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Five Years and 2,000 Graduates: How A Pioneering Master of Arts in Teaching Program Grew Exponentially Without Adding a Single Lecture Hall

USC Rossier School of Education Achieves a High-Quality Online Program With Graduates in 47 States and 16 Countries

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 7, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- In late 2008, Karen Symms Gallagher, Dean of the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education, challenged her faculty to develop a strategic plan to produce more qualified, rigorously prepared teachers to effect real change in schools, not just in the Los Angeles area, but throughout the U.S. and around the world. She presented the university leadership with a solution — online education.

Gallagher and her team successfully made the case that the time had arrived to apply modern technologies to teacher education to further USC Rossier's mission of improving learning in urban education locally, nationally and globally. The school also sought to dramatically scale their teacher preparation efforts to prepare outstanding teachers for high-need and urban school districts beyond the usual levels of 50 graduates per year, mostly from the Los Angeles area.

In 2009, USC Rossier partnered with 2U, Inc., to leverage 2U's groundbreaking technology platform and focus on creating the best online course content. The program introduced immersive blended coursework; live, small seminar-style classes online; supervised field placements in urban schools in students' own communities; and video-capture tools that allowed students to record classroom teaching to be reviewed and discussed by faculty and fellow classmates.

Five years later, USC Rossier is realizing its vision — the online Master of Arts in Teaching program, which includes Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), recently surpassed 2,000 graduates who now teach in 947 school districts around the world, most of them in high-need areas.

"I could not be more proud of what the USC Rossier team has accomplished in creating an online teacher preparation program that is in every way the equal of our on-campus program. The rigorous curriculum, the renowned faculty and the mandatory field experiences provide students with the highest quality preparation to enter their own classrooms and make a positive impact from day one," said Dean Gallagher. "There's no question that we have achieved much in the past five years, an impact on education that would have taken decades if we had maintained just the traditional on-campus delivery. Simply put, going online gave us the opportunity to scale and effect real change in a way that was not feasible on campus."

Facts about USC Rossier Online's more than 2,000 Master of Arts in Teaching graduates:

- Graduates hail from 47 U.S. states and the District of Columbia and 16 countries.
- 94 percent of the reportable* Master of Arts in Teaching graduates were employed full time or part time within nine months of the date of degree conferral.
- Master of Arts in Teaching graduates are employed by 947 school districts.
- More than 17 percent of graduates completed a concentration in a STEM field (science, technology, engineering or math).

Recent USC Rossier developments:

- **Expansion and investment in faculty:** In line with the program's growth and standard of maintaining small seminar-style live weekly classes, USC Rossier faculty hiring has grown as well. The Master of Arts in Teaching program started with 10 USC Rossier faculty and has grown to 89 full-time and part-time USC Rossier faculty members.
- **School and district partnerships for scholarships and career development:** USC Rossier has partnered with more than 20 school districts and charter organizations in the U.S. and internationally. Partnerships provide strong placement opportunities for field experience and job openings for graduated students, as well as offer partner faculty and staff USC scholarships and career development opportunities.
- **USC Rossier Commitment:** The school has made a groundbreaking pledge to ensure the success of all of its graduates for the span of their careers. Any USC Rossier alumnus who is facing a professional challenge in his or her practice and reaches out to USC Rossier will receive a plan for improvement from the USC Rossier Response Team.
- **Doctor of Education (EdD) in Organizational Change and Leadership:** USC Rossier announced its first doctorate

degree to be delivered online for current and emerging leaders who are looking to drive systemic change in organizations. Classes begin January 2015.

- **Masters of Education programs in School Leadership, Learning Design and Technology, and Teacher Leadership:** USC Rossier has launched new online master's degree programs. School Leadership prepares principals and other school administrators. Learning Design and Technology prepares professionals for educational program design primarily in non-traditional education environments and Teacher Leadership prepares experienced K-12 teachers to acquire advanced research and effective teaching methods.

"I have gone through one of the most gratifying things I will ever do in my life. I made friends for life, and I have a supportive community in USC's Rossier School of Education that promises to help me be successful in the classroom throughout my entire career," said Edgar Perez, 2014 USC Rossier Master of Arts in Teaching - TESOL graduate.

USC Rossier Online programs are delivered in partnership with 2U, Inc. (NASDAQ: TWOU), a leading provider of cloud-based software-as-a-service solutions for leading nonprofit colleges and universities to deliver high-quality education to qualified students anywhere.

For more information about USC Rossier Online programs, please visit rossieronline.usc.edu or follow us on Twitter at [@USCTeacher](https://twitter.com/USCTeacher).

*Reportable students include graduates who completed a program but excludes those who are unable to seek employment due to a medical condition, active military duty, continuing education, incarceration, death or graduates who certify they are not seeking employment.

About USC Rossier School of Education

The mission of the USC Rossier School of Education (ross-EAR) is to improve learning in urban education locally, nationally and globally. Rossier leads the way in innovative, collaborative solutions to improve education outcomes. Our work is field-based, in the classroom, and online, and reflects a diversity of perspectives and experiences. We pride ourselves on innovation in all our programs, preparing teachers, administrators, and educational leaders who are change agents. We support the most forward-thinking scholars and researchers, whose work is having direct impact on student success in K-12 schools and higher education. We are leaders in using cutting-edge technology to scale up our quality programs for maximum impact. The Rossier School of Education is part of The University of Southern California, one of the world's leading private research universities, located in the heart of Los Angeles. (rossier.usc.edu)

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