GOVERNANCE

Stanislaus 2030 Goal:

To ensure leadership, infrastructure, and resources are in place to implement Stanislaus 2030 strategic priorities and measure impact over time

JPMorganChase Chairman Jamie Dimon Visits Stanislaus County



In August, our county came together to welcome JPMorganChase Chairman and CEO Jamie Dimon as part of the firm's annual bus tour.

We were honored to showcase our collaborative work alongside Stanislaus Community Foundation, Stanislaus County, and BEAM Circular.

It was a chance to celebrate some of the big wins that came out of the original Stanislaus 2030 Investment Blueprint process, including 129 new and expanded child care businesses in partnership with Nurture, $8.7 million secured for local suppliers through our procurement program with Valley Sierra SBDC, and continued growth of the circular bioeconomy through BEAM Circular.

The visit came as JPMorganChase advances its American Dream Initiative, a multiyear effort to expand economic opportunity through investments in local communities across the country, a mission that aligns closely with the work happening here in Stanislaus County. We're proud of the role our team has played in the implementation of the ideas identified in the blueprint, and we're excited to see how this work evolves in the near future.

Advisory Committee

- July 16 Advisory Committee - Nurture presented on evaluation findings, and Bienestar presented on Manufacturing Workforce grantee progress.
- September 10 Advisory Committee - Reviewed program updates and discussed opportunities for a spin-off organization that builds on Stanislaus 2030 initiatives and successes.

Newsletters & Stories of Impact

- August 5 - Story of Impact: Keeping Money Local: How Valley Sierra SBDC Is Opening the Door to Contracting for Stanislaus County Small Businesses. Highlights Valley Sierra SBDC's

Contract Ready program, which Stanislaus 2030 helped grow into a dedicated procurement service. To date, it has supported 84 local businesses in securing $8.7 million in government and private contracts, revived the regional Procurement Expo, and earned state funding to expand across Central California.

- August 6 – August Update: Stanislaus 2030's monthly newsletter sharing program updates, community engagement activities, and news from across the initiative's portfolios.
- August 28 - Story of Impact: Green Careers in Their Own Backyard: How CAPS Is Opening Doors for Stanislaus County Youth. Features Climate Action Pathways for Schools (CAPS), which used Stanislaus 2030 support to expand paid green-economy internships into the Ceres and Turlock unified school districts. Fifty students took part in sector-based training, and all 20 summer participants earned an industry-recognized energy certificate while touring local employers such as Aemetis and TID.
- September 4 - September Update: Stanislaus 2030's monthly newsletter sharing program updates, community engagement activities, and news from across the initiative's portfolios.
- Turlock Journal & Ceres Courier**:** Local press covered the October 1 launch of StanBusinessOneStop.com, a Stanislaus 2030-funded hub from Stanislaus County Workforce Development. The site guides entrepreneurs through starting, running, expanding, and transitioning a business, with procurement support, a CDFI lending directory, permitting guidance, and a community events calendar:
    - Ceres Courier: County launches one-stop website to support entrepreneurs
    - Turlock Journal: County launches one-stop website to support entrepreneurs

Resource Development

- Conducted outreach to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) regarding the Planning and Local Technical Assistance program and met with a California representative to review application materials in September.
- Supported Valley Sierra SBDC on Nasdaq Foundation's Economic Opportunity grant letter of inquiry and developed a preliminary funding pipeline identifying prospective opportunities for the upcoming year.
- Supported Nurture's Edge Collaborative grant proposal in September, which focuses on scaling child care entrepreneurship programs and launching the new childcare assistance staffing cooperative.
- Supported BEAM Circular's proposal to the Innovative Postsecondary Models Fund in September, which included narrative development and application submission coordination.
- Supported Mocse Credit Union and Valley First Credit Union's funding research, which included recommendations regarding application feasibility and organizational capacity, and identified the CDFI Fund's Small Dollar Loan Program as a prime target for credit unions.

SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORTS

Vision

By 2030, any person who wants to start, sustain, or scale a business in Stanislaus County will have the support they need to be successful.

Lead Partner:
Stanislaus County Workforce Development

Local CDFIs Move from Planning to Lending for Stanislaus County Small Businesses

Progress continues on the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) capacity-building partnership between Valley First Credit Union, Mocse Credit Union, Rolling F Credit Union, and CAMEO Network to strengthen local lending capacity in Stanislaus County. This quarter, each credit union began bringing new lending products and systems online.

Two CDFIs are taking part in CAMEO's CDFI Essentials series, a year-long peer learning cohort. This quarter's sessions covered credit reporting and managing risk with the California State Loan Guaranty Program and other credit enhancements (July), CDFI data maturity and reporting (August), and loan closing and servicing (September). The CDFIs also completed an HR for CDFIs course on building a strong people culture, hiring, retention, and compensation. Alongside the group training, one-on-one tailored consulting sessions covered:

- small business loan product development
- target markets and launch timelines
- strategic planning and CDFI goal setting
- building strategic partnerships
- fund development and tracking

All three credit unions are now working with the Valley Sierra Small Business Development Center (SBDC). SBDC serves as a referral partner and provides technical assistance to small businesses. SBDC's extensive experience with small business is helping inform the design of the credit unions' new lending products.

Mocse made significant strides in its CDFI strategic planning. It plans to launch a new small business credit card in Q4 2026, with credit limits of up to $10,000 for business purposes, and to make small business lending an organization-wide focus in 2027. Mocse has also deployed $2 million through three commercial real estate loans. The County's investment helped prompt Mocse to upgrade its technology systems, and its new online banking platform which goes live in October 2026. The upgrade will make operations more efficient and strengthen the credit union's capacity to deliver financial services.

Rolling F has made significant progress on its CDFI strategic plan. It established a new partnership with SBDC, put a fundraising tracking dashboard in place, and developed a new $5,000 microloan product. It also set a bold first-ever goal of raising $1 million for its CDFI products and programs.

Valley First used Stanislaus 2030 funding for a data management project that supports CDFI impact reporting. The project enabled Valley First to obtain outside assistance, and its data, which had previously been tracked by hand, is now much more complete. Technical assistance from several

consultants also helped Valley First's marketing team tell the story of its impact as a CDFI. By the numbers:

- **$84.3 million** deployed to small businesses over the past 4.5 years across a 12-county region that includes Stanislaus County, and on track to reach $100 million by the end of 2026
- **$239,000** in loans already deployed through a microloan program launched last year
- **$1.1 million** in low-cost affordable loans over the past 18 months through the community loan funds it manages
- **Small-dollar loan products**, created as a safe alternative to payday loans, have grown every year: $2.5 million deployed in Year 1, $4 million in Year 2, $7.2 million in Year 3, and more than $10 million last year

Looking ahead, the CDFI Essentials cohort continues with sessions on managing troubled loans and using Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) funds in the capital stack (October), loan fund capitalization (November), and leadership and staffing (December). Upcoming milestones include Mocse's small business credit card launch and Rolling F's work toward its $1 million goal.

Supplier Readiness Initiative Connects Local Businesses with Public Purchasing Agencies



The Supplier Readiness Initiative, delivered in partnership with the Valley Sierra Small Business Development Center (SBDC), continued to help local businesses compete for public contracts while planning for the program's long-term sustainability.

In August alone, the Initiative provided 16.75 hours of procurement assistance to 14 businesses, helping them secure $34,999 in contract awards.

To date, the Contract Ready program has helped local businesses secure $8.7 million in contracts.

The Initiative also grew its procurement network by presenting to the San Joaquin Chapter of the California Association of Public Purchasing Officials (CAPPO). The presentation generated immediate results. Purchasing agents began referring one another to the Initiative, which produced

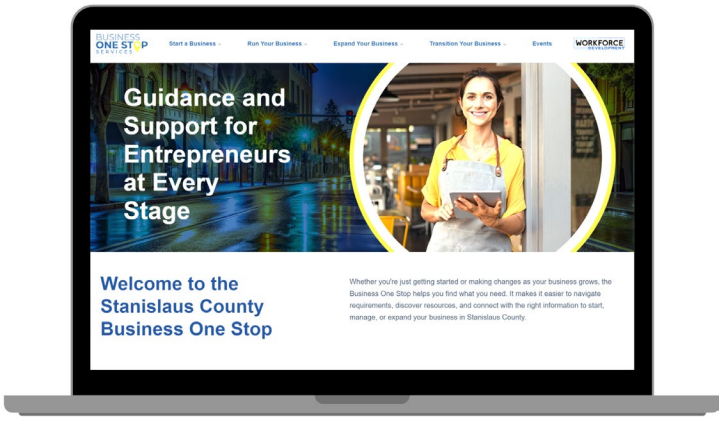
two new contracting opportunities for SBDC clients. Both businesses expressed interest, and the Initiative informed the agency that both businesses were ready to provide services.

Building on this momentum, the Initiative is seeking membership in CAPPO. The chapter meets monthly, so membership would give the Initiative regular access to purchasing agents through a meeting they already attend, rather than asking them to join a separate group session. If membership isn't possible, the Initiative will meet one-on-one with each agency and then bring them together for a group session ahead of the Procurement Expo. Each meeting will provide resources relevant to participating agencies and an opportunity to connect directly with local businesses that are ready to contract.

On sustainability, the Initiative and SBDC reviewed projected program costs and drafted a budget for the Initiative to operate independently.

In the coming months, the Initiative will continue engaging clients and documenting success stories that show how procurement assistance turns into contracts for local businesses.

Stanislaus County Business One Stop



Throughout the quarterm Stanislaus Workforce Development staff focused on the **Stanislaus County Business One Stop** (www.stanbusinessonestop.com) and officially launched it on October 1, 2026. The free online platform helps entrepreneurs find the guidance and support they need at every stage, from starting a business through running, growing, or transitioning it. The launch completes the partner engagement, website development, and marketing work reported last quarter.

A Single Front Door for Local Businesses

The platform is organized around the business lifecycle. Its four pathways are Start a Business, Run Your Business, Expand Your Business, and Transition Your Business. Each pathway brings together resources that used to be scattered across many agencies. These cover business registration and permits, tax requirements, access to capital, procurement, workforce and hiring support, funding and incentives, and labor market information. The Transition pathway covers options that are often overlooked, such as selling a business, employee ownership, and transferring ownership to the next generation of local owners. The site also includes an events section, a site search, and success stories featuring local businesses.

Business One Stop Marketing

A countywide advertising campaign launched to build awareness among business owners. It includes radio commercials, billboards in target neighborhoods, bus advertising, ad buys in local news publications, direct mailers, and a digital media campaign.

Business Transfers and Employee Ownership

As local business owners approach retirement, Stanislaus County faces a quiet but significant economic risk. More than half of the county's businesses (about 3,400 firms) have owners aged 55 or older. Together they employ roughly 44,000 people and generate $15 billion in revenue. Without a succession plan, many of these businesses could close or be sold to outside buyers, taking jobs and wealth out of the region.

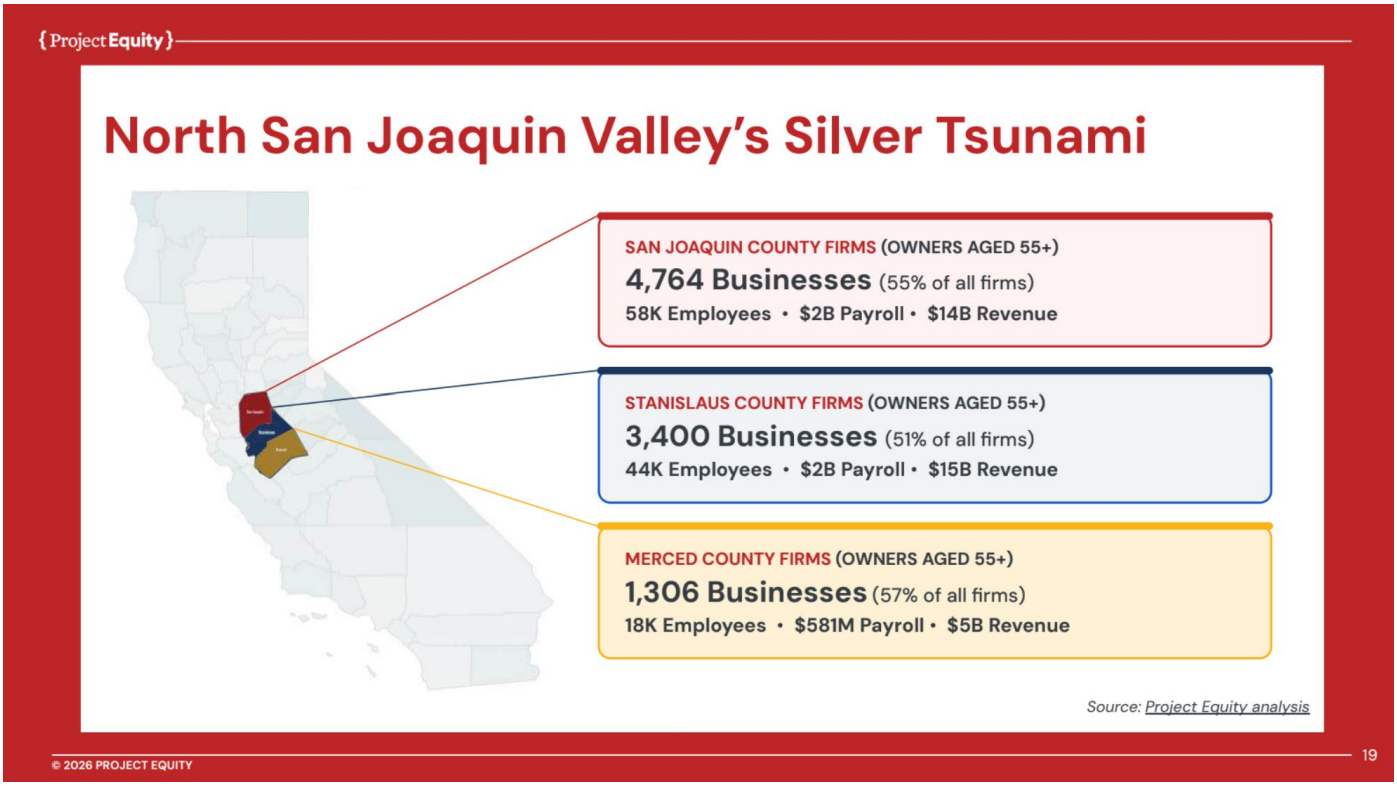
To get ahead of this, Stanislaus 2030 contracted with Project Equity, a national leader in employee ownership (EO), to analyze the county's business succession landscape and build local capacity to respond.

On October 12, Stanislaus 2030 will convene regional stakeholders to review the findings (Employee Ownership & Small Business Retention in North San Joaquin Valley). The analysis identified 978 established "legacy" businesses in Stanislaus County that have operated for 15 or more years. These firms employ 30,000 workers and generate $8.5 billion in revenue, and more than half are in Modesto. Across the three-county region, manufacturing stood out as the strongest EO opportunity: legacy manufacturers account for 16% of regional jobs and 35% of revenue.

Building on this work, Stanislaus 2030 is co-hosting two webinars:

- **Business Owner EO Webinar** (October 23), with SBDC, introducing employee ownership as a succession option that lets owners retire, reward their teams, and keep their businesses rooted locally.
- **Business Advisor EO Webinar** (November 17), with the Stanislaus Community Foundation, helping CPAs and estate planners spot good-fit businesses and raise EO with their clients.

Project Equity also provided succession and EO resources for the County's new Business One Stop hub. Together, these efforts lay the groundwork for a longer-term regional strategy for business retention and community wealth-building.



CHILD CARE EXPANSION

Vision

Stanislaus County's child care deserts become oases, where parents can find licensed care and providers earn family-sustaining incomes.

Lead Partners:
First 5 Stanislaus & Nurture

Nurture Program Update

Thirteen entrepreneurs completed the Business Start-Up training this quarter, resulting in 11 new businesses. Sixteen entrepreneurs completed the Business Operations course to increase business profitability, and nine entrepreneurs completed the Business Growth program and expanded their licensed capacity.

Nurture and Stanislaus County Workforce Development (SCWD) teams are working to connect those interested in Nurture's training to services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Nurture is developing a customizable "partner dashboard" to streamline eligibility determination and will then layer on Nurture-specific orientations to SCWD.

Representatives from Nurture, Stanislaus 2030, and Debrief attended the Democracy at Work Institute's (DAWI) Cooperative Developer Fellowship training from September 15 to 17. The collaborative team learned about cooperative development, gained practical skills and tools to successfully incubate a cooperative start-up, and developed a work plan for launching a child care staffing cooperative in the North San Joaquin Valley. The DAWI fellowship will continue through June and include coaching and technical support.

Evaluation

To understand the effectiveness and impact of Nurture's incubation and training model, Stanislaus 2030 funded an independent evaluation. Evaluator Kris Helé led the design and analysis of a survey of nearly 100 child care businesses in Stanislaus County that Nurture had incubated at the time of the study. Summary findings indicate that Nurture graduates are experiencing higher income and better work-life balance, while also increasing Stanislaus County's child care capacity. See the summary of evaluation findings.



"Having your own business is freedom"

July - September Activity Updates

Presentations	Pop-Up Tabling/Flyering	Rip-Off Tab Flyer Locations
• Stanislaus Equity Partners workshop 8/12	• Gospel Mission Backpack drive 7/25 • Healing arts Ceres 7/25 • Back to school fair: MCS 7/28 • Backpack Drive DCSS 8/1 • Ceres National Night Out 8/4 • Backpack drive Riverbank 8/5 • Backpack Blessings convoy of hope 8/8 • Mujeres Exploradoras 9/29 • Stan2030 Report Back Session 9/30	• La sequoia Market • Multiservicios Latinos • La placita Grocery • Market PAS • Farmacias Salud y Bienestar • Parent Resource center • Free lunch stops • Hughson FRC • United Way (500 flyers)
Outreach: • SMS & Social Media ADs • Instagram Video Flyer		**Canvassing** • West modesto 7/28 • Central and West Ceres 8/4

DEBRIEF



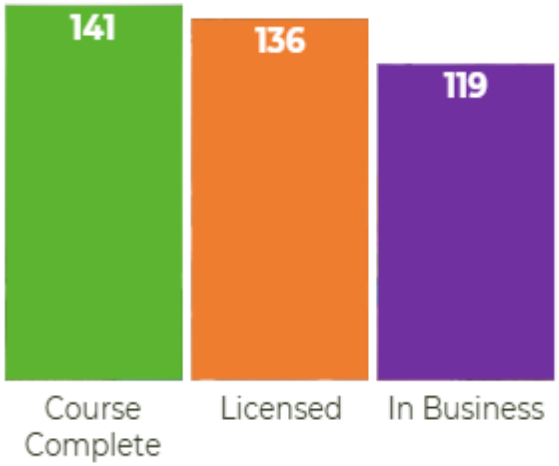
NEW BUSINESS STARTS BY CITY SINCE JANUARY 2024

City	New Businesses
Ceres	14
Denair	1
Hughson	4
Keyes	3
Modesto	58
Newman	4
Oakdale	6
Patterson	9
Riverbank	3
Salida	3
Turlock	14

NEW BUSINESS STARTS SINCE JANUARY 2024

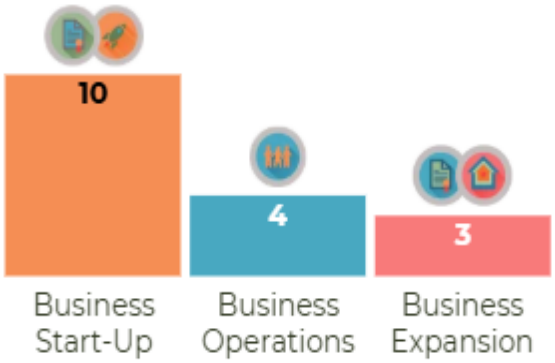
$35 million annual economic impact of businesses supported to date

952 permanent licensed spaces
as of September 30, 2026



Plus ...
20 businesses improved profitability
13 businesses expanded = **78 spaces**

Pipeline of participants
in training, by program



TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Vision

Stanislaus County will have a strong talent base, representative of our diverse population, that is equipped for good or promising jobs in manufacturing occupations.

Lead Partner:
Stanislaus County Workforce Development

Manufacturing Workforce Sector Strategy

- Bienestar Community Economics conducted a preliminary review of Stanislaus County Workforce Development's Sector Strategy Reports and initiated interviews with agency staff. This research will help inform recommendations for program improvement and how to integrate a competency model into workforce development practices.
- Bienestar developed a panel session for the Manufacturers Council of the Central Valley's (MCCV) Manufacturing Summit that focused on how workforce board and employer partnerships are developed, structured, and maintained to ensure public workforce and education systems develop local talent pipelines and connect dislocated workers to job and training opportunities. The session included a case study and representatives from industry and the Tulare and Kings County workforce boards.
- All grantees participated in monthly one-on-one coaching calls with technical assistance teams to support project implementation.

Evaluation Support

- Evaluator Shayla Spilker met one-on-one with all six grantees and developed a high-level evaluation technical assistance plan for the grantees that outlines core learning priorities, data tracking metrics and collection methods, and specific activities to tackle over the next month.
- The evaluator hosted focus groups with grantee program participants to deepen understanding of how these programs support participants in their career advancement. The format included both qualitative and quantitative data for the evaluation, which will be shared in a final report in November.

Community Engagement

Debrief hosted two Community Report-Back Sessions on September 30, 2026, to close the feedback loop with community members who took part in focus groups in February and March 2026. Those focus groups captured the experiences of youth, job seekers, incumbent workers, and Spanish-speaking workers seeking upskilling and training. The findings informed six Stanislaus 2030 grantees running manufacturing-sector workforce programs. Thirty-six of 40 participants attended (11 in the morning, 25 in the evening). They reviewed the key findings and learned how grantees used them to shape their community engagement strategies. Attendees confirmed the findings reflected their experiences. They also stressed ongoing difficulty navigating the county's workforce development and state Employment Development Department systems, and several called for dedicated employment support for adults 40 and older, citing age discrimination in hiring. North Valley Labor Federation (NVLF) led a brief discussion on unions to gauge participants' understanding of union formation, roles, and representation, and answered their questions. Participants valued hearing how

their input was used. Several said it was the first time an organization had come back to share results after gathering their feedback.

Manufacturing Workforce Grantee Updates

Central Valley Opportunity Center

Developed a stronger partnership with the Stanislaus County Workforce Development team to assist with employer outreach and to help identify additional work experience placements. With this support, eight participants enrolled in Work-Based Learning Experience, two participants transitioned to unsubsidized employment, and three new employer partners were added to the CVOC work experience network.

Ceres Unified School District

The team researched business plans and business plan templates and created initial promotional materials to solicit potential business partners and to recruit students for the program. The team finalized the student roster for the 2026–27 academic year and onboarded students this semester. Students and staff developed an inventory of industry partners and a process to track engagement activity, and secured their first client, which is a large manufacturing firm that will contract with the Student-Run Manufacturing Enterprise to create signage for the facility.

Climate Action Pathways for Schools

Completed the school-year internship component and delivered a three-week summer program from June 29 to July 16 for 20 students from Modesto, Ceres, and Turlock. Cumulatively, 50 students participated in paid workforce training, including applied projects, workforce-readiness activities, employer engagement, and final presentations. CAPS also advanced an industry-aligned certification pathway and strengthened regional employer partnerships. See story of impact.

Modesto Junior College

The PATCH (Professional Advancement Towards Career Horizons) Industry & Trades program continued to make progress toward its workforce development milestones. The program began with 12 students, who participated in advanced manufacturing coursework and workforce preparation activities. Students completed MACH coursework and received additional career readiness support to prepare them for employment and paid work experience opportunities. Six students transitioned into paid work experience. Four students obtained full-time employment before beginning paid work experience, representing successful employment outcomes for the program. One student chose to enlist in the military, and one student exited the program due to lack of continued participation and commitment.

VOLT Institute

VOLT's Fast Track program is operating at scale with consistency and quality, with 46 students currently enrolled. Students are completing the program and being placed into industry. VOLT continues to connect with manufacturers regarding the talent pipeline created by the Fast Track program, engaging more than 30 employers this quarter. These engagements include visits to the training center to see the automation lab and expanded capacity for automation training, on-site engagements to inform future program structure and curriculum, and discussions of technical talent

needs and potential job placements. VOLT partnered with Stanislaus County Workforce Development on a work experience program, which supports co-enrollment in programs, integrates case management, and supports industry placements.

Manufacturers Council of the Central Valley

2026 North Valley Manufacturing Summit

The Manufacturers Council of the Central Valley hosted the first North Valley Manufacturing Summit on September 29, 2026, at CSU Stanislaus, with support from Stanislaus 2030 and Stanislaus County Workforce Development. The Summit brought employers, educators, students, workforce boards, funders, and community organizations together. Its goals were to show students well-paying manufacturing careers, align training with what employers need, and open more paths into internships and apprenticeships. More than 400 people attended: 256 professional registrants plus 150 high school students and chaperones. The day included more than 30 exhibitors, 15 sponsors and partners, five breakout sessions across three tracks, and a lunch keynote by Dr. Kevin Fleming.

Event Highlights

- **High satisfaction:** 94% of the 80 survey respondents said they were likely to attend again (4 or 5 out of 5), and 94% of all ratings were “good” or better.
- **Connections that lead to action:** 54 of 55 organizations made or renewed a partner connection. Nineteen made a specific follow-up commitment, such as partnership meetings, industry tours, guest speakers, or apprenticeships, and 23 more are discussing one.
- **Students learned:** 19 of 23 students rated their understanding of manufacturing careers higher after the Summit. Twenty plan to apply for an internship, job-shadowing opportunity, apprenticeship, or job.
- **Strong breakouts:** All five sessions averaged above 4 out of 5. The Workforce Hiring Panel was rated highest.
- **Demand for 2027:** 29 of 31 employers, exhibitors, and partners would take part again. Ten organizations said they would sponsor next year.
- **Room to improve:** Food and refreshments were the lowest-rated part of the day (3.62 out of 5). Attendees also asked for larger expo space and tighter scheduling.



TRADED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Goal

The region will be a top location in the country for bioindustrial manufacturing firms from scale-up to commercialization, creating new quality jobs for residents across all skill levels.

Solutions in Focus

Execute on the Stanislaus 2030 Blueprint traded sector development strategies across five pillars: Cross-Cutting, Innovation Access, Capital Connections, Infrastructure, and Talent.

Quarter Activities

CBIO Collaborative

Initiative 2: Cross-Cutting Initiatives – Innovation Engine/CBIO Collaborative

- During Q3, the BEAM Circular team started planning for next quarter's California Circular Bioeconomy Summit (BioCirCA), taking place in downtown Modesto November 9–10.
  Link to registration page:
  www.beamcircular.org/biocirca
- The CBIO Collaborative has 148 members, exceeding its 2026 membership goal. Membership is expected to continue growing as a result of BioCirCA registration.





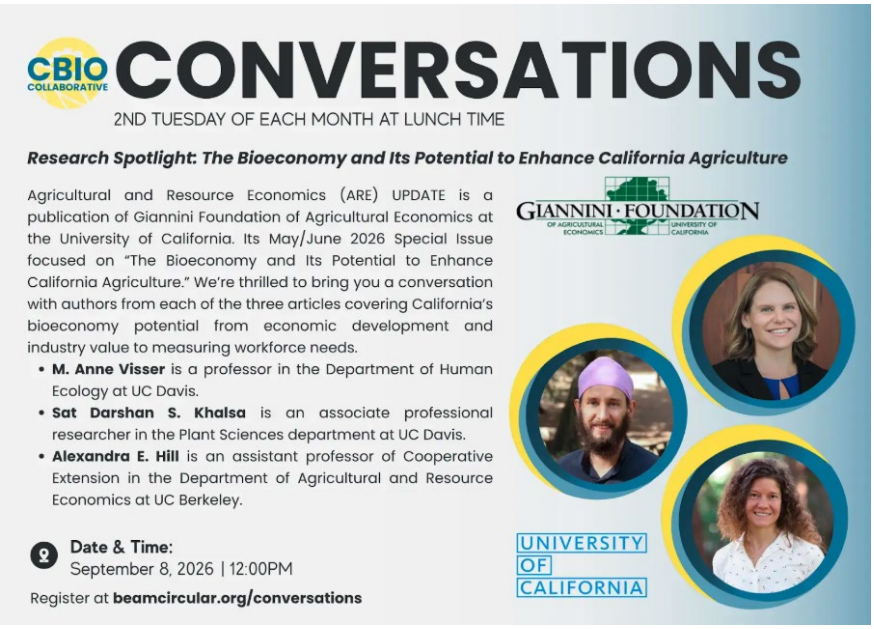
- The groups guiding the CBIO Collaborative continued to meet:
    - The Core Management Team met on July 14, August 11, and September 15.
    - Steering Committee leads met on July 2, August 6, and September 3.
    - The Community Steering Committee met on August 19 and September 21.
    - The Research & Development Steering Committee met on July 23, August 25, and will meet on October 2.
    - The Workforce Development Steering Committee met on August 12 and September 9.
    - The Industry Development Steering Committee met on July 21, August 25, and September 22.
- BEAM Circular hosted three CBIO Conversations webinars this quarter.
    - July 14: Stanislaus County Youth Participation in the Circular Bioeconomy. Student speakers: Adrian Vizcaino, Emma Price, Emmie Matthew, and Qinlong Vang



    - August 11: North Valley THRIVE Spotlight. Speaker: Yolanda Meraz, Program Director of Stanislaus 2030 and Associate Director of North Valley THRIVE



- September 8: Research Spotlight: The Bioeconomy and its Potential to Enhance California Agriculture. Speakers: M. Anne Visser, Professor, Department of Human Ecology, UC Davis; Sat Darshan S. Khalsa, Associate Professional Researcher in the Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis; and Alexandra E. Hill, Assistant Professor of Cooperative Extension in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UC Berkeley



- BEAM Circular hosted other special virtual meetings to offer services and information to local partners:
  - August 25: Sites Across the NSJV: A Regional Showcase (part of the Industry Development Steering Committee). Speaker: Victor Garza, Economic Development Fellow, BEAM Circular.

    The session presented information gathered from North San Joaquin Valley counties on available sites, site readiness, and site characteristics, with discussion focused on matching regional sites with companies and projects seeking locations and identifying the connections and resources needed to advance those opportunities.

  - September 22: IP Basics & Strategy for Early-Stage Companies (part of the Industry Development Steering Committee). Speaker: Vandana Balakrishnan, a registered patent attorney and the founding partner of ReGen Tech Law, PC.

    The session focused on key intellectual property considerations for companies as they move from technology development toward partnerships, investment, and commercialization.

BioCirCA 2026 – Return to Earth Design Challenge

- Launch of the Return to Earth Design Challenge: As part of BioCirCA 2026, BEAM Circular launched the Return to Earth Design Challenge to accelerate the development and implementation of innovative solutions that reduce reliance on single-use plastics. Inspired by California's SB 54, the challenge encourages practical, scalable approaches to packaging and materials innovation that can help advance California's transition toward a more circular economy.





- The challenge features two participation tracks:
    - General Track: Open to CBIO Collaborative organizational members, including startups, established companies, municipalities, nonprofits, and researchers developing bio-based materials, products, or systems solutions with potential for real-world implementation.

    - Student Track: Designed for undergraduate students at participating CBIO Collaborative campuses, providing opportunities to apply their knowledge, develop innovative solutions, and engage with industry challenges.

- Student engagement and outreach: BEAM Circular hosted two informational sessions for the Return to Earth Student Track to introduce local students and educators to the challenge, explain participation requirements, and encourage students to build their design and innovation skills.
    - August 31: Design Challenge Student Information Session
    - September 17: Customer Discovery Session for Student Design Challenge



Guest Speaker: Rhonda Shrader, Executive Director, the Berkeley Haas Entrepreneurship Program and the NSF I-Corps Northwest Hub

- BEAM Circular distributed CBIO Collaborative Member Newsletters each month, showcasing job opportunities, industry news, partner events, shared resources, and highlights of students' work researching the circular bioeconomy. Newsletters were distributed on July 2, August 4, and September 3.
- The Membership Portal has been continuously updated, featuring all BEAM Circular events and most of its webinars.

TRADED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Goal

The region will be a top location in the country for bioindustrial manufacturing firms from scale-up to commercialization, creating new quality jobs for residents across all skill levels.

Quarter Activities

Bioeconomy Talent & Workforce Development

Initiative 8: Infrastructure – Grants for Job Training Facilities and Equipment Initiative

Initiative 9: Talent – Bioeconomy Workforce Development Fund

- In Q3 2026, BEAM Circular contracted Bienestar Community Economics to expand employer engagement through targeted interviews and surveys aimed at validating workforce needs, hiring trends, and gaps in career pathways. The scope of work includes assessing the alignment between existing education and training programs and industry workforce needs, identifying gaps and opportunities through tools such as career pathway maps or matrices, and developing a Bioeconomy Employer Needs and Career Pathways Landscape Report. This work builds on earlier regional workforce landscape analysis conducted in collaboration with community colleges, which established a baseline understanding of the strengths, gaps, and opportunities within education-to-career pathways supporting the North San Joaquin Valley's industrial biomanufacturing sector.

- The BEAM Circular Workforce Team continues to pursue funding opportunities to strengthen and expand the regional talent pipeline for industrial biomanufacturing. In September 2026, BEAM submitted a grant proposal to the Innovative Postsecondary Models Fund, managed by Panorama Global, seeking funding to expand and enhance postsecondary education and career pathways into industrial biomanufacturing across the North San Joaquin Valley. The proposed initiative would strengthen alignment between education and training programs and employer-validated workforce needs, while expanding access to high-quality educational opportunities, career pathways, and industry connections for educators, students, and workforce participants.

- During Q3 2026, BEAM Circular maintained rigorous grant oversight and performance monitoring for 20 workforce development grant recipients through monthly progress reports, site visits, and regular check-in meetings. These activities enabled program staff to assess progress against approved scopes of work, monitor expenditures and deliverables, identify emerging challenges, and provide timely technical assistance to support successful project implementation and ensure accountability for grant funds.

- The BEAM Circular Workforce Team introduced more than 60 students from Modesto Junior College and Denair High School to the circular bioeconomy through educational presentations held at the Stanislaus County Career Inspiration Center. These engagements helped raise awareness of the circular bioeconomy and its emerging career opportunities.

Stanislaus Bioeconomy Workforce Development Fund: Early Exposure - Key Activities in Q3 2026

Modesto Junior College - Exploring Bioeconomy Curriculum Pathways for the Central Valley

Progress remains on track to pilot selected biotechnology skills and concepts in microbiology courses during the current semester. Initial drafts of a bioreactor assignment have been developed to provide students with hands-on learning opportunities focused on the fundamental principles of bioprocessing and cell culture. Additionally, coordination meetings with UC Merced were held to finalize plans for a student externship opportunity designed to extend learning beyond the classroom and provide valuable exposure to biotechnology research and industry practices.

Modesto Junior College - Bioeconomy Educator Training Initiative

Meetings were held with faculty members to explore opportunities to integrate newly developed bioprocessing and circular bioeconomy skills and competencies into existing course offerings. These discussions focused on identifying opportunities to enhance current curricula with relevant, industry-aligned technical skills, allowing students to benefit from emerging bioeconomy career pathways while new courses and academic programs continue to be developed.

Stanislaus County Office of Education – Child & Family Services Division: Early and Engaging Access to STEAM

SCOE project staff continued collaborating with internal teams and support departments to advance preparations for integrating circular bioeconomy concepts into early childhood education. These collaborative efforts focused on developing professional learning resources, instructional videos, educational presentations, and data collection tools to support educators in implementing age-appropriate circular bioeconomy learning activities.

BABEC – Building a Sustainable Bioeconomy Ecosystem in Stanislaus County through Teacher Training, Equipment Access, Microbadging, and Career Exposure

During Q3 2026, BABEC, in partnership with the Bioscience Core Skills Institute (BCSI), launched a recruitment campaign to establish a cohort of BCSI Certified Evaluators in Stanislaus County. BCSI administers performance-based assessments that validate practical skills in bioscience and biomanufacturing. Its credentials are recognized as Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs) in Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Texas, and Kansas, with additional state approvals under review.

BCSI Certified Evaluators are trained and authorized professionals who assess trainees' technical competencies through standardized, performance-based evaluations. Establishing a local cohort of certified evaluators will help strengthen the region's capacity to assess workforce readiness, expand access to industry-recognized credentials, and build employer confidence in the skills of emerging bioscience and biomanufacturing talent.

Ignited – Bioeconomy Experience Week and Learning Community Seminar

During the week of July 13, 2026, Ignited hosted Bioeconomy Experience Week, engaging 20 K–12 teachers from Title I schools in an immersive professional development experience focused on the circular bioeconomy. The program included facility tours, direct engagement with industry experts, and hands-on lesson plan development to support the integration of bioeconomy concepts into classroom instruction during the 2026–2027 academic year.

Participating teachers visited or engaged with representatives from ten organizations, including CSU Stanislaus, LanzaTech, Modesto Junior College, Hilmar Cheese Company, the Innovative Genomics Institute at UC Berkeley, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the VOLT Institute.

All 20 participating teachers successfully developed standards-aligned lesson plans and received classroom materials through the Fund for Innovation, helping reduce barriers to implementing new bioeconomy concepts and activities in their classrooms.



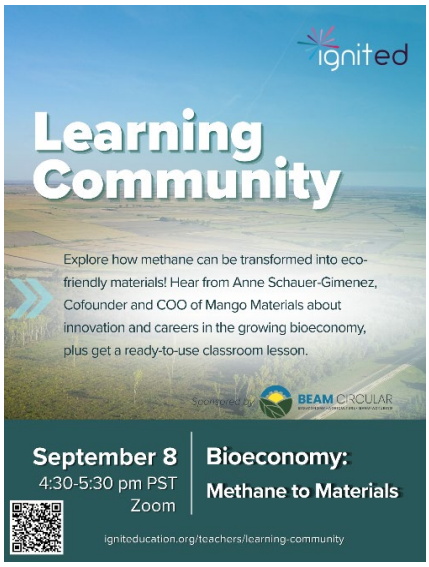






Left top photo: Stanislaus County Educators kicked off at Stan State. **Right top photo:** Educators at Hilmar Cheese. **Left bottom photo:** Educators at VOLT. **Right bottom photo:** Stanislaus County educators at USDA.





Left photo: Educators visited Couco Creek Dairy in Turlock to learn about the use of waste streams in creating renewable natural gas. **Right photo:** Ignited hosted a virtual Learning Community Seminar in September that featured the circular bioeconomy, lessons from the Bioeconomy Week, and careers in the bioeconomy from Anne Schauer-Gimenez, Mango Materials.

CSU Stanislaus – Strengthening Pathways to Biotechnology Careers through STEM Education and Workforce Development

During the week of August 3, 2026, CSU Stanislaus hosted its inaugural iBGLOREA Workshop, engaging 24 high school juniors and seniors from Stanislaus County in an immersive, week-long biotechnology learning experience. Participants gained hands-on laboratory and research experience while engaging directly with academic and industry professionals to explore biotechnology applications, educational pathways, and potential career opportunities. The workshop generated strong student engagement and enthusiasm, highlighting the value of experiential STEM education in building awareness of biotechnology careers and strengthening the region's future talent pipeline.

"We had great participation, and the participants want a two-week program next year."
— Dr. Martina Ramirez, Dean of the College of Science





Left photo: Prof. Alok Arun with inaugural iBGLOREA Cohort 2026. **Right photo:** See Lee, BEAM Director of Education and Workforce Strategies, presenting to iBGLOREA cohort on the circular bioeconomy.









Left top photo: iBGLOREA Cohort Participants conducting a lab experiment using micro pipetting techniques. **Right top photo:** Students with Dr. Robert Haushalter, Director of Education and Outreach from Joint BioEnergy Institute–Lawrence Berkeley Lab Bioscience, Biological Systems and Engineering. **Bottom left photo:** Inaugural iBGLOREA Cohort 2026 celebrating their successful participation in the week-long program. **Bottom right photo:** iBGLOREA Cohort Participants proudly displaying their certificates of completion.

Modesto Junior College – MESA Circular Bioeconomy Research Internship

The Modesto Junior College MESA Program exceeded its original objectives by expanding internship opportunities and engaging additional students in circular bioeconomy research. During summer 2026, two bioeconomy interns participated in a research project exploring circular bioeconomy principles, translating their findings into a formal presentation.

On September 3, 2026, the interns presented their research findings to more than 60 fellow students, strengthening their research communication and presentation skills while increasing awareness and understanding of circular bioeconomy concepts and opportunities among their peers.

This initiative demonstrates the value of undergraduate research experiences in developing students' technical and professional competencies while fostering peer-to-peer learning and engagement in the emerging circular bioeconomy.

Stanislaus County Office of Education – Circular Bioeconomy at the Career Inspiration Center

The Stanislaus County Career Inspiration Center (CIC) team continued developing hands-on learning activities focused on the circular bioeconomy, including growing and documenting tomato cultivation for use in agriculture and biomanufacturing instruction, identifying additional laboratory-based learning opportunities, and strengthening collaboration with industry and workforce partners, including Stanislaus Food Products, Fastenal, and the VOLT Institute.

In September 2026, the CIC hosted students from three high schools, providing experiential learning opportunities that connected classroom concepts with real-world industry applications. Students explored tomato production through hydroponic systems, gained exposure to industrial technology and automation through the VOLT Institute, and participated in teamwork-focused learning activities facilitated by Fastenal.

These experiences introduced students to emerging career pathways in agriculture, food processing, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing, while strengthening their understanding of the technical skills and collaborative competencies needed in these industries.



Left: Tomato hydroponic system at the SCOE Career Inspiration Center. Students learn about the commercial tomato-growing and selection process through educational content developed by Stanislaus Food Products. The activity helps students connect agricultural production and quality control with food processing and bioeconomy career opportunities in the region.

"*Students are not simply participating in career awareness activities. They engage in hands-on, industry-informed experiences connecting agriculture, food processing, manufacturing, technology, and workforce readiness."* — Kevin Fox, SCOE CIC

Walnut Elementary Education Center – Expand and Enhance Math and Science Magnet Program

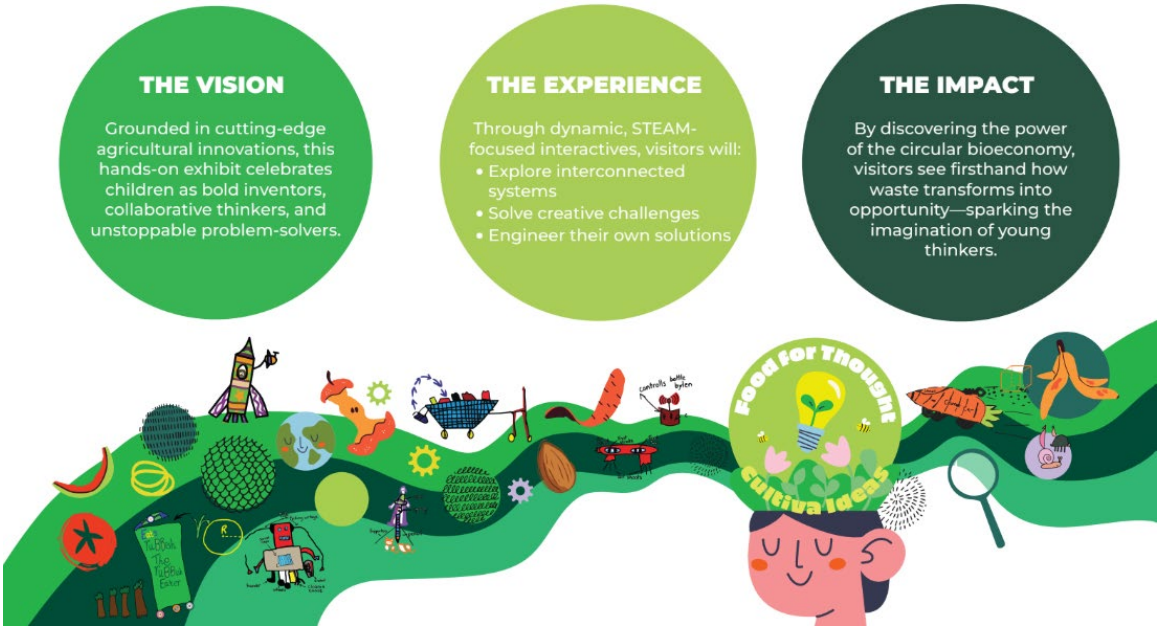
Walnut Elementary Education Center continued advancing its Math and Science Magnet Program amid growth in student enrollment. As part of its efforts to optimize learning spaces, the school combined its STEM Center with the Art Room, creating a shared space for STEM and arts education. Fourth- and fifth-grade teachers continued integrating robotics and coding into their curricula, providing students with opportunities to develop foundational technical skills and strengthen their exposure to STEM concepts.

Modesto Children's Museum – Food for Thought: Circular Bioeconomy Exhibit

During Q3 2026, the Modesto Children's Museum (MoChiMu) completed the design phase of its Food for Thought exhibit, incorporating final feedback from community stakeholders and BEAM Circular staff. The exhibit renderings were unveiled at the museum's annual fundraising gala on September 18, 2026, with a public preview planned for November 9, 2026, during a special open house held in conjunction with the BioCirCA Summit.

Food for Thought will feature a 600-square-foot, hands-on learning space designed to introduce children and families to agricultural innovation and circular bioeconomy concepts through interactive play. Centered on the theme of "Unexpected Connections," the exhibit will demonstrate how agricultural byproducts, such as cow manure, can be transformed from materials traditionally considered waste into valuable resources, including renewable energy capable of powering vehicles and homes. Through accessible, age-appropriate experiences, the exhibit aims to spark curiosity about sustainability, resource recovery, and innovative technologies being developed and implemented in the region.

MoChiMu has also secured funders and selected a fabricator for the exhibit, marking important milestones toward implementation. The project remains on track for an anticipated opening in spring 2027.



Above: The Food for Thought: Circular Bioeconomy Exhibit is rooted in three guiding principles: vision, experience, and impact.

Salida Middle School – Biotech Pathways: A Middle School Lab-Based Introduction to the Bioeconomy

During Q3 2026, Salida Middle School began implementing its *Biotech Pathways* initiative with the start of the new academic year. Activities focused on distributing laboratory supplies, coordinating with teachers, and integrating newly acquired equipment and materials into classroom instruction.

Students participated in hands-on science activities using the three laboratory kits purchased for each grade level, gaining practical exposure to biotechnology concepts and learning about potential

careers in the field. These activities helped introduce students to biotechnology applications while fostering curiosity and engagement in STEM education.

The initial implementation generated positive feedback from educators, highlighting strong student interest in hands-on laboratory experiences.

“It was awesome to see students engaged and using the supplies purchased with the grant funds. Students especially loved using the incubator and water bath.”
— Brittany Brodhag, 8th Grade Science Teacher





Left: 8th-grade genetic engineers in action! Students are using a water bath as part of our pGLO genetic engineering lab. **Right**: From DNA to bacteria! Students are getting hands-on with genetic engineering during our pGLO lab.

Stanislaus Bioeconomy Wet Labs & Training Facilities Fund

Patterson Joint Unified School District – Agriculture, Wet Lab, and Bioeconomy Expansion Initiative

Patterson Joint Unified School District continued making progress in expanding hands-on agricultural, biotechnology, and STEM education opportunities at Creekside Middle School and Patterson High School.

Creekside Middle School established a new STEM laboratory, with furniture and laboratory supplies ordered to equip the space for student learning. The school also ordered a small planting shade house to provide a dedicated area for hands-on agricultural projects during classroom instruction. Additionally, a Fork Farm hydroponic growing system was purchased to enable students to cultivate leafy green vegetables, observe the complete plant lifecycle, and gain practical experience with hydroponic growing techniques.

Patterson High School advanced plans to renovate its existing greenhouse, with a contract being finalized with Fambrough Construction to replace and upgrade greenhouse panels and joints. The planned improvements also include installing two gable fans to enhance air circulation and create healthier growing conditions for student crops. These upgrades will restore and strengthen the greenhouse's capacity to support long-term agricultural and STEM instruction.

Together, these investments are expanding the district's infrastructure for experiential STEM and agricultural education, creating opportunities for students to develop practical skills and explore connections between agriculture, biotechnology, and the circular bioeconomy.

CSU Stanislaus – Establishing the Center for Sustainable Biotechnology: Empowering a Green Workforce for Stanislaus County

CSU Stanislaus made significant progress toward completing renovations to its Center for Sustainable Biotechnology. Laboratory equipment has been procured, and facility modifications are underway, bringing the project into its final phase of implementation.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for October 16, 2026, to celebrate this important milestone. Once completed, the renovated facility is expected to expand hands-on laboratory learning and research opportunities for students and faculty, strengthen biotechnology workforce development, and enhance CSU Stanislaus's role as a regional hub for biotechnology education, research, and innovation.

Modesto Junior College – Advancing Biotechnology & Bioengineering Training in the Valley

Modesto Junior College (MJC) advanced preparations to integrate new bioprocessing equipment into its microbiology laboratory. In collaboration with project staff, the MJC facilities team worked on laboratory modifications to accommodate the bioreactor and additional equipment procured through the grant. These improvements focused on preparing the laboratory space for equipment installation and ensuring its suitability for hands-on instruction.

Once completed, the upgraded laboratory will provide students with opportunities to gain practical experience using industry-relevant bioprocessing equipment, strengthening technical skills and supporting workforce preparation for emerging careers in biotechnology, bioengineering, and circular bioeconomy.

VOLT Institute – BioSmart Technologies Education Pathways (BioSTEP)

During Q3 2026, the VOLT Institute expanded access to manufacturing and industrial technology training through its BioSmart Technologies Education Pathways (BioSTEP) initiative. In July, VOLT launched its *Introduction to Manufacturing* program, designed to introduce individuals interested in manufacturing careers to foundational technical skills and industry opportunities. Strong initial demand prompted plans for a second cohort in August. VOLT also began coordinating with several municipalities to explore opportunities to expand the program across Stanislaus County, including outreach to K–12 students. This initiative strengthens the introductory "Explore" component of the workforce development pathway and creates opportunities for participants to advance into BEAM-supported industrial controls training programs.

Through its mobile training initiative, *VOLT on the Go*, the institute successfully completed a nine-student cohort in programmable logic controller (PLC) training for EmTech Futures, expanding access to technical education in industrial automation and controls.

Additionally, VOLT developed an internship program in partnership with Nitricity, a regional circular bioeconomy startup, to strengthen connections between technical training and real-world industry experience. VOLT also continued collaborating with the RIC to support smaller businesses exploring circular economy solutions and emerging bioeconomy opportunities.

Together, these activities demonstrate progress in expanding access to manufacturing education, strengthening industry partnerships, and developing career pathways that connect foundational

technical training with specialized skills needed in industrial biomanufacturing and the circular bioeconomy.

Events in Which the Workforce Team Participated During Q3 2026

BEAM Circular – Participation in the Inaugural North Valley Manufacturing Summit

On September 29, 2026, BEAM Circular participated as an exhibitor in the inaugural North Valley Manufacturing Summit, organized by the Manufacturers Council of the Central Valley (MCCV) and Stanislaus Partners in Education (SPIE) at California State University, Stanislaus, in Turlock. BEAM was represented by Bri Gonzalez, Senior Manager of Community Partnerships; See Lee, Director of Education & Workforce Strategies; and Gloriamar Gamez, Chief Program Officer.

Through its exhibition booth, BEAM Circular introduced students and educators to emerging career opportunities in advanced manufacturing, industrial biomanufacturing, and the circular bioeconomy, highlighting the technical skills and educational pathways needed to participate in these growing industries.

The event also provided an opportunity for BEAM to engage with regional manufacturing employers and workforce development partners, strengthen relationships, and explore potential collaborations to better align education and training programs with industry needs.

BEAM Circular – Participation in the CAPBIO Summit at Aggie Square

On September 16, 2026, See Lee, BEAM Circular's Director of Education & Workforce Strategies, attended the CAPBIO Summit at Aggie Square in Sacramento, California. The event provided an opportunity to engage with stakeholders from the biotechnology and life sciences sectors and gain insights into industry trends, workforce development priorities, and opportunities for regional collaboration.





Left: BEAM Circular team at the North Valley Manufacturing Summit. **Right:** Panel at CAPBIO Summit in Aggie Square

TRADED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Goal

The region will be a top location in the country for bioindustrial manufacturing firms from scale-up to commercialization, creating new quality jobs for residents across all skill levels.

Quarter Activities

Business and Economic Development
Initiative 1: Cross-Cutting Initiatives – BEAM Circular Growth Partnership
Business & Economic Development: Stanislaus County ARPA Grant Deployment

Stanislaus County Bioeconomy Jobs Catalyst Fund
Track 1 – Early-Stage Innovation and Commercialization

During Q3 2026, BEAM Circular awarded an additional $100,000 in ARPA funding to two innovative companies through Track 1 of the Stanislaus County Bioeconomy Jobs Catalyst Fund. These awards support early-stage innovation, technical validation, commercialization planning, and the development of regional circular bioeconomy infrastructure and partnerships.

New Track 1 Awards

- **Agnomy ($40,000):** Agnomy is developing and validating a digital *AgTech Partnership & Bioeconomy Access Hub* designed to connect Stanislaus County's agricultural feedstocks, equipment, facilities, storage infrastructure, and workforce talent with AgTech and bioeconomy companies. The project includes regional ecosystem research, stakeholder engagement, pilot matchmaking, internship support, and the development of a commercialization roadmap. The initiative aims to improve access to regional resources, facilitate industry collaboration, and strengthen opportunities for bioeconomy business development.

- **Sunburst ($60,000):** Sunburst is establishing a *Regional Fungal Discovery Program* in Stanislaus County to expand local biotechnology research and innovation capacity. Project activities include developing microbiology laboratory capabilities, establishing fungal isolation and characterization workflows, creating a pilot fungal strain collection supported by genome sequencing, and developing a business and operational plan. The project also includes partnership development, an internship pilot, and a roadmap for securing follow-on funding. These activities are intended to strengthen regional research infrastructure and create opportunities for future biotechnology applications and commercialization.

Progress Among Previously Funded Track 1 Awardees

Two additional Track 1 awardees continued advancing their projects during Q3:

- **Renew You Body Butters ($25,000):** Renew You Body Butters advanced the development of a sustainable exfoliating body scrub made from locally sourced almond shells. During the reporting period, the company procured production equipment, almond shell feedstocks, and packaging materials; engaged business consulting and legal services; and participated in regional events to support product development and market access. The company also recruited participants for product trials. The project seeks to transform an agricultural

byproduct into a value-added consumer product, demonstrating opportunities for agricultural waste utilization and circular product innovation in Stanislaus County.

- **Optimized Foods ($75,000):** Optimized Foods advanced its project to convert tomato pomace from Stanislaus Food Products into a sugar-rich liquid feedstock with potential applications in biomanufacturing. The company engaged technical services, supported internship activities, and procured pilot-processing equipment and supplies. Remaining milestones include commissioning and operating the pilot process, completing the Stanislaus County internship, and delivering a techno-economic analysis and go-to-market strategy. The project demonstrates opportunities to create value from regional food-processing byproducts while advancing technical validation and commercialization readiness.

BEAM Circular continued providing grant management, project oversight, and implementation support to Track 1 awardees throughout Q3. Projects remain underway, with grant-funded activities scheduled for closeout by October 31, 2026.

Track 2 – Commercialization and Industrial Scale-Up

During Q3 2026, BEAM Circular continued supporting four Track 2 awardees advancing larger-scale circular bioeconomy projects in Stanislaus County. These investments are intended to accelerate commercialization, strengthen regional biomanufacturing capacity, support industrial infrastructure development, and create opportunities for future business growth and job creation. All four Track 2 projects continued progressing through engineering, equipment procurement, site development, technical validation, and commercialization activities during Q3 2026.

Track 2 Project Progress

- **Artefact ($500,000):** Artefact continued advancing front-end engineering design (FEED) studies and technical validation activities in collaboration with an engineering partner. Work focused on refining equipment specifications and facility schematics, evaluating utility interconnection requirements, and validating key unit operations in preparation for equipment procurement and installation. Equipment staging and commissioning in Stanislaus County are planned before the end of October 2026.

- **Central Valley Circular ($600,000):** Central Valley Circular progressed with site feasibility assessments, permitting analyses, and feedstock logistics planning for a proposed regional paper fiber recovery and recycling facility. The company continued working to secure municipal feedstock agreements and advance environmental reviews required before site development.
- **Mango Materials ($500,000):** Mango Materials continued advancing its proprietary biotechnology platform for converting waste methane into biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate (PHA) biopolymers. During Q3, the company conducted pilot-scale fermentation and downstream polymer recovery activities to validate production yields, optimize gas fermentation process controls, and refine material formulations for potential commercial packaging applications. The company also advanced its search for a Stanislaus County location and recently executed a lease for a facility in Turlock, subject to permitting approvals. This milestone represents progress toward establishing a regional presence and scaling its methane-to-biopolymer technology.

- **Full Circle Brewing ($400,000):** Full Circle Brewing Company advanced equipment procurement and infrastructure improvements to expand its capacity to upcycle fruit-

processing byproducts into value-added beverages. Project activities included procuring higher-capacity brewhouse vessels, expanding fermentation and cellar capabilities, and preparing facility modifications needed to accommodate the new equipment. The company plans to stage and commission its modular equipment in Stanislaus County during October 2026.

Human Capital & Capacity Building / Business Development

Business Development Fellow – Gil Cardon (Hosted by Opportunity Stanislaus)
Gil Cardon, BEAM Circular's Business Development Fellow hosted by Opportunity Stanislaus, continued strengthening regional business development efforts and facilitating connections across the circular bioeconomy ecosystem. Gil facilitated five business connections involving Ecoatex, Gilly, Mango Materials, Electroactive Technologies, and Central Valley Circular (CVC).

Additionally, he conducted 30 information-gathering meetings with companies and ecosystem stakeholders to assess business needs, identify opportunities for regional growth and investment, and facilitate connections to resources, partners, and potential collaborators. These activities contributed to BEAM's broader efforts to strengthen the regional business development pipeline and support the growth of circular bioeconomy companies in the North San Joaquin Valley.

Business Development and Company Siting Support
BEAM Circular continued providing business development and site-selection assistance to bioeconomy companies exploring opportunities to establish or expand operations in the North San Joaquin Valley.

A significant milestone was achieved on July 24, 2026, when Gilly Bio finalized a six-month lease for approximately 1,500 square feet of commercial space at 1511 Lone Palm Avenue, Suite H, in Modesto, with occupancy beginning August 1, 2026. The selected facility meets the company's operational requirements, including water and drainage infrastructure, ventilation access, and a roll-up door. This milestone represents tangible progress toward establishing the company's local operations and strengthening the region's emerging bioeconomy business ecosystem.

BEAM also continued supporting siting efforts for Mango Materials and Caribou, including exploring regional locations, identifying suitable facilities, and assessing potential spaces to accommodate their operational requirements.

Collectively, these activities demonstrate BEAM Circular's role in facilitating business connections, reducing barriers to company establishment and expansion, and strengthening the North San Joaquin Valley's attractiveness as a location for circular bioeconomy innovation and industrial development.

Events and Industry Engagement

BEAM Circular team members participated in regional and statewide events that brought together businesses, researchers, entrepreneurs, educational institutions, government agencies, and community partners. These engagements supported strategic relationship-building, knowledge exchange, business development, and increased awareness of the North San Joaquin Valley's circular bioeconomy ecosystem. Participation also provided opportunities to identify emerging technologies, connect with potential industry partners, and promote regional resources supporting innovation, entrepreneurship, and workforce development.

- **July 9 – F3i Supercomputing Center Launch & Networking Event:** Gil Cardon, Business Development Fellow, attended the launch of the F3i Supercomputing Center at Fresno State. The event highlighted opportunities to leverage artificial intelligence, advanced computing, and data science to address challenges in California agriculture and support emerging technology applications.

- **July 10 – Supercarb Chalk Up Tee Product Launch:** Gil Cardon, Business Development Fellow; Bri Gonzalez, Senior Manager of Community Partnerships; and Gloriamar Gamez, Chief Program Officer, participated in Supercarb's product launch event, celebrating the introduction of its first product made using proprietary Seaweed Tech™ fibers. The technology transforms seaweed and agricultural waste into innovative textile fibers, demonstrating opportunities for circular materials development and commercialization. Supercarb was a participant in BEAM Circular's 2026 Accelerator cohort, and the event provided an opportunity to recognize the company's progress toward bringing bio-based products to market.






Above: BEAM team at Supercarb Chalk Up Tee Product Launch

- **July 24 – Tri-County Mixer:** Gil Cardon, Business Development Fellow, participated in a regional networking event organized in collaboration with the Merced County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, San Joaquin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Stanislaus Latino Chamber of Commerce. The event provided opportunities to strengthen relationships with regional business leaders, entrepreneurs, and economic development partners across the North San Joaquin Valley.

- **August 25 – Circular Economy Cluster Kick-Off at 9Zero:** Gehad Elhanafy, Business Development Program Manager, participated in the launch of the Circular Economy Cluster at 9Zero in San Francisco. The event brought together entrepreneurs, investors, researchers, and circular economy innovators to discuss Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations. Participation provided insights into evolving regulatory frameworks and emerging opportunities for circular materials innovation, sustainable product development, and business growth.

- **September 8 – UC Merced: Sustainable Dairy Systems – Innovation for California's Future:** BEAM participated in an Ag Bags event at UC Merced focused on advancing sustainable dairy systems and agricultural innovation. The event convened researchers, students, agricultural producers, industry representatives, and community partners to discuss challenges and opportunities related to water availability, forage production, circular food systems, and resource efficiency.
- **September 22 – Couco Creek Dairy Site Visit:** BEAM Circular staff participated in a site visit with the Stanislaus County Chief Executive Officer's Office to Couco Creek Dairy in Turlock. The visit included an overview of dairy operations and tours of the facility's anaerobic digester and biogas upgrading infrastructure. The experience provided firsthand exposure to technologies that convert dairy waste into renewable energy, highlighting opportunities for agricultural waste valorization and circular bioeconomy development in Stanislaus County.



Above: BEAM team at Couco Creek Dairy Site Visit

- **September 25 – Business Women's Symposium:** Gloriamar Gamez, Chief Program Officer, participated in the Business Women's Symposium organized by the Valley Sierra Small Business Development Center in Modesto. The event provided networking and professional development opportunities for women entrepreneurs and business leaders, supporting connections within the regional small business and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

- **September 25 – RESERVOIR Farms Open House:** BEAM participated in an open house at RESERVOIR Farms in Salinas, which showcased agricultural technology startups, research and development resources, and infrastructure supporting innovation and commercialization. The event highlighted available workshop facilities, field-testing capabilities, and opportunities for collaboration among entrepreneurs, researchers, and industry partners working to advance agricultural innovation.

Collectively, these engagements strengthened BEAM Circular's connections across the regional and statewide innovation ecosystem, expanded opportunities for collaboration with industry and economic

development partners, and supported ongoing efforts to attract, develop, and scale circular bioeconomy businesses in the North San Joaquin Valley.

Innovation

Initiative 1: Cross-Cutting Initiatives – BEAM Circular Growth Partnership

September 22–25 – Virtual Institute on Feedstocks of the Future (VIFF) Annual Convening, St. Louis, Missouri: Cynthia Ni, Director of Innovation Programs, participated in the VIFF Annual Convening as part of the BioCircular Valley (BioCirV) research project. During the convening, the BioCirV team presented project updates, exchanged insights, and engaged in collaborative discussions with other VIFF-funded research teams advancing alternative biomass feedstock initiatives across the United States. The event provided opportunities to share lessons learned, receive feedback, and explore approaches to biomass utilization and circular bioeconomy development. Participants also toured ADM's headquarters and learned about bio-based manufacturing processes utilizing corn-derived feedstocks, providing valuable industry perspectives on biomass conversion and commercialization.



Left: Cynthia Ni and BioCircular Valley (BioCirV) team at the VIFF Annual Convening. **Right:** VIFF team field visit to ADM’s facility

TRADED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Goal

The region will be a top location in the country for bioindustrial manufacturing firms from scale-up to commercialization, creating new quality jobs for residents across all skill levels.

Quarter Activities

Bioeconomy Innovation Campus Planning (Testbed Facility Development)
Initiative 4: Cross-Cutting Initiatives – Circular Bioeconomy Innovation Campus

Site Selection & Real Estate Progress

- BEAM Circular signed a lease for 10,000 square feet at 3109 Del Este Avenue in the Beard Industrial District in Modesto, establishing initial facility space for the Innovation Campus to be used for storage, staging business operations, and light manufacturing innovation activities that support and attract bioeconomy businesses.
- In addition, a Letter of Intent was signed to purchase a separate 20,000-square-foot building on the same street in the Beard Industrial District. Final diligence and real estate acquisition activities are underway, with purchase of the building expected to close in Q4 2026. This 20,000-square-foot building will support shared office and wet lab facilities, pilot space for circular bioeconomy businesses, bio-based product research and development activities, and educational activities.

Tenant Pipeline & Economic Impact

- Membership License Agreements were drafted to prepare for Campus user recruitment and onboarding.
- BEAM Circular completed needs assessments with two businesses, Optimized Foods and Caribou Biofuels, to become the first users of the Innovation Campus facility. Membership agreements are being finalized, with anticipated launch of preliminary activities in Q4 2026 at 3109 Del Este, allowing these businesses to grow their operations in Stanislaus County.
- User needs assessments and space allocation decisions are underway for businesses in the Campus partner pipeline.
- As of September, 154 companies had completed an intake form to request BEAM services or support. Follow-up is underway with companies that expressed interest in Campus facilities.

Engineering, Permitting & Infrastructure

- A robust search was conducted for an architecture and engineering firm to complete engineering plans for the Innovation Campus. Haskell was contracted to complete the engineering plans.
- Partner Engineering and Science Inc. completed a Property Condition Report and a Structural Assessment Report for 3109 Del Este Avenue.
- A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was completed.

Community Engagement

BEAM Circular's Community Team continued implementing a coordinated community engagement strategy to inform residents and stakeholders about the planned California Bioeconomy Innovation Campus in Modesto and gather input to help shape its development. Engagement activities included

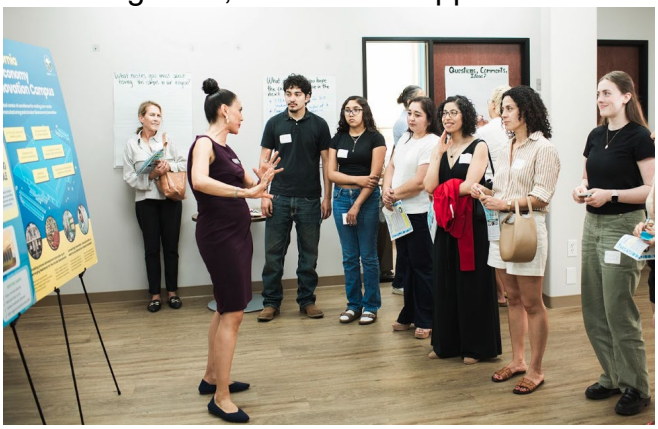
Campus Coffees, a Campus Webinar, and a Campus Open House, creating multiple opportunities for community members to learn about the project, ask questions, and share their perspectives.

On July 22, 2026, BEAM hosted a Campus Open House at its downtown Modesto office, bringing together community members, local businesses, elected officials, and education partners. Attendees explored informational stations covering the Campus vision, anticipated employment opportunities, site selection, and potential community programming. The event encouraged direct conversations with BEAM staff and provided opportunities for participants to share questions, suggestions, and priorities for the Campus.

These engagement efforts are designed not only to increase public awareness and transparency but also to ensure that community perspectives inform Campus planning and development. Bilingual English- and Spanish-language materials were provided to support accessible and inclusive participation.

Feedback collected through these activities is helping BEAM identify opportunities to align the Campus with local needs, strengthen connections between businesses and communities, and explore programming that could expand access to education, workforce development, and economic opportunities. BEAM has begun evaluating how community recommendations can be incorporated into future Campus planning and engagement activities.

Together, these efforts reflect BEAM Circular's commitment to developing the California Bioeconomy Innovation Campus as a community-informed resource that advances regional innovation, supports business growth, and creates opportunities for residents across Stanislaus County.











Above: Innovation Campus Open House hosted at BEAM Circular’s office

TRADED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Goal

The region will be a top location in the country for bioindustrial manufacturing firms from scale-up to commercialization, creating new quality jobs for residents across all skill levels.

Quarter Activities

Initiative 1: Cross-Cutting Initiatives – BEAM Circular Growth Partnership

Community Prosperity and Community Engagement in Stanislaus County

BEAM directly engaged with 304 Stanislaus County community members through its Community Prosperity and Community Engagement programming and collaborated with six community organizations in Stanislaus County by presenting in both English and Spanish and supporting their community events.

- July 13: Presentation at Bioeconomy Experience Week and Learning Community seminar with Ignited – Turlock
- July 14: Stanislaus County Fair outreach, hands-on activities for youth – Turlock
- July 22: BEAM Circular Innovation Campus Open House for Community – Modesto
- July 30: Presentation at Empire Municipal Advisory Council - Empire
- August 5: Presentation at iBGLOREA Summer School for Stanislaus County High School Students - Introduction to Circular Bioeconomy – Turlock
- August 12: Empire Backpack Giveaway with Colores Del Futuro – Empire
- August 29: Presentation at Visión y Compromiso Conference – Turlock
- September 29: Informational tabling at the North Valley Manufacturing Summit - Turlock



Above: BEAM Circular team at Stanislaus County Fair

Community Benefit Toolkit and Community Wealth-Building Strategy

With funding from a California Jobs First grant, BEAM Circular continued developing a Community Benefit Toolkit designed to strengthen partnerships between community-based organizations and bioeconomy companies. The toolkit aims to provide resources and guidance to facilitate meaningful community engagement, foster mutually beneficial partnerships, and help ensure that the growth of

the regional bioeconomy translates into tangible benefits for local communities. Completion is anticipated in Q4 2026.

In parallel, BEAM engaged a consultant to inform the development of a Community Wealth-Building Strategy focused on identifying approaches to expand community ownership, strengthen local economic opportunities, and promote long-term, inclusive prosperity. This strategy is also expected to be completed in Q4 2026. Both initiatives reflect BEAM Circular's commitment to ensuring that the emerging circular bioeconomy creates opportunities for broad-based community participation and economic advancement. Both documents are expected to be made publicly available by the end of 2026, providing resources to support community-centered economic development across the North San Joaquin Valley.

Community Prosperity Grants

With funding from a California Jobs First Regional Investment Initiative Implementation Grant, BEAM Circular launched its inaugural Community Prosperity Grants Program, a pilot initiative designed to support community-led projects that increase awareness of circular bioeconomy principles, promote environmental stewardship, and advance community prosperity across the North San Joaquin Valley.

A total of $65,000 was allocated across 14 selected grants, including seven projects led by organizations and community members in Stanislaus County. These projects reflect diverse approaches to community engagement, including youth education, waste reduction, composting, environmental health, bilingual outreach, and biotechnology career exploration. Of the seven Stanislaus County projects, three have been completed and four remain in progress.

The Community Prosperity Grants Program represents an important step toward placing resources directly in the hands of community members and local organizations to advance sustainability education, environmental stewardship, and community prosperity.

Completed Projects in Stanislaus County

Junior Ambassadors / Embajadores

- Awardee: Avelina Peraza, Community Member
- Location: Patterson
- Status: Completed

This project engaged local youth in hands-on educational experiences introducing the principles of the circular bioeconomy, sustainability, and environmental stewardship. Through three interactive workshops, students explored how biological resources, environmental responsibility, and creative problem-solving can contribute to healthier communities and future career opportunities. The initiative aimed to build environmental awareness among young people while encouraging their participation in community sustainability efforts.



Above: Avelina and youth from Patterson at the Public Library

Less Plastic, More Life

- Awardee: Irene Blancas, Community Member
- Location: Modesto
- Status: Completed

This project promoted waste reduction and sustainable practices by engaging community members in educational meetings and hands-on activities focused on reducing single-use plastics. Participants explored practical alternatives, including reusable products, gardening, and everyday actions to conserve natural resources. The initiative aimed to empower residents with knowledge and tools to adopt environmentally responsible habits beyond the project period.



Above: Program participants at Freedom Park

Visión y Compromiso – Stanislaus Network of Promotoras Regional Conference

- Awardee: Visión y Compromiso
- Location: Stanislaus County
- Status: Completed

This initiative expanded access to culturally and linguistically relevant professional development, leadership training, and environmental health education for promotoras, community health workers, and other trusted community leaders across Stanislaus County.

Through its regional conference, Visión y Compromiso delivered its environmental health curriculum, *My Home, My Work, My Community*, providing participants with knowledge and tools to address environmental health concerns, strengthen community advocacy, and promote sustainable practices. The project sought to equip trusted community leaders to share information and encourage environmentally responsible behaviors within their families, neighborhoods, and broader communities.



Above: Participants at Self Help Credit Union in Crows Landing

Projects in Progress in Stanislaus County

Community Garden Composting

- Awardee: Church of the Cross
- Location: North Modesto
- Status: In Progress

The Church of the Cross Community Garden project focuses on enhancing its community garden gathering space and introducing hands-on composting education for gardeners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The initiative aims to strengthen environmental awareness, encourage organic waste diversion, and provide practical opportunities for community members to learn about composting and sustainable gardening practices.



Above Right: Church of the Cross Community Garden

Café Para la Comunidad

- Awardee: Heidy Moscoso, Community Member
- Location: Modesto
- Status: In Progress

Café Para la Comunidad is designed to create welcoming, bilingual spaces where English- and Spanish-speaking residents can learn about BEAM Circular, circular bioeconomy concepts, and emerging education and workforce opportunities for youth in Stanislaus County.

Through community conversations, the project aims to encourage residents to share their experiences, discuss environmental sustainability and community well-being, and explore how the growing regional bioeconomy can create opportunities for their families and communities.

Reciclando Ando

- Awardee: Mirna Acevedo, Community Member
- Location: Riverbank
- Status: In Progress

Reciclando Ando focuses on increasing community awareness of recycling, waste reduction, and circular economy principles among Riverbank residents. The project aims to provide participants with practical knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about household waste management, resource conservation, and sustainable practices.

By connecting circular economy concepts with everyday activities, the initiative seeks to encourage environmental stewardship and empower residents to contribute to cleaner, more resource-efficient neighborhoods.

School Outreach and Biotechnology Science Saturday

- Awardee: Ansley Van Gorkem
- Location: Turlock
- Status: In Progress

This project aims to expand access to biotechnology education and higher education pathways for underserved middle and high school students in Stanislaus County.

Planned activities include at least two school visits led by undergraduate students, featuring hands-on science demonstrations, and a *Biotechnology Science Saturday* event at Stan State. During the event, participating students will have opportunities to tour research laboratories, learn about undergraduate biotechnology research, participate in college application preparation workshops, and interact with university students and faculty.

Through these experiences, students will gain exposure to biotechnology research techniques, strengthen their understanding of science-related career pathways, and build confidence in pursuing higher education and STEM opportunities.