

Gale, Libraries Offer High School Diplomas

For years, adults who had dropped out of high school had only one venue to prove that they'd mastered the same skills that a diploma reflects: passing the general educational development (GED) test. While it's better than nothing, though, in practice, a GED is not a complete replacement for a diploma, since it's treated as a lesser substitute by colleges and employers. Now, Gale Cengage Learning is partnering with the country's first accredited online school district, Smart Horizons Career Online Education (SHCOE), to offer a way for adults to earn a full high school diploma through libraries across the nation: Career Online High School (COHS).

To illustrate the need for such a program, the 2010 census found that GED holders make an average of \$2,922 per month, as opposed to the \$3,222 earned monthly by the average high school graduate. With more education, that wage gap actually widens: GED holders who go on to get their BA earn an average of \$4,852 monthly, while BA holders with a diploma make an average of \$6,305. While those wages are still much better than the \$2,400 a month that those with no diploma

or GED can expect to take home, the GED remains an imperfect replacement for a high school diploma.

For students who want to finish their high school education but are too old to return to traditional school, the GED has long been the only game in town, though as the exam becomes privatized and moves to online-only testing, some new competitors have begun to spring up. Yet Gale isn't looking to provide the equivalent of a diploma. It wants to offer the real thing, in partnership with COHS and libraries.

The program is launching in Los Angeles, where the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) has purchased 150 scholarships. Each scholarship will allow one returning student to earn his or her diploma from COHS. Gale executives gave a ballpark cost of \$1,000 to \$1,200 per scholarship but stressed that costs would vary depending on a number of factors, including the need in a given community and how many scholarships a library system is interested in purchasing.

"We follow a very training-based model," Howard Liebman, CEO at SHCOE, said. "When students enroll, they declare a major and that determines the courses they take." While there is a curriculum for those who intend to pursue a liberal arts BA, ma-

Interview

Simon Vance

Brilliance Audio's new audio edition of *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* is, in fact, that: all four full-length novels, plus more than 40 short stories. *Hotline* spoke with narra-



tor Simon Vance, who shares his thoughts on voicing a literary icon.

How do you go about voicing an iconic character such as Sherlock Holmes?

It's hard not to be influenced by the variety of variations on Sherlock that exist... but, then, why should I be afraid of that? [Sir Arthur Conan] Doyle has provided us with some clues to his character in his writings. I think my portrayal owes more to [Jeremy] Brett.

How long did the narration process take?

About five to six weeks of studio time. In many ways there really wasn't the opportunity for "immersion." Each story introduced new characters and a different circumstance and that was quite refreshing. Far and away my favorite character is Dr. John Watson. I'd so love to take a stroll through Hyde Park with the good doctor and maybe stop for tea and a bun along the way.

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Library of the Year

All libraries are good, some are great. *LJ* is looking for role-model libraries to vie for the honor of being the 2014 *Library Journal*/Gale Cengage Library of the Year. To learn more and submit your nominations, visit ow.ly/swYmZ.

Postmark deadline: April 5

California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, implemented a new open access policy for its faculty. Staff must now grant non-exclusive rights to the university for any scholarly writing.

Columbia University Libraries, New York, acquired access to the database of the **China Academic Digital Associative Library**, a consortium of Chinese academic libraries. The collection includes 1.75 million ebooks.

Additionally, **Columbia University Libraries** announced applications for its **2014 Library Research Awards**. Ten grants will be given to researchers who demonstrate a need to consult the university's holdings.

Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations' Kheel Center for Labor Management Documentation and Archives, Ithaca, NY, received archival material from nonprofit organization **Jobs with Justice**. The collection contains 55 boxes of correspondence, minutes, publications, oral history interviews, and multimedia items.

The **Private Academic Library Network of Indiana** selected **OCLC WorldShare Management Services** as its cloud-based library management system. It is the first academic group to do so.

Spartanburg County Public Libraries, SC, received the first Library of the Year Award from **Bibliotheca**, a library technology solutions company.

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jors are usually career-focused programs, with tracks like child care, office management, and homeland security. Students take those classes first to drive home the applicability of the program to their future lives before they begin the science, math, and language courses that will make up their accredited diploma.

"The career track gives students a goal," said Nader Qaimari, vice presi-

dent of sales and marketing for Gale. "That makes them more likely to complete the program."

Other factors involved in successful course completion include the elimination of the grading progress, letting students digest the material at their own pace and retake exams as many times as necessary. There is no homework; all exercises are completed during the program itself. Diploma seekers will also have access to academic coaches for guidance and support.

If prospective students wash out of the program despite these support systems, libraries can recoup their scholarship funds if they act within the first 30 days of enrollment. And scholarships don't expire, so libraries don't risk losing money they've invested.

With 45 million American adults lacking a high school diploma, 150 scholarships may not sound like a lot, and John Szabo, director of LAPL, said that he and his staff are anticipating a high level of demand for the limited scholarships. "Our internal conversations are about making certain we do a great job of promoting the program while understanding the demand will be enormous," Szabo said.

Gale's Qaimari said that while participating in the program does incur some new costs for libraries, it could also provide a way for libraries to protect their budgets by expanding their roles as educational centers. Szabo concurred, saying that while it could look like mission creep, being involved in education is a core principle of LAPL's mandate. "We're about learning, education, and workforce development," Szabo told *Hotline*. "This is an area where we can have a huge impact."

Providence Library Offers Early Learning Program

As much of the country braced for a historic cold snap, staffers at Rhode Island's Providence Community Li-

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY
Library Journal & School Library Journal

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www.libraryhotline.com/sub

Outside U.S.

760-317-2332

LIBRARY HOTLINE (ISSN 0740-736X) (RPUSA 123397467) is published weekly (every Monday except on the two Mondays nearest to the year-end holidays) by Library Journals, LLC, 160 Varick Street, 11th floor, New York, NY 10013. Randy Asmo, Chief Executive Officer; Ian Singer, VP, Group Publisher. Library Hotline is a registered trademark of Library Journals, LLC. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. SUBSCRIPTION: \$119.99 per year, Canada \$159.99, Other (incl Air) \$159.99, Single Copy (U.S.) \$5.95, and Single Copy (all other) \$10.00. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Library Hotline, PO Box 460483, Escondido, CA 92046-9803 Telephone 800-588-1030 Outside US 1-760-317-2332.

Printed in the U.S.A.

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brary (PCL) have been hard at work preparing to bring some much-needed warmth to the Providence Public School Department (PPSD), as they seek to sign up hundreds of families to a new school readiness program, Ready for K! The unprecedented recruiting efforts are key to the future success of the program, which begins in March, said Michelle Novello, PCL's

program coordinator.

As of the beginning of January, two PCL staffers will be present at PPSD's registration office every day through mid-February, with books, children's activities, and library cards, to reach out to the community's most underserved children and sign them up for the Ready for K! program, administered by Ready To Learn Provi-

dence, which trains educators, volunteers, and AmeriCorps participants in early childhood education.

"[PPSD] is, of course, elated that we're going to do this, bring a little warmth and a little fun to the office, giving [families] something to do while they're waiting, and they'll have someone who can speak Spanish and answer their questions," Novello told *Hotline*.

"Ready To Learn's mission is to prepare kids to enter school, and there's vast amounts of research about the 30 million-word gap if kids aren't spoken to," Novello said. "The goal of [Ready for K!] is to help those kids who go into kindergarten way behind their classmates—and that's mostly just from parents not knowing to talk to their kids [and] read to their kids, no matter the language."

Over the next two years, PCL and its partners aim to bring more than 400 families into the Ready for K! program, which consists of two-hour learning sessions at least twice a month. Twenty to 40 families will be invited to participate in the first round, taking place between March and August of this year.

Going forward, PCL will survey participants and staff, with an eye toward being a model for other libraries. PCL will also be collecting data on the subsequent use of the library by participating families, noting, for example, how many family members get library cards, how often they visit the library in the future, and how many books they are reading to their children.

Another challenge will be the small, crowded spaces that comprise some of PCL's urban branches; without a community meeting room, these public library areas are all that will be available for the learning sessions. However, Novello is confident the program will be a success. "What we're trying to prove is that this program will work in urban libraries, the real poor parts of town," she said.

Oakland Librarian Documents Notes Found in Library

Of the items librarian Sharon McKellar has found over her years at the Oakland Public Library (OPL), she stumbled fairly recently upon one of her favorites: a photograph, dated March 26, 1998, of a chicken.

"Gender's class to Tilden," someone had scribbled on the back—McKellar's guess is the photo is from a class trip to the park near one of the library's branches.

"I love thinking about this photo of a probably long-dead chicken that has made its way into the library," McKellar said.

McKellar and other staff at OPL have been collecting notes and other items found in between pages of books or left on the floors and tables of the library for years. "As library staff members, I think we have a natural affinity toward ephemera, stories, pieces of paper," McKellar told *Hotline*.

McKellar got the idea to document the library staff's collection of these objects when she came across the website for *Found* magazine, which documents found items. (There's also a Tumblr account, *Found in a Library Book*, which has a similar purpose.)

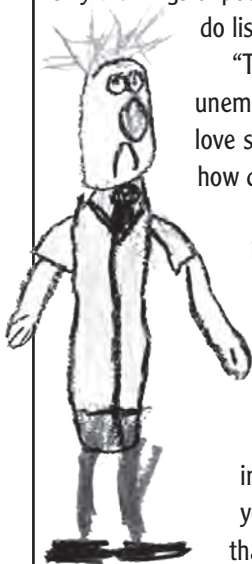
"When you find something that wasn't meant for you, you are seeing a part of someone that you weren't necessarily meant to see," said McKellar of the items OPL's staffers collect. "Inhibitions are gone, defenses are down, 'public' personality is not relevant—this is something that was private and thus feels very 'real' compared to the daily 'hello, how are you' sorts of interactions that we often have with our users."

McKellar's discoveries range from typed documents regarding a mystery surgery to kids' silly drawings of potato pancakes and their devilish parents. She especially likes finding to-do lists, perhaps because she makes so many of her own.

"There's one [in which] someone's talking about a trip to Vegas and their unemployment insurance in the same list," she said of a particular favorite. "I love seeing what they've crossed off and what they haven't and thinking of how confused they might be when they realize that they've lost [the list]."

McKellar hopes one day to curate a physical exhibit of these discarded items, as one of the other librarians at OPL did years ago. That exhibit was filled with funny items, such as packets of hemorrhoid cream, that someone had found in the library.

"I think that everyone likes to have a little glimpse into the lives of strangers," McKellar said. "Maybe it's our innate desire to create stories, and all of these objects are just empty stories that we can fill in. You have a short love note, a to-do list, a drawing (pictured), and you can't help but wonder who wrote it, where it came from, where that person is now, who the recipient was."



Science Library Crafts Fossil Casts on MakerBot

At the University of Oregon (UO), staff at the Science Library have only had an in-house 3-D printer for a few months but have wasted no time putting the new equipment to use. At the beginning of January, the library printed a 3-D model of a rare fossil in the UO paleontology department's collection—the remains of a five million-year-old saber-toothed salmon.

The fanged fish fossil—which was the first one of its kind ever discovered—is a prize specimen, said UO science librarian Dean Walton, but it was also too fragile for researchers to do much work on it. And putting it on display where laypeople could interact with it and get a hands-on look at the daunting dentition of the seven-foot-long ancestor of modern salmon was entirely out of the question. The specimen of *Onchorynchus rastorus* was just too rare and valuable to risk damaging.

That made it a great candidate for 3-D printing, Walton told *Hotline*. Edward Davis, the UO paleontologist who has worked with the fossil, already had a CAT scan of the fossil, meant to preserve its exact measurements without undue handling. Walton and the staff turned that CAT scan into a 3-D model. After starting with a smaller scale version that proved the printer—a MakerBot Replicator II—could offer an adequately detailed reproduction, the library went to work printing the braincase and jaw of the prehistoric piscine in three pieces. “Once that’s done,” said Walton, “[paleontologists] can take the model, make a cast, and have a legitimate, accurate copy without ever having touched the real fossil.”

Unfortunately, the cast isn't perfect for research purposes. While tasks like advanced chemical analysis won't be possible with the reproductions, though, the models will be ac-

curate enough to handle, so they can be used for taking measurements. And since they're easy to make, the reproductions will also be suitable for display, letting far more people get a glimpse of the ancient anatomy of the saber-toothed salmon.

While there are other 3-D printers at work on campus in spaces like the design department, Walton said, the replicator in the library is unique in that it lives in a common space where users from around the university can access it to print whatever they need for their work. The printer is free for staff and faculty to use, a decision Walton said would be revisited after the first year of operation, once the library has a better idea of the popularity of the printer and the materials cost associated with it. Walton and company are working to ensure projects are related to a class or research project.

“We don't want people just downloading something from [3-D blueprint site] Thingiverse and printing a trinket,” Walton said. “If they are going to use the printer and use it for free, they're going to have to learn to use it to create objects.”

Bellevue, WA, To Rehire School Librarians

Washington State's Bellevue School District (BSD) is seeking to hire two certified media specialists, to be known as research technology specialists, by this spring in order to lead the libraries in two of its secondary schools and hopes to staff fully at least some of its remaining secondary schools soon, District Superintendent Tim Mills confirmed. Depending on what funds can be made available, up to 11 positions in total could be filled for the 2015–16

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school year, he said. In addition to direct instruction, the two new hires also will begin working with the district to create a K–12 information literacy and technology curriculum in line with the Common Core State Standards.

“The research technology specialist positions are intended to help our students’ progress beyond learning basic content to developing the abil-

ity to access relevant information and 21st-century skills as they venture into college and career,” Mills said.

Mills became superintendent in July 2012, three years after the district eliminated many of its teacher librarians—all at the secondary school level—owing to state budget cuts.

Although Bellevue’s K–5 librarian positions were safe, those in grades

six to 12 were cut, and clerks were called in to keep those libraries running. Local parents and educators were then compelled to get involved and have been advocating for Bellevue’s students’ right to librarians ever since. These new open positions are an exciting development, they told *Hotline*.

“We are pleased indeed that BSD is on the uptick,” Craig Seasholes, the immediate past president of the Washington Library Media Association (WLMA), told *Hotline*. He also noted that the impending recovery of even just a few of these certified instructional positions is a welcome reversal of BSD’s previous policy and will “help chart a way forward” for the future of the profession in the district.

“I’m superexcited,” added Nancy Mowat, teacher librarian at Bellevue’s Sherwood Forest Elementary. “There’s some pressure from the Common Core State Standards to do so, but we have no K–12 curriculum—let alone an information literacy curriculum. And [the district is] realizing that.”

Mowat said she was grateful to the WLMA for keeping the issue front and center with administrators but also praises Mills for coming into his job with a different viewpoint from previous superintendents. “We are starting 2014 with great optimism,” Mowat said.

Christie Kaaland, chair of the MAEd with Library Media program at Seattle’s Antioch University and former advocacy chair for WLMA, also credits the turnaround to the grassroots efforts of parents, especially the “amazing four-year commitment to reinstating librarians” by advocate Jeani Littrell-Kwik.

“Jeani is a modest but hard-fighting advocate, championing for the rights of children to have the research skills they need to be successful in school,” Kaaland told *Hotline*.

Branching Out



December 30 marked the opening of the renovated **Athol Public Library** (pictured), MA, following a yearlong expansion and remodel. The original 1918 Carnegie library was 5,894 square feet. The current two-story structure has gained a 14,174 square foot addition, which trumped a 3,000 square foot addition from a 1965 construction effort. The new 20,068 square foot library, designed by Tappé, cost \$8.5 million, including a \$4.5 million grant from the Massachusetts Public Library Construction program. It encompasses larger stacks, a teen section, a children’s library, meeting spaces, quiet study rooms, a computer lab, an Internet café, and more parking. With substantial environmentally friendly practices in place, including the restoration of large windows previously removed and the use of resawn salvaged lumber, the library is targeting Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification, which would make it the first Carnegie library to achieve such a rating. Maintaining the

historic nature of the project, the donation of land for the addition came from the Starrett Company, founded in 1880, which also donated the original plot.

The **Adolphine Fletcher Terry Library**, Little Rock, AR, part of the Central Arkansas Library System, reopened on January 6 after a \$325,000 remodel. The library has been serving the community since

1990; it was expanded to 19,030 square feet in 2001. Upgrades include new carpeting, a reconfiguration of shelves and furnishings, updates to the meeting room, a larger AV area, and a new young adult section. Improved sight lines within the main reading area and better display of heavily used items are among the changes directly influenced by a 2013 satisfaction survey of library users and nonusers alike.

Worcester, MA, has completed half of its planned four projects to incorporate a branch of **Worcester Public Library (WPL)** into a school, in an effort to “improve child literacy rates by providing access to grade-level materials,” per Masslive.com. The latest collaboration between the Worcester Public Library Foundation and Worcester Public Schools established a branch in the **Tatnuck Magnet School**, following a similar setup in the **Roosevelt Elementary School**. The pilot program for the quartet of facilities plus a WPL bookmobile is expected to cost \$2 million.

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Fortunately, the groundwork for this new policy was already laid by the time the Bellevue Education Association (BEA) sat down with the district this past summer for contract negotiations, Littrell-Kwik said. The district will spend the 2013–14 school year defining the parameters of these new positions and developing an information curriculum to work with their talents. This means parents’ concerns that students “are not being adequately prepared with research and technology skills by the time they graduate” are finally being addressed, she said.

“There’s a lot of catch-up to do in terms of research, taking in information, and communicating it out,” Mowat added, noting writing and keyboarding skills as areas—even in the younger grades—that need to be strengthened in the future information literacy curriculum.

NC School Board Retains *The Color Purple*

North Carolina’s Brunswick County School District voted to retain Alice Walker’s award-winning epistolary novel *The Color Purple* in its school libraries and classrooms, following a series of unofficial challenges that began in October.

However, the school board also agreed to meet again on January 21 to review its policies and to consider restricting the book’s access in the future, *StarNews Media* reported.

The Color Purple (Harcourt, 1982), which has won both a Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, is included in the Advanced Placement high school English curriculum recommended by the College Board and frequently appears on the AP exam.

Though it is an acclaimed work of American literature praised for its literary merit and exploration of important themes, it is one of the nation’s 100

Gloria Cousins has retired as Senior Manager for Communications and Community Relations at Wake County Public Libraries, NC. She had been with the library for more than 35 years.

Emily Kader was named Rare Book Research Librarian at North Carolina University’s Wilson Special Collection Library, Chapel Hill. She received her master’s degree from the university’s School of Information and Library Science.

Wen Mallette Livingston is now a Librarian at the West Florida Library System’s Molino Branch. She previously held the same position at the St. Louis County Library System.

In Memoriam

Christopher John Maloney, Director of the Ocean City Free Public Library, NJ, died on December 30, 2013. He was 45 years old.

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Jack Martin was appointed Executive Director of Providence Public Library, following the retirement of Director **Dale Thompson**. Martin was previously Assistant Director for Public Programs and Lifelong Learning at New York Public Library.

Cathy Nelson has retired as Assistant Director and Children’s Librarian at Berlin-Peck Memorial Library, CT. She had been with the library for 37 years.

Susan White has retired as Director of the Sequoyah Regional Library System, GA. She had been with the library for more than 42 years.

most frequently challenged books—frequently owing to its language—according to the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom.

In October, a relative of a high school junior at West Brunswick High School—not the youth’s parent—raised concerns about the book, which the student had read for his AP English class. School board member Catherine Cook then raised her own objections at a school board meeting on November 5. During that event, parents, teachers, and other community members both voiced their concerns and spoke in support of the book and keeping it accessible to students.

Although there was no official challenge from a parent, the board then agreed in a meeting on November 26 to review its book challenge policies.

Yet on December 1, Brunswick County Commissioner Patricia Sykes wrote personally to the board to ask for removal of the book, calling its content and language “filth,” “im-

moral,” and “profane.” After a subsequent review by a committee at West Brunswick High School, County Superintendent Edward Pruden agreed to retain the book. Sykes immediately appealed that decision, rallying some community members and other commissioners to her cause.

These community efforts to ban the book caught the attention of the National Coalition Against Censorship, which wrote to the school board to protest any attempt to ban the book.

The board’s January 3 decision to retain the book means it will remain accessible to all students in the district—at least until January 21. At that time, the board may decide to restrict the book’s library access to students in the 11th and 12th grades and classroom access only to students whose parents have signed consent forms. According to *StarNews Media*, the board may also consider setting up a parent advisory council to review curriculum materials.



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