaching credentials, such as secretaries, custodians, maintenance workers and instructional aides.

The cuts include eliminating 43 classified positions and reducing an additional 96 positions from 12-month contracts to 11- or 10-month contracts. Many of the 96 positions include instructional aides, whose contracts will be scaled back due to cuts in the number of courses offered in the summer and winter sessions.

Management will lose 12 positions.

More than a dozen LBCC employees and students voiced their outrage before the board, noting that the reductions would affect nearly 40 percent of the college's classified staff. They said the reductions would affect positions including library aids, educational technologists and custodians.

"The layoffs will have a major impact on campus morale," said Lynn Shaw, president of the college's faculty union.

Bianca Kananian, who moved to Long Beach from Iran two years ago, was concerned about the reductions in summer courses for students learning English as a second language. School employees said the college will be offering two courses for English-learners this summer compared to 10 the previous year.

"The classes have helped me learn English so I can get a job and improve my life," said Kananian. "I like this college. I don't want to have to transfer to another college to take English."

Trustees said the cuts are necessary to offset years of declining state funding. The college has seen a surge in enrollment in recent years, while at the same time it has seen a 7.4 percent drop in state funding.

Earlier this year, LBCC saw an unanticipated loss of \$3.5 million in mid-year state funding cuts. That came on top of a \$7.2 million loss in revenue over the past three years. Officials said LBCC need to permanently reduce its expenditures by at least \$5 million for the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

The college could see an additional loss of \$4.8 million in funding if Gov. Jerry Brown's proposed November tax initiative fails to pass, officials said. In that worse-case scenario, LBCC will face an additional \$4 million to \$5 million in cuts in January.

Trustee Roberto Uranga said the reductions in funding from Sacramento have left the college no choice.

"We have been trying our damndest to sustain and keep jobs, but we're in a difficult budget situation," he said. "Every time that we are challenged with a resolution like this it pains me to no end because it affects people's lives. It's unfortunate we have to restructure everything we have to do."

As the college works through difficult times, President Eloy Oakley announced Tuesday that he will continue his leadership there.

Oakley had been considering a possible position as president of Santa Barbara City College, but he said he has withdrawn as a candidate.

Oakley, who has served as president of LBCC for more than five years, was recruited as one of four candidates for president of the Santa Barbara campus. However, after interviewing for the position on April 16, Oakley said he realized he and Santa Barbara College officials differed in their plans for the college's future.

Oakley said he looks forward to continuing his work at LBCC.



A large crowd of students, staff and faculty members attended the Long Beach City College Board of Trustees meeting, held at the LBCC Liberal Arts Campus Tuesday evening, to protest \$5.1 million in cuts that will lay off 55 employees. (Stephen Carr / Staff Photographer)



Long Beach City College President Eloy Oakley listens as students, staff and faculty members spoke at the board meeting Tuesday. Oakley said Tuesday he will stay at LBCC as it goes through difficult financial times and won't pursue a job at Santa Barbara City College for which he was being considered.
(Stephen Carr / Staff Photographer)