

The African American California Community College
Trustees and Administrators Black Caucus
presents

LEADERSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY

January 27, 2025

Gardenia Room
Sheraton Grand Sacramento Hotel

4:30-7:00 p.m.

THE BLACK EDUCATOR EXCELLENCE (BEE) AWARDS

Presented by the Black Student Success Week Team

PROGRAM

Welcome and Introductions

Event Emcee, Dr. BJ Snowden, Interim Executive Director,
CSU Statewide Central Office for the Advancement of Black Excellence

Black Caucus President Barbara Calhoun, Trustee,
Compton Community College District

Black Student Success Week Co-Chair Dr. Eric Handy,
Dean of Student Equity and Engagement at Diablo Valley College

Leadership Awards

Legislators of the Year

Presented by Black Caucus Treasurer Dr. Ricky Shabazz,
President, San Diego City College

Awardees

Assemblymember Lori Wilson (District 11)

State Senator Akilah Weber Pierson (District 39)

Trustees of the Year

Presented by Black Caucus Parliamentarian Dr. Crystal Jackson,
Trustee, West Hills Community College District

Awardees

Barbara Calhoun, Compton Community College District

Don Dumas, Southwestern Community College District

Joseph R. Williams, San Bernardino Community College District

CEO of the Year

Presented by Black Caucus Secretary, Kerri Webb, Director,
Public Information and Government Relations, El Camino College

Awardee

Dr. Keith Curry, President/CEO, Compton College
and Compton Community College District

The BEE Awards

Adjunct Faculty of the Year

Nominees

Larissa Brown, Associate Professor, Saddleback College

Dr. Marne Foster, Basic Skills/Career & College Readiness Instructor, and
SLO Coordinator, San Diego College of Continuing Education

Alexandra Evans, Student Equity Counselor/Instructor - Psychology,
Glendale Community College

Classified Professional of the Year

Nominees

Angela Fowlkes, Black Student Success Coordinator, Long Beach City College

Caryss Johnson Franklin, Senior Program Specialist, Student Services and
Classified Senate President, Clovis Community College

David Crawford, Activity Director, Project CONNECT Title V,
Glendale Community College District

Full-Time Faculty of the Year (Instructional)

Nominees

Dr. Khalid White, Ethnic Studies Professor, San Jose City College

Angeli Francois, English Professor, Long Beach City College

Walter Turner, Department Chair, Social Sciences, and Umoja Coordinator,
College of Marin

Full-Time Faculty of the Year (Counseling)

Nominees

Dr. Erin Charlens, Counselor Coordinator, San Diego City College

Dr. Teresa W. Aldredge, Umoja Counselor, Cosumnes River College

Brent McLaren, Interim Director, Cultural Programming & Belonging,
Chaffey College

Administrator of the Year

Nominees

Dr. Shawna BuShell, Dean of Educational Services and Distance Learning,
Riverside Community College District

Louis Foy, Assistant Director, Student Equity & Support Center, Merced College

Dr. Vaniethia Hubbard, Vice President, Student Services, Santa Ana College

Most Outstanding Program or Initiative Supporting Black Excellence

Nominees

Black and Males of Color Success, Compton College
Dr. Antonio Banks, Director

Umoja Learning Community Initiative, Sierra College
Tonya Times, Village & Umoja Pathway Counselor and Coordinator

African American Initiatives, Bakersfield College
Program Director/Manager: Marisa Marquez,
Dean of Student Success & Counseling

Hidden Hero Award

Nominees

Dr. Darla Cooper, Executive Director/Board President, The RP Group
Virgil Adams III, Professor of Human Services, Cypress College
Karl Welch, Director, STEMentors, Possible Self, and Emerging Technology
Institute, Foothill College

Black Caucus - Lifetime Awards

Presented by Vice President of the Black Caucus, Nichelle Henderson,
Trustee, Los Angeles Community College District

Honorees

Former State Senator Steven Bradford
Former Congresswoman Barbara Lee

Closing Remarks

by Barbara Calhoun

Networking

Assemblymember Lori Wilson

(District 11)

Assemblywoman Lori D. Wilson was elected in April 2022 to represent California's 11th Assembly District, which includes all of Solano County and portions of Contra Costa and Sacramento counties. Assemblywoman Wilson is the only Black woman in California history to be appointed chair of the influential Assembly Transportation Committee. Assemblywoman Wilson is also the first legislator to be elected Chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus as a freshman. Under her leadership, the Caucus has awarded a record-breaking number of scholarships to students of color while also enjoying numerous legislative and budget wins. Assemblywoman Wilson's track record in the California State Assembly includes delivering policies that create good jobs, keep the community safe, and improve the quality of life for her constituents and the people of California. Grove, and portions of the City of San Diego.



State Senator Akilah Weber Pierson

(District 39)

Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson is a medical doctor, educator, former city councilmember and assemblymember, San Diego native, and mom to two young boys. Weber Pierson was elected to represent California's 79th Assembly District in 2021, where she was chair of the Budget Subcommittee No.1 on Health, in addition to serving on a number of other policy committees. She has advocated for equitable access of maternal and reproductive healthcare, student safety at higher education institutions, and improved care and treatment for individuals at area correctional facilities.

In November 2024, Weber Pierson became the first African American south of Los Angeles County to be elected to the California State Senate, representing the 39th district, which includes portions of San Diego County, including the cities of Coronado, El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, and portions of the City of San Diego.



Joseph Williams

Joseph Williams has served on the San Bernardino Community College District Board of Trustees since 2013, representing Area 2.

He is community agent of strategic partnerships at the Rialto Unified School District and is a governor's appointee to the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and California Workforce Development Board. He is also the founder of Youth Action Project (YAP), a nonprofit organization dedicated to preparing Inland Empire students for college and workplace success. Before founding YAP, Williams served the County of San Bernardino for nine years, working in the behavioral health, workforce development, and sheriff's departments. Williams was a student at Crafton Hills College and San Bernardino Valley College. He earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Redlands, and a master's degree in social impact from Claremont Lincoln University.



Don Dumas

Don Dumas has a successful track record of teaching and education reform and was named San Diego County Teacher of the Year in 2020. He spent 15 years as a classroom teacher and now oversees the ethnic studies program in the Sweetwater Union High School District. He is a founding member of the Sweetwater Union High School District's Black Student Union Elders – a team of Black educators that established Black Student Unions at every school and develops educational programming and opportunities for Black students. As a trustee and current board president, Dumas has led the college in transformative policies and legislative efforts resulting in the establishment of the first Men of Color program, co-sponsoring and passage of AB-91 (which removed financial barriers for binational students), expansion of professional development that advances equity for faculty and staff, and the development of bold board goals that are unapologetically grounded in equity. Trade-Technical College where she studied labor law.



Barbara Calhoun

Barbara Jean Calhoun is a member of the Compton Community College District Board of Trustees. She was elected to her second term in November 2024. Trustee Calhoun resides in the city of Compton and retired after more than 34 years of service to the City of Los Angeles, where she worked as a clerk typist supervisor and traffic officer. Since 2014, she has served as a proctor for the State Bar of California's Committee of Bar Examiners. Calhoun was elected and served two consecutive terms, in 2003 and 2007, as a city council member for the City of Compton (District 1). She also served one term on the Board of Trustees for the Compton Unified School District from 2001-2003. She attended Los Angeles Trade-Technical College where she studied labor law.

A promotional graphic for Black Student Success Week. On the left, a young Black woman with curly hair, wearing a brown jacket, is smiling and reading a book. The background is a bright, outdoor setting with green and yellow elements. On the right, a teal background contains the event title, dates, and registration information.

BLACK STUDENT SUCCESS WEEK

SAVE THE DATE
APRIL 21-25, 2025

DAILY WEBINARS: NOON-1PM

**LIFT UP.
LEVEL UP.**

THE RISE OF BLACK SERVING INSTITUTIONS

Registration Opens
February 2025

FOLLOW US FOR MORE INFORMATION

  **@CABlackStudents**

Former Senator Steven Bradford

In over two decades of public service – first as a Gardena City Councilman, then as a State Assemblyman and a State Senator – Steven Bradford has demonstrated his deep-rooted commitment to community service and social justice. He made history when he became the first African American elected to the Gardena City Council. Bradford's public service continued as an assemblymember before serving in the California State Senate from 2016 to 2024 as a representative of the 35th district, encompassing parts of Los Angeles County.



As a member of the Assembly, Bradford had 43 bills signed into law. He was a formidable force in the Senate, delivering impactful legislation, having authored and championed laws focusing on issues that impact our daily lives including health care, public safety, energy and communications, education, and economic development and revitalization. As chair of the Senate Banking Committee and the Select Committee on Boys and Men of Color, he spearheaded initiatives to promote opportunities for underserved communities. In addition to the legislative accomplishments, Bradford secured \$11.3 million in the state budget for Compton College and helped secure a \$35 million grant to Watts Rising for affordable housing, green space, and local workforce development.

Bradford is an advocate for criminal justice reform, diversity and inclusion, empowering underserved communities, and bringing equity to the cannabis industry. Outside of politics, Bradford has made significant contributions to environmental conservation, youth empowerment, and community engagement. He particularly enjoys the Gardena Jazz Festival, where he serves as the festival's founder and chair. Bradford grew up in Gardena and earned a Bachelor of Arts in political science at California State University, Dominguez Hills. He is currently a candidate for lieutenant governor of California in the 2026 election.

Former Congresswoman Barbara Lee

Barbara Jean Lee served as a U.S. representative from California from 1998 to 2025. She represented California's 12th congressional district (numbered as the 9th district from 1998 to 2013 and as the 13th district from 2013 to 2023), which is based in Oakland and covers most of the northern part of Alameda County.

Born and raised in Texas, Lee was educated at Mills College and the University of California, Berkeley. She started her career by working on the presidential

campaign of Shirley Chisholm, and she later was involved with the Black Panther Party. After working as chief of staff for U.S. Representative Ron Dellums, Lee served in the California State Assembly from 1990 to 1996 and in the California State Senate from 1996 to 1998.

Lee was elected to the House of Representatives in a 1998 special election to succeed Dellums. A noted progressive, she chaired the Congressional Progressive Caucus from 2005 to 2009 and the Congressional Black Caucus from 2009 to 2011. In addition, she is the vice chair and a founding member of the Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus, a co-chair of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus, and a co-chair of the House Democratic Steering Committee. She has played a major role in the antiwar movement, notably in her vocal criticism of the Iraq War and for being the only member of Congress to vote against the authorization of use of force following the September 11 attacks.

In 2024 Lee chose not to pursue re-election in the House and instead ran for Senate to succeed Dianne Feinstein. Lee lost in the jungle primary to Republican Steve Garvey and fellow House Democrat Adam Schiff, who won the seat in the general election. She is running for Oakland mayor in 2025 after the recall of Sheng Thao.



Dr. Keith Curry

Dr. Keith Curry is the President of Compton College and CEO of the Compton Community College District. Dr. Curry is responsible for overseeing all departments and functions of Compton College and the District and serves as secretary for the CCCD Board of Trustees. He brings an abundance of energy and innovative ideas to Compton College, along with a wealth of experience as a postsecondary education administrator. Dr. Curry is an active member of the Foundation for Compton Community College District, the Statewide Association of Community Colleges (SWACC), and the President's Roundtable. He has participated in Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Visiting Teams, serving as Accreditation Team Chair four times since fall 2017.



Curry co-founded and chairs Black Student Success Week. He currently serves as chair of both the National Panel on Black Student Enrollment and the Black Student Enrollment Expert Advisory Committee. He is also a member of the California Alliance for Open Education Steering Committee and the University of Southern California Racial Equity in Guided Pathways Commission Taskforce. His recent honors include the 2024 Diverse Issues in Higher Education - Diverse Champion Award, 2023 California Conference for Equality and Justice Humanitarian Award, 2022 California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers Equity Champion Award, and 2022 California Legislative Black Caucus Unsung Hero Recognition (35th California Senate District).

In June 2020, Curry was invited by Governor Newsom's Senior Policy Advisor for Higher Education Lande Ajose to serve on the California Higher Education Recovery with Equity Task Force. At the 2019 Community College League of California Annual Conference, Curry was honored as one of three 2019 Champions of Equity by the Campaign for College Opportunity and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund. The award honors those who prioritize student-centered policies that produce equitable outcomes and expand opportunities for Californians.

In 2018, Curry received the Harry Buttmer Distinguished Administrator Award. The Association of California Community College Administrators bestows the award to administrators who demonstrate integrity, principle, compassion, strength in leadership, and who have made significant contributions to the college district and community.

Since spring 2021, Curry has served as a Distinguished Research Fellow/ Adjunct Faculty at the California State University, Los Angeles Charter College of Education.

Dr. Curry earned his doctorate in educational leadership from the University of California, Irvine, and a bachelor's degree in American studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

AACCCTA

The mission of the African American California Community College Trustees and Administrators (AACCCTA) is to advance and strengthen the position of African Americans within California's community college system with a goal to improve access and outcomes for African American students enrolled at the state's community colleges.

For more information visit the Community College League of California's resources webpage: www.ccleague.org/resources/.

BEE Awards

The Black Educator Excellence (BEE) Awards were conceptualized in 2022 by the Black Student Success Week Planning Committee. This year's inaugural awards honor Black educators and professional within the California Community College system who continuously uplift the Black community through leadership, innovation, and a deep commitment to equity.

A description of the BEE Award categories and the nomination/selection process is available online at www.blkstudentsuccess.com/the-bee-awards/.

Special thanks to the Planning Committee:

Kari Bolen

Meredith Brown

Keesha Clark

Barbara Calhoun

Steve Gibson

Eric Handy

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Nichelle Henderson

Crystal Jackson

Sarah Kiesling

Carmel Malixi

Thuy Thi Nguyen

Obianuju Nzewi

Torence Powell

Ricky Shabazz

BJ Snowden

Kerri Webb

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STRATEGIC ADVISORS

GHS

GARCIA HERNÁNDEZ SAWHNEY, LLP

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Vice President Nichelle Henderson

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Treasurer Ricky Shabazz

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Secretary Keri Webb

Director, Public Information and Government Relations, El Camino College

Parliamentarian Crystal Jackson

Trustee, West Hills Community College District

Historians Deborah LeBlanc (Trustee Emeritus)

& **Meredith Brown** (Trustee Emeritus)

Pro Bono General Counsel Thuy Thi Nguyen

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