

New Change the World Scholarships for Continuing Education Students

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At a time when California's unemployment rate has surged to 11.2 percent, the highest rate since the Great Depression, University of California San Diego Extension is launching a scholarship program open to the more than 1 million alumni of the University of California. All UC alumni are now eligible to apply for one of four merit scholarships of up to \$5,500 to enter any continuing education certificate or special study program offered by UC San Diego Extension.

All persons who have received a bachelor's degree or a graduate degree from any UC campus are eligible to apply by completing an online "Change the World" Scholarship form from the extension.ucsd.edu/scholarships Web site before the next deadline date of July 15, 2009.

"For recent and mid-career college graduates facing a difficult job market and a troubling economy, continuing-education certificates from UC San Diego are becoming increasingly attractive as a way to transition to employment areas that are in demand," says Extension Dean Mary Walshok. "Here is a chance to discover new career paths, learn about innovative social enterprises and meet life-transforming instructors."

What does it mean to change the world? The definition is purposely broad, and can range from cultural enrichment to regional economic development. UC San Diego Extension is looking to reward alumni with the promise and potential to improve the quality of life in San Diego, and beyond. In the application essay, potential recipients can explain how they would help California build a globally competitive talent pool, accelerate economic vitality or foster community-building conversations if they receive this advanced training.

Certificate programs offer a practical, concentrated study in a specific professional area and most can be started any academic quarter. For the convenience of working adults, classes for most of UC San Diego Extension's certificate programs and specialized study programs are held evenings and weekends on the UC San Diego main campus and three other locations in Sorrento Mesa, Rancho Bernardo and Mission Valley.

UC San Diego offers approximately 100 certificates or special study programs. Some areas of possible study for career changers or those wishing to add new skills to their resume include: Business; Digital Arts; Education; Engineering and Defense Technology; English Language Studies; Foreign Languages; Healthcare and Behavioral Sciences; Humanities and Writing; Information Technology and Software Engineering; Law; Leadership and Management Development; Life Sciences; Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health; Photography, Art and Music, and Public Service, Social Responsibility and Sustainable Business.

Certificate programs at UC San Diego Extension have never been more popular. This past year UC San Diego Extension had approximately 50,000 enrollees, which translates to a record 22,600 students in more than 4,200 courses. The number of students entering certificate programs at Extension increased 28 percent, according Walshok. A total of 3,023 students entered Extension certificate programs during 2008, as compared to 2,362 during 2007, which was a 25 percent increase over the previous year.

In addition to an increased local impact, UC San Diego Extension programs are gaining in national influence. The 10 certificate programs that are fully online attracted 431 new applicants from across the country, an 18 percent increase over the previous year.

Pursuing a continuing-education certificate on a part-time basis can be a cost-effective and time-effective way to gain applied knowledge for employment areas in higher demand. Approximately 62 percent of certificate graduates are under the age of 39. Approximately 85 percent already have a college degree and 10 percent are alumni of UC San Diego. According to a 2009 survey of 487 certificate graduates, 84 percent reported they accomplished the goals they set for themselves by obtaining an UC San Diego Extension certificate.

The "Change the World" scholarships are automatically renewed, provided the recipient continues to pass their coursework and remains active in the certificate program. Scholarships cover tuition only, are non-transferable and carry no cash value.

Scholarships will be awarded each academic quarter. Applications must be received by January 15, April 15, July 15, or October 15. Recipients and non-recipients are notified by email by March 15, June 15, September 15 and December 15. Applications will be considered for the upcoming quarter. The UC San Diego Extension Scholarship Committee will review scholarship applications four times a year and reserves the right not to award a scholarship.

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