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For Immediate Release

Open Space Authority Urban Grant Program Awards over \$875,000 to Local Community Organizations Emphasizing Equity

Latest round of awards brings total to over \$13M in funding provided to increase access to nature for all

San Jose, CA (December 11, 2020) - The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's Board of Directors has awarded over \$875,000 in Measure Q grant funding to 10 organizations as part of the 2020 cycle of the Urban Grant Program. Funding a variety of projects, including environmental education on the topics of food and agriculture, as well as environmental stewardship, the Urban Grant Program focuses on providing access to nature within the urban areas of the Authority's jurisdiction.

The projects funded work towards the Authority's larger goal to help urban communities overcome barriers of accessing nature, and to make this access as equitable as possible for present and future generations. Recipients of the Large Grant awards were chosen to support this effort and fully represent the community. From Bay Area Older Adult's Trailblazer Program, enabling vulnerable older adults to access open space, to Guadalupe River Park Conservancy's "Outdoor Field Trips" for Title 1 schools and special needs groups, the Authority is making strides towards serving the *whole* community and that *all* people can enjoy the physical, mental, and spiritual benefits of nature.

"We are so proud to be making direct investments in local communities and working to connect all people in our jurisdiction to nature," said Andrea Mackenzie, the General Manager of the Authority. "By passing Measure T with 81% approval this November, voters have made clear that access to parks and open space is essential to their physical and mental health. Measure T will continue to allow the Open Space Authority to make investments in organizations that provide access to nature in the urban core."

The Open Space Authority Urban Grant Program, launched in 2016, is one of two grant programs the Authority offers. This program is divided into Small and Large Grants to help provide a variety of opportunities for worthy community-based projects to be supported. Over \$1M was granted in the 2020 cycle of the Urban Grant Program. This latest grant round increases the total number of urban grants awarded by the Authority since 1999 to 74, amounting to over \$13M in funding that the Authority has provided to community organizations to connect people to nature. The Large Grant awards follows the Small Grants awarded in September of this year, which totaled nearly \$200,000. The Urban Grant Program is funded by Measure Q, which was renewed by the passage of Measure T this November with 81% of the vote. Providing funding to community organizations is an invaluable way to provide direct support to the communities within which they operate. With stable funding from Measure T, the

Authority can continue to provide greater investment in nature, especially in the Deep Engagement Communities identified by the Authority as having the greatest barriers to nature access.

One recipient of the Small Grant awards is working to better distribute the benefits of nature by promoting food justice through connections between urban gardeners and community members. “We are so grateful for the grant we received from the Authority’s Urban Grant Program. We are working to provide equitable access to healthy food in San Jose and cultivate leaders in this mission,” said Roberto Gil, a Director at La Mesa Verde. “And the funding from this grant will help us achieve this goal.”

The Authority looks forward to the positive impact the 2020 grantees will make in their communities over the coming year. We will be working closely with the grantees, regularly sharing progress and outcomes with the public through the Authority’s website and monthly Urban Open Space Corner articles. Those interested in receiving updates can register [here](#).

2020 Urban Grant Program - Large Grant Recipients

Organization Name	Project Title	Grant Amount
Veggielution	Eastside Connect	\$150,000
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society	Oak Savanna Citizen Science Project	\$79,608
Bay Area Older Adults, Inc.	Trailblazers Program “Enabling Our Most Vulnerable Older Adults to Access Santa Clara County’s Open Spaces”	\$95,561
Guadalupe River Park Conservancy	Outdoor Field Trips (in-person & distance learning) for Title I & Special Needs Groups	\$130,000
Santa Clara County Public Health Department	JUNTOS Initiative	\$100,000
San Jose State University Research Foundation	CommUniverCity’s Growing Sustainably Program	\$160,000
Living Classroom	Championing Environmental Literacy in Campbell Elementary Schools	\$40,000
Bay Area Ridge Trail Council	Ridge Trail Connection: Class 1 Trail Design along Bailey Ave	\$40,000
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition	RIDESV Enviro Series	\$40,000
San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory	Community-informed Facility Upgrade Planning to Expand Outdoor Education Experiences	\$40,000

Photos and videos can be found [here](#).

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About the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

The Open Space Authority was created by the California state legislature in 1993 to conserve the natural environment, support agriculture, and connect people to nature by protecting open spaces, natural areas, and working farms and ranches for future generations. The Authority has protected over 28,000 acres of open space, preserving the region's scenic beauty, protecting open space, wildlife habitat, water resources and agricultural land, and providing outdoor recreation opportunities for Santa Clara Valley residents. Visit [openspaceauthority.org](https://www.openspaceauthority.org) for more information.