

CAREER ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL IN THE FLORIDA PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

Here's What Graduates and Libraries are Saying:



"Thanks to my academic coach and the amazing library staff, I have more confidence in my ability to pursue my dreams of making early childhood education my career. My advice for anyone who is considering the program is this: Don't waste any time. You have nothing to lose, so just go for it!"

—Benise, graduate, Ethel M. Gordon Oakland Park Library



"We were extremely pleased to see the State Legislature provide funding for this amazing program to public libraries all over Florida. It has been a great benefit to Citrus County. It is an excellent opportunity for those who are ready to make a real positive change in their life, and the best part is that all they have to do to get started is call the library."

—Eric Head, director, Citrus County Library System

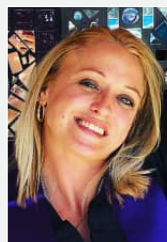


"I'd say without a doubt that my success stems from my determination — I always had the heart to get my high school diploma even as I struggled with the GED... I also benefited greatly from the program's unique setup. I loved the flexibility, that the program was self-paced and that I had the support of an amazing academic coach who helped me stay on track."

—India Craft, graduate, Largo Public Library

"*Career Online High School* has been overwhelmingly positive for Columbia County Public Library. Our staff has been thrilled to witness firsthand how residents have seized the opportunity to make a better future for themselves. The program gives us an opportunity to expand our reach beyond our branch walls, to extend our partnerships with local organizations and to provide a truly valuable service to an underserved portion of our community."

—Katrina P. Evans, library director, Columbia County Public Library



"I'm so much closer to beginning a passion-driven career thanks to *Career Online High School* and all of the positive support I received from my academic coach and the librarians along the way... The program taught me that anything is possible, and nothing is impossible — just look at that word: It can also be read as 'I'm possible!'"

—Jennifer Pawlowsky, graduate, Safety Harbor Public Library



"Our students have shown strength, determination, and courage to complete this first step on their path to success. This program has changed their lives, and in turn, they see and experience their worlds differently, not afraid to make their own contributions and changes."

—Debra Rhodes Gibson, library director, St. Johns County Public Library System



"My advice for any other parent like me who realizes that they need to get a diploma to have a better career is stop waiting and start the program today. It doesn't take much time to complete at all, and the library provides an amazing support structure in the form of their staff and a personal, motivating academic coach for each student. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for the help of librarian Minerva Lopez and coach Simon Maduro."

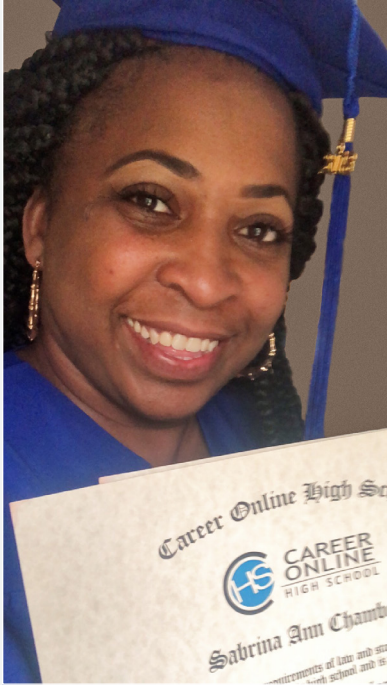
—Carmen Polanco, graduate, Hialeah Public Libraries

"Earning a high school diploma is a life-changing achievement. By offering *Career Online High School*, we are empowering our residents to seek new opportunities and transform their lives."

—Lisa Testa, library manager, Ethel M. Gordon Oakland Park Library

Learn more at gale.com/cohs

ST. JOHNS COUNTY RESIDENT INSPIRES OTHERS with Help from Public Library's High School Completion Program



Library's flexible *Career Online High School* Program removes barriers for adult students seeking better career options.

Sabrina Chambers recalls making a few short-sighted decisions as a teenager, but one really stands out to the now 35-year-old: "I dropped out of high school thinking that I would still have job opportunities without having my diploma. Boy, was I wrong."

When Sabrina realized her mistake, she set a goal to earn her high school diploma no matter what obstacles life threw her way. Unfortunately, trying several GED and online high school completion programs made Sabrina realize that achieving this goal would be harder than she expected. Some of the programs were accredited, some were not — and some were too expensive for her limited budget.

"I could tell from the very moment I picked up the *Career Online High School* brochure at St. Johns County Public Library System (SJCPLS) that this would be different," said Sabrina.

And, indeed, it was.

Career Online High School is an accredited high school completion program offered by the library with funding from the State of Florida. The program is 100% online, and students in the program are supported by dedicated academic coaches. These coaches provide extra motivation as students work towards a high school diploma — not a GED — and a career certificate in a high-demand career field.

"Nelson Mandela once said, 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.' The success of our *Career Online High School* graduates proves this to be true," shared Library Director Debra Rhodes Gibson.

"Our students have shown strength, determination, and courage to complete this first step on their path to success. This program has changed their lives, and, in turn, they see and experience their worlds differently, not afraid to make their own contributions and changes."

So far, SJCPLS has seen eight students earn their diplomas and career certificates through its *Career Online High School* program. Some of these graduates, like Sabrina, have moved on to higher education and at least one has become eligible for a promotion at work.

"All of our students have benefited greatly from how flexible the program is," said Michelle Kiley, Youth Services Librarian. "Many have jobs and families that they have to tend to and being able to access coursework 24/7 makes it easier to balance these competing priorities. In addition, the coursework covers many highly relevant topics — conflict resolution being one example — that can be applied on the job and in personal situations right away."

For Sabrina, the *Career Online High School* program is such a perfect fit that she's already recommended it to several family members as well. "My mother, sister, and cousin are also enrolled in the program now!" she said. "They were inspired by me earning my diploma and enrolling in college — I'm now a student at the Florida Institute of Technology, where I'm pursuing my BA in Business Administration." Sabrina has truly leveraged her education to change her world: Her dream career in computer information systems is now reachable, and she can't wait to leverage this interest that she's had since her early high school days to make a better life for herself.

Sabrina added, "As my diploma hangs on my wall, I am reminded every day about the courage, strength, and perseverance it represents — it's my motivation in all I do!"