SBCC Program Receives \$5,000 from SCE

source: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON

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The Foundation for Santa Barbara City College recently received a \$5,000 grant from Southern California Edison for the Guardian Scholars Foster Youth Program.

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The comprehensive program supports former foster youth in their efforts to gain a college education through: financial aid, housing, academic advisement, employment services, career counseling, personal guidance and tutoring, and supplemental support services like child care, transportation help, books and meal vouchers.

Every year, approximately 4,000 youth age out of California's foster care system upon reaching the age of 18 and in the last five years, the number of foster children in Santa Barbara County who require these services has increased by 81%. This group is particularly vulnerable because many lack a supportive family structure, as almost half of all foster youth live in five different homes between the ages of 14 and 18 and attend at least as many schools during that period. According to studies released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation: less than 2% of former foster youth complete college, 65% of California's prison population have spent some time in foster care and 40% of those living in state homeless shelters are former foster youth.

With these staggering statistics in mind, the Guardian Scholars Foster Youth Program at SBCC plays a key role in providing a wide range of educational opportunities for emancipated foster youth, many of whom also struggle with basic reading, writing, and mathematics. At SBCC former foster youth can pursue academic studies according to their skill level, ultimately achieving an Associate's degree and/or transferring to a four-year institution for a Bachelor's degree. These students can also look to SBCC's career and technical education for certificate programs that will quickly qualify them for employment in rewarding fields. The ability to move rapidly into careers can be extremely important for students who struggle financially and seek to become self-sufficient.

Through the grant from Southern California Edison, the Guardian Scholars Foster Youth Program will be able to provide up to 85 foster youths attending SBCC with mentorship and tools to become successful members of the community.

About Southern California Edison

An Edison International (NYSE:EIX) company, Southern California Edison is one of the nation's largest electric utilities, serving a population of nearly 14 million via 4.9 million customer accounts in a 50,000-square-mile service area within Central, Coastal and Southern California. For more information, visit <u>www.sce.com</u>; also on Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

About the Foundation for Santa Barbara City College

The mission of the Foundation for SBCC is to develop philanthropic

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support to assist the College in providing accessible educational programs that ensure academic and vocational excellence for the students of Santa Barbara City College, and that enrich the cultural, economic and civic life of the South Coast community. For more information, visit www.sbccfoundation.org.