



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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NEWS RELEASE



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CORE INVESTMENTS RECEIVES STATEWIDE RECOGNITION

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce it is one of just 11 counties selected for a Challenge Award, a program of the California State Association of Counties recognizing excellence in public sector program and service delivery in California.

Santa Cruz County received a 2023 Challenge Award for the Collective of Results and Evidence-based (CORE) Investments Program. CORE Investments are local funds allocated to community-based organizations in excess of State and federal funding. Out of 389 entries, CORE Investments was one of 14 programs honored statewide.

“We appreciate being recognized for navigating the transition of the prior funding model and its long history, to our new CORE Investments model. The Board of Supervisors directed County staff to shift to a competitive process focused on collective impact to meet critical community needs with limited funds,” said Randy Morris, Santa Cruz County Human Services Department Director. “We are honored to receive this recognition from our peer counties for this important work.”

Historically, Santa Cruz County’s program did not provide a consistent means for reporting results across participating organizations, and new organizations often found it challenging to access funding. CORE Investments, which enhances the historic model, defines community priorities and selection criteria, utilizes community expertise in application review, provides technical assistance to applicants and to the community, and promotes equity centered and outcomes driven collective impact results. The program was [recently praised](#) by the 2023 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury for its integrity and equity of opportunity for all applicants.

In partnership with the City of Santa Cruz, CORE Investments awarded \$5,953,900 in fiscal year 2022-23 to 41 local partners for 57 programs addressing homelessness prevention and intervention, environmental education, food insecurity, immigrant services, youth and senior needs, employment training, parent supports and more.

For information on CORE Investments including funding awards, visit

<https://www.santacruzhumanservices.org/Home/FundingOpportunities/COREInvestments>.

For more on the 2023 Challenge Awards, visit <https://www.counties.org/post/2023-challenge-awards>.