

The Preuss School at UC San Diego Named Among Top 10 Schools in Nation by Newsweek Magazine

UCSD's charter school only high school in California to make Newsweek's top 25

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The Preuss School at the University of California, San Diego, was named today by *Newsweek* magazine in the top 10 of "the best high schools in America."

The magazine listed Preuss (rhymes with choice) as 9th among 1,200 high schools in the U.S. regarded as the best of the best. Preuss was the only California school among the top 25 on the rankings.

The listing was developed by *Newsweek* through a "Challenge Index" scale which used each school's rate of participation in college-level tests, such as Advanced Placement (AP), to indicate which schools were the most demanding and supportive of all students. The magazine then took the total number of AP tests, plus International Baccalaureate and Cambridge tests, and divided by the number of graduating seniors "so that big schools would not have an advantage over small schools."

Preuss is a middle and high school dedicated to providing intensive college prep education for motivated low-income students who will become the first in their families to graduate from college. The school is jointly chartered by UC California and the San Diego School District.

Opened in 1999 with 150 students, the school currently has 756 students in grades six through 12th and a 2007 graduation class of 78 seniors. Of these, a record 96 per cent has been accepted to a four-year college or university, including all UC campuses and many top private universities-Harvard, Yale, Stanford, NYU, Columbia, Duke, Fordham, Colgate, Wellesley, USC and Penny, among many.

Newsweek selected Doris Alvarez, principal of The Preuss School, as one of seven school leaders to profile in the article. It notes: "Admitting only low-income students whose parents did not graduate from college is a rare thing in American high schools, as is the Preuss principal, Doris Alvarez-still at the top of her game at 70. Alvarez put AP courses at the center of her curriculum at Preuss and hired teachers who gave students the encouragement and extra time they needed to master the material."

"Every student knows why they are here, to get ready for college," Alvarez says. "It is one of the few public schools requiring every student to take AP courses and tests in U.S. history, U.S. government, English language, English literature, biology and chemistry.

Graduating senior Rose Cao says Preuss proves that "Money and skin color do not define intelligence. Preuss gives every student the equal opportunity to be challenged and excel."

UC San Diego Chancellor Marye Anne Fox adds that "The Preuss School continues to be a source of pride for UC San Diego, and we're pleased the school was recognized as one of the top high schools in the country. It has always been our goal to provide an intensive college-prep education for motivated students from low-income

families. This recognition, and the many achievements of our students, demonstrate the success of the school. If given a chance, all students can succeed."

The school has garnered a number of other awards this year.

Alvarez was on hand in Washington, D.C., May 16 to accept a National Charter School of the Year award given to 53 charter schools from across the U.S. by the Center for Education Reform at a special ceremony.

Last month The Preuss School was the only charter school in San Diego County to be selected a 2007 California Distinguished School, an annual award that recognizes some of the state's exemplary public schools.

And earlier this month the California Charter Schools Association honored the school as one of the nation's first "Certified Charter Schools," verifying that participating schools are upholding standards that define a high-quality school.

The school is unique in that the school year is 198 days vs. the traditional 180; the school day is 396 minutes vs. an average 360, and class size is smaller, or approximately 25 students vs. 34 districtwide. It also benefits from a close association with UCSD, as an average 150 college tutors work with Preuss students per quarter and internships are provided for students on campus.

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