

# **CANDIDATE STATEMENTS FOR 2020 EXECUTIVES**

**April 3 – 5, 2020**



### Candidates for President



Michael Schouten, Ventura College  
Region VI



Armani Taylor, Laney College  
Region III

### Candidate for Executive Vice President







Jacob Couch, American River College  
Region II



Stephen Kodur, Reedley College  
Region V



Candidate for VP Regional Affairs	Candidate for VP Legislative Affairs
	
<p>Katherine Squire, San Joaquin Delta Region II</p>	<p>Andrew Nickens, Folsom Lake College Region II</p>

Candidate for Vice President of Finance	Candidate for Vice President of Communications
	
<p>Toni Schiffmaier, Folsom Lake College Region II</p>	<p>Sean Young, Santa Rosa Junior College Region III</p>



Hello Everyone,

My name is Michael A. Schouten and I am running for SSSCC President. I have been a Student Senate President, Treasurer, Regional Affairs Director, SSSCC Equitable Practices Committee Chair, and City of Santa Paula Youth Advisory Committee Chair. I've advocated for environmental and educational reform, social justice, and so much more.

A huge part of this campaign is about providing a platform to empower students, it's about striving for transparency, it's about representing each and every California Community College student on a local and statewide level. It's about reforming a system that works for so few, and above all else, it is about you the delegates. Too often we see CCC students struggling to make ends meet, we see student rights being stripped away, and it's time that this changes, it's time that the SSSCC provides a platform for students to grow and to learn and to share their experiences. It's time that the SSSCC provides world-class training, equipping the next generation of leaders to be prepared for the battles that lie ahead of them. It's time that we embrace our shortcomings, it's time we correct missteps, it's time that we reinforce the concept that the students guide the SSSCC.

On a statewide level a few concerns that I will address if elected President will be strengthening the resolutions process by making sure students are involved and engaged every step of the way. I believe that one of the biggest concerns that we as an organization face is accountability. How do we keep elected officials accountable? How do we make sure these elected officials are prepared and are representing their constituents effectively? I believe that the answer to these questions lies in creating a system that identifies accountability as a cornerstone of good governance, there needs to be a way for constituents to voice their concerns about their representatives, we need to create a system that is more welcoming and fosters development, and we do this by developing a comprehensive training program where delegates, directors, and executives are taught to embrace differences, promote unity, and learn from our failures and celebrate and share our successes. Also, if we want to create an organization that is representative of the population, we need to address the true cost of college, we need to make sure that those who can't afford college are able to attend, oftentimes we see underrepresented populations being shut out from shaping policies that directly affect them and its time that this changes, it's time that we embrace and celebrate our diversity. Coincidentally these concerns are also a few of my priorities I plan on building and fostering accountability, advocating for financial aid reform to close equity gaps and foster diversity, and strengthen the resolutions process.

We are stronger when we are united when we embrace our differences and empower one another. It is in our diversity that we shall seek unity, and it this unwavering unity that we shall foster everlasting relationships, it is this unity that breaks barriers and seeks to build bridges. This unity empowers others to make a change or be the change, it inspires, it creates, and it mends.

Change starts with you and me, change starts here, and change starts now! We are all change-makers, your voice holds weight, your votes hold weight, your values and morals are important to me, and as your President, I promise to uphold those values and morals to the best of my ability.

### Endorsements





***Student Senate California Community College Candidate Statement***  
***Elections for the Academic Year 2020 – 2021***

Class of 2020!

My name is Armani Traylor and I am running to be your next President of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges. Currently, I am a junior at Laney Community College. I serve on the Council as Vice President.

I have put together many events that have helped bridge the gap between Laney college students, staff and faculty. I have also put together events pertaining to the entire Peralta District including but not limited to - career workshops, internships, conferences around the world, mental help workshops for the forthcoming students involved in government and the LGBTQIA community at Laney college. One specific involvement that has been self-rewarding has been getting national support from the NAACP to help build the district's Black Student Unions.

Now, I would like to parlay all of my experiences into a focused role where I can help all community college students on a nationwide level. I have always had a strong passion for student government, advocacy and legislation since a child. I believe the ultimate goal is creating the best experience at SCCC for each and every student from all backgrounds of all demographics.

I'm eager to implement a positive change not only at Laney College, but in our world. Our community college system is one of the largest and most comprehensive academic systems in the world, so people will follow our ideas and implementations. But I think the student voice is often overlooked but it is needed and it can be the best vehicle to drive any cause, because at the end of the day it's not about me becoming president, or about what this does for me - it is for you - the student and the students to come after us. So, that's why I vow to do everything in my power to be your representative. I will be a listening ear and loud voice for you. I have done this and seen many successes as I have had the honor to serve on many boards, and committees around Oakland. More specifically: the Oakland School Board and the Oakland County Community Action Board. While sitting on these boards, I represented young people and worked to provide different and effective opportunities and programs for them.

My main focus will be to tackle the nationwide college issue of homelessness. No student should be homeless. No student should have to sleep in their car. No student should go a day without shelter. This is a basic human right and each student should have access to it.

Another focus is to promote and fight for equity regardless of race, religion, sex, gender, disability, or economic status. As a young Black man from Oakland, I did not have the best upbringing. Living with a single parent and a brother we encountered a lot of struggles and thus I know what it means to struggle, fight but also to come out victorious. Once upon a time I didn't have the desire to go to college because the struggle weighed heavy on me but because of my involvement in Laney college I can now say I believe higher education is the tool to achieving the American dream. But what does that dream look like?

Truth be told, we have a great college, with great students, staff and professors but I believe we can always do more for each and everyone a part of this great institution. I believe you all deserve recognition and access to more. If you will choose me to be President of the SCCC, I will work diligently to build a more unified community and promote diversity and inclusivity on the council, so that the SCCC will truly reflect the special relationship SCCC has with the rest of community colleges. Please VOTE for Armani Traylor for President in the next election. I would like to humbly serve as your representative.



Jacob Couch  
American River College  
Executive Vice President

I am seeking the role of Executive Vice President (EVP) to ensure that the ideas and perspectives of community college students are adequately represented on the Statewide Senate. I bring a passion for social justice issues that will guide my work as EVP. This passion emerged from life experiences, my work in a law office, and volunteer work. I also bring an understanding of Student Senate policies and procedures that developed by working with our governing documents. I'm the chair of the American River College Constitutional Amendments Committee where we've begun a comprehensive overhaul of the constitution and bylaws. On the regional level I'm the Region II Rules and Resolution Chair. This work mirrors one of the responsibilities of the EVP.

I am action oriented as evidenced by my lead role in organizing a lobby day at the State Capitol with my local Associated Student Organization (ASO) where we pushed for student aid reform. With the help of the members of my ASO, my fellow Directors of Legislative Affairs, and several others, we were able to connect several schools and organize one of the most successful lobby day trips in recent years. Moreover, I put in extra work to attend SSSCC Board of Directors meetings in my free time. Through contacts made at these meetings, I was able to identify resources that ultimately contributed to the success of the lobbying event. Recognition of my strong work ethic and the positive results of the work I have done in tandem with others have led my region, Region II, to endorse my campaign for Executive Vice President along with Ian Rubenstein, Legislative Affairs Director for Region VIII.

A collaborative spirit and hard work are not always enough to bring about change. Change is only possible with the voice(s) of many, but often times those voices are never heard. I plan on using my position on the board to bridge the gap between the executives and their constituents. I will do so by attending regional meetings and encouraging events for students to share their views. Other goals I have include improving student services and working to ensure the board stays accountable and transparent. The reason these two goals are part of my top three priorities is due to the fact that without the strong, supported student voice and an accountable, responsible, and transparent board, we are meaningless. It is our duty to represent the student voice and we cannot do so without involving the students. My more personal issues I want to deal with are student mental health, homelessness, and food insecurities but I will only push for these ideas if it is something that the students themselves ask for.

I believe we have a chance to truly make a difference and, with me as your Executive Vice President, anything is possible. I will champion your issues and go above and beyond to solve them through ethical and collaborative means. I have devoted my life to creating a better community college system for those who come after me and hope you too can see the passion I have for making your student experience and the world as a whole a better place.



# Stephen Kodur For Executive Vice President

## Motivated. Determined. Empowered.

I am seeking your vote for the Executive Vice President position for the SSCCC. As EVP, I would oversee the internal affairs of the SSCCC. As chair of the adhoc committee for the new Constitution and Bylaws, I have extensive knowledge of the governing documents, giving me an advantage for this position. My managerial experience helps when it comes to overseeing evaluations of the board and my associate's degree in Communication Studies and 5 years extensive experience in student advocacy will benefit me when maintaining relationships with our external partners.

Historically, community college students are underfunded, underrepresented, and undersupported. Funding for Basic Needs is a huge platform of my campaign. In my district, I have advocated for subsidized bus passes, food pantries on campus, mental health awareness, open educational resources, and low-income housing. These issues are personal to me. There was a time where I couldn't afford to drive or even ride the bus to school, so I rode my longboard over 7 miles just to get to class. I couch surfed for an entire semester just to be able to afford the cost of college. I had a college friend of mine commit suicide which is a pain no individual should have to endure. Textbooks shouldn't be a barrier to your education but rather an inexpensive tool. Students shouldn't have to wonder where their next meal will come from or whether they can afford to receive medical treatment. The system is broken and needs to be fixed so we need to share our stories to raise awareness to these issues.

**For questions: [stephenforevp@gmail.com](mailto:stephenforevp@gmail.com)**

## Biography

Currently, I serve as the Regional Affairs Director of Region V in the Central Valley, Student Trustee of the State Center Community College District, and student at Reedley College. My road to advocacy began as a Reedley College Senator where I eventually ran a successful campaign and became the Student Body President while serving as the delegate to Region V. In addition, I am a nontraditional student. Twice, I had to step away from college to join the workforce to support myself and my family. Getting community college students the funding, support, and representation they need and deserve is my mission.

If elected, I would be extremely honored and grateful to be a voice to over 2 million students. My top 3 priorities would be to make sure that issues regarding basic needs be confronted through proper legislation and raising awareness to all community college districts. Secondly, I would also work to make sure students are better represented by the Board of Directors through reviews and evaluations of directors and regions. Adequate training and follow up is needed to empower our student leaders. Executives, including myself, will be actively participating in region meetings to better gauge the student voice and bridge the gap between the governance levels. Lastly, I will strengthen our relationships with our external partners so students are continually brought to the table and their voices are heard!



## Endorsed By:







# KATHERINE SQUIRE

## FOR VICE PRESIDENT OF REGIONAL AFFAIRS

### SAN JOAQUIN DELTA COLLEGE

A year ago, My father passed away the weekend before I started college and my mother lost her job not too long after. As a struggling college student working a full time job more often than attending my classes, I had little hope for my future.

Today, I am a proud regional affairs director for region II, student trustee at San Joaquin Delta College, and sponsor of my mother's community college education.

It was getting involved in my student government that I realized my problems were not just my own and that they had become normalized, but also that I had the potential to change the system. I decided to run for VPRA, because I want to continue helping students unlock their potential to be student leaders.

As a regional affairs director, I realized very quickly that my job was to create a student-led region through committees, events, and support, but also help students access the power they hold. The main skill that allowed me to do this was stepping back to create the spaces for a delegate-centered region and helping them grow through their struggles. To me, this is the true meaning of student empowerment.

My story as a community college student inspired me to become an advocate for state-wide issues like basic needs, legislation for dreamers, and the power of having a full vote as a student trustee. For me, struggling with these issues was an everyday reality, but I refused to let my voice go silent. Working alongside my legislative affairs director and regional team, I made sure that others' stories wouldn't go silent either and instead became vocalized in the capitol. My region worked together to push for bills like SB 291, AB 302, but also work just as hard to bring new bills to fruition by making proposals with legislators.

As VPRA, my platform is focused on three priorities, increasing connection between the executive board and the delegates, developing regional institutional memory, and building regional communities.

If I were to be elected, my first three projects would be to start working directly with the advisors of each community college to ensure strong relationships with the SSCCC, running state-wide orientation webinars for incoming delegates and regional officers, and ensuring each region has drafted a budget and fundraising plan for the year as well as a list of events that will bring colleges together.

#### Endorsed by:

**Region II**  
**Region IV**  
**Region V**  
**Region VI**  
**Region VIII**  
**Region IX**  
**Region X**



# Andrew Nickens

*for Vice President of Legislative Affairs*  
**Student Senate for California Community Colleges**



## Folsom Lake College Student

I am pleased to present my candidacy for Vice President of Legislative Affairs. I am running in this election because I believe in service. My father raised me to devote my time, energy, and effort to helping others. Serving my peers, community, and those in need are integral to who I am. This began when I joined Cub Scouts at age 5 and continued all the way through the attainment of my Eagle Award at 18. During that time, I dedicated thousands of hours to community service, volunteering, and mentoring youth. This history of service led to community college governance in 2018 where I became a student senator and soon ascended to Director of Legislative Affairs. I am now the Region II Legislative Affairs Director.

I pursued community college governance because of my passion for political science and public policy, but more importantly, I view it as a way to continue my service and give back to others. When I struggled with mental health in middle school and high school, I had people in my corner that fought for me and helped me heal. Ultimately this experience cemented my resolve to fight for community college students and give back. This why issues such as mental health, homelessness, and students struggling to meet their basic needs, are so important to me. I promise to always be in your corner fighting for these issues.

While I've been a community college leader, I have been a strong student advocate while participating in a number of shared governance committees at Folsom Lake College and representing the student voice across Los Rios Community College District. Additionally, I have interned in excess of 500 hours in congress, for campaigns, and the state assembly and senate, working on legislation, political research, and public policy analysis. As the closest Legislative Affairs Director to the Capitol, I have planned 3 major legislative events totaling over 50 visits with Capitol staff. I have the specialized knowledge, hands-on experience, and most importantly, the passion for service to become your next Vice President of Legislative Affairs.

My first priority as VPLA will be to implement a year long plan to ensure our LADs are prepared, we are meeting legislative deadlines, and engaging in participatory governance processes related to legislation and the state budget.

## Endorsed by

**Region II**



**Region V**



**Region VI**



**Region VII**



**Region IX**



**Region X**



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**PASSION | EXPERIENCE | SERVICE**

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FACEBOOK.COM/ANDREWBLAINENICKENS  
ANDREWFORVPLA@GMAIL.COM



# Candidate: Toni Schiffmaier | Position: Vice President of Finance

## College: Folsom Lake College

My name is Toni Schiffmaier and I am a Pre-Law student double majoring in Business Administration (with a specialization in Finance and Nonprofits) and Psychology. Over the last year, I have been very involved in student advocacy on local, regional, and statewide levels serving within student senate finance. On a local level, I established the Folsom Lake College Business Association (to provide more opportunities to students wishing to enter into business), and the Basic Needs Committee. On a regional level, as the Region II Treasurer, I was one of the first to establish a Regional Finance Committee, where we were able to create a new financial policy, and are currently working towards planning a fundraiser for the region. As the Statewide Finance and Fundraising Committee Vice Chair, I was involved with the restructuring of the finance committee, creating marketing plans for the \$2 Student Representation Fee and AB 1504, and working towards ways to allow regions to raise funds through avenues outside of asking their ASOs through being the Regional Fundraising Policy Chair. Because fundraising through other avenues wasn't previously an option, many regions had a lack of funds over the last year, so I sought a solution with the guidance of the current Vice President of Finance and Interim Executive Director Julie Adams to make this happen.



I want to present my candidacy to become the SSCCC Vice President of Finance, because I believe that student representation is vital to student success and the future of the California Community College system. We, the 2.1 million students within the California Community College system, are a part of the largest higher education system in the nation. The student leaders within our colleges not only represent their students, but make decisions that change how our economy is structured. We've done this through increasing equitable funding for CCC students with the successful passing of AB 1504 over the last legislative session. We've advocated for AB 302 in order to provide homeless students a safe place to sleep, and worked towards increasing college access through better financial aid funding with SB 291.

The biggest issues we are seeing affecting California Community College students center around basic needs and mental health. For this reason, my platform for the SSCCC this year is to tackle increasing access to Basic Needs/Mental Health Funding, Affordable Student Housing, and Regional Activities Fundraising, through legislation, regional implementation, and seeking funding for the startup of Basic Needs Centers. With housing prices becoming increasingly expensive in our economy, basic needs are becoming harder for students to afford. As a candidate who is passionately dedicated to student representation, it is my focus to put student priorities and needs first through increasing the student voice on local, regional, and statewide issues. I would greatly appreciate your consideration to vote for me as your SSCCC Vice President of Finance, so we can make a difference in our local, regional, and statewide systems together.

### Endorsements:

- 2019-2020 EVP Lawrence Su
- 2019-2020 VPF Yongha Hwang
- SSCCC Women's Caucus
- SSCCC Region II
- SSCCC Region IV
- SSCCC Region V
- SSCCC Region VII
- SSCCC Region VIII
- SSCCC Region IX
- SSCCC Region X



Hello! My name is Sean E. Young, I currently study at Santa Rosa Junior College and I am running for the position of Vice President of Communications.

I think that I am qualified for this position due to my 2 years of experience within SSCCC as a delegate, a LAD, and as the current Region III Communications Officer. I also am a communication studies major, so I believe that I can take the knowledge that I have learned and apply it to the organization. I also have general knowledge of ASO's having served the past two years as the Executive Vice President of Legislation for the Student Government Assembly at Santa Rosa Junior College.

I am running for Vice President of Communications because I want to improve the communication between us and our constituents, the 2.1 Million Community College Students we serve.

Though I would be working mostly on improvements for the SSCCC, the biggest statewide issue for me is Housing & Food Insecurity, having personally been affected by it while currently in the SSCCC.

If elected by the delegate assembly, my first three priorities would be establishing a youtube channel for educational and informational about the SSCCC, updating the brand standards for the SSCCC, and working to update the website to easier access for all.