

2025 Men of Color Action Network Leadership Conference



Friday, May 9th (9am-3pm)

Santa Monica College



MISSION

The Men of Color Action Network (MOCAN) is an active support network that advocates for, provides resources to, and cultivates a community for diverse male students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color at California Community Colleges. MOCAN focuses on addressing systemic changes needed to foster an environment that optimizes the success and well-being of California Community College Men of Color.

Conference Information

The Men of Color Leadership Conference is organized by a diverse group of men of color, including faculty, staff, and administrators, from various community colleges such as Santa Monica College, El Camino College, Long Beach City College, LA Harbor College, Compton College, Pasadena College, and others. This event seeks to ignite collaboration among men of color students from various campuses and empower them through leaders who possess the social capital to provide vital support. The conference opens doors to a wealth of resources aimed at enhancing their academic, personal, and professional journeys.

In 2018, Santa Monica College hosted the first Men of Color Conference aimed at community college students and staff, offering free admission for all participants. This is particularly noteworthy, as financial constraints can hinder students of color from pursuing valuable professional development opportunities.

2025 SMC MOCAN Conference

Conference Theme: Elevating Diverse Masculinities

Welcome to the **2025 MOCAN Conference**! Join us for a day filled with empowering discussions, networking opportunities, and inspiring speakers. This in-person event is designed to unite men of color from all walks of life to share experiences, learn from each other, and take action toward positive change. Let's elevate men of color in higher education.

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and be a part of a supportive community dedicated to making a difference. Mark your calendars and get ready for a day of growth and empowerment!

The event is free of charge, so please only RSVP if you plan to attend because space is limited. If for any reason you need to cancel your reservation, please let us know.

Event Highlights

- Free breakfast and lunch
- Motivational speakers and workshops
- Networking opportunities
- Community resources

More information can be found on our website.

<https://www.menofcoloractionnetwork.org/events/upcoming-events>



Keynote Speaker - Dr. Monte E. Pérez

Dr. Monte E. Pérez, our 2025 Men of Color Conference Keynote Speaker, currently serves as the Interim President of East Los Angeles College, continuing his decades-long commitment to equity and excellence in education. A proud graduate of Garfield High School in East LA, Dr. Pérez has held numerous leadership roles throughout California's higher education system, including presidencies at Los Angeles Mission College, Moreno Valley College, and Fullerton College. His career began at Stanford University and expanded to include work with the U.S. Department of Education, the National Hispanic University, and multiple California community colleges. Even after retiring in 2021, Dr. Pérez remains a national thought leader, consultant, and advocate for educational opportunity, serving on influential boards such as the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and the Greater Los Angeles Education Foundation.

Conference Agenda

TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
8 - 8:45 a.m.	Check-In/Refreshments/Networking	John Adams Auditorium Courtyard
9 - 10:15 a.m.	Welcome Addresses + Opening Keynote	John Adams Auditorium
10:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.	Student Workshops + Professional Workshops	Various Locations (See below)
12:30 - 2:15 p.m	Student Headshots - SMC Photography Department	Core Performance Center Courtyard
1 - 2 p.m.	Networking Lunch + Resource Fair	Core Performance Center Courtyard
2:15 - 3 p.m.	Closing Ceremony + Scholarship Announcements	Core Performance Center Courtyard

Student Workshop Sessions 1 &2: 10:30 -11:30 a.m. and 11:45am-12:45pm

WORKSHOP	DESCRIPTION	PRESENTERS	LOCATION
Playbook for the Culture: Using Cultural Wealth to Explore Diverse Masculinities	There will be a Critical Race Theory (CRT) component to this presentation as we seek to demonstrate that many of our notions of what it means to be a “man,” and having to “prove” our manhood, stems from a tradition of colonization and oppression.	David Crawford & Jose A. Maldonado	Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS) 103
The Cost of Your Smile	The Cost of Your Smile" is a powerful workshop that explores the mental health challenges faced by men of color, emphasizing the emotional toll of societal expectations and toxic masculinity.	Dr. AK Sterling	Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS) 151
Breaking The Chains Of Machismo	This man has morals, he has values, he believes in something, he stands on something. He’s not pandering. He’s a man who can recognize his mistakes and not be afraid to share the mistakes and can dig deep down into fear-based ideologies or experiences to be able to express them without feeling like he’s less of a man.	Victor Caceres & Ethan Carter	Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS) 105

Redefining Masculinity After Incarceration while Navigating Higher Education	This interactive session focuses on how formerly incarcerated students, particularly men of color, can redefine masculinity as a step toward equality. The workshop challenges traditional views and highlights the importance of vulnerability and personal growth in empowering students academically and professionally. Participants will learn practical strategies to overcome stigma, rebuild confidence, and navigate alienating systems while considering cultural diversity. Through dialogue, we will also explore student interactions on campuses and ways to foster inclusive, supportive environments.	Javy Ahedo, Kevin Gonzalez, Carlos Lopez	Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS) 205
Build A Circle, Not A Cage - Creating Your Support System to Get You Through This Grind	If you look at the people in your circle and don't get inspired, then you don't have a circle, you have a cage." In this journey of life we have to be intentional with the people around us from our family, friends, mentors, and colleagues. Take this workshop to help you reflect about who's in your circle and how to take care of each other to grow, build, and elevate.	Leland Sipliano	Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS) 204
Addressing Masculinity and Mental Health in Young Men	Masculinity & Identity Formation in College: Latino men's early gender socialization around masculinity (e.g., machismo) shapes their college experience and identity development in complex ways.	Oscar Duran, Alejandro Arellano, and Jorge Rios	Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS) 150
From Stress to Strength: Finding Support &	This workshop is about flipping the script. We're going to talk about how to keep stress from running your life—through real social support, outlets for frustration, and strategies that let you stay in control. This isn't about "softening up" or "losing	Yvette C.	Humanities & Soci

**Embracing
Your
Inherited
Abundance**

your edge"—it's about sharpening your mind, protecting your energy, and making sure stress doesn't take you out of the game.

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**Barber Shop
Talk**

Huerta et al. states. "Over half of men of color 62% college students began their higher education pathway directly at community college" (Pg. 3). The purpose of this workshop is to provide a space for men of color to express their experiences and empower themselves from learning from one another. This environment is intended to dismantle systemic barriers and educate students on how to navigate higher education being a man of color.

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**Know your
rights
(Carecen)**

Join us for an informational workshop with CARECEN, where you'll learn practical steps to take care of yourself and your family in uncertain times. This session will provide valuable tools and knowledge to help you stay prepared and informed when facing unexpected challenges. --borrowed from:
<https://dorseyhhs.lausd.org/apps/news/article/2019132>

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Professional Workshop Sessions 1& 2: 10:30 -11:30 a.m.

WORKSHOP	FOCUS	LOCATION
How To Climb The Ladder	Presidents & Vice-Presidents	
	Dr. Luis Dorado/President of LAHC	
	Mike Tuitasi/VP Student Services SMC	Science (SCI)
	Dr. Lawrence Bradford/VP Academic Affairs	145
	Moderator-Dr. Greg Toya/Dean of Student Affairs/Santa Ana College	
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How To Climb The Ladder	Adjunct Counseling & Counseling Graduate Students	
	Armanti Weeks/PT Counselor at SMC & WLAC	
	Diego Rodriguez/PT Counselor at Cerritos & ECC	Science (SCI)
	Nick Bravo-FT Counselor at Glendale	151
	Moderator-Hector Favela/PT counselor LBCC & SMC	
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How To Climb The Ladder	Teaching, Counseling, and Student Affairs	
	Ivan Silva/FT Counselor LAHC	Science (SCI)
	Scott Kushigemachi/Dean of Humanities ECC	140
	Dr. Antonio Banks/Director of MOC Compton	
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Barbershop Talks	Student Affairs Professionals	Science (SCI) 159
	Reggie Ellis/MOCAN President	
	Rohan Desai/MOCAN President Elect	

Professional Workshop Sessions 2: 11:45 a.m. -12:45 p.m.

WORKSHOP	FOCUS	LOCATION
How To Climb The Ladder	Vice-Presidents & Deans	Science (SCI) 145
	Jose Hernandez/Associate Dean SMC	
	Thomas Bui/Associate Dean SMC	
	Dr. Cesar Jimenez/VP of Student Services at Bakersfield College	

**Best Strategies to Support MOC Students and
Colleagues at the Community College**

Adjunct Counseling &
Counseling Graduate
Students

Armanti Weeks/PT
Counselor at SMC & WLAC

Diego Rodriguez/PT
Counselor at Cerritos &
ECC

**Scienc
e (SCI)
151**

Nick Bravo-FT Counselor
at Glendale

Moderator-Hector
Favela/PT counselor LBCC
& SMC

**Best Strategies to Support MOC Students and
Colleagues at the Community College**

Teaching, Counseling, and
Student Affairs

Ivan Silva/FT Counselor
LAHC

Scott Kushigemachi/Dean
of Humanities at ECC

**Scienc
e (SCI)
140**

Dr. Antonio Banks/Director
of MOC at Comptom

Moderator-Greg
Brookins/FT Business Prof
SMC

Barbershop Talks

Student Affairs
Professionals

Reggie Ellis/MOCAN
President

Rohan Desai/MOCAN
President Elect

Science (SCI)
159

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Río Hondo College



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Thriving California*

College Futures Foundation

ConexED

ConexED



California
Community
Colleges

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office



Certree

Certree

Leadership Conference Student Scholarship



SANTA ANA

C O L L E G E

Santa Ana College