Career Pathways Program

Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation · 2025–26 Summary · October 2026

Career Pathways is the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation's workforce development program. It aligns education with current and emerging industry needs by connecting students, job seekers, employers and schools. The goal: help young people see the paths to livable-wage careers in the Salinas Valley, and help local businesses build a pipeline of local talent. Running it through the Foundation allows targeted fundraising to support and grow it.

FOUR PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- **Junior Chamber's Career Pathways Workshops.** A college and career-readiness program for high school students. Students are introduced to young professionals from a broad spectrum of careers and participate in sessions that include mock interviews, professionalism & workplace etiquette, career & college exploration, resume building and more. Classes are offered for free on Saturday mornings from 8:30am-12:00pm.
- **Industry panels, site tours & guest speakers.** The Chamber Foundation organizes guest speakers and panels on industry clusters such as agriculture and food, government, sports and entertainment, and health and biomedical innovation, hosted at high schools or colleges. They also organize site tours hosted by businesses to provide insight into different working environments. Chamber Board, Chamber members, and Junior Chamber members serve as speakers and panelists.
- **Internship pipeline.** An integrated internship program for Hartnell College students interested in applying their skills in a real-world setting. Current internships include logistics & operations, and marketing at the Downtown Salinas Farmers Market and is supported by College Corp funding.
- **Agribusiness Mentoring Program.** Working in partnership with the International Agribusiness Academy at Everett Alvarez High School, the Chamber Foundation has organized leaders in the agriculture sector to serve as mentors who will help shape the future of agriculture by sharing their experience, insight, and encouragement with students.

2025–26 HIGHLIGHTS

District outreach (October 2025). Salinas Union High School Superintendent Dr. Zandra Galvan invited the Salinas Valley Chamber Foundation to bring 12 professionals from a variety of industries to meet her student leaders from across Salinas and to share their professional journeys.

CTE Month at Salinas High School (February 2026). College and Career Counselor Abel Coronel invited the Chamber to help with National Career and Technical Education Month. Colleen made personal calls to line up professionals and site visits for each of the school's four themed weeks:

Week	Theme	What the Chamber lined up
Feb 2–6	Ag-Tech & Sustainability	Feb 6 panel with Mayor Dennis Donohue (Western Growers Ag Innovation Center), Taylor Farms robotics engineer Cayetano Padilla and Reservoir Farms
Feb 9–13	The Built Environment	Architect Peter Kasavan, provided a history of architecture in Salinas; Granite Construction planned a visit to its hot plant.
Feb 17–20	Digital Arts & Innovation	Arts Council of Monterey County tour of ArtWorks on Main Street (Feb 18) to meet local artists. Alex Garcia of Mag One Media and Bobbie Young from the Monterey Jazz Festival spoke to students at the high school.
Feb 23–27	Health & Hospitality	Five Natividad Medical Center professionals in nursing, lab, physical therapy, respiratory and cardiopulmonary care met with students at Natividad and provided an on-site lab tour. John Narigi formerly from the Plaza Hotel & Spa and Weathertech Raceway spoke to students about careers in hospitality.

Career Pathways Workshops (September 2026). The Junior Chamber's Career Pathways Committee, chaired by Savannah LaShomb, a member of the Junior Chamber, launched hands-on workshops for local students. Students

rotate through four 20-minute stations: mock interviews, professionalism and workplace etiquette, career and college exploration, and resume building. The second workshop

Downtown Salinas Farmers Market Internship: The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation has hired five Hartnell interns since July 1.

Agribusiness Mentorship Program launched in September. Ag leaders including Dennis Donohue, Leonard Batti, Mark Kennedy, Colby Pereira will meet with students at Everett Alvarez High School each month through May.