



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Fabiola DeCaratachea

Communications Director

PH: (559) 816-2780

Fdecaratachea@doloreshuerta.org

Dolores Huerta Foundation Statement on State Budget

Thursday July 1, 2021- We thank Assembly member Rudy Salas and Senator Ana Caballero for their work in championing greater investment in the Central Valley to include the multi-purpose building at the Bakersfield College Delano campus, investment in the Cal State Bakersfield Nursing Program, and the Dolores Huerta Peace and Justice Cultural Center. This would not have been possible without the support of the labor unions and supporters that joined our efforts. Camila Chavez, Executive Director of the Dolores Huerta Foundation shared, “We are excited about building a permanent home for DHF as well as other non-profit organizational activities. We will expand our programming and increase the number of people we serve.” The communities in the San Joaquin Valley, like many throughout our state, have been significantly impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. What we’ve always known to be true was highlighted in the last year – essential workers face the highest risks and have the least protections. The budget released today demonstrates that California lawmakers heard the voices of our community. We recognize the budget as a statement of our values and celebrate the increased investment in our community.

The Peace & Justice Cultural Center will be a multicultural community center complex, covering an entire city block in downtown Bakersfield, which will draw tourists and revitalize small businesses in the area. The Dolores Huerta Foundation has chosen to locate the Peace and Justice cultural center in downtown Bakersfield as part of its long-term commitment to revitalize the Eye St. Corridor. The Self Help Federal Credit Union -- with locations throughout California, Illinois and Wisconsin -- creates and protects ownership and economic opportunity for all by lending to individuals, small businesses and nonprofits; developing real estate; and promoting fair financial practices. Their Bakersfield branch will be built adjacent to the Peace & Justice Cultural Center and their partnership with the Dolores Huerta Foundation will be strengthened.

In addition to serving as the headquarters for the Dolores Huerta Foundation, the Peace & Justice Cultural Center will include:

- Youth programming space
- An early childhood education program integrating parent empowerment
- A cultural center honoring those who contributed to the rich history and economy of the Central Valley (Native Americans, Dust Bowl settlers, Arabs, Chinese, Japanese, African Americans, Filipinos and Latinos)
- Auditorium and outdoor event center for cultural/community events; meeting spaces for local organizations

The FY22 state budget is a step in the right direction and represents a renewed investment in working-class communities. It serves as an important starting point for the much needed ongoing investments in our communities. California must continue to step up by strengthening the investment in the Central Valley.



About DHF

The Dolores Huerta Foundation is a 501 (c)3 organization whose mission is to inspire and organize communities to build volunteer organizations called Vecinos Unidos chapters empowered to pursue social justice. Vecinos Unidos members develop their community organizing, civic engagement, and leadership skills by working on policy advocacy on issues such as health, environment, education, and youth development in their communities.

During this pandemic, the Dolores Huerta Foundation worked together with our partners and community members to:

- Distribute \$250,000 of financial assistance payments (ranging from \$500-\$1,000)
- Support over 1,000 people in our community in making their vaccination appointments
- Distribute over 92,000 pounds of food to thousands of families impacted by COVID-19
- Distribute over 125,000 masks along with health and financial resources to communities in Kern, Tulare, Fresno and Antelope Valley
- Host 20 health and wellness events for youth to deal with pandemic stressors.
- Host 40 COVID-19 Parent/Guardian support meetings. This resulted in increased access to school meals, equitable school board meeting access, improved interpretation services, and more.
- Hosted and or supported 13 vaccination clinics, vaccinated thousands of individuals in partnership with the United Against COVID Coalition

Despite the many challenges, we saw our communities rise and demand racial equity in our schools, our healthcare system, and our public budgets.

Additional quote:

Dolores Huerta, Founder/President of the Dolores Huerta Foundation:

“I’m very grateful to Assembly member Rudy Salas, Senator Ana Caballero, the legislature and Governor Newsom for investing in the Central Valley and making this dream possible. This is a big boost for our ongoing capital campaign to raise the additional several millions needed to complete this project.”

Learn more about the Dolores Huerta Foundation at www.doloreshuerta.org.

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