



100 Community College Students to Receive \$400 a Month through Santa Fe LEAP -- the Learn, Earn, and Achieve Project

Pilot Project Funded by Mayors for a Guaranteed Income; Donations Sought to Enhance, Extend Project

September 13, 2021 -- The City of Santa Fe is proud to announce that 100 student parents enrolled at the Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) have been selected as part of a Mayors for Guaranteed Income Pilot Project – the Santa Fe LEAP (Learn, Earn and Achieve Project) – and will begin to receive a basic guaranteed income later this month.

Having received funding through Mayors for a Guaranteed Income (MGI), Mayor Alan Webber collaborated with a team from the City, SFCC, MGI, the University of Pennsylvania Center for Guaranteed Income Research (CGIR), and the Santa Fe Community Foundation to create a pilot project that assists young families with a guaranteed monthly income of \$400 for one year. This project targets parents who are enrolled in degree or certificate programs at the Santa Fe Community College. Research has supported the success of similar projects in communities like [Stockton, California](#). Mayor Webber joined a coalition of more than 25 mayors committed to piloting basic guaranteed income programs to promote economic empowerment.

Mayor Alan Webber says: “We’re committed to helping our young working families have better lives. It’s wrong for a mom or dad to have to choose between getting an education and feeding their family. We’re giving these families the support they need to realize all the things an education can provide: more security, more stability and a lot less stress. This project makes Santa Fe a leader in a national movement for real progressive change.”

Santa Fe LEAP randomly selected 100 participants after an open application process. The recipients are young parents who are taking classes to further their education at the Santa Fe Community College. These include the parents who are enrolled in a health sciences cohort with Expanding Opportunity for Young Families (EOYF), an initiative of the Santa Fe Community Foundation, as well as an additional 86 parents

who are enrolled in other degree or certificate programs at SFCC. Families were selected through an application process to ensure they meet the basic eligibility requirements, followed by a random lottery conducted by UPenn's CGIR.

Students are being guided through the registration process by benefits counselors who will help families understand any impact that the additional income might have on their access to public benefits; share resources; and answer any questions they might have.

In Santa Fe, 75 percent of young families were facing financial insecurity before the pandemic, and it is unknown how many more are being pushed into economic crises as the situation continues. This pilot program is targeting young families who are committed to pursuing further education but are at a higher risk of dropping out due to the reality of juggling work, child care, and school. By targeting these families, it allows the funds to assist a population that is poised to succeed, if they are given the financial support they need to complete their studies and enter the work force with a degree.

MGI defines a guaranteed income as a monthly cash payment given directly to individuals, empowering recipients to address their most urgent needs and providing a cushion for unpredictable expenses, external shocks, and volatility. It is unconditional, and is meant to supplement, rather than replace, the existing social safety net. These programs trust families to make decisions that will best meet their individual needs, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

The Center for Guaranteed Income Research at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy and Practice will be evaluating the successes and challenges of the project in Santa Fe, as well as the other cities receiving MGI across the county. The MGI staff will continue to assist the City throughout the process, offering council and assistance as needed.

Funding for the pilot project: The initial investment of \$500,000 came from a grant received from the Mayors for a Guaranteed Income project. This was underwritten by Twitter and Square CEO Jack Dorsey. Additional dollars will be raised locally, with a goal of extending the project.

How you can support Santa Fe LEAP: Santa Fe has the goal of expanding to a second year of guaranteed income and increasing payments from \$400 to \$500. To accomplish this, we need your help. Make a gift that will go to the Santa Fe LEAP project. All donations are 100% tax deductible.

Checks should be sent to:
SFCC Foundation MGI Project
6401 Richards Ave., Santa Fe, NM, 87508

For additional assistance on donation, contact Kelly Marquez Smith, MBA, Director of Annual Giving; kelly.smith@sfcc.edu; (505) 428-1175

Learn more about the SFCC Foundation at <https://www.sfcc.edu/give-now>

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