



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 19, 2021
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The Elaine F. Stepanek Foundation Restaurant Fund Awards \$500,000 to 71 Restaurants through the Santa Barbara Foundation

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, CA – The Elaine F. Stepanek Foundation Restaurant Fund in partnership with the Santa Barbara Foundation (SBF) announced \$500,000 in grants to 71 restaurants located in the City of Santa Barbara and the Santa Ynez Valley (including Los Alamos). This new grant program was launched in early February with eligible restaurants able to receive grants of up to \$10,000.

Santa Barbara County tourism has taken a large hit due to rolling spikes in COVID-19 cases, that included several restaurant closures. Restaurants have been able to expand into the streets and sidewalks to allow for outdoor dining. As restaurants have attempted to be creative in their approach to remain open, still restaurant employees suffered economically.

“The grant we received from the Elaine F. Stepanek Foundation Restaurant Fund has been invaluable in allowing us to reopen after a prolonged shutdown,” said Kelly Kastanos-Rogers, Co-Owner of Louie’s California Bistro in downtown Santa Barbara and grant recipient. “We were able to stock our shelves with the seafood and produce to prepare for opening, and we were able to provide our employees with the first paycheck many of them have had in months. We will be forever grateful.”

The Elaine F. Stepanek Foundation Restaurant Fund is a committee advised fund at the Santa Barbara Foundation, which is working to provide additional relief to the community at large. The grant program application period opened on February 4, and closed on February 22.



“The Santa Barbara Foundation is working hard to connect resources and ease the short and long-term effects of COVID-19,” said Jessica Sanchez, Director of Donor Relations at SBF. “This committee advised fund is creating immediate impact and we are grateful to support our community-at-large in this way.”

About Santa Barbara Foundation

The Santa Barbara Foundation, the largest community foundation in the region and the county’s go-to resource for investment and capacity-building, strives to mobilize and elevate all residents to thrive. Nearly every Santa Barbara County nonprofit organization and essential community project has been supported by the Foundation during its 93-year history.

The Foundation is working to improve areas that affect quality of life in Santa Barbara County including child care, workforce development, and workforce housing. The Foundation connects those who give with those in need - and all who dream of stronger communities. To learn more, please visit SBFoundation.org.

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