



# BUSINESS JOURNAL



Salinas Immigration Attorney Sees Spike in Calls

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## Step in the Right Direction: The City of Salinas Measure G Oversight Committee Has Resumed Meetings

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

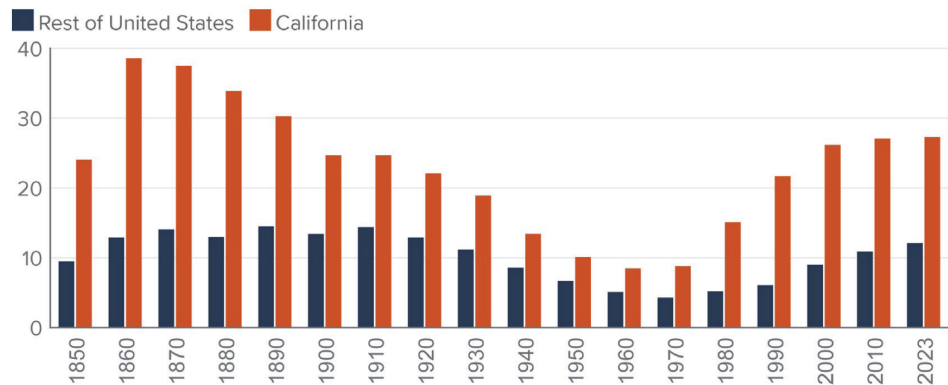
**M**easure G is a 1 cent (per dollar) sales tax approved by 62% of Salinas voters in November 2014. It expires on March 31, 2030, unless voters extend it or replace it with another sales tax measure.

In June 2024, the Salinas City Council decided not to proceed with putting a Measure G sales tax renewal measure on the November 2024 ballot. A survey of Salinas voters had revealed a strong public perception that the city was not transparent or accountable about its affairs.

Now it's 2025, and that perception needs to change. On Jan. 16, 2025 the City of Salinas Measure G Oversight Committee was able to convene its first quarterly meeting since January 2024. The previous four scheduled quarterly meetings were canceled because

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Immigrants as a share of the total population (%)



Source: US Census Bureau, decennial censuses (1850–2000), American Community Survey 2008–2012 5-Year Estimates and 2023 1-Year Estimates.

Source: January 2025 Public Policy Institute of California report, "Immigrants in California: Fact Sheet," at <https://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/jtf-immigrants-in-california.pdf>.

## Immigration Enforcement Looms as Prominent Issue for Monterey County in 2025

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

**Y**our Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is hearing from members concerned that President Donald Trump will act on his stated plans to expand immigration enforcement in his second term.

Some of this concern is based on personal empathy for family, friends, colleagues, and employees as people. If you know someone with good

character who has managed to escape grim and oppressive circumstances elsewhere, you tend to hope they can figure out how to stay in America permanently.

In addition, immigration issues are not an abstract political concept in Monterey County. They are a dominant component of the culture.

Monterey County is close to being the U.S. county with

the highest percentage of residents who were born in another country (about 30%, with Los Angeles County probably at about 33%). It is likely the U.S. county with the highest percentage of undocumented immigrants (probably about 20%).

From an economic and commercial perspective, Monterey

IMMIGRATION see page 8



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# Chamber Board Working on Several Key Initiatives for 2025

By Leonard Batti, SVCC Board Chair

Last month you were introduced to our new CEO, Colleen Bailey. I'm happy to report that Colleen hit the ground running early Monday morning on Jan. 6 and hasn't slowed down since! She has spent much of her time speaking with key stakeholders and civic leaders, laying the groundwork for the Chamber's initiatives in 2025, and she is already making a valuable impact on your Chamber of Commerce.

You also met our new board members last month. I'm looking forward to working with Michael, Regina, Scott, Fred, Oscar and Veronica. They each have a wealth of experience, and I have no doubt that they will be strong contributors to the Chamber board.

I would also like to recognize our outgoing board member and former Chair of the Membership Committee, Starla Warren. Starla's contributions to your Chamber have been immeasurable and we are grateful for her time and wise council. We are fortunate that Starla has agreed to continue to serve on the board of the Chamber Foundation.

Just a few of the key initiatives for the Board this year will be:

- Supporting Colleen with her on-boarding.

- Continued outreach to existing members and potential members on where the Chamber can support our member's business.

- Continued collaboration with city and county legislators and staff through regular communication on issues affecting

business and economic development.

Supporting our legislators on issues where we agree and clearly communicating our position on issues where we disagree.

Raising community awareness of the Chamber and positioning it as the go-to advocate for issues affecting Salinas Valley businesses.

Investing in career development programs for our Chamber team members.

Expanding our membership to every corner of the city and valley. Being an active Chamber for our entire business community.

Working in partnership with other business-centric entities to support and promote business and ensure member prosperity.

Lastly, please mark your calendar for this month's SVCC annual Legislative Breakfast that will be held on Feb. 28 at Hartnell College. This year's event will be especially valuable with the opportunity to hear from our newly elected Mayor, Dennis Donahue, our State Senator, John Laird, and our district 18 Congresswoman, Zoe Lofgren, among others.

I hope to see you there! 🌿



## 2025 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- **Chair - Leonard Batti**  
Taylor Farms
- **Chair-Elect - Aaron Johnson**  
A Johnson Law Group
- **Past Chair - Jennifer Williams**  
Natividad Foundation
- **Vice Chair, GRC - Amy Salmina**  
Coast & Valley Properties
- **Vice Chair, Membership - Mark Kennedy**  
Green Rubber Kennedy Ag
- **Vice Chair, Events - Amy Gibson**  
Wescom Credit Union
- **Vice Chair, Finance - Tom Moran**  
Goodwill Central Coast

## NEW CHAMBER BOARD MEMBERS

- **Michael Arensdorf** - Scholl & Arensdorf LLP
- **Regina Gage** - Meals on Wheels of the Salinas Valley, Inc.
- **Scott Gillett** - Pacific Valley Bank
- **Fred Hooker** - Retired Agri-Business Manager
- **Oscar Mora** - Blue Adobe Mortgage
- **Veronica Plascencia** - KION

## CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Brent Fogg** - Granite Construction
- **Brenda Granillo** - California Water Service
- **Clement Miller** - Salinas Valley Health
- **John Narigi** - A&D Narigi Consulting LLC.
- **Colby Pereira** - Braga Fresh Family Farms
- **Tony Sanchez** - Spiffy Clean Services
- **Hugh Walker** - Stonebridge Homes

## CHAMBER LIAISONS

- **Peter Kasavan** - SPARC
- **Matt Huerta** - Monterey Bay Economic Partnership
- **Kevin Dayton** - SCCIA

## LEGAL COUNSEL

- **Matt Ottone**

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- **Colleen Bailey**  
CEO
- **Gabriel Lopez**  
Membership Development Director
- **Jasmine Bhardwaj**  
Marketing & Member Services Manager
- **Bryan Cabello**  
Digital Marketing Specialist
- **Cesar Chavez**  
Digital Marketing Specialist

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## CHAMBER PRIORITIES

CREATING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY • PROMOTING THE COMMUNITY • PROVIDING NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES • POLITICAL ACTION • REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF BUSINESS WITH GOVERNMENT

## OVERSIGHT - from page 1

of a lack of quorum. (The Measure E Oversight Committee meeting scheduled to be held on Jan. 16, immediately before the Measure G Oversight Committee, was cancelled because of a lack of quorum.)

The committee has four newly appointed energetic members and one member held over from 2024 (who did not attend the meeting). One of the new members is Amy Salmina, the 2025 chair of your Chamber's Government Relations Committee. The other two committee positions on the seven-member committee were vacant — not yet filled by councilmembers.

Showing the importance of this committee to the future of the city, Councilmember Tony Barrera and Councilmember Margaret D'Arrigo attended the meeting and sat in the audience to watch the proceedings.

Committee members discussed the importance of following the law and



Four new members of the City of Salinas Measure G Oversight Committee are sworn into their appointed offices on January 16, 2025.

fulfilling voter expectations that the committee meets regularly and does its job of independent oversight. One new committee member offered a list of strategies that the city could adopt to ensure sufficient member participation in oversight committee meetings.

City of Salinas Finance Department officials made presentations and provided reports on revenues and expenditures. The committee also appointed a subcommittee from its own membership to work with Finance Department officials in reviewing an upcoming Independent Audit Report of Measure G funds. The subcommittee will prepare a report to present the City Council before the May 30, 2025 deadline.

Committee members noted that financial reports confirm that the city is spending Measure G funds properly, but the information is not accessible to ordinary people, nor is the information organized in a way ordinary people can understand.

Your Chamber's Government Affairs Liaison was one of two members of the public in attendance at the Measure G Oversight Committee meeting. He emphasized during public comment that the committee needs to play an important role in reassuring Salinas voters that Measure

G funds are being spent wisely and properly. The other member of the public in attendance warned during her comments to the committee that "no one knows what's going on with Measure G."

Finally, committee members observed that much has changed since Measure G was considered by voters in 2014, and it may be prudent to adjust some of the language and priorities for any ballot measure that would continue the sales tax.

Your Chamber of Commerce has been active in proposing specific recommendations to the City Council and Oversight Committee to ensure that voters have confidence in how the city spends Measure G funds. Measure G provides a significant portion of the city's revenue for programs such as public safety, public works, and parks and other amenities. Its termination in 2030 without a replacement measure would be a serious fiscal blow to the city and its business community. 🌱

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# Salinas Immigration Attorney Sees Spike in Calls as Trump Administration Ramps Up Mass Deportation Plans

By Mac McDonald, Salinas Valley Business Journal

Salinas-based immigration and criminal defense attorney Chris Cain has seen a huge uptick in calls and queries to his office ever since President Donald Trump called for mass deportations of immigrants while he was a candidate. So much so, that he's had to stop advertising his services and has had to hire more staff to take on the increase.

"We are overworked here, so I'm trying to hire more paralegals because we have a lot of numbers we need to call back," he said. "I've definitely seen a spike in calls and I think a lot of it is coming from fear." (This article was written before Trump was inaugurated on Jan. 20 and promised to start mass deportations "on day one.")

What's giving Cain, who offers free initial phone consultations, headaches is that the extent, the timing and the exact details of Trump's proposed deportations is unknown and could take weeks and even months to become reality. Various civil rights and immigration rights groups will no doubt file lawsuits and other legal means to try and stop or at least delay the implementation of mass deportations.

"It's hard to give blanket advice, I don't know of a magic bullet from my office," Cain said about how those fearful of getting deported because of the uncertainty of Trump's policies. "We do know how it will play out when people qualify for benefits. We know what forms to file and how it will be processed. But we don't know how it will play out for people with no status or uncertain status. People need to find out if they qualify for



benefits."

By "benefits," Cain said he's referring to such things as green cards and work permits that would allow people to stay in the country.

Without knowing the details of their situation or status he can only offer "evergreen advice" until he can get individuals and families in a

one-on-one consultation to discuss their specific status and options.

"We hand out 'little red cards,' Know Your Rights card, and we tell people, don't make false claims about your U.S. citizenship (to officials) and if your status is questionable, don't answer any questions," he says. "And not everyone is

going to qualify, sometimes there's not much we can do."

"Little red cards" are business card-sized cards handed out by community organizations, legal aid and civil rights groups (and law offices) that provide concise, essential information about your rights, including the right to remain silent; the right to refuse consent to a search; the right to speak to an attorney; and guidance on how to respond if detained or arrested. The aim of the cards is to empower individuals to navigate interactions with law enforcement while protecting their rights and minimizing the risk of escalation.

Cain added that people should carry their green card or work permit with them to avoid any misunderstandings and that if they don't know their status and find themselves being put on a bus, to immediately ask to see a judge. "You may be released into the community and get a court date, which will give you a little breathing room."

The bottom line, Cain says, is that nobody really knows how these deportations will play out and he expects "significant push-back" from immigration advocates and civil rights groups, so "this make take a while."

Meanwhile, he recommends talking to him or his staff or other qualified immigration attorneys to help navigate the legal maze. And if you have contacted him and are still waiting, he says all calls will be returned as quickly as possible.

Contact Chris Cain Law at (831) 296-0060 (office number); email: [chriscainlaw@gmail.com](mailto:chriscainlaw@gmail.com); and website: [www.chriscainlaw.com](http://www.chriscainlaw.com).

# Salinas Valley . . . What an Incredible Start to 2025!

By Pastor T.K. Anderson, Compass Church

Compass Church of Monterey County hosted The Mayor's Breakfast for the Faith Community on Jan. 29 to kick off the new year. What an inspiring event and successful turnout! This gathering was an incredible opportunity for faith leaders, community members, city officials, and business leaders to come together with one shared purpose: to discover inspiring and impactful ways to serve our community. As the Bible reminds us, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity" (Psalm 133:1). This is the spirit that drives us forward.

This month, we're excited to focus on building strong and meaningful relationships. Together, we're creating a vibrant community where support, connection, and love can flourish! This February, Compass will be hosting an incredible relationship seminar to help strengthen communication. This month, we will host a Communication Workshop with Brad and Heidi Mitchell, relationship experts from Build Your Marriage Ministries on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, from 6 to 9 p.m.

It's a perfect opportunity for committed couples, engaged couples, and married couples to grow stronger. Sign up for a great date night! This practical, biblically based seminar is for all couples of any age or stage. For more details and to reserve your spot, visit our website at [compasschurchmc.org](http://compasschurchmc.org) — we'd love for you to join us!

At Compass Church, we believe that together, as a community, we



can create a lasting impact on the lives of those around us. Every day, we are truly grateful to all the businesses, organizations, and individuals who consistently contribute to making this community stronger, healthier, and more compassionate.

This month, we want to give a special and heartfelt thank you to the Food Bank for Monterey County. Your unwavering support, generosity, and dedication are an inspiration to all of us. The work you do — ensuring that no one in our community goes hungry — truly exemplifies the spirit of service and compassion. Your contribution to our area, not only through food distribution but also through programs that help families and individuals in need, makes a profound difference. We are beyond thankful for your ongoing partnership and the tangible impact you make in the lives of so many.

As we move forward into this new year, we are excited about the relationships God will continue to strengthen and establish. We know that when we come together in love and unity, incredible things happen. This year, we anticipate even greater opportunities to support one another, grow in friendship, and build an environment where hope thrives.

Here's to starting the year with a renewed commitment to friendship, love, and unity. Let's embrace the opportunities before us with open hearts, ready to serve, give, and make a positive impact. 🌱



# Preparing Your Portfolio for 2025

By **Ryan Hastie**, Hastie Financial Group

Investors have enjoyed back-to-back strong years in the U.S. stock market with the S&P 500 gaining in excess of 20% in 2023 and 2024. Over the same time period, the U.S. bond market continues to falter, with the Bloomberg U.S. Bond Aggregate Index gaining only 1.25% in 2024.

This divergence in stock and bond returns will, over time, create a challenge for investors with balanced portfolios that contain both stocks and bonds.

Most investors will build their portfolios with a stock/bond mix that reflects how they feel about accepting long-term investment risk. A very widely used portfolio allocation consists of 60% stocks and 40% bonds. Of the 60% in stocks, the investor will typically allocate a certain percentage to large capitalization (cap) stocks, mid and small cap stocks in order to achieve prudent diversification. They may also include an allocation to foreign stocks.

The 40% allocated to bonds is typically invested in short and medium-term high-quality bonds, high-yield bonds and even some foreign bonds in order to be adequately diversified.

But what happens to that 60/40 portfolio when over the last two years stocks have generally performed very well, and bonds have not? Over time, the desired 60/40 allocation begins to change into a higher risk portfolio given the performance differential. It is common to see a portfolio like this become 65% stocks and 35% bonds, or even 70% stocks and 30% bonds, after two years of very different investment performance. Left untouched, that portfolio will eventually expose the investor to increasingly more portfolio risk than was

originally desired.

There are two schools of thought as to how the investor should handle this situation – to rebalance the portfolio or simply leave it alone. Rebalancing a portfolio is the process of selling some of the portfolio holdings that have substantially gained (stocks, in our example, which are increasing the portfolio risk) and reinvesting in holdings that have not performed well, but that help contain portfolio risk. So, if a portfolio with a desired allocation of 60/40 has changed to 70/30, the investor who wished to rebalance would sell 10% of the stock holdings and purchase 10% more bonds. Once the portfolio is rebalanced back to its desired allocation, it will also reflect the desired overall portfolio risk.

The second school of thought is to leave the portfolio alone. The rationale is that the investor would be selling “winners” and reinvesting in “losers,” and to an extent, that is an accurate observation. The challenge comes when the market goes through a down cycle, and since the portfolio is overweight stocks (creating additional portfolio risk), the investor may experience greater losses than they otherwise would have had they rebalanced the portfolio.

An investment professional can help investors first understand how much portfolio risk they are comfortable accepting and construct a portfolio that reflects that risk. Over time, assuming the portfolio is rebalanced on a regular basis, the investor is not incurring additional and unwanted portfolio risk. 🌱

*Ryan Hastie, CPFA, is a Partner and Investment Advisor with locally owned Hastie Financial Group and can be reached at [ryan.hastie@hastiefg.com](mailto:ryan.hastie@hastiefg.com).*

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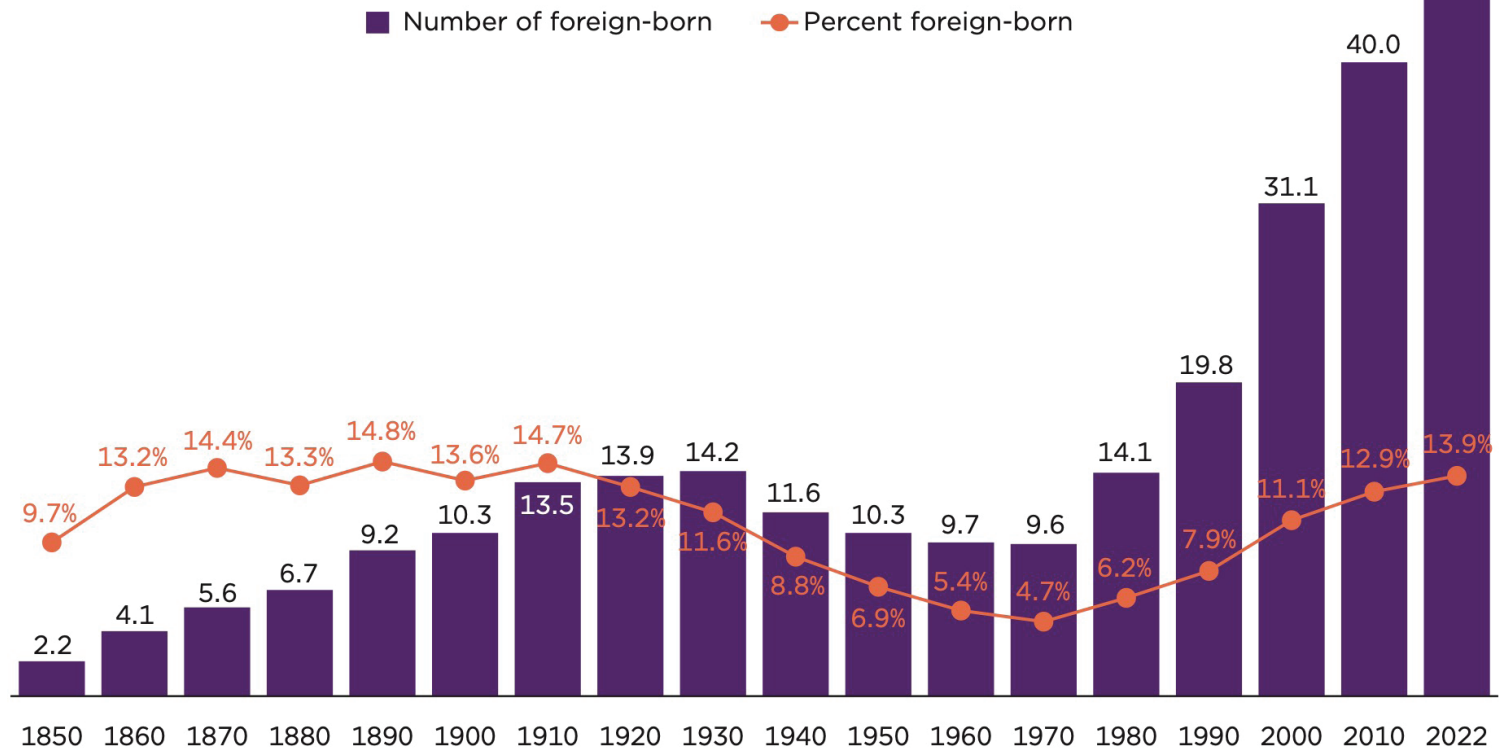
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Figure 1.

**Number and Percentage of Foreign-Born in the United States: 1850–2022**

(Numbers in millions)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1850–2000 Censuses and 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Source: April 2024 U.S. Census Bureau report, “The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2022,” at <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2024/acs/acsbr-019.html>.

**IMMIGRATION** - from page 1

County business leaders worry that agriculture, hospitality, and service industry jobs that require intense manual labor in often unpleasant working conditions may go unfilled. In much of American history, immigrants have filled these positions as a first step toward greater opportunities for their families and future generations. Monterey County today is an example of the historical American immigrant experience.

**Kern County Enforcement Actions Serve as a Warning**

Chamber members intensified their concerns after U.S. Customs and Border Protection executed a high-profile three-day operation starting on Jan. 7 in Kern County

(where Bakersfield is located). This agency announced that “Our operation focused on interdicting those who have broken U.S. federal law, trafficking of dangerous substances, non-citizen criminals, and disrupting the transportation routes used by Transnational Criminal Organizations.”

Part of a Biden Administration initiative called “Return to Sender,” the actions reportedly resulted in arrest of at least 78 people originally from Peru, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Ecuador, Mexico, and China. The agency claimed that among the 78 arrestees were a convicted sex offender who had raped a child, a person with a warrant from Tulare County for a sex offense against a child, someone with an outstanding weapons charge warrant in

Tulare County, and others with felony records. Agents also seized significant amounts of drugs possessed illegally, including fentanyl.

The agency said its purpose was to address “bad people and bad things” and it was not targeting agricultural field workers in general. Nevertheless, the operation disturbed many people in Kern County. Federal agents set up checkpoints on various roads and also convened at businesses where field workers and other laborers tend to congregate, such as gas station convenience stores, fast food restaurants, and the parking lot of a big box hardware store.

Not everyone who had an unpleasant encounter with the Border Patrol during this operation was a criminal. Nor were people caught up

in this operation necessarily undocumented immigrants. Some were even American citizens.

In response to the operation, people stayed away from businesses where federal agents had shown up. Workers avoided going to their jobs to pick fruit and produce. In a press release, the Kern County Farm Bureau stated that “the success of our local agriculture industry depends on a stable and reliable workforce. And at a time when many local farms are already facing labor shortages, disruptions like these adversely affect local agricultural production.”

While acknowledging the arrest of serious criminals as a desirable outcome, the Kern County Farm Bureau also noted that “Those two groups – farmworkers and criminals



— are not synonymous... We hope for a timely and compassionate resolution that allows our farmers and the farmworker community to continue their vital contributions to our local agricultural production while ensuring the safety of our community as a whole."

### **Monterey County Dependence on an Immigrant Workforce**

County statistics about immigration and employment often don't agree and aren't up to date, but what is known is enough to show that Monterey County businesses depend heavily on immigrant employees, including a large number of undocumented people.

A significant percentage of Monterey County farmworkers are undocumented, perhaps 30% to 50%, according to Monterey County Farm Bureau estimates. Somewhere between 25% and 40% of jobs in Monterey County are classified as agricultural support activities or crop production.

Another 10% to 20% of jobs in Monterey County are classified as food service or accommodations. Hospitality is another Monterey County industry heavily dependent on an immigrant workforce, including undocumented people.

Contrary to what politicians may say or what circulates on social media, your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce does not see a groundswell of unemployed American citizens eagerly awaiting openings to make a living in Monterey County picking crops in fields or cleaning hotel rooms. People who actually live in the Salinas Valley know what this difficult and tedious work entails. We see it.

In response to the argument that farms and hotels could simply pay a lot more to attract all the workers they need, your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce also knows the challenges of making a profit in agriculture and hospitality. Ordinary modern Americans are accustomed to access to bountiful food, travel,

and leisure that had been limited to the upper classes for most of human history. There would be national outrage if high prices ended this entitlement of today's democracy.

### **Monterey County Response to Changes in Immigration Policy**

While immigration is a federal issue, Monterey County local governments have responded to potential new immigration policies with positions reassuring immigrants that they will not be subject to local police enforcement actions based on their immigration status.

For example, on Dec. 3, 2024, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors established an Immigrants' Rights Ad Hoc Committee in order to "facilitate bringing nonprofits, agriculture, hospitality, education, labor, local law enforcement, attorneys, healthcare, and other stakeholders together to help make recommendations, enhance communication, and deploy resources in defense and protection of our immigrant communities in Monterey County."

One product of that committee is a Board of Supervisors declaration on Jan. 14, 2025, that Monterey County is a "Welcoming County for Immigrants and Refugees" and "a Place of Trust and Safety for Immigrants." The board also approved \$25,000 for a comprehensive public education campaign for immigrants entitled "Know Your Rights" that includes social media graphics, a resource webpage with downloadable materials, and printed informational cards for distribution to the public.

In addition, Monterey County continues its practice of not using any resources to enforce immigration law, including participation in federal immigration enforcement operations. The Monterey County Sheriff's Office does not inquire about immigration status while carrying out its duties. It has adopted policies that allow undocumented crime victims and crime witnesses to cooperate with local law enforcement without

fear of immigration enforcement actions.

On Dec. 18, 2024, the Soledad City Council reiterated its 2017 declaration of its status as a "Sanctuary City," meaning it is committed to refrain from using city resources in the enforcement of federal immigration laws. The Seaside City Council declared "Sanctuary City" status in 2017.

The Salinas City Council declared itself a "Welcoming City" in 2018. It maintains an ongoing practice of city officials not cooperating with federal immigration authorities.

Monterey County K-12 school districts anticipate that changes in immigration enforcement may discourage families from enrolling their children in school. The Salinas Union High School District passed a resolution on Jan. 14 affirming that state law prohibits state and local police from using funds or personnel to support immigration enforcement, including asking about immigration status, sharing personal information with immigration authorities, or arresting someone only for having a deportation order. It also recognized that state law prohibits schools from adopting policies or practices that discriminate against or hinder access to school services based on immigration.

On the higher education level, Hartnell Community College District continues to operate its Center for Achievement and Student Advancement, which provides financial and personal support for their undocumented students (often called "Dreamers"). California State University Monterey Bay has an "Undocu-Success Center" program for their undocumented students.

### **Your Chamber and Immigration**

Immigration has evoked strong popular emotions throughout American history. Immigration policy debates are often dominated by the most extreme ends of the ideological spectrum, where anyone in disagreement is labeled and

persecuted.

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce notes that federal law (Title 8, Section 1325) provides for criminal and civil penalties for "Any alien who (1) enters or attempts to enter the United States at any time or place other than as designated by immigration officers, or (2) eludes examination or inspection by immigration officers, or (3) attempts to enter or obtains entry to the United States by a willfully false or misleading representation or the willful concealment of a material fact."

Nonetheless, in practice this law is inconsistently and unjustly enforced. And a massive effort to enforce it would cause economic and social chaos. It certainly would not advance the Chamber's official vision of "a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families and businesses succeed via economic growth and opportunity."

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and many other business groups would like to see an overhaul of the federal immigration system. In the U.S. House of Representatives, Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren represents the Salinas Valley and plays a leading role on immigration issues as a former immigration lawyer. She asserts that "Rather than failing to meet the needs of important sectors of our economy such as agriculture, we can help these industries legally employ their workforce."

There are obvious examples of problems in the immigration system that perhaps could be addressed through Congressional consensus and compromise. At the end of Fiscal Year 2023-2024, there was a backlog of 3.6 million pending cases before 700 immigration judges in the 71 immigration courts of the U.S. Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). Dealing with this bureaucracy is not a welcoming process for people who want to come to the United States to experience the freedom and opportunities we enjoy. It could be different. 🌱



## MEMBER NEWS



### **NHEH Attorney Ana C. Toledo Joins Board of Monterey Jazz Festival**

Ana Toledo is a shareholder and heads the NHEH employment law practice group. Her service to the Monterey Jazz Festival extends the firm's decades of involvement with the world's longest continuously running jazz festival. Prior to her role, NHEH attorneys Myron "Doc" Etienne and Terry O'Connor also served long periods with the Board of this major cultural institution. Deeply committed to the community, Toledo has served on the boards of the Center for Community Advocacy, York School and National Steinbeck Center. She is based in NHEH's Salinas office.



### **Bay Federal Credit Union Secures \$10,000 Donation for Salinas Valley Health**

Bay Federal Credit Union is pleased to announce that its nomination of Salinas Valley Health Medical Center for the inaugural Velera Miracle Momentum Awards has resulted in a \$10,000 donation to the hospital. This award recognizes Salinas Valley Health's essential role in providing pediatric care and support services to children and families in our community, ensuring access to care for all. This donation was made possible by Velera, a premier payments credit union service organization (CUSO), in collaboration with Credit Unions for Kids (CU4Kids) to support Children's Miracle Network Hospitals (CMN Hospitals). The Velera Miracle Momentum Awards, which received nearly 500 submissions from across the country, celebrates hospitals dedicated to delivering high-quality healthcare to children. Out of 68 nominees nationwide, only 20 hospitals were selected, and Bay Federal is honored that Salinas Valley Health is among the recipients.



### **Monterey County Bank Hosts Holiday Mixer to Introduce New Leadership and Share Vision for Future Growth**

Monterey County Bank recently hosted a holiday mixer, bringing together longtime customers, community leaders, and stakeholders to celebrate the bank's ongoing expansion since its recapitalization, the addition of new board members, and the appointment of a dynamic new executive leadership team. Among those in attendance were Bill Wilson, President and CEO; John Shindler, Executive Vice President, and Chief Financial Officer; Brian Constable, Executive Vice President, and Chief Credit Officer; and Vida Villanueva, Executive Vice President, and Chief Operating Officer. The event, held at a historic adobe house on Abrego Street in downtown Monterey, featured a sparkling fireplace and a selection of refreshments, providing a warm and inviting atmosphere. It was the perfect setting to celebrate the Bank's legacy as the county's most established community bank. With new leadership in place, the bank will embark on a new chapter in its nearly 48-year history, staying true to its focus on personalized banking services and strong community investment. "Monterey County Bank's new board and leadership team are ecstatic over the heartwarming welcome from our customers and our community," said Wilson



# MEMBER NEWS



## Community Foundation for Monterey County Announces Pajaro Community Grants \$1,893,000 Awarded for Community Resilience Effort

The Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC) announced that 23 organizations will receive a total of \$1,893,000 to help their communities become more resilient in response to the 2023 flooding and levee breach in Pajaro. Grants were awarded to nonprofit organizations working in areas including community health and dental care, business resiliency, digital equity, arts, farmworker advocacy, tenants' rights, legal services, financial workshops, food insecurity and disaster preparedness. A volunteer grants committee comprised of a small business owner, a youth representative, two local government officials and two Pajaro residents worked with CFMC grantmaking staff to develop recommendations, which were finalized by the County of Monterey. The Foundation received 39 applications for the program. "Grants were awarded based on the impact the grant would make for area residents," said CFMC President/CEO Dan Baldwin. California Assembly Bill 102 (AB 102) allocated \$20 million to the County of Monterey to support flood relief in the community of Pajaro. The County set aside a portion of those funds for a Pajaro Community Grant program to be administered by the Community Foundation for Monterey County. "Pajaro is a resilient and vibrant community. We're honored to be a trusted partner along with local residents to award these funds where they will be most effective," said Baldwin. "These grants will provide resources for those most impacted by the storms to continue strengthening their own recovery."



Maribel Maldonado



Adrian Vargas



Rachael Campos

## Bay Federal Promotes New Branch Leadership Across Service Area

Bay Federal Credit Union is proud to announce the promotion of three exceptional leaders to branch management roles:

- **Maribel Maldonado** as Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager of the Salinas Branch.
- **Adrian Vargas** as Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager of the River Street Branch in Santa Cruz.
- **Rachael Campos** as Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager of the Aptos Branch.

These appointments reflect Bay Federal's commitment to fostering internal talent and supporting professional growth.

**Maldonado** brings extensive experience to the Salinas Branch after successfully leading the Aptos Branch for the past two years. A long-standing team member, Maldonado is recognized for her dedication to leadership development and driving positive outcomes for both staff and members.

**Vargas** has been named Branch Manager of the River Street Branch after serving as Interim Branch Manager for the past two months. During this period, he showcased strong leadership and a collaborative approach that inspires team success. Vargas previously held the role of Lead Financial Services Officer at Bay Federal's Capitola Branch.

**Campos** transitions to her new role in Aptos after excelling as Assistant Manager at Bay Federal's Member Service Center. Her expertise in delivering exceptional member service and operational efficiency will support the branch's continued success.

As leaders of their respective branches, Maldonado, Vargas, and Campos will play a crucial role in advancing Bay Federal's mission to provide exceptional financial solutions and strengthen connections with the communities they serve. These branch manager roles are integral to fostering financial wellness, member satisfaction, and operational excellence across the region.



# Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our February 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
Pacific Gas & Electric Company	1928	Steinbruner Hill CPAs	2016
Acme Awning Co.	1959	Treehouse Mortgage Group-Salinas	2016
Mission Linen Supply	1959	ARCpoint Labs of Monterey Bay	2018
Carlton's Fire Extinguisher Sales	1967	Condor Security of America Inc	2018
One Workplace Monterey Bay	1979	Blue Zones Project Monterey County	2019
Sun Street Centers	1979	Comcast Business	2019
MBS Business Systems	1982	Comcast Corporation	2019
MP Express Printing	*35 Years* 1990	Monterey Bay Economic Partnership	2019
Ausonio Inc	1997	Xfinity	2019
Vistra Moss Landing Power Plant and Energy Storage Facility	1999	Luttrell Staffing Group	*5 Years* 2020
Steinbeck Lodge	*25 Years* 2000	Kasavan Construction	2021
Special Events	2003	Kleinfeldt Family BBQ/T&A Cafe, Home of	2021
Jacob's Heart Children's Cancer Support Services	2005	Kleinfeldt Family BBQ	
*20 years*		Nepenthe/Phoenix Corporation	2021
The Yanks Air Museum Foundation	2007	Rossi Bros. Tire & Auto Service	2021
Wheeler's Flooring	2008	A Tool Shed Equipment Rentals Inc	2022
Agricultural Services Certified Organic	*15 Years* 2010	Bankers Casino	2022
California Women for Agriculture	*15 Years* 2010	Monterey County Fair & Event Center	2022
The Worthington Law Centre	2011	Monterey County Supervisor, District 3 - Chris Lopez	2022
Baratto, Sullivan & Co. Insurance	2012	Partnership for Children	2022
Scudder Roofing	2012	Signs by Van	2022
Embassy Suites Monterey Bay - Seaside	2013	T-Mobile	2022
SMG-Monterey, LLC – KWAV-KCDU-KHIP-KKHK-KPIG	2013	American Promotional Events, INC- West dba	2023
Waste Management	2013	TNT Fireworks	
36 North Property Management	2014	EMM KAY DBA The UPS Store	2023
MY Cars- MY Chevrolet	2014	Mercado-Kramer LLP	2023
RDO Equipment Co.	2014	The Whisky Club-TWC11	2023
C & N Tractors	*10 Years* 2015	Vitalant	2023
Monterey Zoo & Vision Quest	*10 Years* 2015	First American Title	2024
Big Sur Land Trust	2016	K&D Landscaping, Inc.	2024
Chamber Discoveries	2016	Milla Legal Document Services	2024

## A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members



# Salinas-based Organic Farming Nonprofit Receives \$225,000 Grant to Support Equity in Nutrient Management Education

The Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA) has been awarded a \$225,000 grant from the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Fertilizer Research and Education Program (FREP). This funding will support ALBA's outreach project, "Equity in Nutrient Management Education," aimed at empowering socially disadvantaged organic growers on the Central Coast.

ALBA is a Salinas-based nonprofit dedicated to empowering limited-resource and aspiring organic farmers through land-based education and hands-on training. FREP supports research, demonstration, and education projects that advance nutrient and irrigation management practices in California agriculture.

Led by Nathan Harkleroad, the program focuses on educating Spanish-speaking farmers in Monterey and San Benito counties on soil fertility, plant nutrition, and irrigation management techniques. The project is part of ALBA's farmer incubation program, which equips aspiring farmers with

the tools and knowledge they need to build successful organic farming businesses.

"This grant is transformative for our growers," said Harkleroad. "By providing culturally relevant, accessible education, we can empower farmers to adopt sustainable practices that improve productivity and protect the environment."

In collaboration with the Monterey and San Benito Resource Conservation Districts, ALBA will offer technical assistance to program graduates to implement these best practices. The grant also funds the Spanish translation of CDFA's California Crop Fertilization Guidelines, ensuring broader access to these critical resources.

Since its inception in 1991, CDFA's FREP has awarded \$31 million to 276 projects focused on nutrient and irrigation management in California.

For more information about ALBA and its programs, visit [www.albafarmers.org](http://www.albafarmers.org).



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# What Did California and Monterey County Voters Authorize Their Local School Districts to Borrow for Construction in 2024?

By **Kevin Dayton**, Government Affairs Liaison

In 2024, California voters approved 232 bond measures for 221 educational districts (elementary school districts, high school districts, unified school districts, and community college districts). These districts are now authorized to borrow almost \$50 billion via bond sales to fund construction projects.

This borrowed money will be paid back over many years, with interest. California voters also approved Proposition 2, which authorized the state to borrow \$10

billion via bond sales to provide to local school districts for construction projects.

Voters approved bond measures for several educational districts based in Monterey County and for districts based in other counties but serving some Monterey County students. Districts with approved bond measures in 2024 include Monterey Peninsula Unified School District, Salinas Union High School District, Soledad Unified School District, Pacific Grove Unified School

District, South Monterey County Joint Union High School District, King City Union School District, Chualar Union School District (in the November election), Mission Union Elementary School District, Parajo Valley Unified School District (which includes the unincorporated community of Pajaro), and Aromas-San Juan Unified School District (which includes parts of rural North Monterey County).

Not every local bond measure for educational districts was approved. Voters rejected 75

bond measures for 60 educational districts in 2024. Three Monterey County school districts saw their proposed bond measures rejected: Chualar Unified School District (in the March election), Spreckels Union School District, and Washington Union Elementary School District.

Below is a list of all local bond measures for educational construction that were on the ballot in California in 2024, with districts associated with Monterey County highlighted in yellow. 🌿

Measure	County or Counties	Date of Election	Name of School or Community College District	Voter Decision	Amount District Authorized to Borrow
US	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Los Angeles Unified School District	PASS	\$9,000,000,000
HH	San Diego	November 5, 2024	San Diego Community College District	PASS	\$3,500,000,000
R	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	San Jose Unified School District	PASS	\$1,150,000,000
AC	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Long Beach Community College District	PASS	\$990,000,000
CC	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Riverside Community College District	PASS	\$954,000,000
P	Sacramento	November 5, 2024	San Juan Unified School District	PASS	\$950,000,000
M	Alameda	November 5, 2024	Fremont Unified School District	PASS	\$919,000,000
R	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Pasadena Unified School District	PASS	\$900,000,000
SW	San Diego	November 5, 2024	Southwestern Community College District	PASS	\$800,000,000
A	San Francisco	November 5, 2024	San Francisco Unified School District	PASS	\$790,000,000
V	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Mt. San Antonio Community College District	PASS	\$750,000,000
Q	Madera, Kings, Tulare, Fresno	November 5, 2024	State Center Community College District	PASS	\$698,000,000
A	Riverside	March 5, 2024	Desert Sands Unified School District	PASS	\$675,000,000
RR	San Diego	November 5, 2024	Sweetwater Union High School District	PASS	\$647,000,000
GCC	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Glendale Community College District	PASS	\$600,000,000
K	Alameda, San Joaquin	November 5, 2024	San Joaquin Delta Community College District	PASS	\$598,000,000
I	Alameda	March 5, 2024	Hayward Unified School District	PASS	\$550,000,000
D	Sacramento	November 5, 2024	Sacramento City Unified School District	PASS	\$543,000,000
N	Sacramento	November 5, 2024	Elk Grove Unified School District	PASS	\$542,000,000
H	Fresno	November 5, 2024	Fresno Unified School District	PASS	\$500,000,000
D	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Redlands Unified School District	PASS	\$500,000,000
K	Orange	November 5, 2024	Anaheim Union High School District	PASS	\$496,000,000
QS	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District	PASS	\$495,000,000
P	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	Campbell Union High School District	PASS	\$474,000,000
S	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Palm Springs Unified School District	PASS	\$465,000,000
ABC	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Burbank Unified School District	PASS	\$458,205,000
RH	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Rio Hondo Community College District	PASS	\$442,200,000
I	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Fontana Unified School District	PASS	\$408,000,000
A	Fresno	November 5, 2024	Clovis Unified School District	PASS	\$400,000,000
AVH	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Antelope Valley Union High School District	PASS	\$398,000,000
MM	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District	PASS	\$395,000,000
UU	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Pomona Unified School District	PASS	\$385,000,000
AA	San Diego	November 5, 2024	Chula Vista Elementary School District	PASS	\$360,000,000
E	Los Angeles	March 5, 2024	Culver City Unified School District	PASS	\$358,000,000
AS	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Arcadia Unified School District	PASS	\$358,000,000
I	Orange	November 5, 2024	Santa Ana Unified School District	PASS	\$355,000,000
EE	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	Los Altos School District	PASS	\$350,000,000
Z	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	Cupertino Union School District	PASS	\$347,000,000
A	Monterey	November 5, 2024	Monterey Peninsula Unified School District	PASS	\$340,000,000
JJ	San Diego	November 5, 2024	San Marcos Unified School District	PASS	\$324,000,000
M	Monterey, Santa Cruz	November 5, 2024	Pajaro Valley Unified School District	PASS	\$315,000,000
SOS	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District	PASS	\$297,800,000
B	Marin	November 5, 2024	Tamalpais Union High School District	PASS	\$289,000,000
E	Ventura	November 5, 2024	Oxnard Union High School District	PASS	\$285,000,000
L	Los Angeles, Orange	November 5, 2024	Fullerton Joint Union High School District	PASS	\$284,000,000
S	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Redondo Beach Unified School District	PASS	\$278,000,000
N	Alameda	November 5, 2024	New Haven Unified School District	PASS	\$272,000,000
N	Orange	November 5, 2024	Fullerton School District	PASS	\$262,000,000
J	Orange	November 5, 2024	Tustin Unified School District	PASS	\$261,000,000
X	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Moreno Valley Unified School District	PASS	\$240,000,000
C	Butte	November 5, 2024	Chico Unified School District	PASS	\$239,000,000
B	Napa	November 5, 2024	Napa Valley Unified School District	PASS	\$230,000,000
BB	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Colton Joint Unified School District	PASS	\$225,000,000
C	Santa Clara	March 5, 2024	Sunnyvale School District	PASS	\$214,000,000
O	Alameda	November 5, 2024	Newark Unified School District	PASS	\$205,000,000
R	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Menifee Union School District	PASS	\$205,000,000
M	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	San Marino Unified School District	PASS	\$200,000,000
CC	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Compton Community College District	PASS	\$200,000,000
RLS	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Manhattan Beach Unified School District	PASS	\$200,000,000
P2024	Santa Barbara	November 5, 2024	Santa Barbara Community College District	PASS	\$198,000,000
T	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Lake Elsinore Unified School District	PASS	\$198,000,000
Q	Alameda	November 5, 2024	San Lorenzo Unified School District	PASS	\$195,000,000
B	Contra Costa	March 5, 2024	Antioch Unified School District	PASS	\$195,000,000
Q	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Paramount Unified School District	PASS	\$190,000,000
O	San Joaquin	November 5, 2024	Tracy Joint Unified School District	PASS	\$190,000,000
X	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Victor Valley Union High School District	PASS	\$180,000,000
A	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Victor Valley Union High School District	PASS	\$180,000,000
V	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Junipa Unified School District	PASS	\$180,000,000
SG	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	San Gabriel Unified School District	PASS	\$178,000,000
H	San Mateo	March 5, 2024	San Carlos School District	PASS	\$176,000,000
M	Fresno	November 5, 2024	Sanger Unified School District	PASS	\$175,000,000
J	Alameda	March 5, 2024	San Leandro Unified School District	PASS	\$174,000,000
P	San Mateo	November 5, 2024	Belmont-Redwood Shores School District	PASS	\$171,000,000
CC	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	Los Gatos Union School District	PASS	\$163,000,000
H	Orange	November 5, 2024	Brea Olinda Unified School District	PASS	\$160,000,000
M2024	Santa Barbara	November 5, 2024	Lompoc Unified School District	PASS	\$160,000,000
AA	Sonoma, Marin	November 5, 2024	Petaluma Joint Union High School District	PASS	\$159,000,000
Z	San Diego	November 5, 2024	Encinitas Union School District	PASS	\$158,300,000
K	San Mateo	November 5, 2024	Cabrillo Unified School District	PASS	\$153,400,000



Measure	County or Counties	Date of Election	Name of School or Community College District	Voter Decision	Amount District Authorized to Borrow
R	Sacramento	November 5, 2024	Folsom-Cordova Unified School District SFID#4	PASS	\$144,000,000
S	Sacramento	November 5, 2024	Folsom Cordova Unified School District SFID#4	PASS	\$144,000,000
H-24	San Luis Obispo	November 5, 2024	Lucia Mar Unified School District	PASS	\$143,220,000
P	Contra Costa	November 5, 2024	Pittsburg Unified School District	PASS	\$140,000,000
U	El Dorado	November 5, 2024	Lake Tahoe Unified School District	PASS	\$127,000,000
U	San Mateo	November 5, 2024	Menlo Park City Elementary School District	PASS	\$123,600,000
C	Solano	March 5, 2024	Benicia Unified School District	PASS	\$122,500,000
LS	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Lancaster School District	PASS	\$122,100,000
I	Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity	November 5, 2024	Redwoods Community College District	PASS	\$120,000,000
G	Monterey	November 5, 2024	Salinas Union High School District	PASS	\$115,000,000
Y	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Ceres Unified School District	PASS	\$114,000,000
B-24	San Luis Obispo	November 5, 2024	Atascadero Unified School District	PASS	\$110,000,000
X	Fresno	November 5, 2024	Central Unified School District	PASS	\$109,000,000
G	San Joaquin, Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Oakdale Joint Unified School District	PASS	\$105,500,000
ME	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	El Monte City School District	PASS	\$105,000,000
W	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Whittier City School District	PASS	\$99,000,000
C	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	East Whittier City School District	PASS	\$97,000,000
J	San Mateo	November 5, 2024	Millbrae School District	PASS	\$95,000,000
BB	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District	PASS	\$91,500,000
O	Contra Costa	November 5, 2024	Martinez Unified School District	PASS	\$90,000,000
LP	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Centinela Union HSD (Local Public Schools Funding Authority)	PASS	\$89,000,000
C	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Morongo Unified School District	PASS	\$88,300,000
X	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Modesto City High School District	PASS	\$85,000,000
O	Santa Cruz	November 5, 2024	Scotts Valley Unified School District	PASS	\$85,000,000
M	Orange	November 5, 2024	Buena Park School District	PASS	\$84,000,000
O	Merced	November 5, 2024	Merced City School District	PASS	\$80,000,000
U	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Lynwood Unified School District	PASS	\$80,000,000
E	Tulare, Kings	November 5, 2024	Tulare Joint Union High School District	PASS	\$80,000,000
B	Monterey	November 5, 2024	Pacific Grove Unified School District	PASS	\$78,000,000
C	Riverside	November 5, 2024	San Jacinto Unified School District	PASS	\$78,000,000
K2024	Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo	November 5, 2024	Santa Maria-Bonita Elementary School District	PASS	\$77,000,000
O	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Banning Unified School District	PASS	\$74,000,000
O	Orange	November 5, 2024	La Habra City School District	PASS	\$73,000,000
P	Santa Cruz	November 5, 2024	Soquel Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$73,000,000
E	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Rim of the World Unified School District	PASS	\$71,000,000
J	San Bernardino, Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Snowline Joint Unified School District	PASS	\$70,600,000
Z	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	Petaluma City Elementary School District	PASS	\$70,000,000
G	San Mateo	March 5, 2024	Pacifica School District	PASS	\$70,000,000
J	Mono	November 5, 2024	Mammoth Unified School District	PASS	\$70,000,000
KK	San Diego	November 5, 2024	San Ysidro School District	PASS	\$68,500,000
PP	San Diego	November 5, 2024	South Bay Union School District	PASS	\$67,000,000
LL	San Diego	November 5, 2024	San Ysidro School District	PASS	\$66,500,000
G	Sonoma	March 5, 2024	Rincon Valley Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$65,600,000
R	Solano	November 5, 2024	Travis Unified School District	PASS	\$65,000,000
J	Shasta	November 5, 2024	Gateway Unified School District	PASS	\$65,000,000
L	Alameda	November 5, 2024	Albany Unified School District	PASS	\$63,800,000
G	Los Angeles	March 5, 2024	Garvey School District	PASS	\$60,000,000
H	Kern	November 5, 2024	Southern Kern Unified School District	PASS	\$59,000,000
I	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Romoland Elementary School District	PASS	\$58,455,000
QQ	San Diego	November 5, 2024	South Bay Union School District	PASS	\$58,000,000
M	Shasta	November 5, 2024	Shasta Union High School District	PASS	\$56,600,000
H	San Bernardino	November 5, 2024	Mountain View Elementary School District (Ontario)	PASS	\$56,000,000
P	Los Angeles, Orange	November 5, 2024	Lowell Joint School District	PASS	\$54,000,000
C	Ventura	March 5, 2024	Hueneme School District	PASS	\$53,700,000
D-24	San Luis Obispo	November 5, 2024	Templeton Unified School District	PASS	\$52,300,000
D	Contra Costa	March 5, 2024	Moraga School District	PASS	\$52,000,000
S	Lake	November 5, 2024	Konocti Unified School District	PASS	\$50,000,000
R	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	Healdsburg Unified School District SFID#1	PASS	\$49,500,000
E	Marin	November 5, 2024	Kentfield School District	PASS	\$48,000,000
R	Inyo	November 5, 2024	Bishop Unified School District	PASS	\$46,300,000
P	Merced	November 5, 2024	Merced Community College District	PASS	\$46,000,000
B	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Hughson Unified School District	PASS	\$46,000,000
R	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Stanislaus Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$45,000,000
H	Santa Cruz	March 5, 2024	Live Oak School District	PASS	\$44,000,000
G	Fresno	March 5, 2024	Fowler Unified School District	PASS	\$44,000,000
D	Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz	November 5, 2024	Aromas-San Juan Unified School District	PASS	\$44,000,000
D	Tulare, Fresno	November 5, 2024	Dinuba Unified School District	PASS	\$42,000,000
E	Monterey	November 5, 2024	Soledad Unified School District	PASS	\$42,000,000
AA	San Bernardino, Kern	November 5, 2024	Sierra Sands Unified School District	PASS	\$42,000,000
J	Kern	November 5, 2024	Delano Union School District	PASS	\$41,800,000
Y2024	Santa Barbara	November 5, 2024	Hope Elementary School District	PASS	\$40,300,000
P	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	BelleVue Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$38,500,000
H	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Perris Elementary School District	PASS	\$38,000,000
K	Los Angeles	March 5, 2024	South Whittier Elementary School District	PASS	\$37,500,000
E	San Mateo	March 5, 2024	Woodside Elementary School District	PASS	\$36,000,000
K	Kern	November 5, 2024	Fruitvale School District	PASS	\$36,000,000
D	Kern	November 5, 2024	Wasco Union High School District	PASS	\$35,400,000
H	Monterey, San Benito	November 5, 2024	South Monterey County Joint Union High School District	PASS	\$35,000,000





Measure	County or Counties	Date of Election	Name of School or Community College District	Voter Decision	Amount District Authorized to Borrow
I	Monterey, San Benito	November 5, 2024	South Monterey County Joint Union High School District	PASS	\$35,000,000
Z	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Denair Unified School District	PASS	\$34,300,000
GG	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	Orchard Elementary School District	PASS	\$30,000,000
CC	San Diego	November 5, 2024	Lemon Grove School District	PASS	\$30,000,000
EE	San Diego	November 5, 2024	Lemon Grove School District	PASS	\$30,000,000
S	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Newman-Crows Landing Unified School District	PASS	\$30,000,000
K	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	Piner-Olivet Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$29,500,000
X	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	Wright Elementary School District	PASS	\$29,200,000
HV	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Hermosa Beach City Elementary School District	PASS	\$28,700,000
RU	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Los Nietos School District	PASS	\$28,500,000
S	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	Mount Pleasant Elementary School District	PASS	\$28,000,000
T	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Newman-Crows Landing Unified School District	PASS	\$27,000,000
H	Sacramento, San Joaquin	November 5, 2024	Galt Joint Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$27,000,000
ST	Los Angeles	November 5, 2024	Los Nietos School District	PASS	\$26,500,000
L	Kern	November 5, 2024	Greenfield Union School District	PASS	\$25,000,000
F	Fresno and Madera	November 5, 2024	Firebaugh-Las Deltas Joint Unified School District	PASS	\$25,000,000
B	Butte	November 5, 2024	Durham Unified School District	PASS	\$24,500,000
U	Fresno	November 5, 2024	Sierra Unified School District	PASS	\$24,150,000
T	Santa Clara	November 5, 2024	Moreland School District	PASS	\$24,000,000
N	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	Sebastopol Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$24,000,000
R	Contra Costa	November 5, 2024	Byron Union School District	PASS	\$24,000,000
B	Colusa	November 5, 2024	Williams Unified School District	PASS	\$23,000,000
U	Kings	November 5, 2024	Hanford Elementary School District	PASS	\$23,000,000
Z	Siskiyou	November 5, 2024	Siskiyou Union High School District	PASS	\$22,000,000
E	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Riverbank Unified School District	PASS	\$21,600,000
L	Monterey	November 5, 2024	King City Union School District	PASS	\$21,600,000
K	Merced	November 5, 2024	Weaver Union School District	PASS	\$20,000,000
L	Imperial	November 5, 2024	Brawley Elementary School District	PASS	\$20,000,000
K	Fresno, Kings, Tulare	November 5, 2024	Kingsburg Joint Union High School District	PASS	\$20,000,000
K	Monterey	November 5, 2024	King City Union School District	PASS	\$19,800,000
C	Fresno, Monterey, San Benito	November 5, 2024	West Hills Community College District SFID No. 2	PASS	\$19,000,000
N	Humboldt	November 5, 2024	McKinleyville Union School District	PASS	\$18,500,000
J	Merced	November 5, 2024	Delhi Unified School District	PASS	\$17,000,000
I	Shasta	November 5, 2024	Cascade Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$16,500,000
A	Butte	November 5, 2024	Biggs Unified School District	PASS	\$16,500,000
Q	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Salida Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$16,000,000
K	Riverside	November 5, 2024	Nuvview Union School District	PASS	\$15,000,000
S	Inyo	November 5, 2024	Bishop Unified School District	PASS	\$14,200,000
P	Fresno	November 5, 2024	Parlier Unified School District	PASS	\$14,100,000
C	Colusa	November 5, 2024	Colusa Unified School District	PASS	\$13,800,000
J	Tehama	November 5, 2024	Corning Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$13,700,000
D	Sonoma	March 5, 2024	Harmony Union School District	PASS	\$13,500,000
MM	San Diego	November 5, 2024	San Ysidro School District	PASS	\$12,900,000
A	El Dorado	November 5, 2024	Black Oak Mine Unified School District	PASS	\$12,700,000
B	Humboldt	March 5, 2024	Arcata Elementary School District	PASS	\$12,500,000
HH	San Mateo	November 5, 2024	Bayshore Elementary School District	PASS	\$12,500,000
M	Sonoma	November 5, 2024	Roseland Elementary School District	PASS	\$12,000,000
P	El Dorado	November 5, 2024	Pollack Pines Elementary School District	PASS	\$11,500,000
L	Fresno, Kings	November 5, 2024	Laton Unified School District	PASS	\$9,700,000
E	Shasta	November 5, 2024	Cottonwood Union School District	PASS	\$9,600,000
A	Colusa	November 5, 2024	Maxwell Unified School District	PASS	\$9,100,000
A	Kings	November 5, 2024	Armona Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$9,000,000
H	Tulare	November 5, 2024	Earlimart School District	PASS	\$8,500,000
U	Stanislaus	November 5, 2024	Keyes Union School District	PASS	\$8,500,000
T	Inyo	November 5, 2024	Owens Valley Unified School District	PASS	\$7,500,000
U	Inyo	November 5, 2024	Lone Pine Unified School District	PASS	\$7,500,000
G	Tulare	November 5, 2024	Burton School District	PASS	\$7,100,000
L	Santa Cruz	November 5, 2024	Bonny Doon Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$7,000,000
D	Butte	November 5, 2024	Thermalito Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$6,800,000
J	Monterey	November 5, 2024	Chualar Union School District	PASS	\$5,600,000
K	Humboldt	November 5, 2024	Cutten Elementary School District	PASS	\$5,000,000
G	Ventura	November 5, 2024	Briggs School District	PASS	\$4,900,000
G	Shasta	November 5, 2024	Bella Vista Elementary School District	PASS	\$4,400,000
H	Imperial	November 5, 2024	Heber Elementary School District	PASS	\$4,000,000
I	Kern	November 5, 2024	Buttonwillow Union School District	PASS	\$4,000,000
TT	San Diego	November 5, 2024	Warner Unified School District	PASS	\$3,800,000
K	Tehama	November 5, 2024	Lassen View Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$3,500,000
J	Tulare	November 5, 2024	Pleasant View Elementary School District	PASS (2/3)	\$3,000,000
A	Nevada	March 5, 2024	Twin Ridges Elementary School District	PASS	\$2,600,000
N	Stanislaus	March 5, 2024	Riverbank Unified School District	PASS	\$2,100,000
C	Sonoma	March 5, 2024	Fort Ross Elementary School District	PASS	\$2,100,000
W	Lassen	November 5, 2024	Shaffer Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$2,000,000
N	Monterey	November 5, 2024	Mission Union Elementary School District	PASS	\$1,500,000
I	Santa Cruz	March 5, 2024	Pacific Elementary School District	PASS	\$1,300,000
J	Santa Cruz	March 5, 2024	Pacific Elementary School District	PASS	\$675,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>232 Districts</b>	<b>\$49,320,005,000</b>





# Embracing the Rich History of Alisal Since 1957, Goodwill Central Coast Celebrates Renovation of Neighborhood Store

By Goodwill Central Coast Staff

**N**amed after a grove of sycamore trees native to the region, the Alisal neighborhood of East Salinas dates back to the founding of its first post office back in 1866.

For nearly 150 years Alisal has enjoyed a rich history forged through migration, agriculture and tight-knit families building a life within a unique blend of cultures. In the late 19th century a large number of Chinese immigrants converted land into farms for potatoes, wheat, beets and barley. During the Great Depression, Alisal became home to hundreds of Dust Bowl migrants from the Midwest, many of them gravitating to the agricultural industry.

Through the years Alisal saw an influx of migrant workers from Mexico, as well as Filipino families looking for their own chunk of the American dream. In 1963, the City of Salinas annexed Alisal and adopted the Alisal District Identity Master Plan that aimed to strengthen the neighborhood's cultural identity and physical identity.

With all of this rich history as a backdrop, it's no surprise that Goodwill Central Coast purchased one of its first buildings in this vibrant neighborhood back in 1957. GCC operates 14 retail locations across Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo counties, and the Alisal store is one of its oldest, having opened in 1962.

More than six decades later, GCC celebrated



We've worked hard to create a space that is more than just a retail store; it's a functional community hub where everyone who walks through the door is an important cog in an efficient machine that helps create jobs, resources, and growth.

— Tom Moran, Goodwill Central Coast CEO

Alisal's people and its history, ushering in a new era with a celebration on Dec. 5 that unveiled a completely renovated store at 708 E. Alisal St. The 4,900-square-foot facility capped off a near-decade-long project that saw the nonprofit renovate all 16 of its stores. Begun in July of 2024, the extensive work at Alisal represented the last in a series of remodels to help further GCC's mission to uplift communities through the power of employment.

## A key location

"This location is dear to us, and important for the community," said Goodwill Central Coast CEO Tom Moran. "The work took three months, with the store closing for five weeks. But it

needed to be done. In the end I think it was a home run for the community, and we can see it standing proud for another 50-plus years."

Alisal also is unique because it's the closest to Goodwill's processing facility, where donations from various sites are collected and organized on their way to distribution to the various stores.

Donations, of course, remain the key to Goodwill's mission to fund job training programs and other services, with more than 630,000 annual donations benefiting more than 11,000 people. It also helps divert an estimated 17 million pounds of items from going to the landfill annually.

The major renovation is part of GCC's efforts to create welcoming, convenient environments for shoppers and donors, along with safer, more

comfortable workplaces for associates. The improvements make it easier for GCC to focus on refining operations and becoming more efficient — funding its core mission to create jobs and build a stronger, more sustainable community rather than on creating bigger buildings.

The renovation provided a major facelift, and included flooring, paint, new roof, a repaired foundation, a new break room and restrooms, widened aisles, new state-of-the-art fixtures, and a high-tech security system. Next year there are plans to engage East Salinas group Hijos del Sol to paint a mural on the exterior wall of the building.

“We’ve worked hard to create a space that is more than just a retail store; it’s a functional community hub where everyone who walks through the door is an important cog in an efficient machine that helps create jobs, resources, and growth,” said Moran.

#### A neighborhood celebration

With a soundtrack of live mariachi music and punctuated by a ribbon-cutting ceremony held by the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Alisal store offered guests exclusive early access and special deals and prices. More than 100 people lined up early in the morning to witness the store’s transformation.

The store’s doors opened at 9 a.m., with the first 50 shoppers receiving a special GCC tote bag filled with surprises. The ribbon-cutting took place at 12:30 p.m., followed by a special presentation about Goodwill’s vision for a sustainable future.

Alisal store manager Juan Ramirez delivered the opening remarks, followed by words of praise from CEO Moran.

“I want to thank our dedicated team members whose hard work has made this transformation

possible,” Moran said. “Thank you to our board members for your unwavering support and guidance. And of course, thank you to our loyal customers — your patronage fuels our mission to make positive impacts every day.”

Leonard Batti, chair-elect of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, led the ribbon-cutting ceremony. And a representative from State Sen. John Laird’s office, Marisa Hernandez, spoke about the importance of community spirit and connectivity.

The proceedings eventually turned into a neighborhood block party of sorts, with store employees literally dancing in the aisles as the mariachi band blasted out traditional favorites.

GCC invites the public to stop by the Alisal store, where donations and purchases transform into local jobs, resources and growth.

For more details, visit [www.cgoodwill.org](http://www.cgoodwill.org).



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# 104th Annual Awards Luncheon

## Nominations are now open!

- ▶ Agricultural Leadership
- ▶ Large Business of the Year
- ▶ Small Business of the Year
- ▶ Citizen of the Year
- ▶ Spirit of the Community
- ▶ Businesswoman of the Year



[bit.ly/104THAAL](https://bit.ly/104THAAL)

**Deadline for Nominations: Friday, February 7th at 12:00PM**





# CHAMBER NEW MEMBER PROFILES

## The Valley Restaurant & Catering

The Valley Restaurant & Catering brings its culinary expertise right to the heart of your home, making residential celebrations truly memorable. Whether it's a birthday party, anniversary, family reunion, or any other special occasion, the team is dedicated to crafting a personalized dining experience that delights your guests. Based in Salinas and serving the Central Coast and Salinas Valley, Valley Restaurant & Catering offers a diverse menu tailored to your preferences, ensuring every dish is a hit. With over 25 years of experience, they've perfected the art of home-gathering catering, providing not just food but an experience that enhances the joy of your celebration. Let them handle the details so you can focus on creating cherished memories with your loved ones.

*Valleyrestaurantandcatering.com, info@valleyrestaurantandcatering.com, (831) 753-0797*



## Hospice of Santa Cruz County

Hospice of Santa Cruz County (HSCC) honors the choices of individuals and families. HSCC's medical, emotional, and practical support provides comfort and peace of mind as you face serious illness or the end of life. Serving Northern Monterey for the last 25 years, HSCC is proud to join the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and become more visible in the community. Rated as the highest-quality hospice in the region, supporting all people of all ages through the journey of serious illness and grief, ensuring that no one walks the path alone. Services include hospice care, palliative care, grief support, and pediatric concurrent care. The HSCC team is available to serve you whenever you need them.

*hospicesantacruz.org, info@hospicesantacruz.org, (831) 430-3000*



# RIBBON CUTTINGS & CHAMBER EVENTS

by Chamber Staff



## Kidz Corner USA's Ribbon-Cutting Celebration

Kidz Corner USA celebrated the grand opening of its new facility, marking a proud milestone since its founding in 2015. Established by Stephanie Bayer, it has since grown into a trusted community hub, offering programs in education, gymnastics, dance and cheer while nurturing creativity and confidence in children!



## Valley Restaurant and Catering Grand Opening

Valley Restaurant and Catering celebrated its grand opening, marking an exciting new chapter of the business. After over 40 years of business with Portobello's Catering, Don and Susan Gibbons proudly handed the reins to long-time Portobello's Catering chef Miguel Xirum. Rebranding the business to Valley Restaurant and Catering, Xirum opened his doors and continued the tradition of exceptional service and catering with a vibrant new restaurant located at 9 E. San Luis St., in Salinas.



## Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Affairs Breakfast Set for Feb. 28

**T**he Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce its 3rd Annual Legislative Affairs Breakfast, presented by Vistra, a signature event to connect community leaders, business professionals, and key elected and appointed officials in the Salinas Valley region. The event is set to take place on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. at Hartnell College in Salinas.

This year's program promises to deliver invaluable insights into the latest government policies, projects, and programs that are shaping businesses and the community. Featured speakers include U.S. Rep. Zoe Lofgren, representing California's 18th District, State Sen. John Laird, Salinas Mayor Dennis Donohue, and other distinguished officials.

The breakfast serves as an

opportunity for the local business and community to hear directly from local, state, and U.S. policymakers about the initiatives impacting our region. Along with key updates, there is an excellent networking opportunity with influential community and business leaders.

Tickets are \$50 for Chamber members and \$60 for non-members. Due to high demand, seating is limited and registrations are

required. Sponsorship opportunities are also available for businesses. To purchase tickets or learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce at (831) 751-7725 or visit [SalinasChamber.com](http://SalinasChamber.com).

We look forward to you joining us for this impactful event and being part of the conversation shaping the future of our community.



#### **U.S. Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA-18)**

Rep. Zoe Lofgren has been a Democratic member of the United States House of Representatives since 1995. She represents the 18th District of California, which serves communities in Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz counties. Lofgren attended Stanford University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in political science in 1970. After graduating from Stanford, she attended Santa Clara University School of Law.

Lofgren practiced and taught immigration law and was a founder and first executive director of the nonprofit Community Housing Developers. In 1980, she was elected to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, where she served for 14 years.

Following Rep. Don Edwards' retirement in 1994 after 32 years in Congress, Lofgren was elected to the House of Representatives. She is currently the Ranking Member of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee and serves on the House Judiciary Committee. Lofgren is also the elected Chair of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation.

Lofgren is known for her steadfast advocacy for immigrant communities and her expertise on U.S. immigration law and policy, as well as for her work on issues related to innovation and technology.



#### **State Sen. John Laird (SD-17)**

John Laird was re-elected to the California State Senate on Nov. 5, 2024, winning all four counties in his district, which includes Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey, and part of San Luis Obispo counties. He serves as Chair of the Senate Budget Subcommittee #1 (Education) and on several other committees.

Before his Senate tenure, Laird served as Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency under Gov. Jerry Brown from 2011 to 2019. He was also a member of the State Integrated Waste Management Board from 2008 to 2009. In 2002, Laird was elected to the State Assembly to represent the 27th District.

Laird began his public service in 1981 when he was elected to the Santa Cruz City Council, where he served until 1990. He was a two-term mayor, from 1983 to 1984 and again from 1987 to 1988, becoming one of the first openly gay mayors in the U.S.



#### **Salinas Mayor Dennis Donohue**

Dennis Donohue grew up in Salinas and has called the city home for decades. Donohue learned the importance of local government in people's lives at a young age as he watched his father, Jim Donohue, lead Salinas Parks and Recreation as the Director for nearly 30 years.

During his tenure as Salinas Mayor from 2006-2012, Donohue was a relentless advocate for our community's safety. His co-founding of the Community Alliance for Safety and Police and his pursuit of innovative public safety strategies, which led to securing grant dollars and fostering ongoing relations with Federal law enforcement partners, significantly contributed to our safety.

One of his many accomplishments as mayor also includes leading the effort to upgrade the Cesar Chavez Library and to ensure all public school students in Salinas received library cards.

Donohue has served on numerous Boards and held a variety of leadership positions, including Chair of the National Steinbeck Center Board, Chair of the SV Chamber of Commerce, Chair of the Central California Grower Shipper Association, and Chair of the Grower Shipper Foundation. 🌱

*For more information on the keynote speakers, visit [SalinasChamber.com](http://SalinasChamber.com).*



## What's Your Chamber's Government Relations Committee Talking About This Month?

## FEBRUARY 2025

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee had 25 members at its first meeting of 2025 on Wednesday, Jan. 15. Under its new chair Amy Salmina, the committee showed its readiness for another year of Chamber community leadership with the following actions:

- 1 Committee members were introduced to Colleen Bailey, new Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce President & CEO.
- 2 As directed by the committee at its December 2024 meeting, the Chamber sent a letter to the Salinas City Council urging them to schedule a strategic planning session and consider discussing 13 topics of interest to the Chamber.
- 3 The committee reviewed the tentative findings and conclusions of the Housing Ad Hoc Group that was established by the committee at its December 2024 meeting. This committee is reviewing the four rental housing ordinances enacted by the Salinas City Council in 2023 and 2024 related to rental registration, rent stabilization/rent control, and tenant protections. The Ad Hoc Committee will meet again to refine the recommendations for the Chamber to submit to the Salinas City Council.
- 4 The Ad Hoc Group has identified a vision for the Salinas Valley of a

rental housing market that's stable and sustainable for tenants. To this end, the Ad Hoc Group has identified seven issues of concern in the four new ordinances. The most damaging provision in the ordinances seems to be the limit on annual rent increases, which is provoking housing owners to remove their properties from the rental market.

- 5 The committee directed the Chamber to send a letter to the Salinas City Council asking for three actions related to the City of Salinas Housing Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): (1) resumption of regularly scheduled TAC meetings; (2) appointment of new individuals to TAC who have a balanced, thoughtful perspective on housing policies; and (3) restoration of the Chamber's Government Affairs Liaison to TAC participation.
- 6 Committee members remain concerned about developing and presenting a strong case to voters about the necessity and value of renewing the City of Salinas Measure G sales tax before it expires in 2030. The Chamber will send a letter to the new Measure G Oversight Committee recommending a framework for ensuring accountability of Measure G expenditures to the public.
- 7 The committee continues to monitor any efforts to mitigate impacts of the planned Amazon Fulfillment

Center on businesses and the community, especially as related to traffic congestion on South Salinas streets and the safety of entrance and exit ramps in the section of Highway 101 designated for the future US 101 South of Salinas Safety Improvement Project.

- 8 The Chamber has sent an email to the City of Salinas Public Works Department asking for 2024 flow measurements of wastewater from Pond 3 of the Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility to the Monterey One Water (M1W) Regional Treatment Plant, and flow measurements of that wastewater after treatment to the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project—CSIP (for agricultural irrigation), the Seaside Groundwater Basin (for storage as Monterey Peninsula drinking water), and the treated wastewater outfall to Monterey Bay. At an August 20, 2024 city council meeting, a Chamber representative asked the Salinas City Council to receive that information after the conclusion of a short-term water conveyance agreement between the City of Salinas and Monterey One Water. The City Council verbally affirmed that request.
- 9 The committee discussed reports about City of Salinas sewer revenue bonds and directed Chamber leaders to inquire with city staff about repayment of those bonds.



- 10 Monterey County has resumed work on its Community Climate Action and Adaptation Plan for 2030. The plan focuses on mandatory conversion of fuel sources from natural gas and oil to electricity, particularly for household heating and cooking and for agricultural equipment.
- 11 Salinas Planning and Research Corporation (SPARC) has approached the Chamber about joining a coalition to discuss and pursue limited and appropriate revisions of the Economic Development Element (EDE) of the City of Salinas General Plan. After years of community collaboration to develop the Economic Development Element, the Salinas City Council voted 7-0 in December 2017 to approve it, along with an Environmental Impact Report. The Committee will seek a presentation at its February meeting from SPARC about ideas for refreshing the city's Economic Development Element (EDE). 🌱



# City of Gonzales Moves Forward With Plans for a Dedicated Industrial Wastewater System

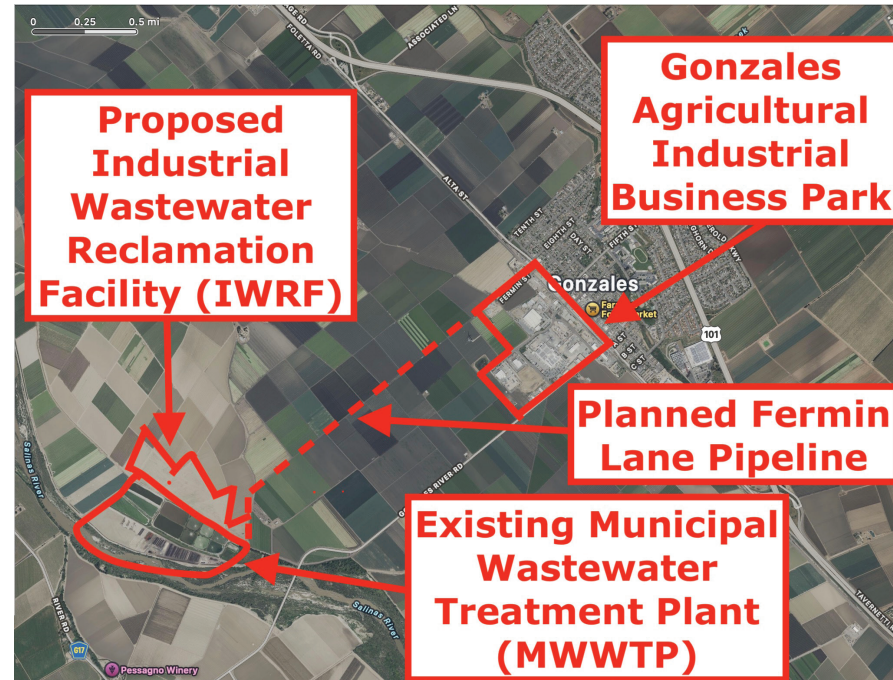
By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

The City of Salinas has operated a separate, dedicated Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility and Conveyance System since World War II. Now, the City of Gonzales has begun construction on its own separate, dedicated industrial wastewater treatment system.

On Nov. 22, 2024, the City of Gonzales held a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase 1 of its Industrial Wastewater Conveyance and Industrial Wastewater Reclamation Facility Project. Planned for several years, this project will separate the conveyance and treatment of municipal wastewater and industrial wastewater flows. It's the beginning of an ambitious effort by the City of Gonzales to provide infrastructure to attract additional housing developments and industrial facilities.

In recent years, industrial wastewater flows from the Gonzales Agricultural Business Industrial Park (GABIP) have strained the capacity of the city's existing Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWTP). For example, in 2022, agricultural processing facilities in the Industrial Park discharged 800,000 gallons per day of agricultural wash water into the city's municipal sewer system — two-thirds of the permitted maximum flow of 1.3 million gallons per day to the city's Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWTP). In March 2024, the city reported 1.2 million gallons/day (MGD) of flow to the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Capacity needs to be increased. In addition, the city has reported that the chemical content of ag-wash industrial wastewater tends to "hinder the effectiveness of the



biological treatment process at the City's wastewater treatment plant, causing it to take longer and use additional energy."

A Long-Term Wastewater Management Plan outlines the steps that the City of Gonzales will take to upgrade its wastewater treatment system. In addition to building the new Industrial Wastewater Conveyance and Industrial Wastewater Reclamation Facility Project, the city will eventually upgrade its existing, operational Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant to comply with conditions of a new Waste Discharge Permit from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Ultimately, the City of Gonzales plans to recycle its industrial wastewater for agricultural irrigation and groundwater replenishment.

**Phase 1** of the city's wastewater system upgrade is financed with a \$29 million low-interest loan

from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) that will be repaid by sewer customers through rate payments. It begins with construction of a 10,700 foot, 24-inch diameter industrial wastewater conveyance pipeline from the city's Industrial Business Park along Fermin Lane to the site of the future industrial wastewater treatment plant. Then, the new Industrial Wastewater Reclamation Facility (IWRF) with 1.0 million gallons per day (MGD) of treatment capacity will be built adjacent to the existing Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant.

While construction of the industrial wastewater treatment plant is ongoing, the city will divert wastewater flows to the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant through the new pipeline, so that the city can rehabilitate the existing 21-inch sewer main that has been used since 1981.

When the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility is completed in 2027 and treating an estimated 900,000 gallons per day of industrial wastewater, the City of Gonzales will begin **Phase 2**, rehabilitation of the existing Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant. This includes removing accumulated sludge, lining the treatment ponds, upgrading the aeration system, and constructing a new treatment process. This will allow the city to fulfill requirements of its new state Waste Discharge Permit.

**Phase 3** adds additional treatment processes at the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant to expand its treatment capacity to 2.9 million gallons per day (MGD). This will allow municipal wastewater treatment for projected housing growth in the city through 2050.

Finally, **Phase 4** expands the capacity of the Industrial Wastewater Conveyance and Industrial Wastewater Reclamation Facility system from 1 million gallons per day (as established in Phase 1) to 3.5 million gallons per day (MGD) to allow new and expanded processing facilities in the City's Industrial Business Park.

Phase 4 will also add a recycled water component to the Industrial Wastewater Reclamation Facility that would allow industrial wastewater to be used for groundwater recharge and irrigation on nearby agricultural fields. This is done now by the Monterey One Water (M1W) Salinas Valley Reclamation Facility (SVRF), in collaboration with the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA), for agricultural irrigation associated with the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP). 🌱



Salinas Valley  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 2025 SIGNATURE EVENTS!



7:30 AM - 9:30 AM, Hartnell College, Salinas

## Legislative Affairs Breakfast

A must-attend event connecting business professionals with public and elected officials to discuss key policies, projects, and programs shaping our community.

*Feb*  
**28**  
2025



10:00 AM - 1:00 PM, Sherwood Hall, Salinas

## 104th Annual Awards Luncheon

The largest networking event with 400+ community leaders and business professionals in the Salinas Valley Area. Celebrating standout businesses, individuals, member anniversaries, and more.

*Apr*  
**10**  
2025



Time and Location TBA

## Legacy of Leadership Gala

An elegant evening that honors exceptional leaders and organizations, featuring food, wine, entertainment, and networking, while recognizing those who make a lasting impact in our community.

*Oct*  
**TBA**  
2025

# 'The Long Valley' Documentary Highlighting the Salinas Valley Selected for 2025 Sundance Film Festival

This year's Sundance Film Festival received 11,153 submissions for short films and only 57 made the cut, including "The Long Valley," a documentary that showcases the landscapes and people of the Salinas Valley created by several local Monterey County filmmakers.

The 13-minute documentary from 433 Pictures was directed and produced by Rodrigo Ojeda-Beck and Robert Machoian, and had its world premiere during the festival's celebrated Short Film Program. The 2025 festival was held in Park City and Salt Lake City, Utah, from Jan. 23–Feb. 2.

Shot using the Alexa Mini Pro and blending Spanish dialogue with English subtitles, "The Long Valley" offers a poignant meditation on human resilience, the passage of time, and the power of dreaming. Through a series of visually striking tableaux, it documents the daily lives of Central and South American immigrants who form the backbone of one of California's most vital agricultural regions.

Co-directors Ojeda-Beck and Machoian bring a deeply personal lens to the project.

"We wanted to document the Salinas Valley and its people

because we both have personal connections to the area," said Machoian, who grew up in King City. Ojeda-Beck added, "This film continues our ongoing exploration of rural communities in the

U.S. using a photobook aesthetic, bridging the space between still photography and film."

"This project is a love letter to the resilience and dreams of the people who make this region

so extraordinary," said Associate Producer Chris Carpenter, who has deep roots in Monterey County.

"The Long Valley" was completed in November 2024 and features a unique narrative structure that reappropriates the talking-head format to provoke questions rather than provide answers. The film encourages viewers to reflect on their own interpretations of time, reality, and the role of dreams.

In addition to Carpenter, Ana Sanchez and Saul Cardenas served as associate producers. The film was edited and sound-designed by Ojeda-Beck, with Lili Arlen Gomez as Assistant Cameraperson.

Ojeda-Beck is an award-winning filmmaker whose work spans across the narrative and documentary spectrum. His films have screened at Sundance, SXSW, Tribeca, Locarno and CPH:DOX. He currently is teaching film at California State University Sacramento.

Machoian has been taking photographs his whole life and making award-winning, critically acclaimed films for

well over a decade. In his career as a writer-director and cinematographer, he has had films premiere at the Sundance, SXSW, Locarno, LA, and Tribeca Festivals. 🌱



# Rancho Cielo Celebrates its 15th Annual Culinary Round Up Strolling Dinner

By Adam Joseph, Rancho Cielo

**O**n Sunday, Feb. 23, Rancho Cielo (RC) will celebrate its 15th Annual Culinary Round Up (CRU). More than 20 chefs from some of the area's finest restaurants—including Lucia Restaurant and Bar at Bernardus Lodge & Spa, Roy's at Pebble Beach and The C Restaurant + Bar at InterContinental The Clement Monterey—will work side-by-side with RC's Drummond Culinary Academy (DCA) students to prepare an unforgettable and delectable strolling dinner at the Portola Hotel & Spa.

Additionally, over a dozen wineries, breweries and other purveyors will be serving libations, including Alvarado Street Brewery, Bernardus Winery, Folktale Winery and Doc Pepe's Lab.

According to Bert Curtino, local celebrity chef, co-founder of the famed Sardine Factory, and longtime RC and DCA supporter and student mentor, CRU has evolved substantially over the years into something much more than a successful fundraiser for Rancho Cielo.

"The whole key to the event is bringing our local professional chefs to work with the young students from the Drummond Culinary Academy in executing whatever they're going to be serving," Cutino says. "We always hope that the chefs get attached to the students, so they might hire them when they graduate. Since [CRU] began, that's what we really look forward to."

Cutino is thrilled to celebrate CRU's 15th year; he's watched it blossom and grow at an exponential rate. It's important to note that all the restaurants and chefs representing them at CRU donate their supplies and their time, as do the wineries, breweries and other participants.



"It's amazing to see how many restaurants participate every year," Bert Cutino (pictured, far right) says. "It just gets bigger and bigger. All these amazing chefs want to support (Rancho Cielo) students."

Amidst the collaboration between our brightest DCA students and a gathering of Monterey County's most esteemed chefs, CRU is also a time when Rancho Cielo showcases its harmonious blend of education, vocational training and life skills—leading to a life students can look forward to after graduation and opportunities opened to earning a living wage.

One of last year's student speakers, Salinas native Kaitlyn Davis, overcame numerous barriers throughout her life before finding her passion in the DCA program.

"I think, hands down, this is the best decision I ever made for myself," Davis said. "Rancho Cielo has taught me that anything is possible. The staff taught me to work hard and stay determined. Every day is different, and I love the opportunity to create new things."

Following CRU in 2024, Davis was invited to the Ted J. Balestreri National Restaurant Association Dinner in Pebble Beach and awarded a scholarship to further her culinary training.

Attendees of CRU can count on a stellar raffle, as well as silent and live auctions to be jam-packed with over 30 glimmering items, exciting experiences, and epicurean dreams to participate in, with all the proceeds benefiting Rancho Cielo youth.

Among the incredible auction items are two nights at Post Ranch Inn in Big Sur (including dinner for two at Sierra Mar Restaurant) paired with a two-night stay at Cavallo Point—The Lodge at the Golden Gate in Sausalito (including dinner for two at Sula)—and an exclusive evening of fine dining at Rancho Cielo for 18 guests, where local celebrated guest chefs will work with DCA students

to prepare a unforgettable evening of five-star dining.

On top of the 15-year milestone celebration of CRU, 2025 also marks Rancho Cielo's 25th anniversary—since 2000, the organization has been serving youth in our community. RC will be celebrating throughout the year, culminating in an anniversary bash in October, date to be announced.

Don't miss the 15th Annual Culinary Round Up on Sunday, Feb. 23, 2025, at the Portola Hotel & Spa in Monterey. Details and tickets are available at [ranchocieloyc.org](http://ranchocieloyc.org).

Rancho Cielo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that invests in all young people facing challenges for success through diploma education, vocational training, counseling and life skills development in a safe and affirming environment. 🌱



# UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Lunch & Learn With Granite Construction Company**

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 12:00–1:00 p.m., 721 Work St., Salinas  
Join Granite Construction for a Lunch and Learn experience. Dive into the fascinating world of road and asphalt production with a guided tour of the facility and discover the processes and innovation behind the work. Enjoy a brief presentation highlighting Granite Construction's rich history, current processes, and commitment to excellence. Along the way, have a delicious lunch, network with business professionals, and connect with others who share a curiosity for learning. Don't miss this unique and informative event.

- **Alliance on Aging Ribbon Cutting & Valentine's Day Celebration**

Friday, Feb. 14, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 236 Monterey St., Salinas  
Alliance on Aging is excited to celebrate Valentine's Day by unveiling its new logo, building signage, and van wrap — and they'd love for you to be part of the festivities. Come share in the excitement, hear a few words about AOA's renewed commitment to older adults, and enjoy a sweet treat that's sure to warm your heart. This Valentine's Day, AOA is unveiling a vibrant new look that symbolizes its dedication to helping older adults thrive. Join them for a short but meaningful celebration filled with warmth, gratitude, and a fresh vision for the future.

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

- **Third Annual SVCC Legislative Breakfast**

Friday, Feb. 28, 7:30–9:30 a.m., Hartnell College, Salinas  
Join your Chamber for the 3rd Annual Legislative Breakfast, where community leaders and business professionals connect with key elected and appointed public officials. Gain valuable insights into the latest government policies, projects, and programs shaping your business and community. This year's featured speakers include U.S. Rep. Zoe Lofgren, representing California's 18th District, along with other distinguished officials. Tickets are in high demand, and seating is limited—so secure yours today. Tickets are \$50 for Chamber members and \$60 for non-members. Partnership opportunities are also available. For more information, contact the Chamber office at (831) 751-7725.

- **SVCC's 104th Annual Awards Luncheon**

Thursday, April 10, 10:00– 1:00 p.m., Sherwood Hall, 940 North Main St., Salinas  
The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is delighted to announce the highly anticipated 104th Annual Awards Luncheon — an extraordinary celebration of achievement, business excellence, networking, and community spirit. This event attracts over 400 prominent business leaders and community members in the Salinas Valley region. Opportunities for participation include individual or group tickets, as well as sponsorship options. Honoree nominations are now open and will be accepted until Feb. 7. Prepaid reservations are required to secure your spot — visit [SalinasChamber.com](http://SalinasChamber.com) to make your reservation today.



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AT THE DUNES



# NON-PROFIT EVENTS

## Monterey County Woman's Business Center – Food Vendor Start-up, What it Takes

*Feb. 3, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m., Zoom Virtual Seminar*

Join the MCSC Women's Business Center (805) 595-1357 for "Food Vendors Start-Up, Part 3 - The Big Picture!" an online workshop exploring the essential aspects of managing your food vendor business. This live session will delve into crucial areas like financing, bookkeeping, and taxation, providing insights into how your business generates long-term profits. You'll learn about various financing options, proper bookkeeping practices, and industry calculations to determine profitability. Additionally, we'll emphasize the critical role of customer relations in ensuring your business's success. Register now and receive your Zoom link upon confirmation.

## CHISPA – Annual Celebration

*Feb. 6, 5:30 p.m., 1 Main St., Salinas – Salinas City Center*

CHISPA hosts one community fundraising event each year, its Annual Celebration. This yearly celebration brings the community together to share in the achievements of CHISPA, its community partners, and its scholarship students.

## The Steinbeck House – Valentine's Day Dinner

*Feb. 14, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., 132 Central Ave., Salinas*

Celebrate with your Valentine with a five-course meal and complimentary glass of champagne in the historic Steinbeck House. Reservations required. Price is \$79 per person plus tax and gratuity. Use this link to make reservations: <https://forms.gle/RKgyCzHsKEgBD95SA>.

## Alliance on Aging – 'Once Upon a Time,' King City Trashion Show

*Feb. 20, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., 625 Division St., King City – Salinas Valley Fairgrounds*

The Alliance on Aging proudly presents the King City Trashion Show: "Once Upon a Time" on Thursday, Feb. 20, at 11:30 a.m. at the Orradre Building, at the Salinas Valley Fairgrounds. Join AOA for an unforgettable afternoon where art, fashion, and sustainability unite on the runway. Witness breathtaking designs that redefine glamour through eco-friendly innovation. Tickets: Runway Seating, \$90; General Admission, \$80. Celebrate style with purpose and support vital programs for seniors across Monterey County. For tickets and more information, reach out to Nicki Pasculli at [npasculli@allianceonaging.org](mailto:npasculli@allianceonaging.org) or call (831) 655-7564.

## Monterey County Office of Education - 2025 Educational Job Fair

*Feb. 22, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., 411 Central Ave., Salinas, Hartnell College Student Center*

Join us for the MCOE Annual Job Fair at Hartnell College. This exciting in-person event brings together job seekers and representatives from the Monterey County School Districts. Whether you're a recent graduate looking for a career change or just curious about new opportunities in education this job fair is the place to be! Meet with local school districts network with professionals and explore job openings. On-site interviews and job offers will be offered! Don't miss out on this chance to connect with Monterey County School District employers and take the next step in your career journey. Register today at: [montereycoe.org/divisions-services/human-resources](http://montereycoe.org/divisions-services/human-resources).

## Rancho Cielo — 15th Annual Culinary Round Up

*Feb. 23, 4:00–8:00 p.m., 2 Portola Plaza, Monterey – Portola Hotel and Spa*

Since 2010, Rancho Cielo's annual Culinary Roundup has provided a unique opportunity for guests to meet and see RC's culinary students in action. It's an evening of fun, food and libations with a Western flair, including an exciting raffle and live auction. Proceeds from the event benefit the culinary program at Rancho Cielo, where the students have a pathway to earning their high school diploma while gaining hands-on culinary training and earning industry certifications. If not for supporters like you, opportunities like this — to test their skills, to learn service, presentation and plating for large events — would not exist. All of the food and beverages, as well as raffle and auction items, are generously donated by local businesses and help generate additional funds needed to serve Rancho Cielo's students.

## United Way of Monterey County – 2025 Live United Awards

*April 30, time and location to be determined.*

United Way of Monterey County is now accepting nominations for individuals and groups who have made a significant impact on our community. From supporting education and youth to aiding those in need and improving the overall quality of life, the LIVE UNITED Awards recognize the invaluable contributions of volunteers across various categories, including Education & Youth Services, Human Services, Youth Volunteerism, Community Service, Group Volunteers, and Lifetime of Service. Help us celebrate the inspiring individuals who make Monterey County a better place!

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



# The care you need, the way you want it.

Health care should be hassle-free. At Kaiser Permanente, it is. With connected teams and flexible ways to access care, it's easy to get the support you need to stay healthy. Learn more at [kp.org](https://kp.org)

**For all that is Monterey County.  
For all that is you.**



Ask The  
**EXPERTS**

FREE  
COMMUNITY  
EVENT

# Newest Advancements in Minimally Invasive Cardiovascular Care



When it comes to your heart health, trust Salinas Valley Health to provide the expert care, advanced technology and personalized support you deserve. Join our *Ask The Experts* presentation to gain insightful knowledge that empowers you to live well and prioritize your heart's health.

## Learn about:

- Atrial Fibrillation, Ablations and the WATCHMAN™ Device
- Peripheral Vascular and Venous Disease
- Structural Heart Intervention

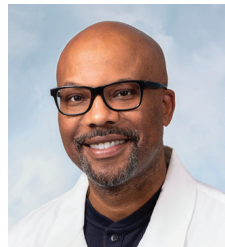
## Panelists



**Harlan Grogin, MD**  
Cardiac  
Electrophysiology



**Rikin Kadakia, MD**  
Interventional  
Cardiology



**Jamil Matthews, MD**  
Vascular & Endovascular  
Surgery

## Moderator



**Tim Albert, MD, MHCM**  
Chief Clinical Officer



**Wednesday,  
February 26, 2025**

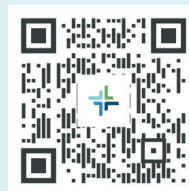
**5 Lower Ragsdale Drive  
Monterey**

**5pm Reception**

Community health and resource  
tables, appetizers and beverages

**6pm Presentation**

*Seating is limited. Register now  
by scanning the QR code.*



For more information, email  
cotero@SalinasValleyHealth.com