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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SKYLINE COLLEGE LAUNCHES FREE COMMUNITY MARKET TO COMBAT FOOD INSECURITY

San Bruno, California – February 12, 2019: Skyline College has launched a weekly Free Community Market that will provide access to free groceries, including a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, to students and local community members. The market, launched in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, aims to address food insecurity in the local community and on campus through a farmers market style experience. This new approach to distributing groceries focuses on celebration, abundance and inclusion so community members and students who need a little help can feel comfortable receiving it.

The weekly Free Community Market will take place every Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the Skyline College campus outside in front of Building 4.

Second Harvest Food Bank collaborated with Skyline College staff to create the innovative program designed to reduce some of the barriers that keep people who are struggling with food insecurity from accessing healthy food.

The Free Community Market will compliment Skyline College's other community-facing programs including Sparkpoint at Skyline College, which provides students and the community

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with free financial resources like coaching and tax preparation, as well as food pantry access through private shopping appointments.

“The Free Community Market is designed to make it as easy as possible for students and other community members to access healthy food. This project arose because we recognized a clear need in the community and on our own campus to provide direct support to combat food insecurity,” said Chad Thompson, Director of Sparkpoint at Skyline College. “We are incredibly proud to expand our offerings through this innovative new project that helps to eliminate the stigma of accepting food assistance.”

Second Harvest estimates that 1 in 4 people are at risk for hunger in Silicon Valley. CEO Leslie Bacho explained that many residents are forced to choose between paying for the high cost of housing and putting healthy food on the table. “Food insecurity is a very real issue in our community and many who experience it are not aware help is available. Second Harvest is testing new ways to make our services more accessible to those who need help, and we are thrilled to partner with Skyline College in that important effort.”

The market will also help to address key issues brought to light in a survey of Skyline College students conducted in Spring 2018 that revealed a high percentage of students struggle with food insecurity. In that survey, 31% of students stated that they had skipped a meal or ate less because there wasn't enough money for food. However, only 16% of students had visited the Food Pantry offered on campus. The Free Community Market will make access to food easier for students and community members who may not be aware of other resources, who may be uncomfortable seeking out resources, or who perceive themselves as ineligible to receive assistance.

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About Second Harvest Food Bank

Based in Silicon Valley, Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties is one of the largest food banks in the nation. Currently providing food to an average of 260,000 people every month, Second Harvest is a trusted community-based organization that was founded in 1974. Despite the immense wealth in Silicon Valley, and partly due to the high cost of living, hunger and malnutrition are pervasive. The Food Bank distributes nutritious food, including more fresh produce than almost any other food bank in the country, through a network of 309 nonprofit partners at 985 sites. Second Harvest is pursuing innovative efforts to increase access to food resources as it seeks to feed more hungry people each month. To reach more people, it advocates for anti-hunger policies and connects those in need to federal nutrition programs and other food resources. To learn more about how Second Harvest is building a hunger-free community, visit SHFB.org.

About Skyline College

Skyline College is an accredited, comprehensive California community college serving more than 16,000 students annually, offering 100 Associate Degree and Certificate programs as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Respiratory Care. Located on a 111-acre campus overlooking the Pacific Ocean, Skyline College has offered world-class educational opportunities to residents from North San Mateo County and beyond since 1969. Part of the San Mateo Community College District, Skyline College strives to inspire a global and diverse community of learners to achieve intellectual, cultural, social, economic and personal fulfillment.

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