SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH ACADEMY HOSTS FIRST ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

San Diego, CA – The Public Mental Health Academy at San Diego City College will host its first annual Professional Development Conference on Friday, October 28 for students interested in the Mental Health Work Certificate program. Sponsored through the college’s Institute for Human Development, the “Current Considerations in Entry-Level Mental Health Work: What’s Hot? What’s Not?” Conference will also be open to non-students to learn more about the mental health field. In the final stages of development, the college’s Mental Health Work Certificate of Achievement will be the first such Certificate in the state.

City College President, Dr. Terrence J. Burgess will open the day-long conference at 9:00 a.m. Alfredo Aguirre, LCSW, the Director of San Diego County Mental Health Services, will provide the keynote address. Workshops topics will include a panel discussion on trends in the field, exploring job opportunities and career paths and dealing with compassion fatigue.

With the passage of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in 2004, efforts have been focused on expanding services to support county mental health programs. These efforts include reducing the serious shortage of mental health service providers and the lack of diversity in the workforce. Dr. Veronica Ortega, Associate Professor of Psychology at City College explained that shortages are particularly severe for skilled mental health practitioners to work with such groups as children, transition aged youth, older adults and ethnically underserved populations.

Funded by the Mental Health Services of San Diego County, the primary focus of the Mental Health Work Certificate program is to train entry-level mental health workers and introduce students to the vast array of local job opportunities in the field of mental health. Dr. Burgess said, “this is just the first of many professional development conferences and mental health career fairs the college will be pleased to sponsor to increase the number of qualified mental health workers in our community.”

The Mental Health Conference will be held in the San Diego City College Faculty Dining Room, D121A/B at 1313 Park Boulevard in downtown San Diego. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. For more information or to register 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 business, computer technology, and communications. Home to KSDS Jazz 88.3 and the award-winning Knights,
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