| Benjamin Blevins  
| Grossmont College  
| Region X |
| Jacob Couch  
| American River College  
| Region II |
Benjamin Blevins
for
Vice President of Regional Affairs

I. After reviewing the job description for the position, what student activities and special skills qualify you for the position and why are you running for this position?

I. VPRA is one of the most essential positions within SSCCC as they help the RADs and Regions fulfill their true purpose, representing students. I was recently elected as Student Trustee of my Governing Board and as Regional Affairs Director for my Region, Region X. I have also served as the Vice Chair of Region X, in that position I have picked up the skills needed to give back to my fellow students, I’m running for VPRA in order to make real, long lasting change for our fellow students.

II. What statewide issues are you most interested in or most concerned about and why?

I. Basic needs, all students should be entitled to the resources they deserve, such as online textbooks, internet, laptops, and all things necessary to complete their studies. COVID-19 has changed the structure of our education system, as student leaders it is our job to make sure that our students have what they need to succeed.

II. The need for overnight parking for students who live in their cars, creating a safe space that students can focus more on their education rather than starvation. With this, creating a plan that also meets physiological needs for students facing housing insecurities to fix inequity gaps.

III. What would your first three priorities be if you are elected and why?

I. To create standing transition reports for Regions to make resignations and vacancies easier for Regions and for the new officers. Coming from a resignation heavy Region, it is important for incoming officers to understand what is expected of them as they enter these positions.

II. Full activation of all college ASOs across the state, we can all agree that the student voice is heard more loudly when all colleges participate, that’s why I would make activating all inactive colleges one of my biggest priorities. As a RAD, full activation of all nine of my region’s colleges is one of the biggest priorities to increase student involvement and the student voice. RAD’s are essential for lifting the student voice and as VPRA I promise to support all RAD’s and Regional Officers.

III. The creation of institutional memory within all of our Regions. Institutional memory is the very bedrock of any successful organization and as VPRA I would create the framework and foundation for successful implementation of institutional memory policy. As RAD, it is my duty to build the memory in order for our region to continue after we’re gone, and as your VPRA, I will do exactly that so that we can insure for years to come that the student voice will not be neglected.

Join me on our journey at www.benforvpra.com!
Persisting Issues
While the SSCCC has improved tremendously over the last few years, there are a few problems that persist. One, as made apparent by the current makeup of the incumbent executive board, is diversity among board members. Generally the SSCCC has been cognizant of ethnic diversity, but executive officers of regional and statewide boards have tended to come from the centers of jurisdictions indicating that the SSCCC hasn’t found an effective way to maximize its reach and influence. Additionally, I have encountered many Associated Student Organizations (ASOs) that are hesitant to participate in SSCCC activities indicating that ASOs have needs or desires not currently being addressed by the SSCCC.

Plans if Elected
If elected, I plan on using my company marketing experience to extend the reach and influence of the SSCCC to the farthest corners of California. While doing so, I will work to establish pathways for our leaders from boarder colleges to attain roles in regional and statewide shared governance. This will also give me the connections needed understand and address concerns from local ASOs as well.

Why me?
My experiences heading marketing operations at Corffee Stone Law Corporation and promoting participation amongst colleges in Region II have given me the tools I need to ensure the SSCCC not only incorporates the voice of students from all 115 colleges, but the students themselves. My diverse set of experiences also allow me to develop intuitive ways to address issues often not seen by my colleagues. Finally, I’d like to say that simply because someone else is from a boarder college, doesn’t mean they would be better at promoting participation from those schools than I. I have already developed knowledge on the issue and devised ways to address it as well. If I can convince businesses to have a small business represent them over a large law firm with a simple letter, then I can convince ASOs to coordinate with the SSSCC because it will amplify both of our voices and further their students’ leadership careers.

Leadership Experience

STUDENT SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Vice Chair | Region II | October 2019 - Present
Encouraged regional participation to ensure student voice was heard when making policy. Worked with representatives of local ASOs to restructure the region’s governing documents. Lobbyed for bills affecting CCC students. Worked to promote institutional memory within through the development of packets for incoming members of the Region II Delegate Assembly. Authored resolutions regarding mental health services and rapid rehousing initiatives.

AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY
Director of Legislative Affairs | September 2019 - Present
Represented the American River College Associated Student Body to local, state, and federal officials. Organized a lobbying trip in conjunction with the other Los Rios Community College District schools. Performed an overhaul of the governing documents. Ensured student opinions were heard in the renegotiation of American River College’s food service contract. Helped develop a course informing teachers of open educational resources to reduce the cost of learning materials for students. Currently working to establish a scholarship for students facing basic needs issues and to organize an advocacy event titled “Get Involved, Get Relief” in which students get involved legislation and in turn receive aid.