



County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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PRESS RELEASE

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Santa Cruz County's nationally-recognized Probation Department was awarded two grants this week that further establishes its role as a leader in community-based justice and safety.

The first grant was awarded by the California Board of State and Community Corrections, and provides \$196,000 annually, for up to four years, to establish a partnership between the Department, the Watsonville Police Department and Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (PVPSA), a nonprofit based in the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, to reduce the number of Latino youth in the justice system.

The second grant is a Justice Reinvestment Initiative award through the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice, and provides \$349,000 over three years for the expansion of pretrial assessment, release and supervision capabilities, the reduction of unnecessary warrants and improved data collection and analysis.

"These funds will help strengthen our partnerships with local law enforcement, courts and schools to improve the justice system and provide positive guidance for Latino youth in a manner that protects community safety," Probation Chief Fernando Giraldo said. "We are honored to receive these awards."

"These awards recognize the County's leadership in the area of criminal justice reforms," said County Chief Administrative Officer Susan Mauriello, a former member of the Board of State and Community Corrections. "Together, they will help advance our objectives of reducing crime, recidivism and the high costs of incarceration."



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Through the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) grant, PVPSA will provide counseling, educational linkages, positive social alternatives and case management services to Latino youth. The grant will also expand the use of the Department's Luna Evening Center as a drop-off center for probation youth by law enforcement, and the Department will attend Watsonville Police Department roll calls to further inform officers of available resources.

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) grant will allow the Department to expand the use of a next-generation tool to improve the assessment of offenders new to the justice system, as well as provide guidance to other jurisdictions in California implementing new pretrial programs necessitated by criminal justice reforms at the state level.

The JRI grant will also help create an automated warrant notification system, coupled with an assertive community-based outreach program to reconnect high-risk defendants with the justice system, while reducing unnecessary warrants. The grant also allows the Department to conduct comprehensive data analysis, including an evaluation of outcomes and cost-savings.

The BSCC award was among \$3 million in federal grants handed out statewide to support delinquency prevention and intervention services and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system.

Launched in 2010, the JRI is a partnership between the Department of Justice and The Pew Charitable Trusts aimed at reducing correctional spending and reinvesting in recidivism-reduction strategies while holding offenders accountable, decreasing crime and strengthening neighborhoods.