



PRESS RELEASE

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New Philanthropic Partner Steps Forward as Santa Barbara Nonprofits Face Rising Demand

Grant to Santa Barbara Foundation's Critical Needs Response Fund will help nonprofits meet rising demand for essential services.

SANTA BARBARA, Calif., July 14, 2026 —The Victor and Susan Schaff Family Foundation awards \$25,000 to the Santa Barbara Foundation's **Critical Needs Response Fund**, helping local nonprofits continue providing food assistance, housing support, mental health services and other essential programs as community needs increase.

The funding will support nonprofits responding to increased demand for programs such as food assistance, housing support, and mental health services at a time when many organizations are facing rising costs, changing funding sources, and growing community needs.

“Flexible funds like the Critical Needs Response Fund allow us to respond quickly when nonprofits face unexpected funding gaps,” said Jackie Carrera, President and CEO at the Santa Barbara Foundation. “We are grateful to the Schaff Family Foundation for helping us ensure essential services continue reaching those who need them most.”



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Launched in September 2025, the Critical Needs Response Fund provides flexible grants ranging from **\$10,000 to \$50,000** to nonprofits serving low-income residents and communities disproportionately affected by economic and health disparities. The fund helps organizations maintain and expand essential services that contribute to long-term stability for individuals and families.

“As a relatively new foundation, we are intentional about partnering with organizations that have deep community knowledge and the ability to respond quickly,” said Victor Schaff. “By supporting a trusted community partner like the Santa Barbara Foundation, we can help ensure resources reach nonprofits and residents who need them most.”

Victor and Susan Schaff established the Victor and Susan Schaff Family Foundation in 2021 to support organizations serving vulnerable or at-risk people, as well as efforts focused on environmental stewardship and animal protection. In its first three years, the foundation has awarded **120 grants totaling \$1 million** to nonprofit organizations.

Applications for the Schaff Family Foundation’s **2026 grant cycle will open Aug. 3 and close Sept. 11**. Additional information is available through the foundation’s website www.schaff-familyfoundation.org.

For more than 90 years, the Santa Barbara Foundation has supported individuals, families and nonprofits throughout the region, by identifying community needs and investing in solutions through collaborative, community-informed grantmaking.

Individuals interested in supporting the Critical Needs Response Fund may contact **Jessica Sanchez, Senior Director of Donor Relations**, at **jsanchez @sbfoundation.org**.

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