



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

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STATE AWARDS \$7M TO LOCAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS

Santa Cruz County is pleased to announce \$7 million in two new grants to increase criminal justice diversion programs including drug and alcohol treatment, and to reduce youth racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

A \$6 million grant will fund the Coordinated Access for Empowering Success (CAFES) project, which will increase the integration and criminal and specialty courts with community services to help divert lower-level offenders from overcrowded jails and prisons and prevent recidivism by addressing root causes of crime.

CAFES will locate case workers within local courts to better connect individuals to services through the Santa Cruz County Probation Department's Service Center, creating additional pathways out of the justice system. CAFES also provides funding to study establishing a new neighborhood court program based on a San Francisco model with demonstrated success as a diversion tool and a high level of community involvement.

"CAFES will work towards three significant shifts in our local justice system," Santa Cruz County Probation Chief Fernando Giraldo said. "First is a shift from distributed services to a cohesive system with services delivered through a central hub. Second is a shift from reaction to prevention, including looking at root causes through a public health lens. The third shift is expanding the criminal justice focus to include overall community health and well-being."

Within Santa Cruz County, data shows 60 percent of all jail bookings being drug- or alcohol-related and 50 percent of those exiting the justice system lacking access to stable housing. CAFES will provide treatment, case management, and housing support through a collaboration probation, mental health providers and multiple community-based organizations, including providing additional treatment beds.

The \$1 million Community Reclaiming Youth Justice is a South County program aimed at diverting disadvantaged Latino youth from the justice system and reducing youth



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justice racial disparities. Through culturally-responsive interventions and using restorative justice models, the program will serve youth and their families to address factors leading to contact with police and the courts.

"Through evidence-based practices including youth leadership development, addressing past traumas and improving school performance and social competencies, our goal is to provide a framework for these youth to grow and mature without being pulled into the system," Santa Cruz County Probation Chief Fernando Giraldo said.

For the Community Reclaiming Youth Justice program, the County will partner with Pajaro Valley Prevention & Student Assistance, with referrals from local police agencies, schools and the community. An oversight committee will be established including local criminal justice partners, community-based organizations and the community, and a robust data collection and evaluation program will be included.

Funding for both programs was provided by the California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). CAFES is being funded through the Proposition 47 grant program, which directs 65 percent of the overall state savings from Proposition 47 to the BSCC to fund mental health and substance-use disorder treatment, housing assistance and job training. In this round of funding, 43 applicants sought \$193 million in funding, with the BSCC awarding approximately half that amount.

The Community Reclaiming Youth Justice program is funded through the BSCC's Youth Reinvestment Grant program, which allocates \$37.3 million for underserved communities with high rates of juvenile arrests and high rates of racial/ethnic criminal justice disparities.

For more information, go to <http://www.bscc.ca.gov>.