


The background of the entire image shows two men in conversation. On the left is an older man with white hair and glasses, wearing a grey suit, white shirt, and a red and white striped tie. On the right is a younger Black man with a short haircut, wearing a grey polo shirt, blue jeans, and a tan tactical vest. He has a white earbud in his left ear. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a blurred indoor setting, likely a hallway or common area of a college, with other people and glass partitions visible.

A SEASON OF TRANSFORMATION

**THE NEW COM
EXPERIENCE**



When I think of the COM experience, many things come to mind. It is an experience of deep impact where students discover their unique strengths and talents inside our classrooms and beyond. It is an experience that breaks down barriers — that changes lives and creates limitless opportunities. It is also an experience of exponential growth and profound transformation as our students enter to learn and leave ready to serve and make the world around them a better place.

While the COM experience is a varied one, I think we all would agree that it centers around the unwavering spirit of the people surrounding us every day. In this issue of *Horizons Magazine*, we highlight those people and share the stories that shape the core of who we are. From visionary college leaders driving students to achieve their dreams to innovative programs and dynamic facilities advancing educational excellence for the next generation of learners, we are truly transforming lives, one student at a time.

Many of the students who I talk to mention the pride that resonates when they share that they are a COM student. That pride is boundless, and I see it ignited across our community as the very landscape of the COM learning experience has soared to new heights in recent years. Whether a student is looking to transfer to a university, attain a baccalaureate-level degree or prepare

for a new career or trade, our college continues to evolve to meet the growing needs of our students and community.

For students like Devyn Cook, who is a Santa Fe High School graduate pursuing nursing with all tuition and fees covered through our Opening Doors Promise Scholarship, and Jose Lopez, who recently completed our English as a Second Language and High School Equivalency programs, the COM experience has proven to be a transformative one. Here, a fresh start is possible with our carefully crafted network of learning pipelines that help students focus on a meaningful path best suited for their individual goals.

The COM experience that we may have once known is changing right before our very eyes as we evolve to keep pace with current learning standards, the progressing needs of our community members and local economy and the dynamic growth of the region. We have new leaders, new buildings and new programs. We have

transformation. And while that transformation is bold, we're only getting started.

But that's enough about us. Because above all else, what shapes the core of the COM experience is YOU. Your successes, your experiences, your journey and your transformation — your story is what truly makes us remarkably COM. And that story is just waiting to be told.

Read on to explore the COM experience, and who knows — your story may be next!

Sincerely,



Dr. Warren Nichols
President, College of the Mainland

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