

## **For Immediate Release**

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### **New CCSF/SFUSD Partnership to Focus on Recovery of High School Dropouts**

Gateway to College National Network announced today (August 28, 2009) the launching of the Gateway to College program at City College of San Francisco.

The first Gateway to College students started classes on August 17, 2009 at the College's Southeast Campus.

The College received a \$300,000 start-up grant from Gateway to College National Network to create a unique San Francisco collaborative to provide greater service for high school dropouts. The City College program currently serves 50, and is expected to serve up to 300 students through its first three years of operation.

The Mayor's Office through Communities of Opportunity and Transitional Aged Youth departments, City College of San Francisco (CCSF), and San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) are collaborating with community-based service providers to assist young adults ages 16 to 20 who have dropped out of high school or are at very high risk of dropping out. It is an option for students who need additional support, both academically and socially, to succeed at the college level. The program enables them to complete their high school diploma requirements while simultaneously earning college credit toward an associate degree or certificate.

"I am proud to support the new Gateway to College program at the Southeast Campus of City College. Gateway is a nationally recognized model to reconnect students with their education, helping them get both their high school diplomas and post-secondary degrees, and Southeast is a community and a campus that deserves such cutting edge programs. The City and County have joined in a unique partnership with CCSF and SFUSD to provide additional services and support to help these students succeed. We look forward to building on this partnership as a model for how we can work together with our education partners to make a real difference in young people's lives," stated San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom.

"We admire the level of commitment that all three parties have made to this partnership. The staff of the college, the school district and the City has stepped forward to ensure that all students have a legitimate path to college degrees. We are happy to be able to contribute to this effort and are eager to see the benefits this program creates for the young people of San Francisco," said Laurel Dukehart, Executive Director of Gateway to College National Network.

According to Dukehart, “the Gateway to College program at City College of San Francisco is unique. In addition to the strong partnership with San Francisco Unified School District, the Communities of Opportunity Office has brought a comprehensive group of community-based service providers onto a campus so that students can access a deeper level of wrap-around services than would be possible in a typical Gateway program.”

“Across the country, we know students are facing a broad range of serious challenges, many of which have nothing to do with academics. Without additional support to address these challenges, many students feel they have no other choice than leaving high school. Gateway to College provides an academic path to a high school diploma and college degree, as well as the wrap-around support services that students need in order to give their attention to school,” added Dukehart.

Following a 9-month screening process, the San Francisco collaborative effort was selected to replicate a model program started in 2000 that is now operational at 24 community colleges across the country.

“This unique collaborative with the Mayor’s Office, City College, San Francisco Unified School District, and community-based providers will benefit San Francisco youth who are in need of a focused pathway to success, whether it leads to a job, or transfer to a four-year college,” said City College Chancellor Don Q. Griffin.

“Each young person is unique and it is our responsibility to provide our youth with multiple options to reach their academic goals. This program makes college an option for students who may have otherwise not even graduated from high school and provides them with the support to persevere,” said San Francisco Unified School District Superintendent Carlos Garcia.

Gateway to College National Network is part of the Early College High School Initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Jobs for the Future, an action/research and policy organization that promotes innovation in education and workforce development, serves as the initiative’s coordinating intermediary. The Early College High School Initiative will ultimately open about 250 schools around the country, serving over 100,000 students annually. Gateway to College National Network’s replication efforts are also supported by the Wal-Mart Foundation.

City College of San Francisco was founded in 1935 as part of the San Francisco Unified School District. It was formally separated from the school district in July 1970 becoming an independent community college district currently serving more than 100,000 credit and noncredit students annually.