



Santa Clara Valley Water District

File No.: 22-0643

Agenda Date: 5/10/2022

Item No.: *2.11.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Receive Information on Internships and Career-Ready Program for Disadvantaged Students.

*PREVIOUSLY LISTED AS ITEM 2.10

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider and discuss information on internships and stipends for disadvantaged students.

SUMMARY:

During their meeting on October 28, 2021, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee directed staff to research and propose programs for supporting and helping disadvantaged students to complete degrees related to the Water Industry.

Studies and research have shown that traditionally, students don't graduate from college when they face financial challenges, lack of non-academic preparation, and lack of a support network to help guide them to graduation. The cost of a four-year degree has steadily risen over recent years, and this cost has become a barrier for low-income students to pursue a higher education. Many first-generation students struggle to know where to turn for assistance, even when colleges have a wealth of resources available. Many low-income and first-generation students may doubt their ability to succeed because they have not had a mentor or someone in their family or community that has completed a degree, to help guide them to success.

Staff identified over 30 Degree majors and areas of concentration related to Valley Water careers and found several programs at both two-year and four-year colleges in Santa Clara County that offer support for students facing financial crisis, who are low income, or who face social, economic, and educational challenges. Representatives for these programs commonly mentioned that the most useful tools to help these students are internships, mentorship, and stipends.

PROPOSAL:

Add ten (10) additional slots in the Summer Internship Program for students from disadvantaged communities that are majoring in a water-related field. In addition, establish a Career-Ready \$1,000 stipend program for 50 disadvantaged students studying in water-related fields per year. The Career Ready program would be six (6) months where students would meet with Valley Water Mentors to discuss Valley Water Career Paths, attend a resume workshop with Valley Water subject matter experts, interview coaching with tips on Valley Water's hiring process, a job shadow day with Valley

Water Employees, and at least one tour of a Valley Water facility. Once the students complete this program, they would receive a \$1,000 stipend.

Valley Water would partner with established programs such as SJSU Cares (SJSU), SSS Aspire (SJSU), World Innovation Network (West Valley and Mission Community Colleges), EOPS/CARES (Gavilan Community College), Silicon Valley Career Pathways (San Jose City, Evergreen, De Anza, Foothill, West Valley Community Colleges), Evergreen Business & Workforce Dean Dickerson (Evergreen Community College), and LEAD (Santa Clara University).

Staff would work with partners to establish the stipend program and applicants in Spring/Summer 2023. Staff would also work immediately with the partners to identify and select the ten (10) summer interns to start in June 2023 and have the Career Ready Stipend Program begin with the new school year in September 2023.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACT:

There are no Environmental Justice impacts associated with this item.

This action does not result in Environmental Justice impacts, which result from the unfair exposure of poor and marginalized communities to harms associated with resource extraction, hazardous waste, and other land uses. However, staff has identified the following potential impacts and benefits of the recommended program for Internships and Stipends for Disadvantaged Students to the communities listed below:

- Disadvantaged Students participating in student support services at the following academic institutions of San Jose State University, Santa Clara University, West Valley College, Mission College, Evergreen Valley College, San Jose City College, Gavilan College, De Anza College, and Foothill College. The potential impacts/benefits include providing summer internship opportunities, mentorship, and stipends to encourage and support the success of participating students.

To ensure meaningful engagement of these communities in the decision-making process, staff will work closely with representatives of the student support organizations within these colleges and universities to ensure targeted outreach and engagement occur to offer summer internships and stipends to disadvantaged students in their college/university communities

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The total cost is \$198,370. This amount includes the cost for ten (10) additional spots in the Summer Internship Program at the cost of \$148,370 and fifty (50) \$1,000 stipends for the Career Ready program at the cost of \$50,000.

CEQA:

This program does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have the potential for resulting in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: PowerPoint

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

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