

# **SAN BRUNO**

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## Community Foundation

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### **SAN BRUNO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS COVID-19 RELIEF GRANTS TOTALING \$500,000 TO ASSIST SAN BRUNO SCHOOLS AND SMALL BUSINESSES**

***Grant Funds Will Provide New Teacher Laptops to Support Distance Learning and Two Programs Supporting Struggling Small Businesses***

**San Bruno, California, May 7, 2020** – Last night the Board of Directors of the San Bruno Community Foundation approved a package of COVID-19 relief grants totaling \$490,000 to assist San Bruno schools and small businesses. Together, with a \$10,000 grant helping to provide internet access to low-income students for distance learning approved in April, these grants represent a \$500,000 investment in two key segments of the San Bruno community struggling to deal with the significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The three recently approved grants include \$240,000 to the San Bruno Education Foundation to provide all TK-8 teachers in the San Bruno Park School District with new laptops to ensure that they have up-to-date digital tools necessary to adapt to online teaching methods in a new era of distance learning; \$150,000 to support small businesses in San Bruno through the San Mateo County Strong Small Business Grant Program; and \$100,000 to fund the creation, by the Bay

Area Entrepreneur Center of Skyline College, of the San Bruno Small Business Recovery Assistance Program.

To fund the grants, the Foundation is utilizing a portion of the restitution funds resulting from the City of San Bruno's settlement with Pacific Gas & Electric Company following the 2010 gas pipeline explosion that devastated San Bruno's Crestmoor neighborhood.

"San Bruno is truly the 'City with a Heart,' and the San Bruno Community Foundation is grateful for the opportunity to step forward and help our community during this unprecedented time," said Emily Roberts, President of the SBCF Board of Directors. "Small businesses are the backbone of San Bruno's local economy, and we want to help our diverse small business community to recover from the ravages of COVID-19 and thrive once again. And what better way to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week than by providing our public school teachers with the digital tools they need to teach our students during these less than ideal circumstances."

The Teacher Laptop Initiative addresses a critical need the San Bruno Park School District uncovered as school sites were closed in response to the Shelter-in-Place Orders implemented in March by the County of San Mateo and the State of California. The district's teachers have been asked to make a difficult and sudden shift in their teaching methods to accommodate distance learning, and while the dedicated teachers have done their best to adapt to their new circumstance, their lack of uniform and in many cases outdated technology has made the situation that much more difficult for them. New laptops would ensure that all 115 TK-8 teachers have the same, up-to-date computers to utilize the online teaching tools they now need to reach their students. This grant follows a \$10,000 grant SBCF made last month, in collaboration with the City of San Bruno, the San Bruno Education Foundation, the San Bruno Rotary Club, the San Bruno Police Association, and YouTube, to support students in need of devices and home internet access for distance learning.

“The entire San Bruno Park School District is very grateful for the \$240,000 grant to fund new laptop computers for our dedicated teaching staff,” said Dr. Sharon Kamberg, Interim Superintendent of the San Bruno Park School District. “Not only does this support enable the district to address an unexpected and pressing financial need as we adapt to our new circumstance with COVID-19, but it also reinforces the San Bruno community’s strong commitment to our teachers and students.”

To assist San Bruno small businesses as they attempt to survive the disastrous impacts of COVID-19, SBCF is taking a two-pronged approach. The first prong is to support small businesses in San Bruno through a \$150,000 grant to the San Mateo County Strong Small Business Grant Program. The County Board of Supervisors seeded the program with \$1 million in Measure K funds, and those funds are being distributed as grants of up to \$10,000 each to small businesses throughout the County to pay for payroll, operations, ongoing expenses, or other costs associated with COVID-19 impacts. SBCF’s funds will be earmarked specifically for small businesses in San Bruno.

“The San Bruno Community Foundation’s support for San Mateo County Strong will allow 15 San Bruno small businesses to benefit from the Small Business Grant Program,” said Rosanne Foust, President and CEO of the San Mateo County Economic Development Association (SAMCEDA), which is assisting the County in the creation and implementation of the San Mateo County Strong program. “This funding is critical as small businesses attempt to overcome the economic hardships resulting from COVID-19.”

The second prong of SBCF’s small business assistance efforts is a \$100,000 grant underwriting the creation of the San Bruno Small Business Recovery Assistance Program. Administered by the Bay Area Entrepreneur Center (BAEC) of Skyline College, this program will provide valuable financial and technical assistance to a broad pool of San Bruno small businesses to help them develop business plans for recovery from the COVID-19 damage they have experienced. Over the next six months, San Bruno businesses will have access to no-cost financial advising,

business consulting, tax preparation, translation services, business tools, virtual workshops, and a recovery symposium.

“As the off-site business hub for Skyline College and a local workforce, business and economic development resource center located in downtown San Bruno, as well as a close partner of the San Bruno Chamber of Commerce, the BAEC is uniquely poised to give the small business community the assistance it needs during this time of crisis,” said Pcyeta Stroud, BAEC Director and the President of the San Bruno Chamber of Commerce. “With SBCF’s generous financial backing, the Small Business Recovery Assistance Program will be able to provide San Bruno small business owners with valuable resources and tools they need to apply for funding programs, develop business recovery plans, and adapt their businesses to their evolving reality. Outreach for this program to the small business community will begin immediately.”

Don Cecil, a consultant with SAMCEDA, summed up the value of SBCF’s two-pronged approach to assisting small businesses: “To use a metaphor from the Titanic, if direct financial assistance to small businesses through the San Mateo County Strong program is the life preserver, the Small Business Recovery Assistance Program that the BAEC will offer is the lifeboat. This model of dual support, which we hope other communities will replicate, is critical for small businesses weathering the COVID-19 storm.”

“SBCF was created in the aftermath of a horrific tragedy that our community endured nearly a decade ago,” said Leslie Hatamiya, SBCF Executive Director. “At this challenging time, it seems most appropriate for SBCF to utilize a portion of the restitution funds that resulted from the gas pipeline explosion to address some of the significant needs that our community now faces as a result of the horrific tragedy that is COVID-19.”

The San Bruno Community Foundation is the nonprofit organization created by the City of San Bruno to administer the \$70 million in restitution funds received from PG&E after the devastating 2010 gas pipeline explosion in San Bruno’s Crestmoor neighborhood. The

Foundation serves the San Bruno community by investing in projects, programs, services, and facilities that have significant and lasting benefits. Through making grants, leveraging partnerships, and taking advantage of other resources, SBCF assists and enables the community to maximize shared investments and realize their subsequent enhancements and benefits.

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