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Compton Alumni Earn Public Administration Master Degrees, Sheriff Lee Baca Officiates

Two alumni were recently presented graduation certificates by Sheriff Lee Baca during a ceremony at the Sheriff's Training Academy and Regional Services (STARS) Center in Whittier, Calif. The sister and brother team, Carolyn and Reginald Scott, earned matching Master degrees in Public Administration (MPA) from National University, which partners with the Los Angeles Sheriff Department's own University.

Compton Community College District Board of Trustees member Dr. Deborah LeBlanc (Area 4) attended the graduation ceremony. "Sharing our students' successes is an honor," said LeBlanc. "We are proud to recognize these alumni who have overcome adversity and challenging life circumstances to become successful professionals who now dedicate themselves to helping others do the same."

The two siblings were born in Compton, Calif., and attend Longfellow Elementary School until moving into the Los Angeles Unified School District while living in South Central Los Angeles with their single father. Their father only completed the 7th grade and Carolyn and Reginald knew that education and sports would be their ticket to a better life. Little did they know that they would endure a lot, including Reginald surviving two shootings, before they could complete their higher education and make their dream of attending graduate school together a reality.

Today, Carolyn Scott works as a training coordinator managing the Civilian Training Unit for the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, a position she has held since June 2008. Prior to joining the Sheriff's Department, Scott worked for AT & T Wireless (formerly Cingular Wireless) for 11 years. Earning her MPA helped her transition from the private sector to working for local government. "The public and private sector operations are entirely different and the MPA program gave me a full organizational overview to prepare me for my new career in the public sector," explained Scott. "The focus for me was learning how inter-government works and the role law enforcement plays in local government."

In 1991, Carolyn enrolled concurrently at the former Compton Community College and California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) while also working three jobs to help out her single-father household. She graduated from CSUDH with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Management in August 1998.

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Once Carolyn became a real-life example of a first generation college student for her brother, Reginald settled into his junior year at Alain Leroy Locke High School and began to excel on the football field. During his senior year, he was honored as an All-Star middle linebacker before graduating in 1993. He continued his education at Los Angeles Southwest College where he earned a football scholarship to New Mexico State University. Tragedy struck two weeks before Reginald was to leave for New Mexico in 1996 when he was shot in the back while attending a backyard pool party.

After a tough year-long recovery, Reginald was offered the opportunity to play football for the former Compton Community College during 1996-1997. He graduated from Compton Community College in May 2000 with an associate degree and earned yet another scholarship to Whittier College where he subsequently graduated with a bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies and Physical Education.

Carolyn and Reginald had always planned to attend graduate school together, but once again plans were put on hold when Reginald suffered a life-threatening injury for the second time at the hands of a shooter in 2006. After another long recovery, their plans to attend graduate school became a possibility when Carolyn left work in the private sector and entered public service at the LASD. "I as soon as I heard about the MPA program at National University through LASDU, I jumped at the opportunity," said Carolyn. "My brother and I were able to make our distant thoughts about graduate school a reality."

Reginald currently works as a recreation coordinator for the City of Los Angeles, running the CLASS Park after-school youth program in south Los Angeles. He also worked for several years as a probation officer for at-risk youth for the Los Angeles Unified School District. Reginald took his own tragic experiences as an at-risk youth and is now giving back by helping children from disadvantaged backgrounds. "He can now help young people and do it from a place of experience," said Carolyn. "He can help change the lives of people that came from the same place we came from."

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. 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 Web site at www.compton.edu or may be picked up at Compton Center located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA. For more information, call 310-900-1600.

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Photo Caption: From Left, Sheriff Lee Baca, Carolyn Scott, Dr. Deborah LeBlanc of the Compton Community College District, and Reginald Scott. El Camino College Compton Center Alumni and siblings Carolyn and Reginald Scott recently received Master's in Public Administration certificates from Baca during a graduation ceremony at the Sheriff's Training Academy and Regional Services Center (STARS) in Whittier, Calif.