



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Communications Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, August 27, 2015

Photos and B-roll Available Upon Request

CONTACT: Marion Moss Hubbard
619-322-5580

**First Graduating Class Earns High School Diploma through Innovative Program
Announced by Mayor Faulconer in January**
*San Diego Public Library Offers Accredited Diplomas and Career Certificates to Residents
through Career Online High School*

SAN DIEGO – Last evening, Wednesday, August 26, the San Diego Public Library held a graduation ceremony for its first graduating class of the *Career Online High School* (COHS) program. Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer recognized the graduates included Dana Sneberger, who gave the student commencement address. Ms. Sneberger is also the first City of San Diego employee to graduate from the program. There are three graduating students in the first COHS graduating class with 48 students currently enrolled in the program and 10 others taking prerequisites to determine their readiness for the program.

The San Diego Public Library (SDPL) launched *Career Online High School* in January 2015 following Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer's announcement about the program at his [State of the City](#) address. COHS was made possible by a partnership with the San Diego Public Library Foundation and Gale, a leading provider of library resources and part of Cengage Learning.

Through the support of the Library Foundation, scholarships are awarded for *Career Online High School* to qualified learners looking to earn a high school diploma and advance their careers. Once enrolled, COHS pairs each student with an Academic Coach, who offers ongoing guidance and encouragement, evaluates performance, and connects the learner with the resources needed to demonstrate mastery of the course material. Classes are supported by board-certified instructors and students have 24/7 access to the online learning platform. Coursework begins in one of eight high-

growth, high-demand career fields (across a wide spectrum from child care and education to certified transportation), before progressing to the core academic subjects. Many students are able to graduate in as few as 4 to 6 months by transferring in previously earned high school credits.

Another graduate, Cassandra Denneson enrolled in *Career Online High School* while pregnant with her second child. “I felt now was the perfect time to finish my high school education because I had the support of my husband and family,” said Cassandra. “I was able to do all my school work from home while taking care of my family.” Cassandra plans to continue her education and become a large animal veterinarian.

“Education is a ladder to success,” said San Diego Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer. “For many, the first rung remains just out of reach. 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. While we can’t solve all of these problems, this program puts opportunity back within reach.”

“The achievement of these graduates is a great example of the direct social and economic impact libraries have on their communities,” said Paul Gazzolo, senior vice president and general manager at Gale. “As part of Cengage Learning, Gale is uniquely positioned to partner with San Diego PL – and libraries around the nation – to make it happen.”

Residents can learn more about *Career Online High School* at San Diego Public Library or by visiting the library’s Web site at www.sandiegolibrary.org. To support scholarships for local residents to take advantage of *Career Online High School*, you can contact the San Diego Public Library Foundation at <https://give.supportmylibrary.org/career-online-high-school>.

###