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Philanthropy and Community Launch San Joaquin Valley COVID-19 Response Fund

Fresno, Calif. – Today, The Center at Sierra Health Foundation, through the San Joaquin Valley Health Fund (SJVHF), a community-led funder collaborative working across the nine counties of the region, announces the launch of a rapid response fund to support those most impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis.

The mission of the SJVHF COVID-19 Response Cluster is to ensure vulnerable families, individuals and the nonprofits serving them receive assistance for essential supplies, food, rent, utilities and other needs, including access to the services, programs and protections available under local, state and federal law.

This effort will support the SJVHF's existing collaboration of 27 funder partners and nearly 150 partner organizations and grassroots groups to deepen the impact and reach of the existing network of cultural and ethnically diverse partner organizations and grassroots groups to effectively and expeditiously provide response and support to particularly vulnerable communities.

Sierra Health Foundation and The California Endowment have seeded the fund with nearly \$500,000.

“Our community members and organizations need immediate relief; this fund allows us to tap into the existing networks and expertise of community organizations to provide needed support to those experiencing the immediate consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Chet P. Hewitt, president and CEO of Sierra Health Foundation and The Center, which manages the San Joaquin Valley Health Fund. “We are proud to spend our time, energy and dollars to build a bridge to necessary statewide and federal assistance for our families, individuals and organizations.”

Individual and institutions can make donations through the Donate4SJV website [link]. There are a number of ways donors can support the SJVHF COVID-19 Response Cluster:

- Support for Farmworkers and Immigrants
- Enhanced Health Education/Health System Navigation Resources

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- Enhanced Employment/Worker Rights System Navigation Resources
- Support for Vulnerable Children and Families
- Support for Homeless and Those in Over-Crowded Housing
- Nonprofit Flexible Support
- Support focused on other particular vulnerable populations (e.g., LGBTQ+, limited-English-speaking populations) or geographies (specified San Joaquin Valley county or counties)

“Despite immense challenges, we see our communities standing up for each other in this historic moment,” said Dr. Robert K. Ross, president and CEO of The California Endowment. “Now, more than ever, we need to work together to support and flatten the curve of this pandemic. We hope this fund will help communities to support each other and provide some resources that will help during this very critical time.”

The Center at Sierra Health Foundation will administer the funds, deploying directly to community organizations working closely in neighborhoods and communities throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

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About the San Joaquin Valley Health Fund and The Center at Sierra Health Foundation:

The San Joaquin Valley Health Fund is managed by The Center at Sierra Health Foundation and provides funding support for nearly 150 community partners from 27 state and national funders committed to the San Joaquin Valley: Sierra Health Foundation, The California Endowment, Rosenberg Foundation, The California Wellness Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Blue Shield of California Foundation, Wallace H. Coulter Foundation, Dignity Health, Tides, Hellman Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, Convergence Partnership, Health Net, The Grove Foundation, Werner-Kohnstamm Family Giving Fund, New Venture Fund, Sunlight Giving, Heising-Simons Foundation, The Libra Foundation, Ceres Trust, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, College Futures Foundation, BeaconIA – a donor-advised fund of Impact Assets, Walter Funder Initiative, S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Latino Community Foundation and San Francisco Foundation. Learn more at www.shfcenter.org/sjvhealthfund.

The Center at Sierra Health Foundation works to promote health and racial equity in communities throughout California with local, state and national partners: www.shfcenter.org.