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ANTHONY CUOMO, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies, knew early on that he wanted a career in education.

“Even when I was a little kid, I would pretend to be the teacher and the student,” he laughed.

The New York native moved to California on his own at age 18 to seek a fresh start. He began his higher education at Mira Costa College. There, Cuomo said, he was not always an A student; he struggled through school but found support and confidence through his teachers and mentors. He went on to earn a Bachelor’s degree from California State University, San Marcos and a Master’s degree from California State University, Long Beach.

“I just became really inspired by my communication classes,” he said. “I remember thinking they were so much fun and they talked about the world in a way that I identified with. I related to the theories and the concepts and it was so applicable to my everyday life.”

His own experiences fueled his passion for teaching communication studies at the community college level. Cuomo has been an adjunct faculty member at Golden West Community College, El Camino College and East Los Angeles College. Cuomo came to West in 2017 because he wanted to be a part of a diverse community where he could support people of color, first generation college students, working students and those who pursue higher education as a stepping stone. His goal was to find a home, and West felt like a perfect fit.

“I feel so lucky because I love being here,” said Cuomo. “Even if there’s traffic or it took a long time to commute here, all of a sudden I get here and I just feel different. What motivates me is my students and my colleagues and everyone here at West who is really working to help our students be as successful as possible. It makes me feel like I’m a part of the West team and that I’m a part of the community here.”



Cuomo wants every student who walks into his class to have a transformative experience. By the end of the semester, he hopes that students are able to find their own voice, learn how to advocate for themselves and communicate more effectively in their personal and professional lives. Like many West students, Cuomo knows what it is like to be a first-generation college student at a community college and wants students to know that he is here for them.

“If any students see this, or they are struggling, or they kind of identify with anything in this story, they can reach out to me,” he said. “By reaching out to us we can connect them with any resources or anything that we think will help support them. I’m happy to be one of those people.”

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