

PRESS RELEASE

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COMMUNITY BRIDGES
PUENTES DE LA COMUNIDAD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UndocuFund Aids Residents During COVID-19 Pandemic

Community Bridges expands services to provide rental assistance to undocumented workers

Santa Cruz County, CA —Thousands of Santa Cruz County agriculture, hospitality and service industry workers have lost wages due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They have been disproportionately affected by business shut downs and many are unable to pay their bills, are at risk of losing their homes and face imminent food insecurity. Undocumented individuals in these industries are most impacted as they are not eligible for traditional public benefits, such as unemployment or public food assistance programs. As the leading human services agency in Santa Cruz County, Community Bridges has expanded its services and worked collaboratively with local partners to fill this gap.

UndocuFund, a collaborative effort between Community Bridges and other local agencies within Santa Cruz and Monterey counties, provides undocumented individuals and families impacted by COVID-19 with one-time emergency cash assistance. To date, the program has helped 826 families pay their rent and stay in their homes.

“Undocumented workers are essential to our economic recovery. They contribute over \$21 million to our economy in state and local taxes and we can’t leave them unsupported during this crisis,” states Ray Cancino, Community Bridges CEO. “Our mission states that we provide equitable access to all people and we have put that into action through the UndocuFund.”

Through Community Bridges and other partnering agencies, families receive support and peace of mind knowing they are not at risk of being displaced during these difficult times. UndocuFund is funded through a myriad of funding sources including our local Community Foundations of Santa Cruz and Monterey and others. Additional partner agencies include Catholic Charities Diocese of Monterey, Community Action Board Santa Cruz County, Live Oak Cradle to Career, Monarch Services, Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, Salud Para la Gente, Santa Cruz Community Ventures and United Way Santa Cruz - all working tirelessly to get dollars into families hands and fundraising critical resources to distribute to qualifying families.

“The Family Resource Collective team has seen hundreds of working families who in the best of times financially struggle and sacrifice in ways most of us will never experience,” said Roxanne Moore, Program Director for the Community Bridges’ Family Resource Collective. “When the economic rug was pulled out, there was nothing there to catch them. \$500 doesn't solve a lost job, but it does give people some hope that they are going to get through this.”

To find out more about the UndocuFund program text (831) 854-7093 or contact a Community Bridges Family Resource Center.

ABOUT COMMUNITY BRIDGES

Community Bridges envisions a thriving community where every person has the opportunity to unleash their full potential. Together, our family of programs delivers essential services, provides equitable access to resources, and advocates for health and dignity across every stage of life. To learn more, please visit www.communitybridges.org.

The Community Bridges family of programs includes the Child & Adult Care Food Program, Child Development Division, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), La Manzanita Community Resources, Live Oak Community Resources, Mountain Community Resources, Nueva Vista Community Resources, Elderday Adult Day Health Care, Lift Line and Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County.

ABOUT THE FAMILY RESOURCE COLLECTIVE

The compassionate and knowledgeable staff at the four Family Resource Centers (FRCs) offer a warm, friendly, safe place for the Santa Cruz County community to access resources that offer stability and hope for the future. Bi-lingual and bi-cultural advocacy services meet the long and short-term needs of families at no or low cost. FRCs help our community access benefits and resources such as housing, employment, healthcare, disability, unemployment, immigration, mental health counseling, literacy education, youth tutoring, substance abuse recovery, domestic violence prevention, nutrition, and child care.

Watsonville: La Manzanita Community Resources 521 Main St, Suite Y Watsonville, CA 95076
<https://communitybridges.org/lmcr/>

Live Oak: Live Oak Community Resources 1740 17th Ave, Santa Cruz, CA 95062
<https://communitybridges.org/locr/>

Felton: Mountain Community Resources 6134 Hwy 9, Felton, CA 95018
<https://communitybridges.org/mcr/>

Santa Cruz: Nueva Vista Community Resources 711 E Cliff Dr, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
<https://communitybridges.org/nvcr/>

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