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PRESS RELEASE

Wheelhouse Credit Union Honors San Diego County First Responders with 2024 *Badge of Honor* Scholarships

***** Scholarship Program Supports Children of San Diego County First Responders *****

San Diego, CA – 08-13-2024 –Wheelhouse Credit Union (Wheelhouse) has awarded five \$1,000 “*Badge of Honor*” Scholarships to college-bound students to honor the heroic efforts of San Diego County’s first responders and their families.

In the fifth year of the *Badge of Honor* program, scholarships were awarded to rising college freshmen with a parent/grandparent/legal guardian who is an active member of law enforcement, fire protection service, healthcare or EMT in San Diego County.

“We are proud to honor our first responders and their families and express our appreciation to these heroes for their service and dedication to our San Diego community through these scholarships,” said Wheelhouse President/CEO Lisa Paul-Hill. “We congratulate these recipients for all their accomplishments. The heartfelt tributes conveyed by our award recipients demonstrated the tremendous impact, hard work, and sacrifice made by their first responder family members. We wish each of them the very best of luck in their college journey ahead.”

The Wheelhouse 2024 *Badge of Honor* Scholarship recipients are:

Recipient	School	City	College Attending	Family First Responder
Natalie Guevara	Bonita Vista High School	Chula Vista	University of Chicago	Fire Captain/Paramedic, City of San Diego Fire and Rescue
Chaeli Hammes	Valley Center High School	Valley Center	Franciscan University	Fire Captain, Vista Fire Department
Lacey Oliver	Santana High School	Santee	Grossmont-Cuyamaca	Special Agent, California Department of Justice
Samantha Richardson	Patrick Henry High School	San Diego	La Salle	Fire Captain, City of San Diego, Fire and Rescue
Heaven Woldai	Preuss School	San Diego	Harvard College	Respiratory Therapist, Scripps Mercy Hospital



(L-R) Wheelhouse Badge of Honor Recipients Lacey Oliver and Chaeli Hammes; Wheelhouse President/CEO Lisa Paul-Hill; San Diego Police Department Chief and Wheelhouse Supervisory Committee Member Scott Wahl; Wheelhouse Badge of Honor Recipients Samantha Richardson and Natalie Guevara.

Beyond having a parent, grandparent or legal guardian as a first responder, all recipients recently graduated from San Diego County high schools with plans to attend an accredited college. Award criteria included academic achievement, letters of recommendation, an essay about the first responder in their family, and a desire to make an impact on their schools and communities.

The *Badge of Honor* scholarships are in addition to the Credit Union's annual Sustainability College Scholarship Program, which was created in 2005 to support high school seniors in San Diego County. Since the creation of these programs, Wheelhouse has awarded \$126,000 in scholarships to local students.

About Wheelhouse Credit Union

Wheelhouse Credit Union (formerly San Diego Metropolitan Credit Union) is a federally insured, state-chartered credit union founded in 1934 serving more than 32,000 community members in the greater San Diego area. Wheelhouse is "San Diego Made and Proud," providing a full suite of consumer banking services and a comprehensive set of Energy-Efficient and Solar Loan products for the conscientious San Diegan. The Credit Union is committed to helping its Members succeed while supporting initiatives that help San Diego thrive. Please visit [wheelhousecu.com](https://www.wheelhousecu.com) for more information, or follow the Credit Union on Instagram®, Facebook® and X®.

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