



## NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release:**

March 9, 2017

**For further information contact:**

Ryan Brown

Phone: 408-531-6172 | Cell: 541-591-3352

ryan.brown@sjeccd.edu

### **Community College District joins with Mayor's Office and Other Partners to Launch San José Promise**

*Program includes launch and expansion of San José Promise Scholarships that will ensure hundreds of local students can attend two years of community college for free*

(San Jose, Calif.) —Yesterday, San José – Evergreen Community College District (SJECCD) Chancellor Debbie Budd joined San José Mayor Sam Liccardo, community college Presidents Byron Breland, Henry Yong, and Bradley Davis, and several other local elected officials and community leaders to officially launch the San José Promise, a collaborative, city-wide campaign to ensure that community college is affordable and accessible for all San José high school students.

“For too long, the opportunities afforded by a college degree or certificate have seemed out of reach for many in our community,” said Dr. Budd. “We are proud to work with the Mayor’s Office in leading the way to break down barriers for student success and college access. By ensuring that more local students are prepared for, enroll in, and graduate from college, we will diversify the Silicon Valley workforce and ensure our local economy has the skilled workers needed for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs.”

The San Jose Promise is built upon three core elements: College Readiness Programs, College Promise Scholarships, and College Pathways Partnerships. In conjunction with the launch, San Jose City College and Evergreen Valley College announced a significant expansion of College Promise scholarships that, when leveraged with other sources of financial aid, will ensure up to two years of free community college for approximately 500 qualifying students next school year alone. The College Promise scholarships will be focused on low-income, first-generation, and historically underrepresented students.

“College remains a daunting financial challenge for thousands of San José families, leaving far too many of our kids unprepared to compete in an increasingly challenging global economy and relegated to a future of financial struggle,” said Mayor Liccardo. “The San José Promise reflects our city’s collective commitment to ensuring that every single San Jose high school student has the opportunity to continue their education and pursue a future with unlimited opportunity.”

The College Promise Scholarship programs available at both San José City College and Evergreen Valley College will cover full tuition and fees, textbook, transportation, and summer bridge program costs for approximately 500 students attending in the 2017-2018 school year. Applications for these new scholarship programs will be open to students graduating from a San José high school this June.

Representatives of the national College Promise Campaign were on hand during the launch event, and are excited to see the nation's 10<sup>th</sup> largest city join the growing national college promise movement. "San José Promise joins nearly 200 communities across the nation in delivering affordable and quality higher education through Promise programs," said James Schuelke, Senior Director of Engagement and Advocacy for the College Promise Campaign. "We applaud Mayor Sam Liccardo and Chancellor Debbie Budd for building community support for this program and for ensuring that hardworking students have a fair opportunity to get ahead."

The launch of the San José Promise and expansion of the associated scholarship programs are being largely funded by an initial two-year grant from the California College Promise Innovation Grant Program, which awarded SJECCD with \$1.5 million in funds to be divided between its two colleges. SJECCD was one of just 14 institutions to be awarded out of more than 100 applicants.

The colleges will also be working with K-12 partners to provide college readiness programs and outreach to help San José middle and high school students prepare and plan for college.

### **About San José – Evergreen Community College District**

Located in vibrant downtown San José in Silicon Valley, the San José – Evergreen Community College District encompasses more than 300 square miles, including a large portion of the City of San José and all of the City of Milpitas. The District includes the areas served by Milpitas and San José Unified School Districts, together with East Side Union High School District. The District is comprised of two colleges: Evergreen Valley College, established in 1975; and San José City College, established in 1921; and the Workforce Institute, established in 1988. For more information, visit [www.sjeccd.edu](http://www.sjeccd.edu).