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**SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Sponsors Joan Nelson Award Scholarship in San Diego County**

**Tustin, Calif. (Aug. 16, 2024)** – [SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union](https://www.schoolsfirstfcu.org/gateway/schoolsfirstfcu/home), the largest credit union serving school employees and their families, has partnered with the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) to sponsor the Joan Nelson Award Scholarship. The credit union has granted $7,500 to underwrite the scholarship, which supports those who want to further their education to pursue careers in education management and continue to make an impact through their work.

The award is named in honor of Joan Nelson, a former administrator with SDCOE who passed away in 2021 following a successful career as a teacher and administrator. Nelson began her 42-year career in education as a special education teacher and continued to be a strong advocate for students as a teacher, vice principal and principal. Joan saw the brilliance in students and enjoyed working with other adults as an Executive Leadership Coach with SDCOE and more recently as a San Diego State University supervisor, while continuing to impact students in a powerful way.

“Joan Nelson’s lifetime work to support excellence in education is very strongly aligned with the mission of our credit union,” said Josh Smith, vice president, school and community relations for SchoolsFirst FCU. “We partnered with the SDCOE to support the Joan Nelson Award Scholarship program that helps administrators further their careers and continue their dedication and commitment to students and schools.”

“We are grateful to SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union for their generous support, which helps us create stronger school communities and further our North Star goal of reducing poverty and increasing belonging through public education,” said Ross Godfrey, an executive leadership coach at SDCOE. “This two-year program is focused on building socially conscious leaders, which is crucial to building cultures where students feel welcome and thrive socially and academically.”

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About SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union

SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union is the largest credit union serving school employees, and once again Forbes has named SchoolsFirst FCU the top credit union in California. Serving school employees and their families, the organization is dedicated to delivering World-Class Personal Service and improving the financial lives of its Members. Today they serve more than 1.4 million Members with a full range of financial products and services. SchoolsFirst FCU was founded in 1934, when 126 school employees pooled $1,200 and established a Member-owned cooperative to help improve each other's lives. In 2024, the Credit Union reported more than $30 billion in assets and remains the largest credit union in California. For more information about SchoolsFirst FCU, visit schoolsfirstfcu.org.

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