



NEWS

Compton College | Community Relations
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For Immediate Release

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Compton Community College District Introduces New Student Trustee

The new student trustee for the Compton Community College District (CCCD) is Long Beach resident Ted Somers, who was appointed to represent the students of Compton College on the District's Board.

As the student trustee, Somers will attend all Board meetings, discuss student-related issues, and receive all materials presented to the members of the CCCD Board of Trustees, except for closed session issues. It is also the student trustee's responsibility to make regular reports to the Associated Student Body and at other public forums held on behalf of Compton College students as it relates to the business of the District.

"I was interested in becoming the student trustee because I want to help address and improve issues that students are concerned about," said Somers. "Sometimes students express concerns among themselves and nothing gets down about it. I can contribute, from the student's point of view, important factors that will help frame policies that will support student success."

Somers began his educational journey at Compton College in fall of 2016. He serves as the first president of Compton College's award-winning Formerly Incarcerated Student Transition (F.I.S.T.) program, and made the college's Dean's List for the 2017-18 academic year. His interest in leadership and passion for helping others is a key motivator for redirecting his life and becoming a case manager and drug abuse counselor for other formerly incarcerated individuals. He currently has a 3.5 GPA and is on track to graduate with an associate degree for transfer from Compton College in June 2019. He plans to transfer to a local four-year university to pursue a double major in psychology and behavioral science. He hopes to give back by pursuing a future career as a substance abuse counselor, specifically working with the formerly incarcerated.

The F.I.S.T. program provides academic, social and economic support for students reentering the community after incarceration. The program helps students develop confidence in themselves and their abilities through regular support meetings, skills training and professional development, career counseling and entrepreneurship exploration, career workshops, and basic skills enhancement.

As a student equity worker, Somers also counsels parolees on campus and helps keep them motivated. He has walked in similar shoes, which helps him be more relatable as a peer mentor. Several of his mentees have commented, "If it wasn't for Ted, I wouldn't be here at Compton College." Somers

confirms that having a mentor is crucial for success. “My mentor is Joseph Lewis, student service advisor for Compton College’s Student Equity program,” said Somers. “I thought I was too old to start over, but he was the one who actually convinced me to enroll. Dr. Lewis continually encourages me and stopped me from dropping out of college more than once. He has always been available to help me, and I am grateful he has taught me patience, among other things.”

Somers says Compton College has given him the tools to make significant changes in his life. He takes advantage of the many resources on campus including the Transfer Center and Extended Opportunities Programs and Services, a program that offers a variety of services to assist low-income and educationally disadvantaged students achieve their educational and career goals. He also credits the Compton College faculty and staff with genuinely wanting students to succeed. “There are some really good instructors here and kind-hearted counselors that listen and give students extra help, no questions asked.”

Somers believes positive change is within everyone’s grasp. “I wasted 18 years in and out of the correctional system,” he said. “Now, I am getting a college education and I am the student trustee. Anybody can change if they really want to. You have *want* to be motivated to be something better in life.”

Photo Available online:

http://www.compton.edu/campusinformation/currentnews/Photos/2018/Ted_Somers.jpg

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About the Compton Community College District

Board meetings are usually held the third Tuesday of each month and are open to the public. The District is located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90221.