SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE HOSTS 2nd PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH ACADEMY CONFERENCE  
Friday, November 9th, 2012

San Diego, CA – On Friday, November 9 the Public Mental Health Academy (PMHA) of the Institute for Human Development at San Diego City College will host its second conference for students and those working in public mental health field. The “Youth in Our Community: From Risk to Resilience” Conference will provide an opportunity for specialists to address current issues impacting young people and offer potential intervention options.

Sandra McBrayer, Chief Executive Officer of the Children’s Initiative and an internationally known advocate for children, youth and families will keynote the Conference. Workshop speakers will identify some of the most pressing challenges facing our youth, including relationship violence, suicide, and homelessness, and also offer recommendations to help find ways to avoid or overcome these challenges. The four workshop topics are: 1) Sex, Teens and Power and Control, 2) No Time to Lose: Preventing Suicide Among Our Youth, 3) Helping Homeless Youth Survive and Thrive, and 4) It’s Up to Us.

Beginning with coffee and registration at 8:30 a.m., the Welcome and Keynote address will begin at 9:00 a.m. followed by the four workshop presenters: Detective Sylvia Vella M.A. of the Family Justice Center and Emilio Ulloa from SDSU; Stan Collins, Consultant to the Suicide Prevention Council; Alberto Hernandez, Advocate and Motivational Speaker; Karen Alexander, Project Specialist, San Diego County Office of Education; and Toroshinia Kennedy, County of San Diego Health and Human Services.

Established by faculty within the Institute for Human Development at San Diego City College, the primary focus of the Public Mental Health Academy was to initiate a career pathway for a diverse population of students by developing a Mental Health Worker Certificate of Achievement Program. Potential students are recruited from the community and internally from among existing students at City College.

With part of the Institute’s mission to help improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities through education, training and support, Dr. Veronica Ortega, Associate Professor of Psychology at City College and Director of the Public Mental Health Academy said, “It is rewarding for all of us to help address the critical shortage and lack of diversity in mental health service providers.”
President of San Diego City College, Dr. Terry Burgess agreed, “With increasing economic and social challenges facing our young people, City College is pleased to be a resource for providing qualified mental health workers.”

The Public Mental Health Academy Conference will be held in the San Diego City College Faculty Dining Room, D121A/B at 1313 Park Boulevard in downtown San Diego from 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

The Conference and PMHA is funded by the County of San Diego, through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Workforce Education and Training.

For registration information:  www.PMHAConference.EventBrite.com. Non-students may park in Level 1 of Lot 3 Parking Garage on 16th Street near Russ Blvd. Lunch is provided for the first 120 registrants. For more information, contact Veronica Ortega, Project Director at vortega@sdc.edu

About San Diego City College
Founded in 1914, San Diego City College serves as the educational cornerstone of downtown San Diego. With more than 18,000 students, City College offers 200+ Associate Degrees and Certificates and 1,500 day, evening and weekend classes, including programs in Alcohol and Other Drug Studies, Child Development, Community Health Work and Youth Development Work, and a new Certificate and Associate Degree program in Peace Studies which includes mediation and conflict resolution content. City College is part of the San Diego Community College District, comprised of City College, Mesa College, Miramar College, and Continuing Education. For more information, visit: www.sdcity.edu

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