



Contra
Costa
County

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Theresa Speiker, Interim County Librarian
Date: July 12, 2016

Subject: Grant for 5 Scholarships Totaling \$5,475 from the California State Library

RECOMMENDATION(S):

APPROVE and AUTHORIZE the Interim County Librarian, or designee, to apply for and accept five scholarships for Career Online High School in the aggregate amount of \$5,475 from the California State Library to provide qualified adult learners in Contra Costa County with an accredited online high school degree and career training opportunity, for the period July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Library Fund match of \$5,475.

BACKGROUND:

Career Online High School (COHS) is a nationally accredited educational program offered by Gale, a division of Cengage Learning. Currently, 38 libraries in California are using Career Online High School, including, in the East Bay, Richmond Public Library, Alameda County Library, Berkeley Public Library and Hayward Public Library. Of the 38 programs, 36 of the participating libraries received support from the California State Library in order to implement it.

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **07/12/2016** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: Candace Andersen, District II
Supervisor
Mary N. Piepho, District III
Supervisor
Karen Mitchoff, District IV
Supervisor
Federal D. Glover, District V
Supervisor

ABSENT: John Gioia, District I
Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: July 12, 2016

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: Chris Heck, Deputy

Contact: Alison McKee,
925-927-3290

cc:

COHS gives students the opportunity to earn concurrently both a high school diploma and credentialed career certificate online. The goal is to bring non-traditional and/or adult learners back into the educational system and prepare them for jobs in growing sectors of the local economy. Students graduate with the tools they need to take the next step in their careers or advanced education.

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

The Library is required to purchase five matching Career Online High School scholarships from Gale Cengage in order to qualify for the five scholarships offered by the California State Library. Each scholarship is valued at \$1,095, for a total of \$5,475, and will be paid for from the Library Fund.

The Contra Costa County Library will provide access to COHS via Adult Literacy library staff housed at the Pittsburg Library. Based on outcomes from libraries already participating in the program, this educational approach appears to be having a significantly more positive effect on both the participants and the community at large than is estimated would occur for these adult learners through a traditional GED program. The California State Library is encouraging local communities to partner with them in making an investment in this program because research shows that persons with high school diplomas end up earning an average of about \$1500 per month more than persons with GEDs. Also, 73 percent of students who received a high school diploma went on to complete at least some post-secondary education, while less than half (43 percent) of GED certificate recipients did so. Furthermore, only 5 percent earned a bachelor's degree or higher. In contrast, of high school diploma holders, 33 percent earned this level of education. The program is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy. Because students can also obtain a career credential in addition to a diploma, the program should also introduce more skilled graduates to the local workforce.

Prospective students wishing to be considered for admittance to the program must complete an online self-assessment and a two-week prerequisite course designed by COHS to determine if they will be successful. Students are then required to be interviewed by Adult Literacy library staff to determine their overall capability to complete the program. Those persons that complete both steps in the application process will be eligible to enroll in the program. Based on the best practices experiences of California libraries who participated in this program last year, the library plans to enroll its first 10 students on a "first come, first served" basis. To make sure that all 10 scholarships are used, we also plan to create a small waiting list, also on a first come, first served basis, to allow for admittance from this wait-list if any of the first 10 students drop out or withdraw from the program.

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If the proposal is not approved, the Library will not be able to offer and provide access to Career Online High School to qualified county residents/adult learners.