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Community Environmental Council Receives Food Rescue Grant and Partners with SBCC and Allan Hancock College to Feed Hungry Students

SANTA BARBARA, CA – The Community Environmental Council (CEC) received \$116,000 from Cal Recycle to feed hungry students at Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) and Allan Hancock College as part of an innovative food rescue program that will also help our region reduce waste and fight climate change. The CEC coordinates [SBC Food Rescue](#), a collaborative food recovery network for Santa Barbara County with support from private, public, and nonprofit sectors. CEC's partnership with the two community colleges in Santa Barbara will create more opportunities for the Foodbank and businesses with excess food, such as supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, and caterers, to safely provide donations to students who are struggling with food insecurity. It will also keep an estimated 84,000 pounds of food out of the landfill.

"This grant provides a great collaborative opportunity to redirect excess food to those in need," says Sigrid Wright, CEO/Executive Director for the CEC. "Keeping edible food out of the landfill while increasing access to sufficient nutritious food is a key component of our efforts to build a sustainable, healthy food system." The grant funds will help extend the reach of the SBC Food Rescue program, which already has participation from a number of local organizations and businesses.

"This funding will allow us to significantly expand our campus programs that address food insecurity," says Rachel Johnson, Director of Grants for the SBCC Foundation. "The SBCC Food Pantry currently serves over 3,500 students per semester with food from the Santa Barbara Food Bank and our campus permaculture gardens. This grant will equip us to give away prepared foods safely as well, meaning students get fed and that food doesn't end up in the garbage." Approximately \$40,000 in funding will allow SBCC to upgrade its

food pantry with reinforced flooring to accommodate new refrigerators, additional storage racks, and new A/C units. The college will also expand the program to its West Campus, and purchase a microwave and water dispensers, all of which will increase the capacity to accept prepared food for distribution at the pantry, and extend the shelf-life of that food once received.

At Allan Hancock College, the Culinary Arts & Management Program will focus on rescuing food from local restaurants in areas where municipal organic waste collection and recycling are not available, by forming partnerships and providing equipment and training. “Allan Hancock College culinary students will take food from both local restaurants and the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County and then prepare and distribute it to students in need,” said Allan Hancock College Director of Grants Dr. LeeAnne McNulty. “The college will use the grant funds for food packaging equipment, a trailer and insulated bags for transportation, thermometers to ensure food safety, promotion and training materials, student worker funding, and compostable service items. We are very excited to help our students with food insecurities through these new tools.”

California’s Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) has awarded \$11 million in grants to 36 local projects throughout the state that prevent waste, fight climate change, and distribute good food to Californians who need it. When food is sent to the landfill, it decomposes and produces methane – a greenhouse gas that is far more potent than carbon dioxide. The purpose of CalRecycle’s [Food Waste Prevention and Rescue Grant Program](#) is to lower overall greenhouse gas emissions by establishing new or expanding existing food waste prevention projects.

“Edible food disposal is a humanitarian tragedy and a tremendous waste of California’s resources,” CalRecycle Director Scott Smithline said. “These local food waste prevention and rescue projects make our communities healthier and help California combat climate change.”

In Santa Barbara County, 50% of low-income households deal with food insecurity, and community college students are among those who lack access to adequate, healthy food. According to the results of the [California Community Colleges #RealCollege Survey](#), released in March 2019, half of the nearly 40,000 California community college students who responded were food insecure in the prior 30 days. The grant funding for SBC Food Rescue and the CEC’s partnership with SBCC and Allan Hancock College will provide food to local students in need, divert waste from the landfill, and reduce greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change – a win-win-win for our community.

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About the Community Environmental Council (CEC)

Since 1970, CEC has incubated and innovated real life solutions that directly impact climate change. Our programs lead to clean vehicles, solar energy, resilient food systems and reduction of single-use plastic. We educate and activate the community by producing events like the annual Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival. Our commitment to excellence has made CEC one of only a small handful of nonprofits in Santa Barbara County to earn the highest possible ratings from both Guidestar and Charity Navigator. Find CEC on the web at CECSB.org and on Facebook.com/CECSB, Instagram.com/CEC_SB and Twitter.com/CECSB.

About Allan Hancock College

Allan Hancock College is a California public community college located in northern Santa Barbara County. The college is ranked as one of the five best community colleges in California and one of the top 120 community colleges in the nation.

Approximately 11,500 credit students enroll each semester at one of the college's four locations in Santa Maria, Lompoc, Santa Ynez Valley, or at Vandenberg Air Force Base. The main campus is in Santa Maria, a 105 acre park-like setting that provides students with exceptional teaching and state of the art technology. The college offers opportunities for those who want to begin a bachelor's degree (university degree), earn an associate degree (two-year degree), prepare for a career, or upgrade skills. The college offers degrees and certificates in more than 100 areas of study. Allan Hancock College is well-known for its English as a second language program, its professional theatre program, and for providing superior support services for its students, including counseling and tutoring.

In every sense, Allan Hancock College is a college for the community. Over 98 percent of its students come from the local area. The college puts great emphasis on the success of its students and challenges them to excel. In return, Hancock students consistently enjoy one of the best, if not the best, acceptance rates to University of California and California State University campuses, including Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and UCSB. Visit: hancockcollege.edu

About the SBCC Foundation

The SBCC Foundation has provided Santa Barbara City College with private philanthropic support since 1976, serving as the vehicle through which individuals and organizations may invest in the college and its students.

As an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization and partner to SBCC, the SBCC Foundation awards more than \$5 million annually for student success programs, scholarships, book grants, emergency funds, and other critical needs of the college. For more than four decades, the resources raised and managed by the SBCC Foundation have supported SBCC students as they prepare for careers, transfer to four-year universities, and pursue lifelong learning goals.

In 2016, the Foundation launched the SBCC Promise, offering all local high school graduates the opportunity to attend SBCC full-time at no cost. The SBCC Promise relies entirely on private support and covers all required fees, books, and supplies for up to two years. To date, more than 3,000 local students

have participated in the SBCC Promise. By removing financial barriers, the SBCC Promise ensures that SBCC's life-changing educational programs are fully accessible to all local students. For more information, visit sbccfoundation.org.