



SANTA BARBARA  
EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION

# Education Matters

SUMMER 2023

## BUILDING A BRIGHTER TOMORROW



Santa Barbara Community Academy students with a 3-D printer purchased with a Teacher Grant

GOOGLE GRANT  
HOPE AWARDS  
STATE OF OUR SCHOOLS

# SBEF RECEIVES \$50,000 GRANT FROM GOOGLE.ORG TO SUPPORT TEACHERS

Santa Barbara Education Foundation received a \$50,000 grant from Google.org, Google's philanthropic arm, for its Teacher Grants program, which provides funding to Santa Barbara Unified educators to promote innovative teaching and purchase essential classroom supplies.

Since 2018, the SBEF has awarded grants once a year to support much-needed, project-based supplies, instructional tools, and field trips to encourage creative and innovative teaching in the Santa Barbara Unified School District. The grant will specifically fund classroom projects and materials that increase students' learning opportunities in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education.

"We're thrilled to support educators through the incredible work the Santa Barbara Education Foundation is doing to expand access to STEM education resources," said Dr. Erik Lucero, Lead



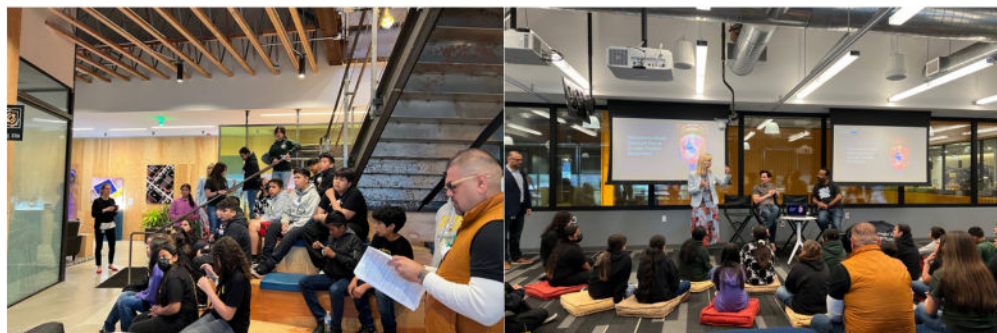
Franklin Elementary School students and staff arrive at Google's Quantum AI Campus.

Quantum Engineering at Google and Site Lead for the company's Quantum AI Campus in Santa Barbara. "We hope we can play a small part in sparking the interest of the next generation of scientists, engineers, technicians, business experts, and quantum mechanics."

SBEF has seen a dramatic increase in grant requests from educators in recent years. In 2022, the organization received over \$330,000 in requested funds from teachers. With only \$100,000 in funding available, more than \$230,000 in classroom needs did not get funded by SBEF.

"Equipping our teachers with resources is tantamount to the success of our next generation," said Santa Barbara County District 2 Supervisor Laura Capps. "I am grateful that our community has the Santa Barbara Education Foundation and Google.org to help support our teachers, who inspire our students. I hope to see more collaborations like these to help nurture our youth."

"We are truly grateful for this extraordinary gift." said Executive Director Pedro Paz, "It will go a long way to give teachers additional tools to impact Santa Barbara Unified students directly and inspire a love of learning."



Students from Franklin Elementary School visit Google's Quantum AI Campus in Santa Barbara with County Supervisor Laura Capps.



# SBEF BRINGS RAISES \$110,000 AT THE HOPE AWARDS

On Thursday, May 5, the Santa Barbara Education Foundation hosted the Hope Awards to celebrate individuals and programs supporting students in the Santa Barbara Unified School District. The annual event raised over \$110,000 in funding for the Santa Barbara Education Foundation to continue making a positive impact on SB Unified student outcomes.



**Dos Pueblos High School culinary students serve up salads at the Hope Awards.**

Over \$55,000 of the proceeds will go towards Teacher Grants, which fund the purchase of much-needed, project-based supplies and tools, and encourage the development of creative and innovative teaching in the Santa Barbara Unified School District.

A performance by the La Colina Junior High School Advanced Band kicked off the festivities, and culinary arts students from Santa Barbara, San Marcos, and Dos Pueblos high schools served a variety of salads, savory treats, and desserts. High school students Kavya Suresh and Isa Mireles took to the stage to serve as the evening's emcees.

Although the event highlighted the contributions of Santa Barbara Unified students and teachers, it also honored former San Marcos High School Athletic Director Abe Jahadhmy and State Senator Monique Limón for their work on behalf of local students.

Honoree Abe Jahadhmy has been a coach and educator in the community for over 35 years. Abe began working with local youth at the Goleta Boys and Girls Club in 1975. After earning his credential, he began teaching and coaching at San Marcos High School. In 2004, he became the Athletic Director for San Marcos High School, where he continued to help guide student-athletes until his recent retirement.

When accepting the award, Jahadehmy stated, “There is nothing I’m more proud of in my life than being able to influence youth that I worked with to give back to the community. Whether it’s financially, volunteering, or being there to have empathy for people that need support, that’s the most important thing that I could have given.”



(Left) Student Emcees Kavya Suresh and Isa Mireles (Right) La Colina Junior High School Advanced Band performing at the Hope Awards.

Honoree Monique Limón, who was born and raised in Santa Barbara, has always prioritized education and has worked continuously to serve her community as an educator, leader, and advocate.



In her acceptance speech, Limón shared, “I am someone who had incredible teachers

Lynn Rodriguez, Virginia Alvarez (SBUSD Board member), Senator Monique Limón (honoree), Abe Jahadhmy (honoree), and SB Unified Superintendent Hilda Maldonado.

in our schools who believed in me, who pushed harder to ensure that I would succeed. I am someone who at the core has the belief that investment, human investment, yields community outcomes.”

She concluded by saying, “We don’t forget, ever, the teacher who made an impact on us. And that is what tonight is about, ensuring that we give the resources to those teachers.”

The Santa Barbara Education Foundation wishes to recognize and thank Hope Award sponsors, including Pillar Sponsor: SAGE Publishing; Visionary Sponsors: Griffith and Thornburgh; Ambassador Sponsors: Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, Chevron, KBZ Architects, Raymond James, RHS Construction, Santa Barbara City College Foundation, and Santa Barbara Historical Museum; Champion Sponsors: Cottage Health Systems, DA Davidson, Dennis Thompson Architect, Tisha Ford, Hohbach-Lewin, M.F. Strange & Associates, Montecito Bank & Trust, Montecito Journal, Pueblo Radiology Medical Group, and Schipper Construction.



# TECH, EQUITY, & ACADEMICS TOP OF MIND AT STATE OF OUR SCHOOLS

Speaking to a full house at the Carrillo Recreation Center, Santa Barbara Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Hilda Maldonado addressed the community during the Santa Barbara Education Foundation's annual State of Our Schools presentation.



SB Unified Superintendent Maldonado takes questions from the crowd.

Following an introduction by SBEF Executive Director, Dr. Pedro Paz, Maldonado started with a demonstration of ChatGPT to show how technological advances are drastically changing how students access and present ideas with the aid of artificial intelligence. What Maldonado said has not changed is the need for schools to produce critical thinkers.

SB Unified serves over 12,000 students in 19 schools. Of these students, 61% are socioeconomically disadvantaged, nearly 10% are unhoused, 13.1% are students with disabilities, and 15.1% are Emergent Multilingual Learners. And despite all these challenges, the district has a 95.5% graduation rate.

Superintendent Maldonado outlined many ways in which District resources are organized to ensure student success, including the addition of Family Engagement Liaisons, crisis counselors, youth outreach workers, and licensed clinicians.

The Superintendent spoke of SB Unified's role in developing a strong local workforce through investment in facilities to provide opportunities for students to explore career pathways. With an improved Wellness Center at San Marcos High School, more students can explore health careers. The creation of an innovation center at Dos Pueblos High School will provide STEAM teacher training, curriculum development, and school field trips.

For the first time since 2007, all elementary teachers will have a common set of materials to teach reading with the recently adopted *Wit & Wisdom/Foundations* curriculum. Maldonado outlined a three-year implementation plan for teacher learning, with training starting as soon as next month.

Although the Superintendent gave details on the changes that will be made inside the classroom regarding literacy, she envisions a broader community effort to make literacy part of the local culture. "What if we held a literacy week in the cities of Goleta and Santa Barbara, where we celebrate reading and writing to help motivate kids to read, bring the joys of reading to students of all ages, and make all children feel safe, valued, and welcome?" Maldonado shared, "I imagine book fairs, writing contests, reading gardens where students can curl up with a book under a tree, celebrity guest readers in classrooms, and a multicultural festival that celebrates reading and opens windows on the world."

SBEF wishes to recognize and thank State of Our Schools sponsors, including the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo, McGillivray Construction, Chevron, KBZ Architects, Santa Barbara City College Foundation, Montecito Bank & Trust, AE Group Mechanical Engineers, and American Riviera Bank.



# ON BOARD WITH SBEF

Get to know SBEF's newest Board of Directors members.



## EVA MARIA CATALAN

As the Associate Program Director at Future Leaders of America, Catalan has been instrumental in delivering comprehensive services to students in grades 8 through 12. Alongside her professional commitments, she leads the Youth Wellness Coalition, a

collective of community leaders in Santa Barbara.

Through the coalition, she spearheads efforts to educate and prevent underage alcohol and drug usage among the city's youth. With a strong background in youth leadership and a commitment to empowering Santa Barbara's students, Catalan brings her valuable expertise in youth leadership and advocacy will further strengthen the foundation's impact on the community.



## STEPHANIE RAMÍREZ ZÁRATE

Ramírez Zárate currently serves as the District Director for California State Senator Monique Limón. Ramírez Zárate earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Public Policy from UCLA, after transferring from Santa Barbara City College. While studying

at UCLA, she served on the board for IDEAS, a student advocacy group that supported undocumented students.

With prior experience as a Santa Barbara Education Foundation board member from 2019 to 2020, Ramírez Zárte understands the foundation's mission and its significant influence on student outcomes. Ramírez Zárte shared, "Public education has the power to equip students with the tools and knowledge to develop into effective adults and future workforce. It helps students expand their perspectives and world views and establishes values of equality that strengthen our democracy."



## **VICTORIA JUAREZ**

Juarez's experience in the nonprofit sector is extensive. She previously held the role of CEO at the Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara, where she played a pivotal role in supporting students' pursuit of higher education.

As the Executive Director of Girls Inc of Carpinteria, Juarez demonstrated her commitment to empowering young women and fostering their personal and academic growth.

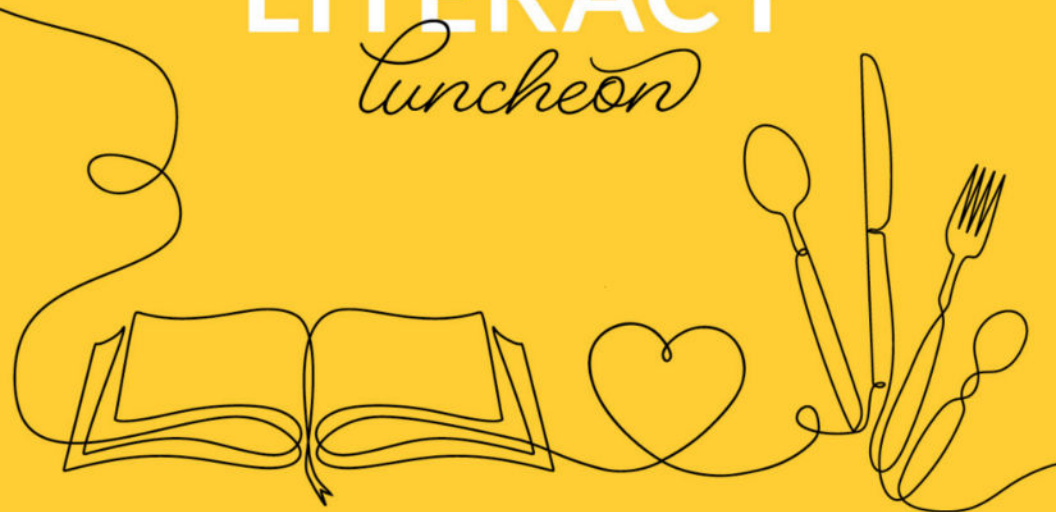
With a Master of Public Administration in Public Policy and Administration from California State University, Long Beach, and a Bachelor of Arts in History from the same institution, Juarez brings a strong educational foundation to her work. Having previously served as a Santa Barbara Education Foundation board member from 2013 to 2020, Juarez deeply understands the organization's mission and impact on students and the community.

# SAVE THE DATE



SANTA BARBARA  
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## LOVE OF LITERACY *Luncheon*



**Thursday, September 28, 2023**

**12 pm at the Santa Barbara Woman's Club**

The Love of Literacy Luncheon features a keynote speaker addressing how literacy is essential to positive academic outcomes and later life success. This inspirational event raises critical funds to support students and provide community outreach efforts to increase literacy rates for SB Unified students.



**For details and to RSVP, visit  
[sbefoundation.org/love-of-literacy-luncheon](https://sbefoundation.org/love-of-literacy-luncheon).**





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**SEPTEMBER 28**

**FOR THE**

**LOVE OF LITERACY**

**LUNCHEON!**