

# CommUniverCity • San José

engage — learn — build



## ANNUAL REPORT >> 15-16



Understanding

Sustainability

# Growth

Creativity

Proficiency

# Visibility

Rehabilitation

Resources

Equality

Humanity





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# Director's Message

## Dear friends, partners and supporters of CommUniverCity,

In 2015-2016 CommUniverCity entered its second decade with a splash! CommUniverCity continues to reach out to downtown neighborhoods and receive attention for its high-impact model of cross-sector community engagement. I'd like to highlight here a few of the many accomplishments in 2015-2016 and also invite you to read about our projects in more detail in the pages that follow.

This year 23 leaders of our downtown communities successfully completed the Community Leadership Program (CLP) led by our own Imelda Rodriguez and Elizabeth Figueroa, and SJSU Anthropology Professor A.J. Faas. These high achieving leaders now feel strongly connected to each other and are re-energized to continue their critical work in the neighborhoods while reaching out to others to join in community development efforts.

In Spring 2016 we welcomed Jennifer Goto, Pastor of the St. Paul's United Methodist Church as CommUniverCity's Associate Community Director. In the short span of a semester, Jennifer has greatly expanded our reach in the community by overseeing the completion of a neighborhood-wide survey and community planning process with the South University Neighborhood (SUN) and launching a partnership with community-based organizations in the Northside Neighborhood. Our new community partners include Northside Neighborhood Association, Grant Elementary School, Wesley United Methodist Church and the San José Silicon Valley Rotary Club among many others. CommUniverCity continues to receive regional and national recognition as a high impact community-academia-government partnership. Last November, Associate Director Katherine Cushing and San José State University Provost Andy Feinstein traveled to Indianapolis to receive the prestigious C. Peter Magrath Engagement Scholarship award, given each year to ONE among 236 participating public institutions of higher education in North America that are members of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU).

And the accolades keep rolling in. Earlier this year the *Greater Washington: Voice of the Community/Voces de la Comunidad* neighborhood planning project received the Academic Award of Excellence by both the Northern California Chapter and the California Chapter of the American Planning Association. *Voice of the Community/Voces de la Comunidad* was completed in collaboration with a large number of partners under the leadership of SJSU urban planning instructor Richard Kos that include, among many others Fernando Burga, urban and regional planning professor at the University of Minnesota; De Madre a Madre, a neighborhood leadership group created by mothers of the Washington Elementary School; Catholic Charities' Washington Youth Center; and Santa Clara University's Thriving Neighbors Initiative. *Voice of the Community/Voces de la Comunidad*, a 80+ page fully bilingual (Spanish-English) report is available on CommUniverCity's website.

Looking forward, the coming year—and decade—promise to be as fruitful and meaningful as the first ten years of CommUniverCity.

In community spirit,

*Dayana Salazar*

Dayana Salazar  
Executive Director



# CommUniverCity Overview

CommUniverCity believes that everyone deserves to live in vibrant, healthy communities. We help build community by engaging residents and students in community-engaged learning projects that accomplish neighborhood-driven goals. CommUniverCity creates and supports community action projects that:

- Provide rich educational opportunities for residents of all ages that promote a "college going" culture and instill a desire for lifelong learning.
- Strengthen the community's capacity to bring about vibrant, healthy, and engaged neighborhoods.

Each year we spearhead over 50 projects in partnership with underserved communities in central San José, San José State University and the City of San José .

CommUniverCity launched in 2005 as a way to engage our students in solving real-life neighborhood issues such as food access, educational attainment, and the built environment. Residents in turn benefit from the intellectual capital provided by the University, and both parties contribute to creating a thriving neighborhood they can proudly call home.

We believe that the essence of community building lies at the intersection of education, community health, and the neighborhood environment. CommUniverCity encourages students, businesses, faith groups, residents, advocacy groups, community benefit organizations, corporate partners, and government officials to engage in an open dialogue about the needs of their community, and provides them with the tools and the framework to spring their ideas into action.

The projects outlined in this report may vary in scope and theme but they are all united in their commitment to improving central San José neighborhoods, and to ensuring that all of its residents have access to health, safety, education, and civic pride.





# ENGAGE

## Community Health



“CommUniverCity was not only an opportunity to work with my community in a more meaningful way, it was an experience of a lifetime. The genuine nature of the work we did as a community with the Franklin-Mckinley/Five Wounds families – mothers, teens, children – was one part of a much larger movement that continues to thrive through CommUniverCity’s work.”

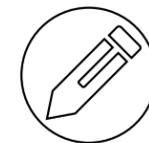
– Vanessa Goulart, CommUniverCity Project Coordinator (2008-2010), Academic Counselor, Secondary Curriculum & Instruction, San José Unified School District



# Community Leadership Program

The Community Leadership Program (CLP) focuses on building neighborhood engagement and leadership skills through fellowship. While many of today's downtown San José communities are facing a shortage of new leaders, the CLP is an effort to train emerging leaders using effective tools and support to become established

neighborhood leaders in their area. The program pairs emerging leaders with neighborhood mentors who have experience in event planning, organization, petitioning, and engaging local government officials to improve their community.



7 SJSU students engaged



92 hours of service



97 residents engaged



\$2,141 value

## Project Impact

- 89% of participants reported they were very satisfied with what they learned in the program.
- 94% of participants definitely plan to use what they learned from the program to improve their lives or community.
- At the completion of the program, 61% of participants considered themselves established leaders.
- More than 1/3 of respondents who completed the course reported that they engaged in activities related to civic engagement at least once a month.

## Community Voices

"[CLP] made me understand that every neighborhood shares the same issues, and we can network with others on dealing with them."  
 –CLP participant

"I learned a lot about the issues people are facing in San José but most importantly, what the leaders are doing to solve these issues."  
 –CLP participant

"CLP has given me the confidence to know that I have a network to rely on for advice and support when I do take more of a leadership role."  
 –CLP participant





**28** SJSU students engaged



**840** hours of service



**\$19,378** value

### Project Impact

SJSU students had the opportunity to mobilize voters in their own community, helping to strengthen the bond between the political science program and area residents. This project also gave students the opportunity to apply their political science education to the real world of politics; talking to actual residents

about why they do not vote (and convincing them to register) was an invaluable experience. Students who participated in this project have a better understanding of what community residents care most about and if they believe public officials care about their concerns. **26** voters were registered in the

Brookwood Terrace neighborhood and **14** were registered in the Five Wounds neighborhood. Importantly, the teams registered voters of underrepresented groups: young, Latino, Asian, less affluent—and they expressed the importance of voting in the type of election that routinely witnesses very low turnout.

### Community Voices

“This project taught me how difficult it really is to get someone’s attention to vote; however, there are still citizens that do care about the elections and see voting as something each citizen is responsible for.”  
*–SJSU student*

“Each story told has shaped the ways we view the world in a way that appreciates our right to vote and the importance of what voting means to people.”  
*–SJSU student*

# Get Out The **Vote**

Get Out The Vote (GOTV) aims to increase voter participation and awareness about the primary election in neighborhoods near San José State University which are comprised of residents who traditionally turn out at lower rates. It also aims to increase student

involvement in the local community. Student teams were split between the Five Wounds Neighborhood and the Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood for tabling and canvassing.





# Growing Sustainably

## Garden Education & Garden Club

Childhood obesity rates are disproportionately high in Santa Clara County (25% of children were overweight or obese in 2013), particularly among Latino youth (47% were overweight or obese in 2013). The nutrition and garden education program engages school age children in activities designed to teach them the importance of living healthy. The program includes garden education

during school hours, an after school garden club, and gardening workshop. K-12 students learn science, math, nutrition and other subjects by participating in gardening activities. SJSU students who are trained in garden and nutrition education work with K-12 students, parents and teachers to use the garden as an outdoor living classroom.



28 SJSU students engaged



590 hours of service



271 residents engaged



\$13,951 value

### Project Impact

In completion of the Garden Club program at Horace Mann and McKinley Bonita elementary schools, students showed a steady increase of interest in garden activities. The program participants reported a

93% satisfaction rate, increased by 15% from earlier in the year. Garden Workshops report that 67% of participants claimed the material they learned in the program helped them with classes and practical life-

skills. Garden Workshops also helped 40% of students better understand the scientific concepts they were learning in class.

### Community Voices

“The Garden Education program helped me understand that plants are important and that eating lots of fruits and vegetables every day is healthy.”

–Garden Education participant

“I learned that worms help make the soil good for plants and I learned about photosynthesis.”

–Garden Education participant

“I can’t wait until we start planting! I want to plant a bunch of vegetables and flowers and fruits for my family and I want to have my own garden.”

–Garden Club participant



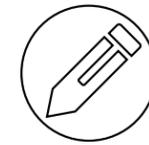


# Growing Sustainably

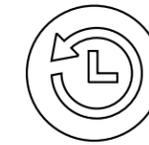
## Cooking Matters

Cooking Matters participants learn to prepare healthy, low-cost meals, and make healthy food choices when cooking, shopping and ordering. The program hosts students from both Selma Olinder Elementary School and Anne Darling Elementary School. Program facilitators use cooking and meal preparation concepts

to educate students using science, technology, engineering, math, reading and writing skills. Lesson plans included science experiments, reading and following recipe measurements, and explanations of nutritional facts on healthy foods.



**6** SJSU students engaged



**116** hours of service



**51** residents engaged



**\$2,676** value

### Project Impact

- **91%** of participants reported they can now make healthy choices at a grocery store
- **95%** of participants reported they can now talk to their family about healthy cooking
- **17** respondents reported that they learned to incorporate vegetables into a meal made by themselves
- **22** respondents reported they can now follow the directions of a recipe

### Community Voices

"I don't really like vegetables but I really like this class! These foods taste yummy and I now like eating. Can you teach my mom these foods?"  
*-3rd grade participant*

"This program is super fun, especially with these students. I love that this is related to my major and I can teach what I know to the students. I would definitely do this again, if I could."  
*-SJSU student facilitator*





**30** SJSU students engaged



**89** hours of service



**179** residents engaged



**\$2,092** value



### Project Impact

- **71%** of participants reported that they had better success at school and/or work
- **80%** of participants reported a better understanding of who they are and what they can do
- **69%** of participants respect others who are different from them more
- **81%** of parents reported an improvement in their child's ability to communicate
- **86%** of parents reported that their child had a better understanding of what it meant to keep their word

### Community Stories & Voices

- Angel Ramos, Joven Noble participant, is a youth who currently participates in our Foothill High School group. Angel has shown great improvement on his academics as well as his campus involvement. He has joined the wrestling club and has also volunteered to assist as an aid in the office. He has gone above and beyond as a student and continues to make progress.

# Joven Noble & Xinachtli

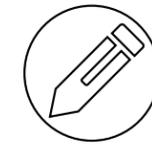
## Sacred Circles

Joven Noble Sacred Circles (JN) program provides life skills, cultural identity, and leadership development for Chicano/Latino male youth, ages 13 to 24. JN uses a holistic rites of passage process based on a traditional talking circle model, Joven Noble con Palabra Curriculum, that provides a safe place for participants to receive and practice cognitive behavioral focused teachings and life skills development. In addition, it allows participants to work with caring adult mentors who personally practice the teachings provided and serve as a living example for all participants.

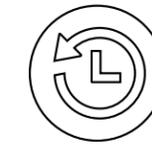
Xinachtli is a character/leadership development program predicated on the La Cultura Cura philosophy. This program is a young women's-centered curriculum that addresses topics such as healthy relationships, reproductive health, human rights, and what it means to be an honorable woman. Xinachtli hopes to guide young women on their life journey while acknowledging the values and gifts provided to them by their families in order to become a positive asset for their communities.



"Participating did really help me change myself because I am more self-aware about what I know and how educated I want to strive to be. And it really helped me change my thought process a lot!"  
*-Xinachtli participant*



41 SJSU students engaged



205 hours of service



49 residents engaged



\$4,829 value

### Project Impact

- 76% of participants reported that they will definitely use what they learned to improve their life
- 87% of participants reported they've either learned new ways to save or identified areas in which to save
- 15 adult participants indicated that for the first time they were able to save money each month, with an average monthly savings of \$93.
- 65% of participants reported they learned new ways to reduce their debt

### Community Voices

"We are discussing opening savings accounts for our children and want to do so by 2017."  
 –Adult participant

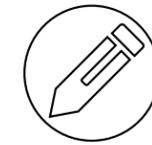
"My children are 6 year old twins, so it was a wonderful introduction to money for them. They loved coming to the workshop!"  
 –Parent of child participant

# Money Matters

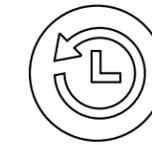
Money Matters educates low-income families about financial management, and helps them gain control of their finances, reduce their debt, and save money to meet future goals. The program is a series of lectures and five-week financial literacy classes, facilitated by SJSU business students and designed in collaboration with corporate volunteers. Since over 60% of our participants are Spanish-speakers, we provide professional simultaneous translation at each workshop. All learning

materials are also translated into Spanish. Language barriers are cited as one of the leading causes of financial illiteracy, which means immigrants are far more likely than non-immigrants to face financial hurdles such as identity theft, predatory loans, and check cashing fees. It is imperative that we show our low-income and immigrant communities that you don't have to be wealthy in order to be financially smart!





**57** SJSU students engaged



**7,185** hours of service



**1,600** residents engaged



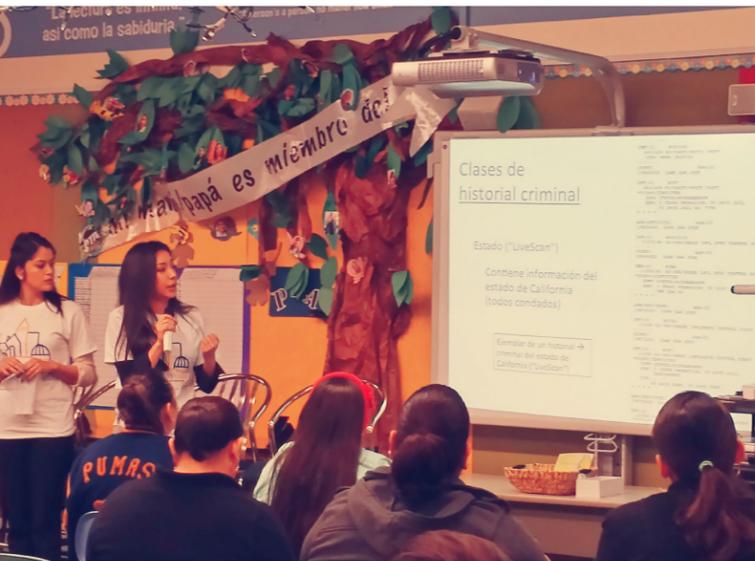
**\$165,757** value

## Project Impact

In the 2015-16 Academic year, the students of RCP prepared **34** cases for **12** clients. Of those cases, **16** have been heard and granted in court, while the remaining are pending on calendar. The RCP gave 24 presentations to **1,055**

community residents explaining expungement law. The RCP interviewed a total of **159** clients, 48% of which had convictions that were required to be dismissed by law. Students helped them fill out a simple form to have the convictions

dismissed, if the clients desired. Additionally, the RCP hosted three presentations on expungement law at Elmwood Jail, and **127** people signed up for mentoring on expungement upon their release.



## Community Voices

"This team of individuals has really enlightened me and I look forward to staying focused and not getting into trouble."  
-RCP participant

"Thank you very much for coming to Elmwood and speaking...Taking the time to follow up shows a sense of belief that is encouraging and empowering at a time when positivity is so very much needed."  
-Path to Expungement participant

# Record Clearance Project

The San José State University Record Clearance Project (RCP) engages undergraduates in assisting people to clear their eligible criminal convictions from their records. Students prepare clients' petitions for court, review clients' rap sheets at drop-in advice sessions, and give community presentations regarding expungement law and procedure. The RCP helps people move forward with their lives following a criminal conviction. One quarter of the California population has a record. A conviction history can interfere with employment,

housing, foster parenting, student loans and other important opportunities. Laws exist entitling eligible people to dismiss their convictions and open doors. Low-income individuals suffer the consequences of a conviction history longer than necessary since they lack access to legal services and few free legal services are available. RCP students — always under attorney supervision — learn to provide legal information and assistance to those who cannot afford an attorney. In the process, they change lives, often including their own.

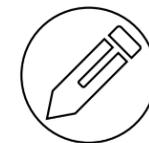




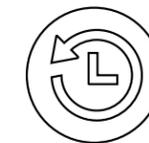
# Candidate Forum

A coalition of community organizations, including the Friends of Five Wounds Trail, BART Village Transit Advocates, The League of Women Voters and various downtown neighborhood associations came together on May 9th, 2016 for a candidate forum centered on the California Assembly District 27th race. The forum allowed residents to get a better understanding of the candidates' positions on a wide array of neighborhood and city issues, and residents were encouraged to ask questions pertaining to their particular areas of

concern. Political Science students were divided into groups – logistics, outreach, implementation – and each performed specific tasks pertaining to their function. Residents asked about 25 questions, touching on different themes: Five Wounds Trail, BART Station, East Santa Clara Urban Village, County Health Clinic, Bus Rapid Transit, homelessness, prostitution, illegal gambling, and highway trash. The forum proved to be a resounding success for the community, and CommUniverCity received positive feedback from the over 100 attendees!



22 SJSU students engaged



220 hours of service



103 residents engaged



\$5,075 value

## Project Impact

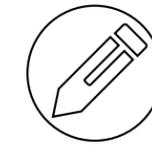
- By attending the Forum, residents are more knowledgeable about what each candidate offers and are prepared to make a well informed decision at voting time.
- Residents took a role in the political process and were able to receive in-person responses from candidates to subjects ranging from neighborhood trails and health centers to freeway trash and prostitution.
- Students increased their awareness of political and social issues and strengthened their commitment to working for social change.

## Community Voices

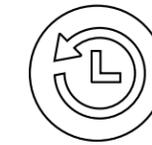
“This is a great opportunity to meet the candidates and ask questions about issues that affect our immediate communities.”  
–Forum participant

“I came here to learn what an Assembly Member does.”  
–Forum participant





**70** SJSU students engaged



**310** hours of service



**150** residents engaged



**\$7,151** value

## Project Impact

The festival created a positive use for the neighborhood's O'Donnell Garden Park to facilitate San José State University student and SUN resident interaction. Noticeable

teenage attendance has increased since past years and report to have a better understanding of what it means to "take back the park" in an effort to further enhance their quality of life. With significant

community and City involvement, the festival yielded heavy promotion of social capital through community building, awareness and social justice.

## Community Voices

"This is a fantastic event and a great partnership between the community, SJSU faculty and students, and the City of San José."  
*–Community participant*

# Spring Festival

The Spring Festival began 4 years ago as a means of revitalizing the primary open space within the South University Neighborhood at O'Donnell Garden Park. The festival is a collaboration between residents, CommUniverCity, and San José State University students and faculty. The annual event has been instrumental in combating the unsafe and "negative" environment

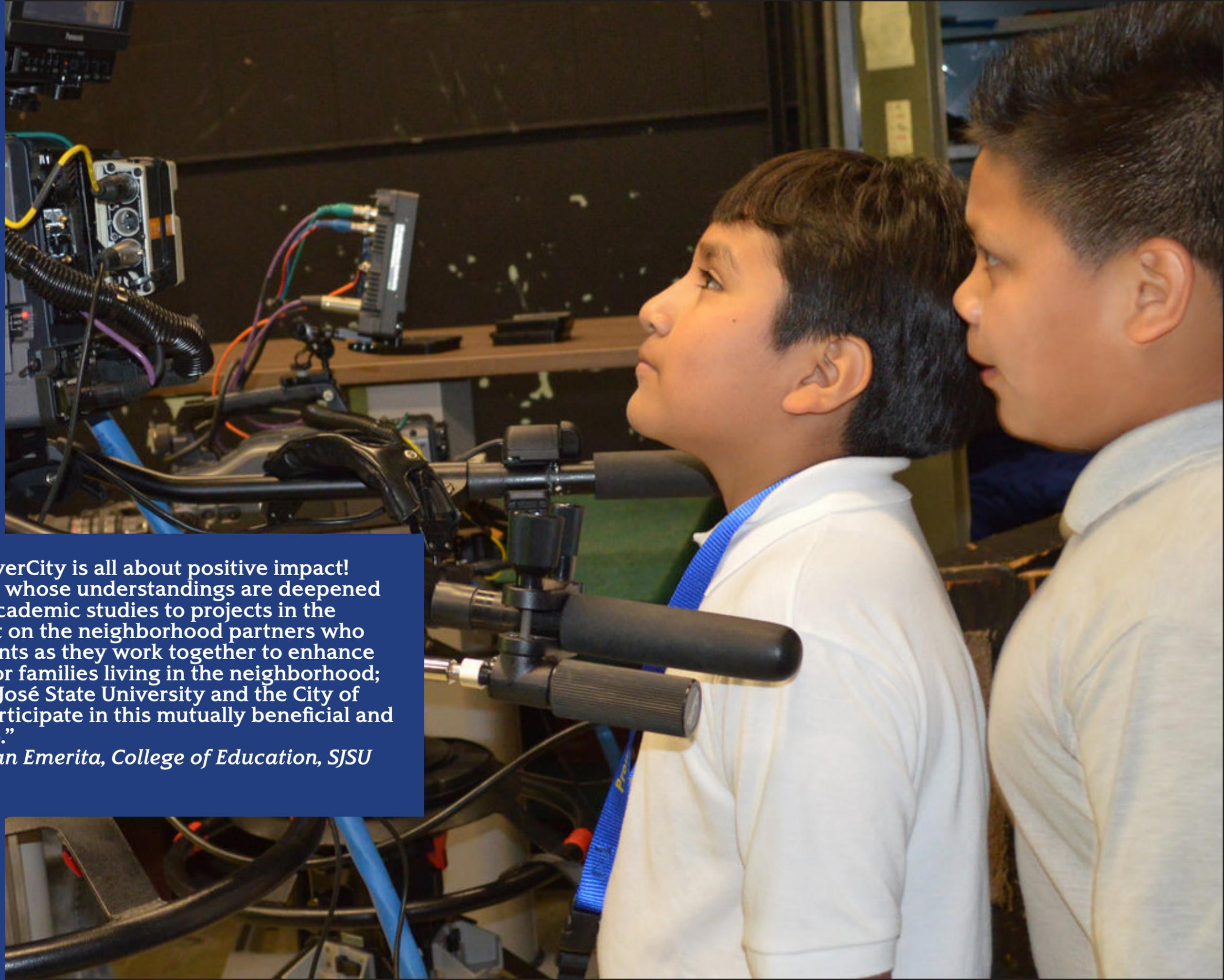
that once consisted of drug dealing and prostitution in the neighborhood area. The festival had two primary goals, (1) engage the local neighborhood coalitions to address this community-identified need, and (2) to plan and implement specific activities to reclaim the park for neighborhood families.





**LEARN**

**Education**



“For me, CommUniverCity is all about positive impact! Impact on students whose understandings are deepened by applying their academic studies to projects in the community; impact on the neighborhood partners who welcome the students as they work together to enhance the quality of life for families living in the neighborhood; and impact on San José State University and the City of San José as they participate in this mutually beneficial and unique partnership.”

*–Susan Meyers, Dean Emerita, College of Education, SJSU (2001-2009)*

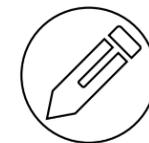


# Engineering In Action

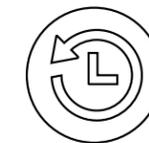
## And Tech Expo

The Engineering in Action program seeks to ignite a passion for science and technology within young residents of central San José. Over the course of two semesters, K-12 students participate in a series of workshops, designed and facilitated by SJSU Engineering students. Students learn the basics of computer programming, physics, renewable energy, and aerodynamics, and are able to experience firsthand just how interactive and engaging science can be! SJSU students get hands-on experience designing

presentations, synthesizing complex engineering concepts, and working with K-12 students. These skills not only enhance their resumes, but also give them a deeper commitment to their chosen career paths. The project is reciprocally beneficial for the K-12 students and the young adults who guide them, which is part of CommUniverCity's effort to foster a college going culture in the communities of central San José. The Tech Expo event allows the SJSU Engineering students to hold a fair event to demonstrate projects to high school students and engage them in new and innovative science concepts.



**449** SJSU students engaged



**3,090** hours of service



**1,932** residents engaged



**\$71,286** value

### Project Impact

In a survey of students who participated in the Tech Expo event:

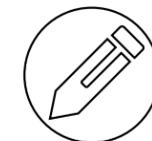
- **96%** of participants reported they enjoyed the event and what it had to offer
- **96%** of participants agree or strongly agree they learned about technology
- **54%** of participants reported they are sure they will attend college
- **41%** of participants are likely or very likely to pursue a STEM major in college

### Community Voices

“It was great hearing that our kids had fun while exploring and interacting with your (engineering) students.”  
 –CORAL Program Coordinator at McKinley Elementary

“This is very cool - being able to look at all these projects.”  
 –Tech Expo attendee





126 SJSU students engaged



570 hours of service



165 residents engaged



\$13,311 value

### Project Impact

Anne Darling Elementary School students became more familiar with the SJSU campus and expressed an interest in attending college. Their writing skills have improved in grammar, spelling, writing for

an audience, and proofreading components. SJSU student pen pals learned to communicate effectively with child writers and take on a mentor role. Over 800 letters in total were written between the pen pals!

They gave students the opportunity to view the SJSU campus through their own personal experiences with college-life.

### Community Voices

“I really enjoyed writing to these kids, and seeing the smiles on their little faces makes me want to work with children!”  
–SJSU student pen pal

“I can’t believe I’m finally going to meet my writing partner! I’m so excited!”  
–Student at Anne Darling Elementary School

# Writing Partners

Over 80% of the students at Anne Darling Elementary School are either English Learners or socioeconomically disadvantaged. Writing Partners enables these young students to correspond with college-aged mentors at SJSU throughout the course of the semester, entirely through hand-written letters. This personal touch fosters a special bond between mentor and mentee, allowing both parties to learn to express themselves entirely through the written word. The elementary students receive positive feedback from their mentors

and language critique on their writing from teachers. The student mentors help their pen pals gain valuable insights into college life. The SJSU students develop skills in mentoring and tutoring youth while becoming a positive role model. At the end of the semester, CommUniverCity facilitates a culminating event where the mentors and students meet face to face for the first time on the SJSU campus with an exciting campus tour and college-life activities.

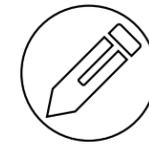




# A Taste of Their Future

A Taste of Their Future is a program that provides college campus tours to Lowell Elementary School students. The goal of the program is to start a college-going environment at an early age by allowing young students to become familiar with a college campus that resides in their own community. In addition, parent chaperones learn the various resources that San José

State University has to offer to their college-bound children. The field trip provides the students the opportunity to begin thinking of which college they want to attend, which goals they want to accomplish and the benefits college can yield. At the end of the college campus tour, all students take a "pledge" to promise working toward attending college in their future.



**25** SJSU students engaged



**150** hours of service



**169** residents engaged



**\$3,460** value

## Project Impact

- **100%** of participants reported they are now planning to go to college in the future, up from **45%** before the program
- **144** students were exposed to the SJSU campus for the first time
- **14** parents of students toured a college campus for the first time

## Community Voices

"Thank you for the tour and lunch. I learned where all the places are and I also know where I would go if I go to SJSU. I want to be a biologist."  
-lan, 4th grade

"Thank you guys because you inspired me to go to college. You showed me all the achievements I can do. So in 7 years, hopefully I'll see you guys."  
-Renan, 5th grade

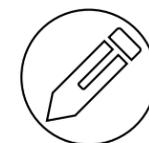




# College Day

College Day celebrates, promotes and inspires a college-going culture among first generation students. Now in its fifth year, the county-wide event strives to inspire Santa Clara County students to plan for their college success — especially those who will be the first in their family to attend a college. College Day culminates in a series of events where students ranging from preschool to high school take part in activities promoting the benefits of college. The date of the event intentionally coincides with college application season in an effort to

raise awareness for high school seniors on application deadlines. To assist with application readiness, the Family and Community Engagement Conference, a branch of College Day, holds a 'senior lab' where high school students receive help from industry professionals to fill out and submit their applications on-site. College Day is a strategic effort to help immigrant and first generation students pursue higher education and reach their full potential. The event emphasizes that the conversation should not be about whether a student is going to college, but rather which college a student will attend.



50 SJSU students engaged



144 hours of service



1850 residents engaged



\$3,322 value

## Project Impact

In total, nearly **2,000** students in downtown K-6 schools heard a message about attending college from college students. Of the 4th and 5th grade students surveyed at Lowell Elementary School,

nearly **80%** are sure they will be attending college. **93%** of the participants surveyed were satisfied with the program. Young students were thrilled to learn that college can be affordable and attainable.

Student speakers were given the chance to communicate the various opportunities provided by attending college, based on their own college experiences.

## Community Voices

"BEST COLLEGE DAY EVER!!! I'm so thankful that I signed up for a speaker and that my class was paired with Cirilo....his presentation was a great endorsement of college."

–Teacher

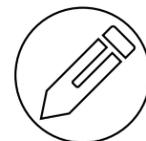
"This is our second year participating in College Day and each year it gets better."

–Teacher

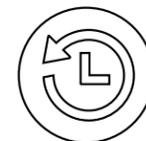
"The feedback I got from two students was the best part... I know I can't win them all but for me, that one child counts."

–Student facilitator





3 SJSU students engaged



20 hours of service



70 residents engaged



\$471 value

### Project Impact

During the tour, students were educated about the water, the nearby salt marsh, the plants, and even the decomposing animal bodies. Although the students were aware the refuge was to serve as a site of protection for the animals, they learned the protection put

in place was to safeguard them against humans, not the other animals themselves, who may harm each other in nature. This lesson on nature's animal food chain was a highlight of the trip. The wetlands tour provided sound engaged learning outside the typical

classroom curriculum and gave students the chance to engage in real field work at the wetlands.

### Community Voices

“Programs like Living Wetlands provide a unique opportunity for school children in Downtown San José. It was such a great feeling to hear the students answer many of the tour guide’s questions correctly. Hearing about habitats of different species and the importance of having a protected area in our region was a great learning opportunity for the kids. The kids were taught about local efforts to conserve water and about the local treatment plant.”

*-Project Coordinator*

# Living Wetlands

The Living Wetlands integrated program offers students a deeper look at the issues surrounding the health of the South Bay wetlands. Following a one-period classroom presentation, the students attend a field trip to the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Alviso. Olinder Elementary School students engaged in interactive environmental science activities during the classroom presentations and field trip. Activities involved watershed literacy including the local Water Treatment

Plant, endangered species such as the salt marsh harvest mouse, pollution prevention activities such as guessing how long something takes to decompose once thrown away, wastewater, and water conservation. With assisted guidance from SJSU Biodiversity Club students, the tour of the area included learning about the different habitats and natural plants found along the walkways.



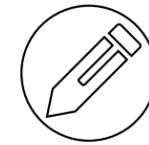


# Environmental Science

## With the Green Ninja

Elementary-school students from the Catholic Charities' CORAL afterschool programs engage in climate science and sustainability workshops with pre-credential college students, as part of SJSU's Green Ninja environmental initiative. The project's mission is divided into three important goals: 1) to provide underserved students of color with access to science enrichment; 2) to give the students a positive view of college through their

interactions with their mentors at SJSU, and thus foster a college-going culture within their communities; and 3) to provide SJSU students with opportunities to gain experience and skills while working with underserved elementary school students. The curriculum for students included environmental impacts of recycling, the effects of pollution, and the effects of natural water sources from acid rain.



18 SJSU students engaged



360 hours of service



62 residents engaged



\$8,305 value

### Project Impact

Elementary school students learned new topics on environmental science including deforestation and the effects on pollution in their own communities. The youth spent many hours working with the SJSU tutors that provided them with experienced-based insights in

how college leads to learning new concepts, many of which can help advance their careers. Following the presentations and lessons, students reported that they would try to reduce consumption, recycle more, and conserve energy. SJSU students gained experience for classroom

instruction, particularly among 4th and 5th graders in using culturally-responsive teaching methods.

### Community Stories

- A 4th Grade CORAL Elementary School student reported that the interactive activity about the negative effects of acid rain on water sources such as rivers and creeks really showed him not only what acid rain is but how terrible it can be to our natural water sources.





**BUILD**

**Neighborhood Revitalization**

“CommUniverCity means that we have an amazing partner in revitalizing neighborhoods! CommUniverCity provides access to a pipeline of community-minded students who are eager to make a difference in San José and beyond. We are grateful that several talented CommUniverCity students have become NHSSV staff members throughout the years!”

*–Matt Huerta, Housing and Community Development Consultant and former Executive Director, Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley*



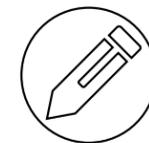


# South University Neighborhood

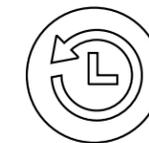
## Planning

This project initiated outreach efforts in the South University Neighborhood (SUN) and the West of 4th Street Neighborhood, as well as activated the assessment process of existing neighborhood conditions. This included documentation of resident's perceptions of their community. On the day of the survey, 50 teams of SJSU graduate and undergraduate student teams canvassed the neighborhood. The surveys documented resident's levels of social connectedness,

community engagement, and thoughts about their community. The goals of the assessment project were threefold: 1) analyze results of the door-to-door survey conducted in September 2015, 2) conduct a building and block conditions survey, and 3) identify and define neighborhood priorities. The students presented their findings at a community open house, where they were able to collect further feedback to strengthen their analysis.



**122** SJSU students engaged



**2,640** hours of service



**227** residents engaged



**\$60,904** value

## Project Impact

In surveying **196** buildings in total, the SUN project provided SJSU community-engaged learners and faculty with the opportunity to apply their academic learning to real-life situations. Students were afforded valuable work experience in a local community, and the opportunity to nurture

positive ties between residents, local governing bodies, and the university. Approximately **600** homes were visited, resulting in over **200** completed surveys by residents. The door-to-door survey provided residents an opportunity to voice their concerns and dreams for their neighborhood and created an

invaluable baseline of information regarding current public perceptions. Residents were able to actively participate in a dialogue on how to improve their neighborhood and now have a deeper understanding into the strengths and weaknesses to leverage for future improvement.

## Community Voices

"The students were able to interact with the community in multiple languages and were very professional in their commitment to get input that reflected the diversity of the neighborhood. We are so grateful for that commitment... The wisdom and commitment in creating the relationship first was so impressive! Thank you for going above and beyond!"

–Jennifer Goto, the Pastor of St. Paul's United Methodist Church

"I really feel like I have contributed enormously to the South University Neighborhood and know that the efforts my class and I took to understanding their needs will go to great use in improving their community."

–SJSU student





66 SJSU students engaged



2,268 hours of service



235 residents engaged



\$52,352 value

### Project Impact

At the end of the project, micro-entrepreneurs gained knowledge on how to create better marketing strategies for their business. They also learned how to assess and formulate ideas to improve their products and services while gaining profitability. Students in the business

and marketing programs showed improved skills in information evaluation, market and consumer analysis, and presentation to an audience. The City Love Festival was created to help drive business and continue the ongoing revitalization of the E. Santa Clara Street

Neighborhood Business District. Moving forward, the marketing materials and concepts provided by the SJSU student's work should prove to drive more consumer traffic into the corridor.

### Community Voices

"I had a great experience and time working and sharing with them [my team]. They are very positive, enthusiastic, very secure and focused about what they are doing, relaxed and happy. They are contagious, or better said- emitters of pure positive energy and great knowledge."  
 -Carmina Rivera, Owner of Emit Market

"Essentially we could not have completed the grant and achieved the level of community outreach and involvement without the students."  
 -Patricia Curia, President of ESCBA

# Marketing Smarts

Downtown business owners are continually debilitated with numerous unsavory issues such as homelessness, gang presence, drugs, blight, traffic issues, and seemingly never-ending construction projects that deters customers and minimizes their profits. In an effort to cut through the external factors, students of SJSU's business and marketing programs serve as consultants to local micro-entrepreneurs who need assistance to further develop their business ventures. Students work with the micro-entrepreneurs to learn their products

and services and develop a strategic plan to improve business. At the end of the semester, students present a complete marketing communications plan for the micro-entrepreneurs to create and strengthen brand identity and promote their products and services to specific target markets. This year's Spring semester students hosted the CityLove Festival; an event that enabled businesses of the East Santa Clara Street Business Association (ESCBA) to meet and showcase their products and services to the public in a fun and engaging setting.

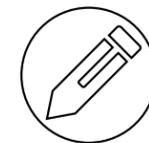




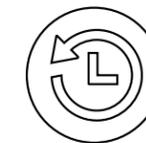
# Safe & Green Halloween

Safe & Green Halloween is a neighborhood fair centered on safety and the environment, with a fun Halloween twist! This annual event promotes the value of living “green” by having residents participate in fun-filled activities that promote sustainable behaviors such as recycling, reusing, reducing, composting, water conservation and energy efficiency. Community volunteers collaborate with San José State University students in the planning, coordination and

implementation of the fair. The fair has three principal components: 1) the activity fair, 2) a pumpkin decoration contest, and 3) the Halloween costume contest, a favorite amongst the children who get to show off costumes made entirely of recycled and reused materials! This event also allows city departments and county representatives to connect with over 600 people in one single day.



68 SJSU students engaged



470 hours of service



460 residents engaged



\$10,842 value

## Project Impact

In a survey of adults and children who participated in the event:

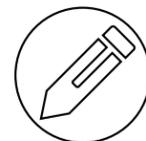
- 76% of participants reported they will eat more fruits and vegetables
- 77% of participants reported that the fair has increased their understanding of how to live more sustainably
- 70% of participants said that the fair taught them why they should eat healthier foods
- 81% of participants indicated they are more interested in growing their own food
- Based on what was learned from the fair, 80% of participants reported they would implement ways to reduce, reuse and recycle more in their daily activities

## Community Voices

“[I learned] to teach our children to mend the environment and that the most important thing is education.”  
–McKinley Elementary School parent

“Reciclando puede uno ayudar mucho al ambiente a contaminarse menos.”  
–McKinley Elementary School parent





24 SJSU students engaged



400 hours of service



159 residents engaged



\$9,228 value

### Project Impact

The door to door sessions found that **87%** of the community residents were not aware of the large item pickup that is provided by the City; this allowed the outreach team to educate the residents on solutions

to help combat illegal dumping and provide them information of scheduled pickup dates. **44%** of respondents indicated they had noticed a difference in their neighborhood since the weekend

pickups had begun. **58%** of the respondents said that they were likely to use the large item pickup service within the next three months.

### Community Voices

“Every person who responded indicated that they believed ‘dumping’ or ‘excess trash’ was a serious problem in the neighborhood, and that they also noticed an improvement over the last few months.”  
*–Student outreach assistant*

“Most of the residents I spoke with talked about illegal dumping as being a huge issue in SUN. They detailed certain areas where illegal dumping occurred most frequently and some residents even spoke about neighbors who frequently were dumping illegally in front of their apartment complexes.”  
*–Student outreach assistant*

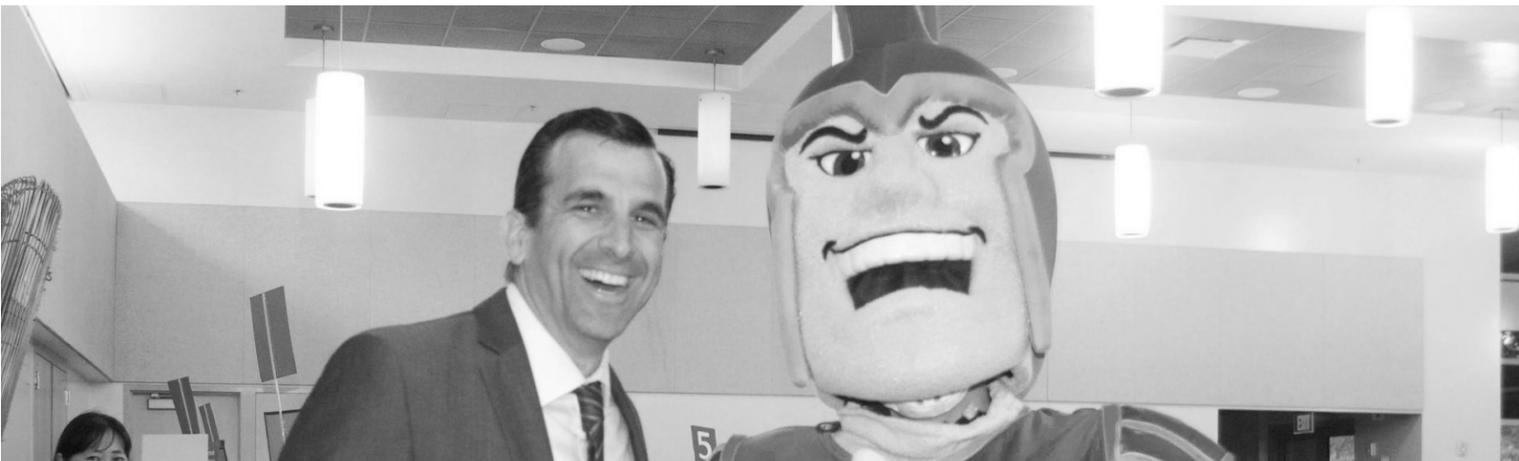
# Illegal Dumping

In response to 75% increases in San José’s illegal dumping issue over the past three years, the City of San José Environmental Services Department initiated a collaboration in December 2015 with CommUniverCity to better understand the problem and work with residents to design and implement solutions. The Illegal Dumping project included three hotspot assessments, which targeted areas previously identified by residents via a city hotline. During each assessment, data was collected for quantity and types of items being dumped,

as well as geographic coordinates for all documented sites. In conjunction with the hotspot assessments, outreach efforts designed to enhance public education and engage the community on how to better address the issue was initiated. Data from each assessment was analyzed and mapped, and a written report summarizing the findings was provided to the City. Outreach efforts included “knock and talks” within the South University Neighborhood, focus groups within the Mayfair Neighborhood, and distribution of informational door hangers within five neighborhoods of East San José.



# CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIPS 2016



# In the 2015-2016 academic year, we...



Organized **19,712** hours of community service valued at **\$454,745**



Received the **Academic Award of Excellence** from the American Planning Association, Northern California Chapter, and California Chapter



Received the **C. Peter Magrath Engagement Scholarship Award** from the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU)



Enlisted **126** SJSU mentors in a pen pal program focused on writing skills for **165** youth



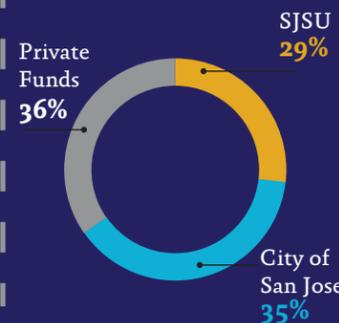
Engaged **841** SJSU students in activities with **5,158** school children



Influenced **169** youth to pledge to attend college



Motivated **7,829** residents to actively improve their communities



True to our name, CommUniverCity's funding comes from the community, San José State University, and the City of San José for a total of **\$690,000**

**13** Neighborhood Leaders have participated in community improvement projects



## Community Leadership Program

Completing the program enabled neighborhood residents to:

Learn and use leadership skills **94%**  
 Consider themselves established leaders **61%**  
 Participate in civic engagement **33%**



**11** Neighborhood Leaders participated in advocacy groups

## Money Matters



**91%** of participants recommend the Money Matters, financial literacy programs to others

## Record Clearance Project



**32** criminal records granted in court and advised **1,055** community members and inmates through the Record Clearance Project

Since its inception in 2005, CommUniverCity San José has engaged **78,812** residents, **15,814** SJSU students, **465** local government agency staff, and **2,108** corporate volunteers, who have invested **268,170** hours of volunteer work, valued at **\$6 million**



## Partners

### *Community Partners*

13th St. Neighborhood Action Council  
 Alum Rock Counseling Center  
 Anne Darling School Council  
 Buena Vista Neighborhood Association  
 Cafecitos with McKinley Principal  
 Campeonas de Salud  
 Campus Community Association  
 Catholic Charities of Silicon Valley  
 Center for Employment Training (CET)  
 Community Financial Resources  
 CORAL After School Programs  
 D3 Community Leadership Council  
 DB Consultants  
 Downtown Residents Association  
 Downtown Streets Team  
 East Santa Clara St. Business Association  
 Five Wounds Church  
 Franklin McKinley Children's Initiative  
 Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Action Coalition  
 Garden to Table  
 Greenbelt Alliance  
 Guadalupe River Conservancy  
 Habitat for Humanity  
 Horace Mann Neighborhood Association  
 Indian Health Center  
 Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful  
 Kids in Common  
 League of Women Voters  
 Market Almaden Neighborhood Association  
 Mayfair NAC  
 McKinley Bonita Neighborhood Association  
 National Compadres Network  
 Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley  
 Northside Neighborhood Association  
 Olinder Food Program  
 Olinder Neighborhood Association  
 Operation Frontline/Fresh Approach  
 Our City Forest  
 POSSO  
 Restore Coyote Creek  
 Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association  
 Sacred Heart Community Service  
 Sacred Heart Parish  
 School of Arts and Culture

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition  
 Silicon Valley Leadership Group  
 St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
 Somos Mayfair  
 South University Neighborhood  
 Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Action Coalition  
 Step Up Silicon Valley  
 Sunday Friends  
 The Health Trust  
 THINK Together  
 Third Street Community Center  
 TransForm  
 United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County  
 University Neighborhoods Coalition  
 Valley Verde  
 Veggielution  
 Washington Neighborhood Association  
 Wesley United Methodist Church  
 Year Up

### *San José State University:*

Office of the President  
 Office of the Provost  
 College of Applied Sciences and Arts  
 College of Business  
 College of Education  
 College of Engineering  
 College of Humanities and the Arts  
 College of Science  
 College of Social Sciences  
 School of Journalism  
 School of Social Work  
 Department of Accounting and Finance  
 Department of Aerospace Engineering  
 Department of Anthropology  
 Department of Art and Art History  
 Department of Biomedical, Chemical, and Materials Engineering  
 Department of Child and Adolescent Development  
 Department of Communication Studies  
 Department of Counselor Education  
 Department of Design  
 Department of Educational Leadership  
 Department of Elementary Education



## Partners

Department of English and Comparative Literature  
 Department of Environmental Studies  
 Department of Health Science  
 Department of Geology  
 Department of Justice Studies  
 Department of Management Information Systems  
 Department of Marketing and Decision Sciences  
 Department of Mechanical Engineering  
 Department of Meteorology and Climate Science  
 Department of Mexican American Studies  
 Department of Nursing  
 Department of Nutrition & Food Science  
 Department of Organization and Management  
 Department of Political Science  
 Department of Psychology  
 Department of Radio, TV, Film and Theater  
 Department of Social Science  
 Department of Sociology  
 Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Science  
 Department of Urban and Regional Planning  
 Department of World Languages and Literatures  
 Industrial Design Program  
 Jay Pinson STEM Education Program  
 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resource Center  
 Science Education Program  
 Women's Resource Center

### *Santa Clara University:*

Thriving Neighbors Initiative/Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education

### *Government Partners*

City of San José:  
 Mayor Sam Liccardo's Office  
 Raul Peralez, San José Council District 3  
 Magdalena Carrasco, San José Council District 5  
 City Manager's Office  
 Department of Environmental Services  
 Department of Housing  
 Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services  
 Department of Planning, Building & Code Enforcement  
 Department of Transportation  
 Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force  
 McKinley Teen Center  
 Office of Immigrant Affairs  
 Roosevelt Teen Center

### *Santa Clara County:*

Cindy Chavez, County Supervisor, District 2  
 Dave Cortese, County Supervisor, District 3  
 Santa Clara Public Health Department  
 Santa Clara Valley Water District Zoe Lofgren, 19th Congressional District

### *School Partners*

Franklin McKinley School District:  
 McKinley Elementary School  
 San José Unified School District:  
 Anne Darling Elementary School  
 Burnett Middle School  
 Empire Gardens Elementary School  
 Grant Elementary School  
 Horace Mann Elementary School  
 Lowell Elementary School  
 Olinder Elementary School  
 San José Community School  
 San José High School  
 Washington Elementary School  
 Downtown College Preparatory  
 Foothill High School  
 Latino College Preparatory  
 Overfelt High School  
 Rocketship Discovery  
 Sacred Heart Nativity School  
 St. Patrick's Elementary School  
 Yerba Buena High School

### *Corporate & Foundation Partners*

Cathay Bank Foundation  
 CEFCU  
 PG&E  
 Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
 United Way Silicon Valley  
 Wells Fargo

### *Financial support from:*

City of San José  
 San José State University  
 United Way Silicon Valley  
 Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
 Wells Fargo  
 PG&E  
 Cathay Bank Foundation  
 Individuals



Understanding

Accomplishment

# Success

Resolution

Compassion

# Youth

Rehabilitation

# Celebration

Support

Education



## 2015-2016 Steering Committee Members

### *Chairs*

Chair: Joan Rivas-Cosby, Chair, FWBT Neighborhood Action Council

Vice-chair: Elaine Chin, Dean, SJSU College of Education (alternate: Jean English-Lueck, Decanal Fellow, SJSU College of Social Sciences)

Vice-chair: Julie Edmonds-Mares, Deputy Manager, City of San José\* (alternate: Zulma Maciel, Assistant to the City Manager, City of San José Strategic Partnerships & Office of Immigrant Affairs)

### *Community*

Sami Monsur, Garden to Table & McKinley neighborhood

José Posadas, President, Luna Park Business District

Marcus Salomon, South University Neighborhood

Rita Torres, Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Action Council

Davide Vieira, Little Portugal Neighborhood resident

### *San José State University*

Steve Branz, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies, SJSU

Stacy Gleixner, Interim Chief of Staff, Office of the President, SJSU

Fernanda Perdomo-Arciniegas, Director, Campus & Community Relations, SJSU

### *City of San José and Santa Clara County*

Aurelia Bailey, Community Services Supervisor, Housing Department, City of San José\*

Patricia Ceja, Council Assistant, Council District 3, Raul Peralez, City of San José\*

Alex Lin, Policy Aide, Santa Clara County District 2, Cindy Chavez

Jo Zientek, Deputy Director, Environmental Services, City of San José\*

### *Corporations*

Wen Chang, Vice President & Branch Manager, Cathay Bank

### *Schools*

Lupe Mendoza-Ramirez, Manager, Office of Family Engagement, San José Unified School District

### *Community-based Organizations*

Erin Healy, Director of Healthy Living, The Health Trust

Sara Reyes, Division Director; Children, Youth and Family Development Division; Catholic Charities (alternate: America Aguirre, Catholic Charities)

### *SJSU Students*

LooLoo Amante, President & CEO, SJSU Associated Students

Jason DeHaan, Urban & Regional Planning (alternate: AnaLisa Campos, Environmental Studies)

Matthew Isaac, Political Science & Behavioral Science (alternate: Baltazar Lopez, Political Science)

\*Non-voting members/liaisons



SAN JOSE DISTRICT 3  
COMMUNITY  
LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL



**SJSU** SAN JOSÉ STATE  
UNIVERSITY



SAN JOSE DISTRICT 3  
**CO** COMMUNITY  
LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL

CITY OF  
**SAN JOSE**  
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

**SJSU** SAN JOSÉ STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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