

For Immediate Release

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Valley First Credit Union Supports Latino Leadership Initiative

Modesto – Valley First Credit Union donated \$15,000 to the Latino Leadership Initiative to help increase the number of Latino leaders in the Central Valley.

“The individuals involved with this are just WOW,” said Valley First Credit Union CEO Kathryn Davis, “I’m blown away every time I cross paths with one of the students. This is such an important program and aligns with our focus of supporting the Latino community. I’m so proud to be a part of what they are doing.”

According to the 2020 Census, Latinos are the majority in six of the 12 Valley counties served by Valley First Credit Union – Tulare (65.5%), Merced (61.8%), Madera (59.6%), Kings (56%) Kern (54.9%) and Fresno (53.6%). In Stanislaus County, Latinos make up 48.1% of the population. Unfortunately, those numbers are not reflected in education or economic stability and the Latino community lacks leaders in city and county government.

“Growing strong leaders is critical to the success of the Latino community in the Central Valley,” said Marvin Jacobo, executive director of the City Ministry Network, which started the Latino Leadership Initiative. “Our goal is to increase the number of Latino leaders who serve our communities through civic leadership. The support of local business leaders like Valley First Credit Union is critical to our success.”

As a Community Development Financial Institution, Valley First Credit Union is charged with generating economic growth and opportunity in economically disadvantaged communities with programs that inject new sources of capital into neighborhoods that lack access to financing. Valley First is also a designated low-income credit union, which expands access to capital for small businesses and others who have been underserved in low-income communities.

Under the banner of “Making Good Happen,” Valley First employees attended 165 community events throughout the Central Valley volunteering 1,115 service hours in the past year. The credit union also donated more than \$97,000 to local non-profits in 2022.

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About Latino Leadership Initiative

Latinos are a significant represented community in the Central Valley. As such, the LLI seeks to increase the core competencies of emerging Latino civic servants in the areas of growth, change, collaboration, and deep community engagement. The LLI takes a small cohort through a community capacity program that brings in training from experienced practitioners in subjects like business, non-profit management, financial literacy, board commission and advocacy, and more, and then directly applying these concepts within our community. Upon completion, participants will be well equipped with the necessary resources, insights, and skills for properly engaging with those serving our community.

About Valley First Credit Union

Valley First Credit Union is a \$998 million, member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative providing quality financial services to more than 80,000 members in the growing and diverse communities of Calaveras, Fresno, Kings, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Sacramento, Tulare, and Tuolumne Counties. With eight branches throughout the central valley, the credit union is committed to banking with a purpose – to better the financial lives of the people and businesses in the communities we call home. For more information, please visit <https://www.valleyfirstcu.org/>