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—MEDIA ADVISORY—

"SiVHER CERTIFICATE" PROGRAM PROMISES KINDERGARTENERS A PLACE IN SILICON VALLEY COLLEGES, SUPPORT FOR GETTING THERE

Leaders of Higher Education Institutions to Present Certificates June 10 at Festive Kindergarten Graduation Ceremonies, as Proud Families Look On

SILICON VALLEY—College and university presidents from the Silicon Valley Higher Education Roundtable (SiVHER) will present graduating kindergarten students with certificates guaranteeing them a place in the participating institutions upon graduation from high school. The third annual SiVHER certificate ceremonies will take place the morning of June 10 at Anne Darling Elementary School in San José and Gault Elementary in Santa Cruz. The events cap a year of Roundtable activities for students and parents aimed at increasing college participation among historically underrepresented students.

Top college and university leaders dressed in full academic regalia will present each kindergartener with a "SiVHER Certificate" in the pomp and circumstance-filled ceremonies. The Silicon Valley Higher Education Roundtable is a consortium of higher education institutions in Silicon Valley. Members include the University of California, Santa Cruz; San José State University; National Hispanic University; Cogswell Polytechnical College; and four area community college districts, Foothill-De Anza, Gavilan, San José-Evergreen and West Valley-Mission.

The kindergarteners also will receive a SiVHER T-shirt that says "Future College Student" in English and Spanish. The Roundtable's activities are meant to

encourage children and their families to begin planning for college early and communicate that college is an important part of their future. Activities are conducted by the Roundtable throughout the school year for children who already have received SiLVHER certificates, reinforcing the college message.

Details about the two ceremonies follow:

10:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 10

Gault Elementary School

1320 Seabright Ave.

Santa Cruz

Featured speakers: From SiLVHER, Philip L. Hartley, President, West Valley College, and David P. Lopez, President, National Hispanic University; from Santa Cruz City Schools, Alan Pagano, Superintendent

Confirmed SiLVHER participants: Elba Maldonado-Colon, SiLVHER Facilitator (for Don W. Kassing, President, San Jose University); and Felicia E. McGinty, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, University of California-Santa Cruz (for Chancellor George R. Blumenthal)

9 a.m., Tuesday, June 10

Anne Darling Elementary School

333 N. 33rd St.

San José

Featured speakers: From SiLVHER, Brian Murphy, President, De Anza College, and Harriett J. Robles, President, Mission College; from the San Jose Unified School District, Don Iglesias, Superintendent

Confirmed SiLVHER participants: Chester D. Haskell, President, Cogswell Polytechnical College; Don W. Kassing, President, San José State University; Judy C. Miner, President, Foothill College

The Roundtable kicked off the SiLVHER Certificate program in May 2006.

The certificate guarantees admission to a SiLVHER member institution provided the students meet admission requirements. To help students achieve, Roundtable members have committed to providing additional information and support for children and their families as they progress through the grades.

In addition to the kindergarten graduation ceremonies, the SiLVHER program includes bilingual presentations, materials and question-and-answer sessions for parents and hands-on activities for students during the school year. Kindergarten students take part in activities introducing them to possible future careers in fields such as biology, dental hygiene, nursing, horticulture, medicine, construction management, mathematics and public safety and music. SiLVHER member organizations provide subject matter experts for the presentations and demonstrations, which also feature community college students who are enrolled in the career programs.

To support students who received certificates in the past two years, SiVHER volunteers read to first-graders at Anne Darling Elementary School in San Jose on Wednesdays in the spring of 2008 to underscore the importance of literacy. Their parents attended a session on how best to read to their children at home. Second graders toured the Martin Luther King Jr. Library at San Jose State University and students at Gault Elementary toured the UC Santa Cruz campus earlier this year.

"Our goal is for SiVHER to leverage the collective and collaborative work of our member colleges and universities to benefit students and all of Silicon Valley," said Martha J. Kanter, chancellor of the Foothill-de Anza Community College District and chair of the Roundtable. "The SiVHER Certificate program is a step we can take together to help meet the needs of students who have limited access to higher education."

SiVHER is composed of the presidents and chancellors of Cogswell Polytechnical College; De Anza College; Evergreen Valley College; Foothill College; Foothill-De Anza Community College District; Gavilan College; Mission College; National Hispanic University; San José City College; San José/Evergreen Community College District; San José State University; University of California, Santa Cruz; West Valley College; and West Valley-Mission Community College District.

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