

SAN BRUNO

Community Foundation

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SAN BRUNO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS GRANTS TOTALING \$109,000 TO SUPPORT SAN BRUNO'S SISTER CITY EXCHANGE PROGRAM WITH NARITA, JAPAN

Three-Year Grants to the City of San Bruno and the San Bruno Education Foundation Include Funding to Develop Sustainability Plans for Longstanding Relationship and Middle School Cultural Exchange Program

San Bruno, California, December 12, 2024 – At its December 4, 2024, regular meeting, the Board of Directors of the San Bruno Community Foundation approved strategic grants totaling \$109,000 to the City of San Bruno and the San Bruno Education Foundation to support San Bruno's sister city relationship and annual cultural exchange program involving middle school students and local dignitaries with Narita, Japan, over the next three years.

Since 1990, San Bruno and Narita – a suburb of Tokyo and home of a major international airport, just like San Bruno – have had a sister city relationship. Each spring, Narita sends a delegation of about ten middle school students, teachers, and other local dignitaries to San Bruno for a week-long cultural exchange that allows the students to stay with host families and learn about American culture and people. In return, each summer, a delegation of Parkside Intermediate School students and teachers, along with one or two representatives from the City, visit Narita for an immersive introduction to Japanese culture.

The City of San Bruno and the San Bruno Park School District have played instrumental roles in fostering the relationship, organizing the San Bruno delegations' travel to Japan and hosting the Narita delegations during their San Bruno visits. For many years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, a set of local donors helped raised the funds needed to support this annual tradition – a funding model that is no longer in place. After a three-year hiatus during the pandemic, in the summer of 2023 San Bruno relaunched the relationship by sending a four-person adult delegation to Narita, and in 2024, the first exchange of students since 2019 took place.

“The San Bruno Community Foundation recognizes the value of the San Bruno-Narita sister city relationship as an essential community-building and educational initiative for the City of San Bruno, the San Bruno Park School District, and the San Bruno Education Foundation, benefiting the students traveling to Narita, the students and families who host and interact with the Narita youth during their visit to San Bruno, and the broader San Bruno community each year,” said Malissa Netane-Jones, President of the Foundation’s Board of Directors. “We are thrilled to support this international partnership that fosters cultural exchange, promotes understanding, and builds bridges between the people of San Bruno and their Japanese counterparts in Narita.”

The recently awarded SBCF grants totaling \$109,000 will provide seed money to jump start the relationship for three years starting in 2025. The City will receive a total of \$34,000 to support its role in hosting the Narita delegation in San Bruno and to cover travel expenses for one City representative to participate in the San Bruno delegation to Narita each year.

The San Bruno Education Foundation, as the San Bruno Park School District’s fundraising partner, will receive \$60,000 to support its role in hosting the Narita delegation and students’ and teachers’ participation in the cultural exchange program each year. The bulk of these funds will subsidize travel expenses for the ten students and two adult chaperones traveling to Narita. In 2024, the cost for each student to participate was approximately \$2,000; with the SBCF grant

funds, the School District will cap the amount families are asked to pay at \$500 per participating student in order to make the opportunity accessible to more students.

The San Bruno Education Foundation will receive an additional \$15,000 to support public outreach and sustainability activities to help develop a sponsorship and fundraising program for the sister city relationship and exchange program in future years. The grant funding that both the City and SBEF will receive will decline over the three years, as the sponsorship and fundraising activities ramp up.

“Over the years, San Bruno has built a deep, meaningful relationship with the people of Narita through the sister city exchanges,” said Travis Karlen, Community Services Director for the City of San Bruno. “This three-year grant from the San Bruno Community Foundation will enable San Bruno to reciprocate the high level of hospitality and friendship that Narita offers to the San Bruno delegation each year. We are deeply grateful for SBCF’s willingness to support our efforts, in partnership with the San Bruno Park School District and the San Bruno Education Foundation, to enhance and sustain this valuable cultural exchange with Narita.”

“Over the years, more than 300 Parkside students have had the eye-opening and enriching experience of spending a week in Narita, Japan, staying with Japanese families, learning Japanese traditions, and getting a firsthand glimpse of everyday life in Japan. Many more San Bruno students and their family members have had the unique opportunity to host and interact with the Narita students when they travel to San Bruno,” said Heather Latta, President of the San Bruno Education Foundation. “We are thrilled that with the San Bruno Community Foundation’s support, we will be able to continue to offer this once-in-a-lifetime adventure to San Bruno middle schoolers, and that we will be able to develop a sustainable funding model for the program to ensure that future generations of Parkside student will similarly benefit. We look forward to reuniting past Narita program participants and hosting an alumni dinner, as well as attracting corporate and other community sponsorships to ensure the long-term success of the exchange program.”

To fund the San Bruno-Narita Sister City Program grant, the Foundation is utilizing a portion of the restitution funds resulting from the City of San Bruno's settlement with Pacific Gas & Electric Company following the 2010 gas pipeline explosion that devastated San Bruno's Crestmoor neighborhood.

The San Bruno Community Foundation is the nonprofit organization created by the City of San Bruno to administer the \$70 million in restitution funds received from PG&E after the devastating 2010 gas pipeline explosion in San Bruno's Crestmoor neighborhood. The Foundation serves the San Bruno community by investing in projects, programs, services, and facilities that have significant and lasting benefits. Through making grants, leveraging partnerships, and taking advantage of other resources, the SBCF assists and enables the community to maximize shared investments and realize their subsequent enhancements and benefits.

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