



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**San Diego Public Library**

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**SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY OFFERS ADULTS A SECOND CHANCE  
TO EARN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AND CAREER CERTIFICATE**  
*Scholarships Available for Qualifying Career Online High School Students*

**SAN DIEGO** – Following Mayor Kevin Faulconer’s announcement at his State of the City address, the San Diego Public Library (SDPL) has launched Career Online High School (COHS) in partnership with the San Diego Public Library Foundation and Gale, a leading provider of library resources and part of Cengage Learning. SDPL joins other innovative libraries to offer adults the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma and career certificate online. The library’s pilot program provides scholarships to qualified adult learners who are looking to advance their careers, prepare for workforce entry or continue their education. Career Online High School is open to all eligible San Diego City residents through SDPL.

Career Online High School offers adult students the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma while preparing for a career in one of eight high-demand, high-growth fields. The program allows students the flexibility to take classes online and access schoolwork 24/7 to fit their busy lifestyles. Learners also receive support and free educational resources at their local library.

Career Online High School is nationally accredited as a private online school district by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, one of the six accrediting bodies in the U.S. It’s supported by degreed educational professionals and this accreditation is accepted in all fifty states. The program is built on a sophisticated educational model that was designed to help high school dropouts overcome the reasons they didn’t finish, whether due to academic failures, lack of support at home, or other challenging life circumstances.

There are 40,000,000 adults in the US with no high school diploma. In San Diego, there are more than 205,000 people (15 percent of the population) over the age of 25 who do not have a high school diploma. A disproportionate number of these people are Black or Hispanic. High school dropouts face a stark employment picture, with unemployment rates double that of high school graduates. This strain affects their health and social relations, leading to lower life expectancies and higher family dissolution as well as incarceration rates many times higher than those of graduates. A 2009 study estimated that the total lifetime cost per dropout to taxpayers is almost \$300,000.

“Education is a ladder to success. And for many, the first rung remains just out of reach,” said Mayor Kevin Faulconer in his State of the City address. “The realities of working and providing for a family mean that for some, going back to school is too difficult. It takes too much time. It costs too much money. And while we can’t solve all of these problems, we can put opportunity back within reach. That’s why we’re partnering with the San Diego Library Foundation to launch a new initiative called Career Online High School. Our community will reach its greatest heights when every San Diegan has the opportunity to rise up into prosperity.”

“When I first heard about Career Online High School, I jumped at the chance for our library system to be one of the pilot libraries for this program,” said Misty Jones, director of the San Diego Public Library. “The approach that Career Online High School has taken addresses the trauma many dropouts experienced that kept them from graduating. The Public Library is the perfect place to put them on the road to academic and career success. We are already looked at as the ‘safe haven’ and this program supports students from beginning to end.”

“Library Foundation donors are happy to commit to this program that will give a second chance to adult learners,” said Jay Hill, chief executive officer. “This innovative program fits well with our vision to give everyone access to free resources that help them succeed in school, their careers and in their communities. Anyone who would like to support additional learners can visit [SupportMyLibrary.org](http://SupportMyLibrary.org) for information on sponsoring scholarships.”

“Public libraries improve lives and move communities forward,” said Paul Gazzolo, senior vice president and general manager for Gale. “By partnering with Gale to offer Career Online High School, SDPL will make a positive impact on the residents of San Diego while supporting economic development in the community.”

For more detail about this program, other programs, services, events and resources at the San Diego Public Library’s Central Library and 35 branches see our website at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org).

*Inspiring lifelong learning through connections to knowledge and each other*

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