



# Salinas Valley

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# BUSINESS JOURNAL



Leadership Monterey County  
Develops Local Leaders  
page 14



Supercharging Asset Accumulation  
for Retirement  
page 22



Salinas City Councilmember Steve McShane speaks at a Dec. 11, 2017, community meeting about the City of Salinas Downtown Vibrancy Plan, which McShane strongly supported.

## Exclusive: Insights Into Councilmember Steve McShane’s Public Service and Resignation

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Former Salinas City Councilmember Steve McShane is not ashamed to describe himself as a friend and neighbor rather than an intellectual or a philosopher. He wasn’t inspired to speak eloquently about the lofty obligations of public service when he announced his plan on April 9 to resign from the Salinas City Council on May 7. Instead, he simply cited faith, family, and a desire to remove himself from city council dysfunction.

**MC SHANE** see page 8

## City of Salinas Has Revealed a Projected \$20 Million Budget Deficit

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison



During a sparsely attended Salinas City Council Finance Committee meeting on April 9, 2024, city staff revealed that the city budget under development for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025) has a projected deficit of \$20 million. This means that if the city

council enacted the budget prepared by staff as of that date, the city would end up spending \$20 million more in the coming year than it collects in revenue. The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Fund, Measure E Fund, and Measure G Fund operating budget is about \$147 million. Using the current budget as a

basis to calculate necessary spending cuts for the next budget, the city council will need to cut the budget by 13.6 percent to eliminate a \$20 million deficit. City staff told the Finance Committee that they wanted to tell the city council about the

**DEFICIT** see page 6



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# Elections Foster Engagement and Debate, Forging a Stronger, More Resilient Civic Fabric

By Jennifer L. Williams, SVCC Board Chair

**W**ere privileged to join you in honoring local businesses and community leaders at the 103rd Annual Awards Luncheon on April 11. A summary of the event — with pictures! — is included in this month's issue. We loved celebrating with all of you who were able to join us and hope that you and those who couldn't attend will join us for the 104th celebration next year!

The award recipients recognized that hard work and support from their loved ones and the Salinas Valley community in which they take so much pride brought success to their businesses. Congratulations to each of those nominated and honored!

Our Government Affairs Director Kevin Dayton continues to track and analyze the latest public policy issues in the Salinas Valley on your behalf. His contributions to this issue include an exclusive interview with resigning Salinas City Councilmember Steve McShane, an article about the City of Salinas' current projected budget shortfall of \$20 million, the impending Salinas City Council vote on rent stabilization and tenant protection, and the final data for new housing in unincorporated Monterey County.

These are all complicated issues, and this Business Journal delves deeper into the complexities involved to illustrate potential benefits, risks, and unintended consequences.

The City has several opportunities — immediately following the adoption of the new transparent Annual Budget Community Sponsorship Policy — to help preserve and advance the obligations of government to the people it serves. Transparency in the processes of addressing an expected budget deficit, high housing costs, and a Council vacancy provide a rare opportunity to build trust in local government.

We rely on our elected officials to thread together the diverse voices and aspirations of their constituents into a cohesive vision for the common good. An appointment to

fill the upcoming City Council vacancy may be expedient, but dissenting voices must not be marginalized, alternative viewpoints dismissed, or critical inquiry blunted. Only through a commitment to inclusivity and open-mindedness can elected officials ensure that their decisions truly reflect the needs of the people they serve.



Your Chamber  
conducts a thorough  
candidate-review  
process to identify  
leaders who are  
most likely to  
support the business  
policies adopted by  
the Chamber and  
represent the values  
of its members.”

Elections serve as the cornerstone of democratic legitimacy, providing the people with the opportunity to directly participate in the selection of their leaders. They serve as a crucible wherein ideas are tested, and candidates are held to account by the very individuals they seek to represent. Your Chamber conducts a thorough candidate-review process to identify leaders who are most likely to support the business policies adopted by the Chamber and represent the values of its members. An election will ensure the process fosters engagement and debate, and ultimately, forges a stronger and more resilient civic fabric.

A shared commitment to transparently restoring a full City Council and developing policies allows us to work together to address pressing challenges and pursue

the common good.

Soon the Chamber will begin work on the Nomination process for new members for the Board of Directors to serve in 2025. Your membership is a testament to your desire to have a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley and demonstrates your commitment to serving in a leadership capacity. The Board will be filling six slots for 2025, and we hope you will apply to be part of this group of experts and leaders in our community. 🌱

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deficit now, rather than informing them when staff presented the draft budget to them for discussion at their May 21, 2024 meeting. However, staff did not mention the \$20 million deficit during the full city council meeting later that day. The city council is scheduled to approve the final budget at their June 11, 2024 meeting.

Unexpectedly, staff also claimed to the Finance Committee that they will present a balanced budget to the city council on May 21, 2024, without cuts in services. Staff did not offer any clues as to how this would be done.

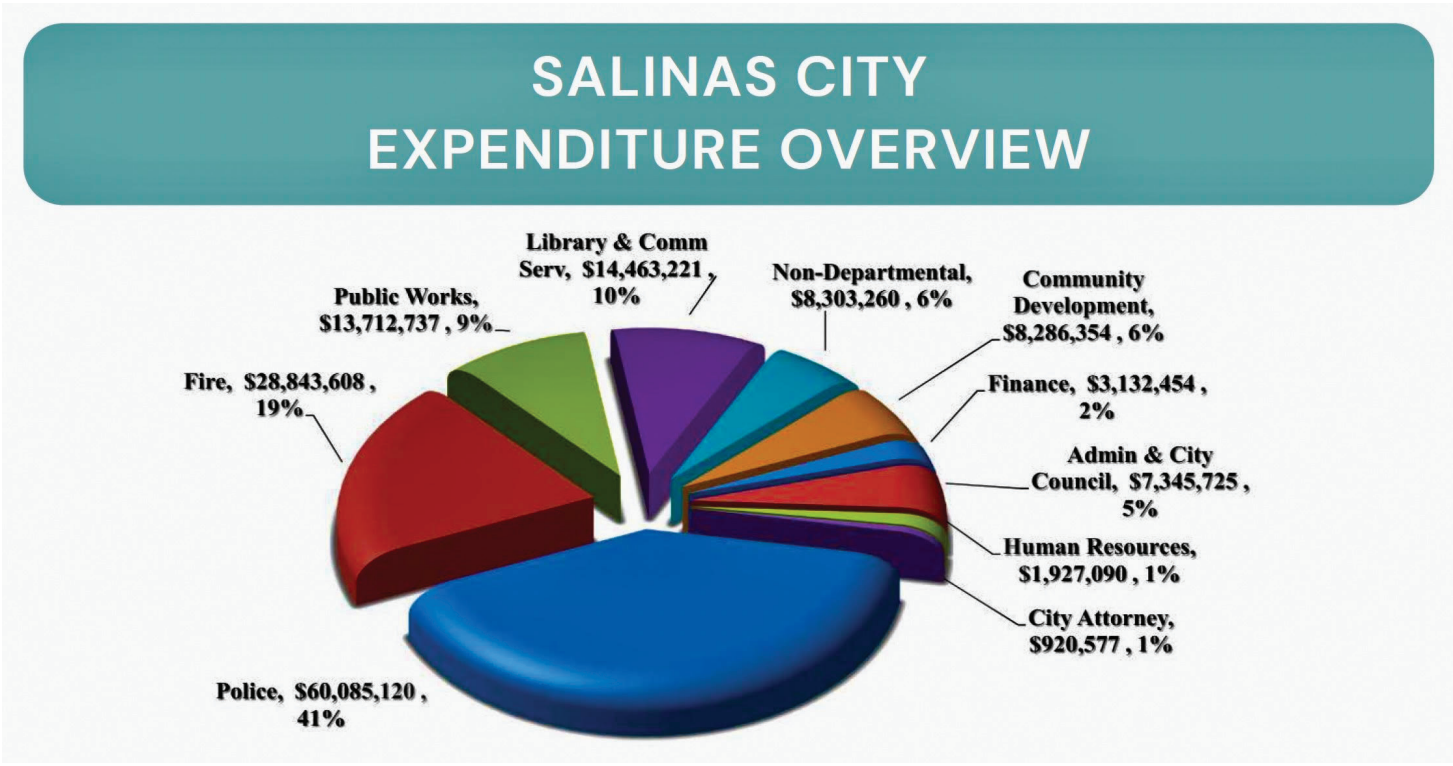
What may happen as the final vote approaches on the budget?

It is likely that results of this year's community budget surveys and meetings will show public demand for more spending on facilities, programs, and services — demands made by residents who didn't know there was a projected \$20 million budget deficit. Public expectations will need to change. The city council will have to shift from a "More Spending" mindset to a "Cut Spending" mindset. Only Mayor Kimbley Craig and Councilmember Tony Barrera have experience with the lean years for the city budget during and after the Great Recession.

The city's employee unions, including police and fire associations, will begin lobbying to preserve their gains in collective bargaining and will warn about threats to public safety and quality of life if their departments are targeted for reductions. The drums will begin beating again outside the city council chambers.

Community organizations, programs, and events that have enjoyed city support in past years may not get such funding this year. This will frustrate community leaders, who will warn that popular, beloved events may be cancelled if city financial support does not happen.

It's possible many vacancies throughout city departments will



not be filled. "The Salinas Plan II" and other comprehensive plans to reduce spending will be resurrected into prominence, to the dismay of interest groups.

Proposals may also be considered to increase revenue. The city may resort to short-term schemes to obtain immediate revenue at the expense of considering long-term impacts. And while city leaders worry about the expiration of the Measure G sales tax in 2030, some city councilmembers may start proposing higher and new taxes and fees, with particular focus on agriculture-related businesses.

November 2024 elections will be particularly vicious, as interest groups spend significant money on independent expenditures defending or attacking city councilmembers for the budget deficit and the resulting changes.

Organizations such as the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce could play an important leadership role in proposing budget solutions and relieving city councilmembers from isolation in making tough but necessary fiscal decisions. 🌱



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For questions or for any purchases, contact our Director of Operations and Finance, Willa Doroy  
831-751-7725 / Willa@SalinasChamber.com



# With People Steadily Leaving California, is the Golden State Losing Its Luster?

By Mac McDonald, Salinas Valley Business Journal

**C**alifornians are fleeing the once-Golden State and Monterey County is no exception.

In March, The U.S. Census Bureau reported that California's population as of last July had dropped to an estimated 38,965,000 — down by 75,400 in a year — and 573,000 below California's peak of 39.5 million residents in 2020.

When the century started, California's growing population was 34 million and was predicted to reach 45 million by 2020 and an astounding 60 million by 2040. Obviously, that's not happening.

From July 1, 2022, to July 1, 2023, 17 of California's 53 counties experienced a population increase while the majority lost residents. Populations fell in every coastal county from Del Norte down to San Diego.

According to the Census Bureau, Monterey County's population as of April 1, 2020, was 439,035. By the end of 2020, it dropped slightly to 438,322, and estimates for 2021 (the census is held every 10 years, the next one is 2030) was 437,158; down to 432,884 for 2022; and 430,723 in 2023. That's more than 8,300 in four years.

Of course, some of that loss can be attributed to what the Census Bureau calls "natural change," such as births and deaths, but the biggest cause is that more people are moving out of California than are moving in, something that's been happening since the pandemic.

And the reasons are pretty simple: California is just an expensive place to live compared to a lot of other states. Housing prices are going off the charts, it's harder and more expensive to find insurance for housing,



Getty Images

developers are building fewer homes (again, high insurance and mortgage rates) paychecks aren't keeping up with high costs ranging from gas to groceries, taxes are higher than other states, and California just got too big for its carrying capacity.

"Grow and grow and grow and eventually there's not enough room," Hans Johnson, a demographer at the nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California told the LA Times. "The easy places for growth have been used up. Growth today means infill development [in cities]. That's expensive and controversial. Or you live further away from your job."

Or, as the case is these days, leave

the state and find cheaper housing and taxes in almost every other state. Add high costs of land and labor plus tighter regulatory restrictions and neighborhood resistance to growth, and you've created a scenario that's ripe for folks to consider uprooting their lives.

Last November, the median cost of a California house was almost \$800,000, which is more than double the \$336,000 you'd pay in Texas, according to Redfin housing market data. In Arizona and Nevada, it was \$435,000 and \$479,000, respectively. All three are destinations for those Californians fleeing the state.

During the pandemic, demographer Johnson told the Times, highly

educated people with the opportunity to work remotely began leaving California because they could find affordable housing and do their jobs at home rather than commute long distances. They also began leaving for states such as Texas and Nevada that don't impose income taxes. California has the nation's highest state income tax rate, 13.3%, and also has high sales and gas taxes.

California homeowners got more bad news in the last month. The state's leading insurer, State Farm General, announced that it would not renew 72,000 property owner policies

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## LOSING LUSTER - from page 7

statewide, joining Farmers, Allstate and other companies who are either not writing or limiting new policies or tightening underwriting standards. The insurers are blaming wildfires, inflation that raised reconstruction costs, higher prices for reinsurance they buy to boost their bottom line and protect themselves from catastrophes, as well as outdated state regulations — claims that are disputed by some consumer advocates.

But there are other reasons for the exodus, and reasons that might not be readily apparent: birth rates and foreign immigration.

Those who were born between 1946 and 1964, baby boomers, are dying off and their children and grandchildren aren't having enough babies to fill the gap. The state's fertility rate has fallen faster than most other states, from a rate above the national average (2.15) in 2008 to the seventh lowest in 202 (1.52), according to the Public Policy Institute of California.

The pandemic took its toll on the population, especially older people. Deaths increased by 19% in 2020 over 2019, according to the institute.

The pandemic also took a toll on



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— Hans Johnson, demographer,  
Public Policy Institute of California

immigration into California, which had been a primary driver of population growth for years. During COVID, visas were restricted to reduce the spread of the virus. Although immigration has increased since then, it's nowhere near prior levels. The state is no longer the preferred destination that it once was.

Add to that Mexico's birth rate, which has significantly declined and its labor market has become less competitive. Fewer Mexican residents are heading north to look for work and many Central Americans are seeking asylum, but mostly in other states.

Some residents see a silver lining to

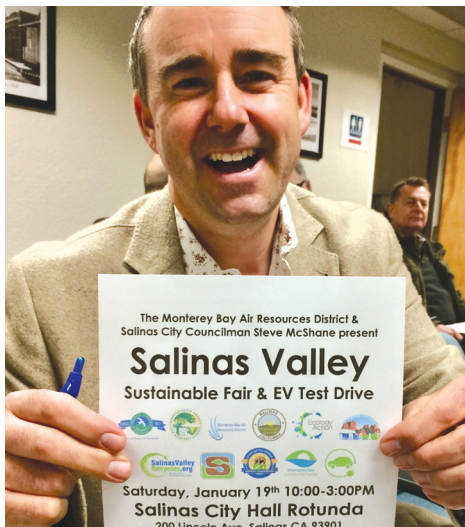


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the loss to other states: more room on the highways and byways, less congestion overall, and less stress on our unreliable water supply and infrastructure. But that also means less tax revenue. The top 20% of earners, those making at least \$120,000 a year, supplies 91% of the state income tax, which means that if people keep leaving, the state government will have to tighten its purse strings. And that's in the current climate where the state is facing a deficit of billions of dollars.

And California could lose a little bit of power in the House of Representatives. It currently has 51 (the state lost 1 in 2020) and may lose two more after the 2030 Census if the exodus to other states continues.

There's no easy solution to this loss — it's not as if California is no longer a desirable place to move to — it's just that more are leaving than moving in because the luster of the Golden State may not be as bright and shiny as it once was. 🌱



Councilmember Steve McShane promotes a Jan. 19, 2019 multi-agency Salinas Valley Sustainable Fair and EV Test Drive event at a board meeting of Monterey Bay Community Power (now called Central Coast Community Energy).

## MCSHANE - from page 1

But Steve was not a warm body filling a position. He's a prominent long-time regional leader in business, community organizations, and government service. With that stature, he could not escape public demands for a more substantive explanation for his resignation.

Why would someone with nearly 20 years in local elected office suddenly resign in the middle of his fourth term on the city council? That's what friends (and foes) wanted to know. Not surprisingly, the community began answering their own questions with speculation and gossip.

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce saw an opportunity to use the Salinas Valley Business Journal

as a forum to offer an introspective analysis of Steve's public service and his unexpected resignation. In fact, the Business Journal may be the most ideal place to report his thoughts to the public.

Steve consistently supported businesses during his tenure on the Salinas City Council (and earlier on the Hartnell Community College District board). He was endorsed by the Chamber in his first three elections for city council and in his 2020 campaign for District 4 of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors. He even served as President & CEO of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce for 18 months. He has been an ally to the business community.

In addition, some Chamber leaders knew that Steve was strained by a

challenge many local elected officials face: how to balance his civic duties with his family responsibilities as a child, a spouse, and a parent. A few Chamber leaders also knew that Steve was turning his heart and mind to his religious faith. He has been seeking a sanctuary of eternal, transcendent meaning in a world where people are tempted to harm each other in pursuit of power, position, fame, money, and pleasure.

Businesses in the Salinas Valley regard Steve as a friend and neighbor. He was willing to provide the Business Journal with his thoughts about his public service and the changing times that led him to resign from the Salinas City Council.

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Councilmember Steve McShane organized a July 15, 2019, neighborhood meeting to call for city action on a blighted house on the corner of West Alisal and Lorimer Streets. The city used its new Blight Accountability Ordinance (championed by McShane) to make the owner finally responsible for a house that was vacant and deteriorating at a prominent location for 25 years.

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## AN IDEA OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Steve was first appointed to a government commission in 1995 and elected to his first public office in 2003. He observes three kinds of people who serve in local government:

1. Some people love public policy. They research issues and devise ideas for legislation. They read every staff memo and study the municipal code.
2. Some people love politics and campaigning. They join political party central committees, associate with statewide and national politicians, and may hold ambition to pursue a higher office.
3. Steve puts himself in a third category. He is someone who simply enjoys activities centered around improving the community. He believes in the adage that people's checkbooks and calendars reveal their true interests and motivations.

While on the Salinas City Council, Steve hosted more than 100 community

meetings for constituents. He organized numerous special community events, including the Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival, a city tree-planting program, the Founder's Day 150th Anniversary celebration, and the Salinas United community clean-up program — the precursor to AMOR Salinas.

These events gave Steve refreshing opportunities to interact in person with residents and hear their concerns in their own words. Steve regarded community events as essential for an elected official to recognize which community sentiments are legitimate and which are artificially manipulated through organized political operations funded by outside parties.

Steve regards collaboration and cooperation as foundational principles for successful public service. In all of his government roles, he maintained an attitude of optimism and positivity, with a "song in my heart and spirit of can-do." Steve always focused on fostering a positive relationship with all of his fellow colleagues serving in public office.

Some of his warmest experiences he

appreciated as a public official involved his leadership in regional agencies such as Central Coast Community Energy (formerly Monterey Bay Community Power), the Monterey Bay Air Resources District, and the Association of Monterey Bay Governments (AMBAG). At these regional agencies, appointed officials from different places who often don't know each other come together to govern for a common cause not directly related to the offices they were elected to hold. These circumstances require them to work collaboratively, often without the coercive taint of politics.

## CHANGING TIMES OF THE MID-2010S

Steve has been involved in politics for almost 30 years. He began public service when constituents communicated with their officials primarily through mail, faxes, and phone calls. Most constituents followed their government through mainstream daily newspapers, weekly news magazines, and radio and TV news broadcasts. Professional reporters and editors filtered and checked the news before publication to

minimize lies, errors, and brazen bias. Government meeting agendas were available on paper for people to receive in the mail or read on a bulletin board where meetings were held.

Generations change. Technology changes. And societal attitudes change. By the mid-2010s, Steve observed that the way he served in elected office was falling out of public favor. The public began to express greater disdain and suspicion about elected officials and candidates who projected a governing style of optimism, positivity, and collaboration.

The first dramatic change Steve noticed was driven by social media, which quickly displaced mainstream news media as a chief source of government information for the public. By the mid-2010s, Steve was getting twice as much constituent correspondence as he had in the early 2010s. But this did not mean democracy was growing stronger.

Much of the increase consisted of complaints stirred up by social media

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posts reporting negatively about the three branches of the federal government, rather than the city government. It seemed that residents had forgotten about the different levels and different branches of American government. Even when constituents seemed to understand the separation of powers, they still demanded the City of Salinas to breach that separation and influence the federal government.

And the correspondence was sometimes angry and threatening. Of course, politics before the mid-2010s was not always polite and civil, but the new intensity of public anger and hate was noteworthy. It infected politics. As Steve notes, the political rancor seeped into other activities, such as running a gardening business or organizing a neighborhood barbecue.

People had more access to information and more ways to communicate it to their elected officials. Regrettably, some used these new electronic resources as a tool to demand that government reorganize “the system” in the way they wanted, as if they were rebooting a computer with an error message. Government policies and services became the equivalent of an Amazon package delivery or a digital song — the product demanded by the people needed to be delivered immediately.

But the American system of government was not designed to immediately gratify the people by appeasing their outrages of the day. In fact, it was designed to prevent that kind of rule. Steve could not fulfill public demands for systematic change, even if he wanted to do so.

Serving in local public office then became more unpleasant with the candidacy of Donald Trump and his subsequent election as President. President Trump ended post-World War II political norms and injected a new degree of emotional intensity into politics. Social media then fanned this intensity.

Constituent contacts to Steve tripled, but it wasn't necessarily helpful. People said what they wanted and

believed what they wanted. It became unpleasant to serve the public when much of it was perpetually activated into a frenzy of seething rage.

Meanwhile, the decline of local journalism was accelerating. Quality and quantity declined. Major city policy stories were ignored. And as public expectations for political coverage changed, the struggling news business began catering to popular demand for anger and hostility as a marketable product.

Nevertheless, for a few more years the fairly staid Salinas City Council conducted business as usual, collaborating through routine 7-0 votes to enact moderate, technical policies favorable to economic development and job creation. Steve was the lead backer for several initiatives, including the implementation of a Downtown Vibrancy Plan and blight control.

It was still a good time for Steve to serve the public as Steve.

#### **THE FINAL BLOW - SALINAS ABSORBS THE NATIONAL MOOD**

Societal upheaval caused by the COVID-19 public health orders and uprisings for racial justice in the summer and fall of 2020 brought changes to the world, the nation, the state, and the City of Salinas. When COVID-19 public health orders suspended or hindered personal interaction starting in 2020, organized political movements gained unprecedented power to influence governments through electronic communications. The City of Salinas was not an exception.

Community meetings once beloved by Steve were now virtual and infiltrated by offensive “Zoom-bombing.” Out-of-area instigators used electronic meetings to promote extremist ideologies. Even local community leaders, isolated from the benefit of personal interaction, sometimes advocated inappropriate responses to complex community problems that needed to be addressed through collaboration.

It was difficult to serve the community when anyone could hide behind an electronic veil. “We held city council meetings on Zoom and didn't know if someone was calling from South

Salinas, Philadelphia, or someone in another country,” Steve observes.

The desire to overturn the system was reflected locally in the November 2020 elections. Voters in Salinas chose new, young city councilmembers who held somewhat different views of the city than the views of Steve and his old collaborators. Traits exhibited by Steve in his public service — optimism and positivity and collaboration — now seemed inappropriate at a time of crisis.

For people who had concluded that elite business interests (and their allies, the police) were depriving Salinas residents of equity in services, projects, and programs, it was not a time to be optimistic or positive or collaborative. It was time to disrupt the system.

And a newly empowered coalition seeking social justice and liberation for disadvantaged residents had no legitimate reason to collaborate with Steve. He was seen — rightly — as a strong advocate for business and the police.

Helping business and the police wasn't Steve's fundamental reason for serving in local public office. But this didn't matter; even the framework of public policy had changed. At a city council strategic planning meeting, one councilmember asserted that the session structure and facilitation were oriented toward cultural expectations and norms of people holding wealth and power, thus minimizing the ability of disadvantaged people to have their voices recognized and affirmed.

Whether this was true or not, Steve's enthusiasm for collaboration and friendship across ideological lines wasn't going to find a place in this new political context.

After the 2022 elections, at least one city councilmember began seeking public records to substantiate his belief that the city's major business interests were obtaining financial and policy privileges in improper ways. Steve was someone with a history of enthusiastically supporting what he regarded as optimistic, positive, collaborative community outreach and activities. He was quickly entangled in controversy, along with his family.

And ultimately, this is when Steve

realized he could still be Steve. But he could not do it by continuing to endure the relentless animosity generated by his presence on the Salinas City Council.

Steve and his wife had young children at home. They were addressing serious long-term care options with their parents. His family wanted and needed his optimism, positivity, and collaboration. Meanwhile, Steve was going to city council meetings to get routinely disparaged by other city councilmembers and residents aligned with them.

Steve also saw that his church appreciated optimism, positivity, and collaboration. He believes that a loving relationship with neighbors starts with a right relationship with God. It is not achieved by pursuing a struggle among social classes to possess the temporary things of this world, or by the government trying to fulfill demands from the people.

Steve chose family and faith over service on the Salinas City Council.

#### **THE FUTURE**

People routinely tell Steve that elected office is definitely something they do NOT want to do. And his experience perhaps confirms their arguments against running for public office.

But Steve still says public service is a worthy and noble cause, even if the political culture nowadays is sometimes more contentious than collaborative.

Steve has traveled to more than 90 countries. During some of these trips he met with local elected officials. (At least one “sister city” relationship of the City of Salinas was developed through his travels.) He has heard firsthand how other countries handle the relationship between the government and the people.

Steve emphasizes that his travels have shown him that “even with our flaws, we have the best form of government and enjoy some of the greatest prosperity in the history of man.” He will never give up asking right-minded people to consider elected office.

Maybe you are such a person for this time and this place. 🌱





## Alliance on Aging Announces Community Outreach for Developing Age - and Disability-Friendly Communities in Monterey County

With the support of a pivotal grant from the California Department of Aging, the Alliance on Aging (AOA) is embarking on a transformative journey to foster age-and disability-friendly communities across Salinas, North, and South Monterey County. This initiative, part of the Local Aging and Disabilities Action Plan (LADAP), aims to address the unique needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities, focusing on creating inclusive, supportive environments. Phoebe Cheney, a dedicated committee member and a lifelong resident of South Monterey County, highlights the critical nature of AOA's work: "As someone who has lived and worked here for over 50 years, I've seen firsthand the challenges faced by our aging population and those with disabilities — challenges like transportation to medical services, social isolation, and caregiving needs. The Alliance on Aging and many other community partners are not just recognizing these issues but are actively working towards solutions by studying our rural agricultural communities and enhancing services to make our towns more age and disability-friendly."



## Santa Cruz County Bank Recognized by Findley Reports, Inc. as Super Premier Performing Bank For 14 Years

Super Premier is the highest rating level established by Findley Reports, Inc. For a bank to achieve the Super Premier performance rating it must meet four key performance ratios established by Findley Reports, Inc. Santa Cruz County Bank met the four criteria at a high level of performance: growth, return on beginning equity, net operating income as a percentage of average assets and loan losses as a percentage of gross loans. The Findley Reports, Inc. has been recognizing the financial performance of banking institutions in California and the Western United States for over 50 years. Gary Steven Findley, Editor of The Findley Reports, remarked, "One of the true joys in reviewing the performance of all banks in the western United States is recognizing exceptional performance. Santa Cruz County Bank has again been recognized as a Super Premier Performing Bank and remains one of the top performing banks year in and year out."



## Rancho Cielo Secures \$1 Million for Pastry Kitchen

The Community Project Funding initiative enables members of Congress to advocate for specific projects that directly benefit their districts. It's a significant step in supporting local communities. Rep. Zoe Lofgren, California's 18th Congressional District, requested funding for 14 local projects totaling \$50,095,535. On Saturday, March 9, President Biden signed off on the initiative. Among the projects on Lofgren's list is funding for Rancho Cielo to expand its Drummond Culinary Academy. This expansion aims to transform the academy into a state-of-the-art culinary center, providing students with unparalleled opportunities. The Culinary Advisory Committee at Rancho Cielo, in conjunction with labor market data, underscores the need for pastry chefs — a specialized trade that local restaurants and hotels seek. By investing in these facilities, Rancho Cielo's DCA students will benefit from enriched experiences, essential resources, and skill enhancement. Ultimately, this investment will contribute to better living wages for our graduates. With the support of the Community Development Funds, the plan is to build a 1,200-square-foot pastry kitchen on Rancho Cielo grounds. The kitchen will be adjacent to the central kitchen and dining room, including a lab/classroom, production room, administrative office, storage space, and restrooms. With an innovative, fully equipped pastry kitchen, Rancho Cielo aim to create a social micro-enterprise modeled after Homeboy Industries. The pastry kitchen alone will allow us to do so, and this will add entrepreneurship skills and knowledge for students to start a path toward creating their own businesses. The curriculum combines the science of baking, an artist's finesse and an entrepreneur's strategy.





# MEMBER NEWS



**HARTNELL COLLEGE  
FOUNDATION**

## **The Bright Futures Education Partnership is now a Grade-to-Career Partnership Anchored at the Hartnell College Foundation**

The Hartnell College Foundation is once again leading the way in innovative thinking and action by taking under its umbrella the Bright Futures program, which will enhance support to communities towards a bright future for every student in Monterey County," said Bruce Taylor of Taylor Farms. "As a convenor, I am proud to help lead the way toward making the Bright Futures vision a reality. "The vision of Bright Futures is to ensure that every child is prepared for school, succeeds in and out of school, completes a post-high school credential, and enters a promising career." "We are excited to continue the important work of ensuring that all of our students in Monterey County can achieve their educational and career goals," Jackie Cruz, Hartnell College Foundation executive director and vice president of institutional advancement for the college, added, "Bright Futures is an important convenor for youth-serving organizations throughout Monterey County and will continue to be a catalyst for change." Bright Futures is organized around seven goal areas: early care and education, kindergarten readiness, early reading, critical thinking, youth development, college and career readiness, and career pathways. The goal areas represent key points in the education pipeline for Monterey County and guide the partnership's activities. "Hartnell College has partnered with Bright Futures for the last several years on initiatives to help Salinas Valley students get ready for college, access financial aid, enroll in college, complete a degree, and transfer to earn a bachelor's degree," said Michael Gutierrez, Hartnell College superintendent/president. "Taking on Bright Futures aligns with our commitment to ensuring that every student in our region can achieve their potential."



## **Senior Programmer Developer at Salinas Valley Health, Tim France, is Latest STAR Award Recipient**

The most recent STAR Award at Salinas Valley Health was a well-kept secret. Chief Information Officer Audrey Parks disguised the announcement as a meeting to review a new software rollout so the Information Technology (IT) honoree would be unaware of the award and surrounded by colleagues from departments throughout the healthcare system. Five minutes into the meeting discussion, Parks revealed Senior Programmer Developer at Salinas Valley Health, Tim France is the latest STAR Award recipient. Tim joined Salinas Valley Health in 1999 as a support specialist and over two decades advanced to his current position. Leaders from throughout the Medical Center praised Tim's IT skills in generating a wide range of department specific reports and data integration solutions. The written nomination highlighted Tim's dedication, service excellence and ability to balance competing priorities. "Tim is a phenomenal asset to our organization," said Audrey Parks, Salinas Valley Health Chief Information Officer. "His technical skill set alone is valuable however his work ethic and attitude make him a pleasure to engage on any project and those characteristics remain a standout for 25 years and counting. "The STAR award at Salinas Valley Health recognizes exceptional service and is given to non-nursing staff who demonstrate the organization's STAR values, an acronym for Support, Teamwork, Accountability and Respect.



## **Montage Health Announces Healthcare Fund for Monterey County Teachers**

Montage Health announced on March 15, a \$5 million contribution to the Community Foundation for Monterey County to create the new Montage Health Fund for Teachers. The fund will provide financial support to all of Monterey County's public and private school teachers to reduce their healthcare insurance premiums. The announcement came from Montage Health President and CEO Dr. Steven Packer at the 2024 Montage Health Annual Meeting. "Every day, we count on our teachers to take care of our children," Packer says. "It is our responsibility to take care of our teachers. I am honored to announce this new fund for teachers, who are critically important to the well-being and development of our community's youth and future leaders. We've found that when we provide pricing concessions to insurers and unions, often the savings are not passed along to the teachers. This program will do just that."



# NEW & PROSPECTIVE MEMBER ORIENTATION

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**12 PM - 1 PM**

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## AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT LAURA KERSHNER

Laura Kershner is a communications professional trained in media and public relations, nonprofit communications, government relations, cable franchise coordination, telecommunications, live television news production and workforce development.

Over the years, she's volunteered with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Committee, the Salinas Valley Businesswomen's Network, The First Mayor's House, Fund Builders Alliance, Monterey County Theatre Alliance, Job Developer's Networking Group, City of Salinas, General Plan Steering Committee, and she's a graduate of Leadership Salinas Valley — Class XXVI.

Laura's background includes working behind the scenes in local media, for non-profit organizations, and local government. She currently works for the Monterey County Workforce Development Board as a business liaison to bring together local employers and jobseekers here in Monterey County.

When she's not working, she's busy singing in four-part, a capella harmony with the Monterey Bay Belles ladies' barbershop chorus; and her quartet, Vocal Point. She also enjoys singing in a small choir at Grace Community Church in Prunedale.

Laura is a native of Bakersfield, California, and moved to Monterey County in 1996. She is a 1991 graduate of Cal State University, Bakersfield with a double major in Communications and History and a minor in Political Science. She also graduated from Bakersfield College with an Associate of Arts degree in Liberal Arts.

In recent years, Laura has enjoyed traveling the world with her sister, Debbie, and the two of them are looking forward to a Caribbean cruise later this year.



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# Leadership Monterey County Develops Local Leaders

By Mitchell Friedman, Leadership Monterey County



Leadership Monterey County 2024 Cohort at Monterey County Office of Education.

**L**eadership Monterey County (LMC) kicked off its 2024 with programs delving into the inner workings of two major sectors of the local economy.

The first program focused on the hospitality industry. LMC participants heard from industry leaders who shared their experiences and insight into ongoing operational challenges as well as efforts to market the County of Monterey as a tourist destination.

Speakers included leaders from Intercontinental the Clement Monterey Hotel; the Monterey County Hospitality Association; See Monterey; and the Monterey Conference Center. Lunch was served at the Paper Wing Theater, located on Cannery Row in Monterey, and featured presentations on jobs and careers in the hospitality industry. The day concluded with a briefing on the culture and operations of The

Pebble Beach Company, followed by a walking tour.

The second program focused on education. The day's events highlighted critical ties between this sector and the hospitality industry and agriculture (the focus of a future LMC program).

Moreover, longstanding structural changes affecting public and private institutions alike, not to mention the ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic and other challenges, loomed large throughout the day's conversations.

Speakers included leaders from California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB); Hartnell College; the County of Monterey Office of Education; and Monterey Peninsula College (MPC). Speakers representing the three postsecondary education institutions (CSUMB, Hartnell College, and MPC) highlighted their ongoing efforts to prepare students for careers



Michael Gutierrez (far left) meets with Leadership Monterey County Cohort.

by partnering with local business and other community members — with the goal to provide opportunities for students to cultivate professional skills, whether through internships, experiential and service learning projects, and other arrangements.

In short, these programs were

full and fun days that offered LMC participants unique insight into critical issues and vital organizations. To learn more about their experiences, and the LMC program in general, visit <https://www.leadershipmc.org>. 🌱

*Mitchell Friedman, EdD, APR, is a Facilitator with Leadership Monterey County.*





## Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our May renewing Members. Please help keep the Salinas Valley strong by doing business with companies that support the Chamber.

Member Name	Member Since	Member Name	Member Since
Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Inc.	1957	Hearts & Hands Christian Preschool	2015
Goodwill Central Coast	1983	Salinas City Center Improvement—	2016
Edwards Truck Center, Inc.	1985	Association (SCCIA)	
CHISPA	1987	Spherion	2016
Harden Ranch Plaza	1991	Brandon D Patterson - Windermere	2017
Enza Zaden North America, Inc.	1993	Valley Properties	
Green's Camera World	1995	Platinum Tax, Payroll, and Bookkeeping	2017
TAMC(Transportation Agency for MoCo)	1996	Escape Room Salinas	2018
1st Capital Bank	2007	Ocon Family Chiropractic	2018
Community Foundation—	2007	Silver Point Protection Inc.	2018
for Monterey County		Jim Bogart	2019
Lopez Tax Service	2007	Salinas Self Storage	2019
Alzheimer's Association of Monterey County	2007	Power Associates, LLC	2020
Lopez Tax Service	2007	Bandit Systems	2022
Beverly Meamber	2008	Community Human Services	2022
K. Craig Media	2010	Matt Huerta Consulting LLC	2022
Scudder Solar Energy Systems	2010	Soledad Community Health Care District	2022
MY Jeep Chrysler Dodge RAM	2014	Stonies Taphouse and Bistro	2022
MY Nissan/Kia	2014	Ameriprise Financial Services	2023
A Tool Shed Equipment Rentals Inc	2015	DeVeera Technology	2023
Alliant Insurance Services	2015	Equine Healing Collaborative	2023
Veterans Transition Center—	2015	Varnel Consulting & Training Services	2023
of Monterey County		Vivere Drip Therapy	2023

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members





# Spring Into Savings and Sustainability with Goodwill Central Coast

By Goodwill Central Coast Staff

**A**s the days grow longer and the flowers begin to bloom, the arrival of spring inspires a season of renewal and refreshment in many aspects of our lives. From revamping our wardrobes with lighter fabrics and vibrant colors to embarking on outdoor adventures and beautifying our outdoor spaces, spring is a time for rejuvenation.

Goodwill Central Coast emerges as your one-stop destination for all your spring essentials, offering a treasure trove of items that cater to the season's activities and fashions at unbeatable prices. But shopping at Goodwill isn't just about finding great deals; it's also a way to support a mission transforming lives and communities.

## SPRING WARDROBE ON A BUDGET

Spring cleaning often involves decluttering our closets, making room for new-to-us pieces that capture the season's essence. At Goodwill Central Coast, you can find an array of spring apparel, including shorts, T-shirts, bathing suits, and even new tags (NWT) items that are perfect for updating your wardrobe without breaking the bank. The thrill of thrift shopping lies in searching for unique finds and high-quality pieces that add a personal touch to your style. Whether you're looking for casual wear for those leisurely weekend outings or something more sophisticated for spring gatherings, Goodwill's shelves are stocked with options catering to every taste and occasion.

## GEAR UP FOR SPRING ADVENTURES

The spring season is synonymous with outdoor activities and reigniting our connection with nature. Whether you are planning to hit the trails, enjoy a family picnic, or dive into gardening, Goodwill Central Coast has all the essentials to get you equipped. From sporting equipment and bikes to roller skates for those nostalgic rides down the boardwalk, shopping at Goodwill allows you to explore your passions without the hefty price tags often associated with new gear. Moreover, you'll find a variety of gardening pots and yard furniture to create your spring oasis, making your outdoor spaces more inviting and enjoyable.



Getty Images

## SUSTAINABLE SHOPPING WITH A MISSION

Shopping at Goodwill Central Coast is more than just a savvy way to score great deals; it's a choice that supports environmental sustainability and a mission dedicated to making a difference. Goodwill's business model revolves around donating goods, which are then sold in their stores. This circular economy gives items a second life, reducing waste and the need for new resources. Still, it also fuels Goodwill's mission to enhance the dignity and quality of life for individuals and families. By shopping at Goodwill, you contribute to funding job training programs, employment placement services, and other community-based projects supporting those facing employment barriers.

## A CALL TO DONATE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

As you embrace the spirit of spring cleaning, consider donating items you no longer need to Goodwill Central Coast. Your donations play a crucial role in fueling Goodwill's mission, providing inventory for the stores and opportunities for individuals to gain valuable skills and employment. From gently used clothing and accessories to household items and sporting goods, your donations can transform lives. It's a chance to declutter responsibly, knowing that your items will find a new home and purpose.

## THE HEART OF GOODWILL'S MISSION

A commitment to community and sustainability is at the heart of Goodwill Central Coast's operations. Goodwill seeks to empower individuals, promote inclusivity, and foster economic development through its various programs. The revenue generated from store sales is directly reinvested into the community, offering a hand-up rather than a hand-out. By shopping, donating, or even volunteering with Goodwill, you become part of a more significant movement that champions social and environmental responsibility.

## EMBRACE THE SEASON WITH GOODWILL CENTRAL COAST

As we welcome the rejuvenating energy of spring, let Goodwill Central Coast be your guide to a season filled with discovery, savings, and impact. With a diverse selection of spring essentials and the opportunity to support a meaningful mission, Goodwill offers a shopping experience that is both rewarding and responsible. So, whether you're refreshing your wardrobe, gearing up for outdoor adventures, or beautifying your garden, remember that your choices can contribute to a more significant cause. Visit Goodwill Central Coast today and spring into a season of savings, sustainability, and support for your community. 🌱





# RIBBON CUTTINGS & CHAMBER EVENTS

by Chamber Staff



## Door to Hope Chamber Mixer

Door to Hope hosted a mixer to kick off their Community Resource Festival and Recovery Run Celebration taking place on Saturday, June 8, from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Guests listened to poignant testimonials showcasing the profound impact Door to Hope had, learned more about how they can expand their reach, and actively participate in upcoming events.



## Grand Opening of Hartnell College's El Mercado

Hartnell College celebrated the grand opening of El Mercado at the Hartnell College main campus. This ambitious project, cultivated by the Hartnell College's SOUL Center (Office of Basic Needs), aims to ensure students have convenient, year-round access to essential groceries, basic necessities, and personal hygiene products free of cost.



## ARCpoint Labs Mixer

ARCpoint Labs of Salinas hosted a joint mixer in partnership with the Salinas Valley and Monterey Peninsula Chambers of Commerce in honor of Medical Laboratory Professionals Week, April 14-20.



# CHAMBER NEW MEMBER PROFILES

## Monterey County Bar Association

The mission of the Monterey County Bar Association is to promote access to the legal community in Monterey County, foster fellowship among members of the Bar, promote attorney and public education, and enhance public perception of the legal profession. [Montereycountybar.org](http://Montereycountybar.org), [Laura@montereycountybar.org](mailto:Laura@montereycountybar.org), (831) 582-5400



## Hijos Del Sol Arts Productions

Hijos Del Sol Arts Productions creates opportunities, inspires children and youth, and builds community in the Salinas Valley through visual and multicultural arts education, experiences, and mentorship, where young people are respected, develop artistic and life skills, and explore and embrace their cultural identities. [Hijosdelsol.org](http://Hijosdelsol.org), [Admin@hijosdelsol.org](mailto:Admin@hijosdelsol.org), (831) 200-3915

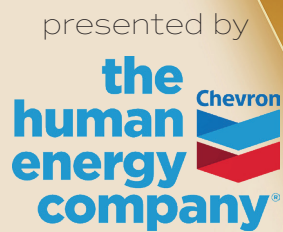


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# 2024 Annual AWARDS LUNCHEON

"This event served as a reminder of the power of unity, resilience, and collective action in shaping a brighter future for our community," said Chamber President/CEO Karin M. Moss. "We want to thank our sponsors and all our esteemed guests that made the celebration successful."

The festivities commenced with a dynamic networking power hour, presented by Salinas Valley Health, where attendees had the opportunity to forge new connections and meet up with old friends. The air buzzed with energy as individuals from diverse backgrounds and industries came together, sharing insights and experiences.



Ambassador of the Year Honoree Laura Kershner and SVCC Digital Marketing Specialist Bryan Cabello.



YOSAL Orchestra's Berniz House, Kaiser Permanente's Cristina Medina-Dirksen, SVCC Board Chair Jennifer Williams, Kaiser Permanente's Joe Foster.



Citizen of the Year Honoree Esmeralda Montenegro Owen shares a heartfelt speech on volunteerism and community support.



D'Arrigo California President/CEO John D'Arrigo, Spirit of the Community Honoree Andy D'Arrigo, Large Business of the Year Honoree SSB Construction's Stephen Goldman.



Businesswoman of the Year Honoree Nancy Valdez & California Water Service's District Manager Brenda Granillo.





Hartnell College's Chris Padgett and Bruce Adams, Salinas Valley Health's Tiffany DiTullio.



CCFCU & SVCC Vice Chair of Events, Amy Gibson, Staff Sergeant Gilbert Rote, Rancho Cielo's Joanne Bravo.



Small Business of the Year Honoree Mag One Media's Owner Alex Garcia with his wife Alissa and step-mother Soledad.



Spirit of the Community Honoree Andy D'Arrigo gives an inspiring speech at age 100 with a message of never forgetting where you come from, continuing to give back, and uplifting those around you.



Agricultural Leadership Honoree ALBA's Director Chris Brown centers his remarks around education, opportunities, and the dream of farm ownership.



Presenting Sponsor Chevron, Peggy Ramey, welcomes 400+ guests at the Luncheon.



# Salinas City Council Plans Vote for Government Restrictions on Rents and Rental Practices

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

**O**n March 26, 2024, the Salinas City Council Housing and Land Use Committee heard public comments and discussed a proposed “Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protection Ordinance.” A final vote is tentatively planned for June 25, 2024.

This committee hearing was the fulfillment of a Salinas City Council decision on Oct. 24, 2023, to direct staff to prepare city ordinances to restrict rent increases, prohibit certain fees in the rental market, and limit the ability of landlords to evict tenants. The City Council decided at that time to designate the Housing and Land Use Committee as the “forum through which the City will engage the community as the work on the ordinance(s) progresses.”

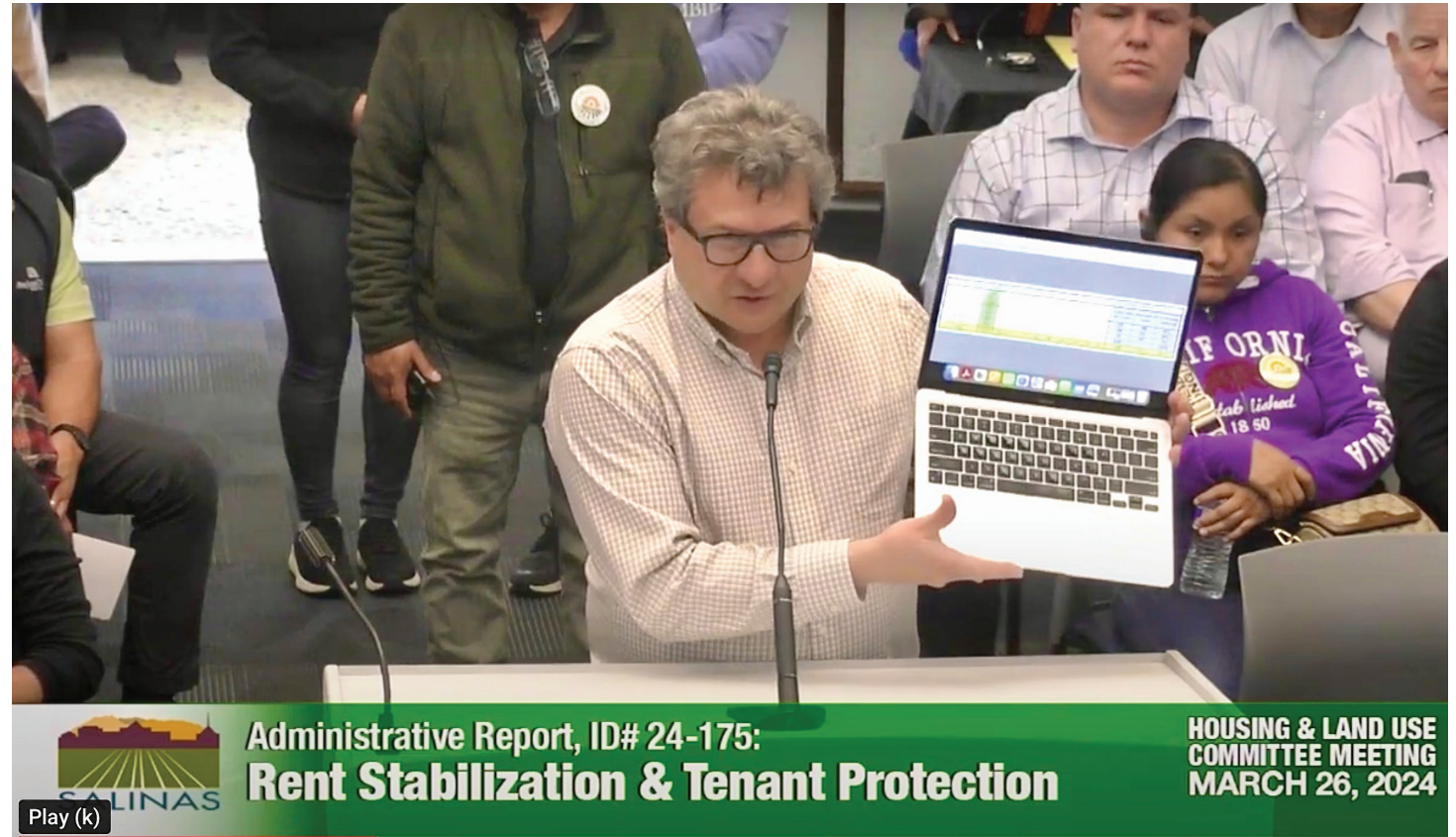
There were two very different perspectives at this meeting on limiting rent increases (“rent stabilization”). One was mostly based on logic and economic theory, and the other was mostly based on emotion and morality.

Residents and employees in the City of Salinas are understandably anxious and frustrated about the high rents. They seek government help to stop rent increases that may destabilize their lives and the lives of their families.

On the other hand, price is generally determined by the relationship of supply and demand. What happens when rental housing supply is stagnant and government proceeds to control the price of rental housing? Do people find housing stability? Or are there new, unintended sources of housing instability?

## Growth in Supply Is Sluggish

Your Chamber of Commerce believes that high rents and rising rents are largely a consequence of the failure or unwillingness of regional



The Chamber's Government Affairs Director Kevin Dayton talks about City of Salinas' performance in achieving its Regional Housing Needs Allocation goals.

leaders to encourage, approve, and create new housing supply. Talking about more housing doesn't necessarily result in more housing.

Although the City of Salinas has made more progress than the Monterey Peninsula in achieving its state-mandated goals for Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), progress has been lackluster. A table in the March 2024 Business Journal showed the final outcome for the City of Salinas in approving residential units for the 5th Cycle (2015-2023). Results were mixed.

Reasons for the lack of new housing are many. For example, city staff observed at the committee hearing that housing construction in the Central

Area Specific Plan of the North of Boronda Future Growth Area has been delayed for a couple of years. The project was stalled after two local school districts sued the City of Salinas for inadequate environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), with the intent of getting the developer to pay higher impact fees to the districts for school construction costs.

## Price Control Has Unintended Consequences

While a strict government limit on rent increases may help some households, an aggressive attempt to circumvent market conditions may end up reducing the supply of rental

housing. Studies on rent control in other locations seems to confirm the tendency of the market to respond to artificial distortions with additional distortions to achieve a new equilibrium.

Even in a centrally controlled economy, market forces based on supply and demand cannot be suppressed. Outlets for supply and demand in such situations include underground economic activity, bribery, and corruption.

## Greed as the Problem

Representatives of organizations that support rent stabilization (or what they called “rent control”) had a completely different approach to the issue. Downplaying logical economic analysis and even calling it irrelevant,



County of Monterey Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Final Outcome - 2015-2023 Housing Element (5th Cycle)													
Income Category	Goal for Units	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total Units for Cycle	Shortfall of Units	% of Units Achieved
Very Low	374	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	7	367	2%
Low	244	0	0	0	0	0	176	0	58	45	279	-	114%
Moderate	283	0	0	0	4	8	0	0	0	0	12	271	4%
Above Moderate	650	0	0	0	230	215	100	95	121	124	885	-	136%
Total	1,551	0	0	0	234	223	276	95	186	169	1,183	638	76%

Last month, the Business Journal published the final data for the City of Salinas Regional Housing Needs Allocation for 2015-2023. Here is the final data for unincorporated areas of the County of Monterey.

supporters appealed for an emotional response to families and individuals suffering because of high rent and rising rent. One speaker asked the city council to impose a specific limit on rent increases: 1 percent per year. Supporters also introduced the concept of greed into the debate. A few speakers asserted that many landlords are primarily motivated to maximize

profit without compassion or empathy. To protect tenants from exploitation, government must play a role in re-straining the greedy inclinations of residential property owners who lease their property to others.

**What Ordinary People Think About the Rental Market**

Many public speakers at the hearing

ignored the public policy debate altogether. They instead complained about unresolved disputes with their landlords over a wide variety of issues. While some of their disputes may be influenced by “greed,” many speakers seemed to need a neutral, structured forum for communication and mediation.

This suggests an opportunity for

the city council to consider another approach as an alternative to the most contentious “rent stabilization” provisions of the rental policy proposal. Some local governments in California have established committees and procedures for landlords and tenants to resolve disputes. Is this something that would benefit the people of Salinas? 🌱

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# Supercharging Asset Accumulation for Retirement

By Bill Hastie, Hastie Financial Group

**R**etirement readiness often begins with the accumulation of assets that will provide income later during retirement. There are many ways to accomplish asset accumulation, but for most people this is done with an employer-sponsored qualified retirement plan – namely the 401k plan. While internal designs of a 401k plan can vary widely from plan to plan, they are typically designed to hold salary deferrals from employees, called elective deferrals. Many plan sponsors offer some type of employer contribution, either as a flat percentage or in the form of a match.

Elective deferrals can often be made either as being income tax-deductible in the year the deferral is made (traditional) or made after income taxes are paid on the deferral (Roth), or a combination of both. The decision of the best type of elective deferral for someone to make is ideally made after consulting a CPA or financial advisor. This decision must take into consideration current and future income tax implications, as well as important estate planning issues.

The IRS establishes maximum limits each year that an employee can contribute to a 401k plan, and typically increases every year due to inflation. For 2024, the maximum elective deferral amount (either traditional or Roth, or a combination) is \$23,000 for employees under age 50, and \$30,500 for those age 50 and over. Another limit set forth by the IRS is the total amount of money that can be added to an employee's 401k account each year (including both elective deferrals and employer contributions), known as the annual additions limit or 415 limit. In 2024, the 415 limit is \$69,000 for those under age 50 and \$76,500 for those age 50 and over.

There are situations when individuals, often business owners, professionals, etc., want and have the ability to defer much more each year. When this person is reaching the maximum annual additions limit in their 401k plan, they can consider a cash balance plan. A cash balance plan works in addition to, not in place of, a 401k plan. While 401k plans are defined contribution plans, cash balance plans are technically a defined benefit plan. The design of cash balance plans and their integration with 401k plans is quite technical and well beyond the scope of this article. The purpose here is to illustrate the vast amount that can be contributed to a 401k/cash balance combination.

Let's use the example of a 55-year-old business



Getty Images

owner with 30 employees. She is reaching the \$76,500 annual maximum additions to her 401k account and is asking what else she can do to save more for retirement. There are then two critical questions – are you willing to contribute additional amounts to certain employees, and are you willing to commit to maintaining the cash balance plan and its contributions requirements for at least 3 years? If the response is “yes” to both, further discussion is warranted. Two key points also to consider is that the plan must cover at least 40% of all eligible employees, or 12 employees in this case, and the owner has the ability to choose those 12 employees. The real carrot of a cash balance plan is the maximum annual contribution she (as the employer) can make – \$274,000 for a 55-year-old, and this

is addition to the \$76,500 in the 401k plan, for an annual maximum of \$350,500. The current lifetime maximum accumulations limit is \$3,400,000.

A great deal of consulting time goes into the proper design of a cash balance plan based on the intent of the owner, number of employees, and the amount of annual employer contributions desired, among other factors. The investment structure of a cash balance plan is quite different than that of a 401k plan, which is also taken into consideration during the design process. Cash balance plans are not for every company, but in the right situation with the right design, they can be amazing! 🌱

*Bill Hastie, MBA, is a financial advisor at locally owned Hastie Financial Group, and can be reached at [william.hastie@hastiefg.com](mailto:william.hastie@hastiefg.com).*



# California Chamber of Commerce Releases Initial 2024 'Job Killer' List

**"J**ob Killers" are what the California Chamber of Commerce (CalChamber) views as legislation or pending legislation that makes it more challenging for the state's small businesses to do business.

Every year CalChamber Alert releases a list of "job killer" bills and in April it released its first list (which will be added to through the year) for 2024 — nine bills dealing with labor and employment, taxation, unemployment insurance, environmental and health care issues.

"These proposals would add significant costs and burdens to California's small businesses, creating an even more challenging business climate in our state," said CalChamber President and CEO Jennifer Barrera. "Lawmakers should carefully weigh the consequences these bills would have on California employers and businesses in their local communities. We are grateful that the Governor and legislative leadership have indicated that new taxes are off the table this year. This is particularly significant because two bills on this year's job killer list propose tax increases to fund UI benefit hikes."

The nonprofit CalChamber is the largest, broad-based business advocate to government in California, working at the state and federal levels to influence government actions affecting all California business.

The 2024 CalChamber Job Killer List includes the following bills:

## UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE/ NEW TAXES

- SB 1434 (Durazo; D-Los Angeles) Huge Increases to Unemployment Insurance Taxes. Increases UI taxes to fund UI benefit hikes of up to 55%, as well as providing for subsequent



increases based on inflation. Also creates entirely new UI program to provide benefits to workers who do not qualify for traditional UI, to be funded by a new tax on California employers.

- SB 1116 (Portantino; D-Burbank) Increased Unemployment Insurance Taxes to Subsidize Striking Workers. SB 1116 will allow striking workers to claim UI benefits when they choose to strike. Because the UI Fund is paid for entirely by employers, SB 1116 will effectively add more debt onto California employers. Moreover, SB 1116 will effectively force employers to subsidize strikes at completely unrelated businesses because the UI Fund's debt adds taxes for all employers, regardless of whether they've had a strike.

## LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

- SB 1345 (Smallwood-Cuevas; D-Los Angeles) Prohibits Consideration

of Conviction History in Employment. Effectively prohibits most employers from considering conviction history of an applicant, existing employee, or contractor in employment or contracting decisions.

- AB 2374 (Haney; D-San Francisco) Joint Liability for Businesses of All Sizes. Imposes new statutory joint liability on business of any size that contracts for janitorial services if a contractor violates the Displaced Janitor Opportunity Act and places new mandates on those businesses that should be assigned to the contractor.

- AB 2499 (Schiavo; D-Chatsworth) Leave Expansion. Significantly expands uncapped leave related to crimes and lowers threshold of applicability to employers with just five employees.

- AB 2751 (Haney; D-San Francisco) Prohibition on Employee

Communications During Certain Hours. Prohibits any employee working for an employer of any size from contacting another employee outside of their normal work hours except in very narrow circumstances and would subject employer to costly litigation for any dispute as to whether the communication was permissible.

## CONSUMER PRODUCTS

- SB 903 (Skinner; D-Berkeley) Bans All Uses of PFAS. Prohibits the use of PFAS in all commercial and consumer products by 2030 unless DTSC is petitioned and makes an affirmative determination that the PFAS in a particular product is an unavoidable use. Because of the breadth and scope of PFAS use, including in aerospace, lithium ion batteries, medical devices, automotive and semiconductors, to name a few, the regulatory program established is unworkable and ultimately will lead to a ban on critically important products or otherwise make certain products less safe.

## ENVIRONMENTAL

- ACA 16 (Bryan; D-Los Angeles) Environmental Rights. Has far-reaching negative consequences that would impair government operations, stunt development for new housing, infrastructure and clean energy project development and has strong potential to destabilize California's economy.

## HEALTH CARE

- AB 2200 (Kalra; D-San Jose) Government-Run Health Care. Forces all Californians into a new untested state government health plan, with no ability to opt out while eliminating Medicare for California seniors and increasing taxes at least \$250 billion a year on workers, income, jobs, goods and services. 🌱

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE 2024 JOB KILLER LIST, VISIT [WWW.CALCHAMBER.COM/JOBKILLERS](http://WWW.CALCHAMBER.COM/JOBKILLERS)**





# UPCOMING EVENTS —

- **All-Chamber Mixer at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca**

*Thursday, May 2, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.*

*1021 Monterey Salinas Hwy, Salinas, Hospitality Pavilion*

Laguna Seca SpeedTour is the first race of the season. One to three authentic historic SpeedTour race cars will be on display for guests to admire and take pictures with. Come network with guests from Monterey, Salinas, Carmel, and Pacific Grove Chambers. There will be music, a raffle, pace car rides, appetizers, and libations for guests to enjoy to kick-off the 2024 race season. Purchase your tickets today at [SalinasChamber.com](https://SalinasChamber.com)!

- **IMSA Street Party**

*Wednesday, May 8, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.*

*100 Block of South Main St., Salinas*

An estimated 100-plus fans are expected to descend on South Main Street for this event. The event provides fans with an opportunity to see sports cars from some favorite manufacturers like Hyundai, Porsche, Mercedes, BMW, Cadillac, and Honda, just to name a few. It will also include a driver meet-and-greet, an autograph session, raffle with ticket giveaways, and potentially a pit stop demonstration. The street party will have music and an opportunity for business/partner participation.

- **Grand Opening and Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony with Hijos Del Sol Arts Productions**

*Thursday, May 9, 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.*

*443 East Alisal St., Suite C, Salinas*

Hijos Del Sol Arts Productions creates opportunities for fostering creativity and community engagement through visual and multicultural arts education, experiences and mentorship. Hijos del Sol creates a space in which young people are respected and empowers them to develop artistic skills. This being their 30th anniversary, first grand opening and first independent studio space, it is an honor. Community support fuels their mission and empowers Hijos del Sol to make a lasting impact in the arts. This will be the annual exhibit opening of A Toda Madre. A Toda Madre is an exhibit dedicated to all mother forms and mothers around the world in preparation and dedication by alumni and professionals from HDS studio. Hijos del Sol Arts Production is especially grateful to its team, board members, parents and students. Hijos del Sol is excited to see what the future will bring to their organization, and the impact they will continue to make in the arts community. They invite you all to celebrate this milestone together.

- **Chamber New and Prospective Member Orientation**

*Tuesday, May 21, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.*

*119 East Alisal St., Salinas*

Join us for an informational orientation with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce's Membership Director, Gabriel Lopez. We welcome new and prospective members to learn more about how the Chamber can help you meet and surpass your marketing goals! Lunch will be provided. If you have any questions, please contact Gabriel Lopez at [Gabe@salinaschamber.com](mailto:Gabe@salinaschamber.com) or call (831) 751-7725. Join us in-person at the Salinas Chamber Office or via Zoom.

**RSVP at [salinaschamber.com](https://salinaschamber.com)**



**Don't miss this rare opportunity to explore remote trails and conserved spaces!**



Join us on **May 11** at Palo Corona Regional Park to raise funds for, and bring awareness to, Big Sur Land Trust's conservation and stewardship work throughout Monterey County.

Whether you want to go fast, slow, solo, with a group, or just cheer on your friends, the Race for Open Space has something for you!

- **12K** Whisler Wilson Overlook
- **25K** Williams Canyon
- **35K+** The Lunch Bench Lollipop
- and a **1-mile Fun Run** for all ages!



Please visit [bit.ly/ROS\\_2024](https://bit.ly/ROS_2024) or scan the QR code to learn more, register, and check out our event sponsors!



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Minneapolis Institute of Art



Minnehaha Regional Park

Getty Images

# Summer to Fall Escape: New Flights and Easy Access to Exciting Destinations Across the Country from Monterey Regional Airport

## Monterey Regional Airport

**A**s the sun beckons adventurers and relaxers alike, Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) is thrilled to announce an expansion of its flight offerings through Sun Country Airlines that include new flights to and from Minneapolis/St. Paul (MSP), offering a direct connection to the heart of the Midwest.

The seasonal flights will be offered on Thursdays and Sundays beginning Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024, and will be available through Nov. 3, 2024. Sun Country is now the fifth air carrier to serve MRY.

Whether you are a solo traveler looking for an adventure, a couple seeking

out cultural and artistic endeavors, or a family hoping to explore a new area together, the addition of Sun Country's new route to Minnesota's Twin Cities offers something for everyone. This new service, along with the existing nonstop service from MRY to eight other destinations, makes the treasures of our beautiful country more accessible than ever.

There are plenty of things to do this summer or fall in Minnesota, and the Twin Cities are calling your name. Families will appreciate the Minnesota Zoo and Fort Snelling, while culture hounds can marvel at the distinct design of the city's hallmark buildings,

including the Walker Art Center or the Guthrie Theater. Shopaholics can peruse the windows at the Mall of America or take a stroll downtown at Nicollet Mall. Looking for more? Read on for 10 of the best things to do in Minneapolis/St. Paul, according to U.S. News and World Report Travel (travel.usnews.com).

### 1. CHAIN OF LAKES REGIONAL PARK

No trip to the Land of 10,000 Lakes is complete without a stroll around some of the metro area's most popular lakes. Popular among athletic-minded travelers, the Chain of Lakes, a scenic byway located southwest of

downtown Minneapolis, is the perfect stop for those who enjoy jogging or boating.

### 2. MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ART

Sheltering more than 90,000 works of art that span more than 5,000 years, the Minneapolis Institute of Art is the place to go if you're an art aficionado.

### 3. MINNEHAHA REGIONAL PARK

Sprawling along the banks of the Mississippi River, Minnehaha Park offers respite from the fast-paced atmosphere of Minneapolis and includes the renowned 53-foot Minnehaha Falls. Situated about 6 miles southeast



of central Minneapolis, the 167-acre park is a popular spot all year round.

#### 4. WALKER ART CENTER AND MINNEAPOLIS SCULPTURE GARDEN

The Walker Art Center is famous for its collection of modern and contemporary art comprising paintings, sculptures and photographs from both American and European artists. The Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, part of the Walker Art Center, is an 11-acre outdoor exhibit with roughly 60 sculptures, some of which are interactive.

#### 5. MALL OF AMERICA

The largest shopping mall in the country is a must-see with more than 500 stores, this is truly the place to shop till you drop. The Mall of America is also home to several family-friendly attractions, including the Nickelodeon Universe amusement park — complete with more than 25 different rides and attractions — and the SEA LIFE Minnesota Aquarium.

#### 6. GUTHRIE THEATER

The downtown theater is one of the nation's most renowned and one of the city's most beloved treasures. Opening in 1963 with a production of "Hamlet," the Guthrie Theater's repertory company has made a name for itself with its highly praised balance of classical theater and avant-garde productions.

#### 7. STONE ARCH BRIDGE

The Stone Arch Bridge is a must-see for any architecture buff. This 2,100-foot granite and limestone bridge (featuring a total of 23 arches) was constructed in 1883. Designated a Historic Civil Engineering Landmark in 1971, it is the only stone arch bridge to have ever traversed the Mississippi River.

#### 9. CATHEDRAL OF ST. PAUL

Located at the highest point of St. Paul and west of the city's main downtown area, the Cathedral of Saint Paul is a historical site dating back to 1915. The impressive Renaissance-style

architecture is enhanced by marble columns and stained-glass windows.

#### 10. WEISMAN ART MUSEUM

Designed by avant-garde architect Frank Gehry, the Weisman Art Museum is the place to go for a glimpse at some of America's most renowned contemporary art. You will find pieces by famed artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe and Roy Lichtenstein, not to mention an impressive collection of ceramics and Korean furniture. This museum also hosts notable touring exhibits.

There are many other attractions to round out your visit that are identified by U.S. New Travel and include: the Minnesota Zoo, Minneapolis Skyway System, Historic Fort Snelling, Mill City Museum, Midtown Global Market, Target Field, the Minnesota Twins ballpark, and the Minnesota Children's Museum. A more in-depth and detailed look at what to do in the Twin Cities can be found at [minneapolis.org](http://minneapolis.org).

Flying from Monterey Regional Airport is the gateway to a hassle-free vacation, where you will experience ease of access, minimal TSA wait times, and a straightforward journey from the terminal to spectacular destinations.

In addition to Minneapolis/St. Paul (MSP), MRY offers short and affordable flights to the following destinations: Dallas (DFW), Denver (DEN), Las Vegas (LAS), Los Angeles (LAX), Phoenix (PHX), San Diego (SAN), San Francisco (SFO), and Seattle (SEA). Wherever your travel interests lie, reaching breathtaking landscapes, exquisite dining, and unparalleled attractions are more available now than ever before.

Monterey Regional Airport stands as the sole commercial airport in Monterey County, serving over 550,000 passengers annually. Stay updated by visiting our website at [monte-reyairport.com](http://monte-reyairport.com) or following @monte-reyairport on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. 🌿



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# Separating Fact From Fiction Surrounding Hormone Testing

By Spenser Smith, Lab Manager, ARCpoint Labs

**M**easuring hormone levels is a growing segment of the healthcare industry. Information about hormone imbalance is more available than ever, and new research continues to show the ways in which lifestyle and environmental factors can affect your body's balance. Testosterone levels (also called "T levels") in particular are a popular topic in many male-focused health communities, including body-builders, online health forums, and lifestyle gurus. Americans spent about \$200 million on T level testing in 2023, and more than \$1 billion on testosterone therapies and replacement products.

But sometimes, the facts about hormone testing can get diluted by hype. In this article, I aim to separate some facts from some of the fictions surrounding hormone testing. While we of course offer all these tests at ARCpoint Labs, the goal is to provide some simple information that you can use anywhere you might obtain hormone test results!

Let's start with one of the big ones, testosterone. Testosterone, often associated with masculinity, actually plays a vital biological role for both men and women. In men it promotes reproductive health, controls fat distribution and muscle mass, affects mood, and more. In women, testosterone is equally important, affecting energy levels, libido, and both physical and mental well-being.

Symptoms of clinically low testosterone in men (also called hypogonadism) may manifest as decreased libido, erectile dysfunction, fatigue, and mood changes. Abnormally high testosterone levels, while less common, can lead to acne, excessive body hair growth, and behavioral changes. In women, low testosterone can lead to muscle and bone loss, as well as disruptions in the menstrual cycle. High testosterone

may be associated with unwanted hair growth. Maintaining healthy T levels can be as important in women as in men for healthy aging and maintaining physical rigor.

Proponents of T level therapy tout testosterone as a weight loss and bodybuilding aid, treatment for fatigue or low libido, and a physical performance booster. Independent medical guidelines generally advise against hormone replacement treatment for low testosterone, unless an individual is diagnosed with loss of bone mass, low libido, or erectile dysfunction. As always, working with a healthcare provider is key if you are interested in any sort of supplementation or medication. However, there is good news for individuals who want to boost their testosterone. Lifestyle changes, including

exercise, dietary choices, and healthy sleep patterns, can have dramatically increase production of testosterone.

Despite research showing an overall decrease in testosterone levels among men recent decades, the medical community has largely found no evidence that this coincides with any increase in symptoms of hypogonadism. Many experts suggest that some of the concern in popular media on this topic may be overblown. Still, research suggests that approximately 5 million men in the United States alone may have low testosterone levels.

If you do decide to test your testosterone levels, there are several important factors to consider. Testosterone levels vary during the day, so testing in the morning is recommended. Most tests split T levels into free, total, and

bioavailable testosterone. Since total testosterone only measures the sum of these subtypes, it may overcount an individual's T level. As always, choosing a reputable laboratory with approved testing protocols and reference ranges is important. Additionally, you should consider blood testing over saliva or fingerstick tests, which return slightly different values that are not directly comparable to clinical guidelines for healthy T levels.

Estrogen, on the other hand, is associated with women but also present in men in small amounts. Hormonal imbalances involving estrogen can affect both genders. Around 6 million women in the United States experience symptoms of low estrogen, such as irregular menstrual periods, hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and mood





swings, especially during perimenopause and menopause. High estrogen levels might cause breast tenderness, bloating, and mood swings. These imbalances often become noticeable in women during puberty, pregnancy, or menopause.

Estrogen can further be broken into three subtypes: estrone, estradiol, and estriol. Testing for one or more of these subtypes of estrogen specifically can be important depending on the purpose of your testing; for instance, estradiol is a particularly potent form of estrogen in men, while in women estriol is of particular importance in readying the body for pregnancy or breastfeeding.

Testosterone naturally decreases as men age, while estrogen increases. This isn't much to be concerned about unless your estradiol levels are abnormally high. This can be a risk factor for conditions like diabetes and certain forms of cancer. For women, testing of

estrogen is generally performed on day 19-22 of the menstrual cycle. Also, contrary to a popular myth, eating tofu and soy products has never been linked to increased levels of estrogen!

Luteinizing hormone (LH) and follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) are two critical reproductive hormones produced by the pituitary gland. In men, imbalances in LH and FSH can lead to decreased sperm production, infertility, and erectile dysfunction. In women, irregular menstrual cycles, fertility issues, and symptoms similar to those of menopause may occur. These imbalances can start manifesting in both sexes during puberty and may become more pronounced with age.

Cortisol, often dubbed the "stress hormone," is produced by the adrenal glands. Chronic stress can lead to cortisol imbalances, affecting millions of people worldwide. Symptoms of low cortisol, known as adrenal insufficiency, include fatigue, weakness, weight

loss, low blood pressure, and darkening of the skin. Conversely, high cortisol levels, commonly associated with conditions like Cushing's syndrome, can cause weight gain, thinning skin, muscle weakness, and mood changes. These imbalances can occur at any age but are often triggered by prolonged stress or underlying health conditions.

Because cortisol varies cyclically throughout the day, testing is almost always performed in the a.m., usually before 9:00 a.m.

Sex hormone-binding globulin (SHBG) might not be as well known as other hormones, but its role in regulating sex hormones like testosterone and estrogen is crucial. Imbalances in SHBG levels can impact hormone availability and function. Low SHBG levels may lead to higher levels of free testosterone or estrogen, contributing to symptoms such as irregular menstrual periods, acne, and mood changes. High SHBG levels, on the other hand,

can bind to circulating hormones too tightly and block their function, result in lower levels of free hormones, affecting libido, fertility, and bone health.

There are more hormones that may be commonly tested, of course. TSH is an indicator of thyroid health, used especially for patients with fatigue or weight fluctuations. DHEA-S is a male hormone that expresses in both males and females. It indicates pituitary reproductive health. Progesterone is a female hormone that, at low levels, can make it difficult to conceive, affect the intensity of menstrual cycles.

Panels exist that can combine these and other hormone level tests to match an individual's patient's needs and interests, for example fertility panels for both male and female reproductive health, annual checkups for men's or women's hormones, or periodic hormone level monitoring to track your personal variation over the weeks or months. 🌿

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# NON-PROFIT EVENTS

## The Western Food Safety Conference

*May 1-2, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Sherwood Hall, 940 North Main St., Salinas*

The Western Food Safety Conference is an annual two-day conference designed especially for you — our food safety industry leaders. The conference will provide you with current produce safety information, research, and regulatory developments in the fresh produce industry that you can apply to today's environment. Join us and industry-leading scientists, executives, and professionals for the latest science-based industry information and networking opportunities.

## Laguna Seca SpeedTour (TransAm)

*May 3-5, WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca, 1021 Monterey Salinas Highway, Salinas*

The TransAm Series has been thrilling fans and drivers alike since 1966, with a range of classes that include production-based entries all the way up to the iconic 850-plus horsepower Trans Am class. Come see America's classic muscle cars such as Mustangs, Camaros, and Challengers competing against European-based Audi and Mercedes-AMG for racing honors on Monterey County's iconic race course, Trans Am's spiritual Monterey home.

## WELI Soirée

*May 4, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m., Hartnell College-Main Campus Willard Lewallen STEM Center, 411 Central Ave., Salinas*

The Women's Education & Leadership Institute (WELI) Soirée will bring together business and community leaders to support the WELI. You're invited to join in promoting the economic prosperity of women through higher education. This important event will fund the WELI endowment, ensuring this invaluable support is available to the women of this community for generations to come. WELI is more than a scholarship program; it provides four keys to student success: Resources, Education, Social Support, & Mentorship.

## Relay For Life Tri-Tip Fundraiser

*May 4, 11:00 – 2:00 p.m., Salinas Sports Complex, 1034 North Main St., Salinas*

Join the California Rodeo's Relay for Life Team at their upcoming tri-tip lunch fundraiser on May 4. Indulge in a delicious meal for just \$15 per ticket, which includes a mouthwatering tri-tip sandwich, a side of chips, a delectable dessert, and a refreshing drink. To secure your tickets, reach out to Joey by calling or texting at (831) 596-7600.

## On Stage with Tessa Lark & Michael Thurber

*May 13, 5:30 p.m., Sunset Center, San Carlos Avenue & Ninth Avenue, Carmel*

Join in for a unique new concert series from the Monterey Symphony. Guests enter through the backstage door of the Sunset Center for a memorable evening of food, wine and music. The Symphony is delighted to welcome back violinist Tessa Lark along with bassist Michael Thurber. Cost: \$250 regular seating, \$300 premium seating.

## Women's Fund Luncheon 2024 Organized by Women's Fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County

*May 17, 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa, 1 Old Golf Course Road, Monterey*

Please join the Community Foundation for the 17th annual Women's Fund Luncheon at the Hyatt Regency Monterey. 11 a.m. reception and registration, 12-1:30 p.m. luncheon and program. This inspiring event brings together more than 500 supporters each year to benefit local women and girls. Purchase a ticket, a table or become a sponsor.

## 35th Anniversary Celebration "De Colores"

*May 17, 5:00 – 8:30 p.m., Monterey County Fair & Event Center, 2004 Fairground Road, Monterey*

The Center for Community Advocacy (CCA) is pleased to announce its milestone 35th anniversary celebration, "De Colores," Friday, May 17, 2024, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Monterey County Fair & Event Center ("Monterey Fairgrounds"). Celebrating "all the colors" in the rich tapestry of our community's traditions, "De Colores" will commemorate CCA's remarkable 35-year journey with even more of the magnificent folkloric design, color, music, and dance that was always the highlight its Dia de Muertos event of past years.

## Jacob's Heart – Spring Soiree

*May 18, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m., 150 Main St., Salinas – The Taylor Building*

Join Jacob's Heart in Old Town Salinas for an evening of fun, music, and amazing food, all in support of children battling cancer and their families! As a nonprofit deeply rooted in the local community, with 80% of our families residing in Monterey County, Jacob's Heart couldn't be more thrilled to bring this event to Salinas for the evening. Visit [jacobshheart.org/spring](https://jacobshheart.org/spring) to secure your spot at the Spring Soirée. Until there is a cure, Jacob's Heart is here.

## Salinas Valley Speech Pathology — Strength Over Parkinson's

*May 29, 5:00 p.m., 450 East Romie Lane, Salinas, SVH Downing Resource Center Conference Room*

The topic at May's gathering is "Strength for Caregivers and Loved Ones." Nancy Belton, whose husband lives with Parkinson's, will be the guest speaker. Parkinson's not only affects the individual but the family as well. She will discuss her experience and insights so caregivers will be able to provide the best support for themselves and for their loved ones with Parkinson's.

## Party in the Library by the Hartnell College Foundation

*May 31, 6:00 – 11:00 p.m., Hartnell Library, 411 Central Ave., Salinas*

Join nearly 300 community leaders and support Hartnell College students with an epic "Party in the Library." Enjoy a spectacular strolling dinner, lively auction, fantastic wines, and specialty drinks. The Hartnell College Foundation is honored to present the 2024 Leadership Award to Andrea Bailey. Empower the leaders of tomorrow by supporting Hartnell College students.

## Door to Hope — Community Resource Festival & Recovery Run Celebration

*June 8, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 1034 N. Main St., Salinas*

Join us as we bring our local Salinas and greater Monterey County communities together to promote prevention, offer resources for intervention & rehabilitation for individuals struggling with substance use challenges. All are welcome to participate in the 2024 Virtual Recovery Run & Free Community Celebration to follow on June 8. Run and Celebratory Reception are hosted by Door to Hope in partnership with Central Coast Overdose Prevention. Visit the event page for more information and links to the event app where you can register to participate in the run, sign up to volunteer, host a resource table or become a sponsor!

## Junior Rodeo

*June 9, 9:00 a.m., Salinas Sports Complex, 1034 N. Main St., Salinas*

Howdy, young cowboys and cowgirls! Get ready to lasso some excitement at the inaugural Junior Rodeo, happening on Sunday, June 9, at the Salinas Sports Complex in Salinas. Brought to you by MYCars.com and hosted by the California Rodeo Salinas, this event is all about celebrating our Western heritage and nurturing the next generation of rodeo stars. This Junior Rodeo isn't just about competition — it's a chance for young riders and ropers to learn, grow, and connect with the spirit of the Wild West. From stick horse races to barrel racing and team roping, there's an event for every age and skill level. Check-in from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., Competitions start at 9 a.m.

BE SURE TO VISIT THE CHAMBER WEBSITE FOR UP-TO-DATE LISTINGS





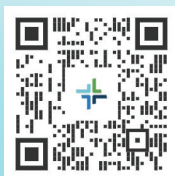
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# MAY



## Upcoming Workshops

### **Cybersecurity & Your Small Business (Webinar)**

Wednesday, May 8th  
12 PM - 1 PM

### **Launch a Food Business from Home**

Thursday, May 9th  
1 PM - 2 PM (English)  
2 PM - 3 PM (Spanish)  
Filipino American Community Club  
192 Paddon Pl, Marina, CA 93933

### **Lanze un Negocio de Comida Desde su Casa**

Wednesday, May 15th  
3 PM - 4 PM  
Community Room, 560 Walker Rd, Soledad, CA 93960  
This workshop will be held in Spanish  
Translation is available in English, Triqui, & Mixteco

### **Dale Utilidad a Tu Sitio Web (Seminario Web)**

miércoles, 22 de mayo  
12 PM - 1 PM

Register using the QR code or visit: [linktr.ee/MontereyCountyBusiness](https://linktr.ee/MontereyCountyBusiness)



## Resource Highlight

### **Hartnell Internship Program**

*Empowering Students for Success*

Designed to bridge the gap between education and industry, this program offers students invaluable hands-on experience in their chosen fields. By partnering with local businesses and organizations, we create opportunities for students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world challenges, developing essential skills and building professional networks. These internships not only enhance students' academic journeys but also prepare them for rewarding careers.

Hartnell College's CAT (Career and Transfer) Hub offers services to connect students with career and transfer opportunities. They provide guidance and support for career exploration, employment preparation, and transfer assistance.

#### **Questions?**

Dina Uribe  
[duribe@hartnell.edu](mailto:duribe@hartnell.edu)  
(831) 755-6791



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