Silicon Valley Community Foundation

About Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Silicon Valley Community Foundation makes all forms of philanthropy more powerful. We serve as a catalyst and leader for innovative solutions to our region’s most challenging problems and give more money to charities than any other community foundation in the United States.

SVCF has more than $4.7 billion in assets under management. As Silicon Valley’s center of philanthropy, we provide thousands of individuals, families and corporations with simple and effective ways to give locally and around the world.

Find out more at www.siliconvalleycf.org.

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Immigration Impact Brief

Making a difference for immigrants in Silicon Valley

548 Adult Students

Increase in amount of students enrolled in ESL from 2011 to 2012, reaching a total of 2,712

15,000

Over 15,000 immigrants who received one-on-one assistance with legal services through SVCF grants.

86%

Three-quarters of the students who completed the courses we funded went on to pursue higher-level courses.

75%

In 2012, 75% of students who completed the courses we funded went on to pursue higher-level courses.

Federal grant funding that helped create a first-of-its-kind regional network of adult schools and community colleges.

$2.6 Million

Immigrants who received one-on-one assistance with legal services through SVCF grantees in 2012.

86%

The number of trained legal staff at grantee organizations increased from 29 in 2011 to 54 in 2012.

FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING THAT HELPED CREATE A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND REGIONAL NETWORK OF ADULT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Silicon Valley Community Foundation is committed to solving the region’s most challenging problems. One of the ways we do this is through our strategic grantmaking and by partnering with the most effective and innovative organizations to make a difference in four key areas: economic security, education, immigration and regional planning. In addition to these areas, the community foundation has also made grants through its community opportunity fund, which focuses on time-sensitive issues, community and philanthropic leadership and regional innovation.

We understand that creating real impact does not happen by chance. Over the last two years we took a detailed look at the effectiveness of our grantmaking with the help of an independent, third-party evaluation conducted by LFA Group: Learning for Action. What this evaluation revealed is that with our grantee partners, we made a significant positive impact on the lives of individuals and families, institutions and entire communities. We also learned a great deal about what works and what does not.

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Silicon Valley is a diverse region. More than one-third of the 2.5 million residents of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties are immigrants, and almost two-thirds of those younger than 18 are children of immigrants. Immigrant entrepreneurs have contributed considerably to innovation and job creation in Silicon Valley, and nearly half of our workforce is foreign-born. Our region's continued prosperity and quality of life depend on our ability to create communities that recognize immigrants as assets and that honor shared values of family, hard work and opportunity for all.

With 15,000 immigrants living in our area, we can make a meaningful difference in their lives. Whether helping immigrants to navigate the naturalization process, increasing the availability of affordable legal services, or increasing the availability of affordable and reliable legal services, we have made a significant positive impact on the lives of individuals and families, institutions and entire communities.

Our impact
Learning English is linked to much higher wages and economic opportunity, and through our grantmaking, we have helped more adult immigrants enroll in and complete ESL courses.

- We increased the number of students enrolled in ESL courses by 548 students from 2011 to 2012, reaching a total of 2,712 enrolled. This represented a 25 percent increase, which easily surpassed our 10 percent goal and was accomplished at a time when the traditional providers of these courses—adult schools and community colleges—experienced hundreds of millions in cuts statewide.
- Three-quarters of the students who completed the courses we funded went on to pursue higher-level courses.
- Our grant funding and involvement also helped create a first-of-its-kind regional network of adult schools, community-based organizations and community colleges (the Alliance for Language Learners’ Integration, Empowerment and Success) to develop a more coordinated model of service delivery, leading to improved academic and vocational pathways for immigrants. Because of its groundbreaking work, ALLIES received a $2.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund, one of just 26 such grants awarded nationally.

In addition to expanding adult English language services, we increased the capacity of legal service providers to help more immigrants on the path to citizenship.

- Over 15,000 immigrants received one-on-one assistance with legal services through SVCF grants in 2011, up 370 percent from 3,297 in 2011.
- The number of trained legal staff at grantee organizations nearly doubled, increasing from 29 in 2011 to 54 in 2012. Our funding also allowed agencies to apply for Board of Immigration Appeals accreditation to ensure legal service providers meet the highest standards of practice, which will help many future clients.
- We provided seed funding for the development of award-winning technology tools to serve more people, responding to a 2007 SVCF-funded survey that showed that legal services agencies need to increase capacity three- and four-fold for future legalization reforms to succeed. Among them is CitizenshipWorks.org, a site of online tools that helps people navigate the naturalization process. While we are proud of these successes, the result of our work in other areas has been harder to evaluate. For instance, grants awarded under our Bridging the Cultural Gap strategy supported a variety of activities, some focused on media (e.g., film), some focused on dialogue and engagement activities, some on advocacy and others on messaging. The collective impact was difficult to quantify. We saw the most success when these different activities were united toward a common purpose, such as the development of consistent messages and powerful stories of the immigrant experience, which can be used in future advocacy efforts in support of immigrant rights and other reforms.
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INCREASE IN AMOUNT OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ESL FROM 2011 TO 2012, REACHING A TOTAL OF 2,712

548 ADULT STUDENTS

IMMIGRANTS WHO RECEIVED ONE-ON-ONE ASSISTANCE WITH LEGAL SERVICES THROUGH SVCF GRANTEES IN 2012

OVER 15,000

THE NUMBER OF TRAINED LEGAL STAFF AT GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS INCREASED FROM 29 IN 2011 TO 54 IN 2012

86%

IN 2012, THREE-QUARTERS OF THE STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE COURSES WE FUNDED WENT ON TO PURSUE HIGHER-LEVEL COURSES.

FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING THAT HELPED CREATE A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND REGIONAL NETWORK OF ADULT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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