

Programming for Families and Youth at Stephen Leonard Youth Center

Merced College

Education. Workforce. Family Support.

Presenters: VP Kelly Avila and Dean Joe Serena

Merced College Answers The Commission's Call



The City of Merced Parks & Community Services Department invites qualified organizations, service providers, and community-focused partners to submit a Request for Interest (RFI) to lease and operate programs and services at the Stephen Leonard Youth Center for youth and their families.



The City is particularly interested in youth development, educational support, family services, workforce development, health and wellness programs, cultural programming, and other community-serving uses that enhance access and promote positive outcomes.







Merced College is a highly-qualified organization with extensive experience operating facilities and the financial capacity to enhance the facility and grow its reach within South Merced for many years to come.



Goals and Objectives

- **Expanding access to education,** workforce training, and support services within the South Merced community
- **Supporting youth development,** academic engagement, early college and career awareness
- **Increasing successful enrollment,** persistence, and navigation of educational pathways for adult learners
- **Strengthening family connections** to educational, workforce, and basic needs resources
- **Providing a welcoming and supportive environment** that encourages continued participation and long-term success

Programming Opportunities

					
<p>Education & Workforce Pathways</p>	<p>Adult Education & Advising</p>	<p>Supportive Learning Environment</p>	<p>Community Enrichment</p>	<p>Bachelor's Degree & Promise Access</p>	<p>Added Value Benefits</p>
<p>Credit & noncredit classes</p> <p>Career exploration & job readiness</p> <p>Resume, interview & digital skills workshops</p> <p>Connections to workforce training pathways</p>	<p>College application & enrollment assistance</p> <p>Academic and career advising</p> <p>In-person & online learning support</p> <p>Navigation of educational pathways</p>	<p>Computer & laptop access</p> <p>Study and collaboration spaces</p> <p>Virtual appointment areas</p> <p>On-site support referrals</p>	<p>Workshops & community learning events</p> <p>Cultural and enrichment activities</p>	<p>Pathways to baccalaureate through ASU Local and UC Merced Promise programs</p> <p>Access to Promise Housing for students</p>	<p>Investment in an existing public facility</p> <p>Access to financial aid & basic needs support</p> <p>Access to Student Health services</p> <p>Trusted neighborhood resource</p>

Ready to Launch: Steps to Successful Startup



Community Survey: \$26,500 committed to engage a third- party research firm to survey zip code 95341



Strengthening Community Partnerships: Central Valley Opportunity Fund, NAACP, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Development Board, Merced City School District



Expanded Funding: MC has applied for direct congressional funding of \$1.5m to enhance the project

Summer 2026 Kick-Off!



Stewards of the Youth Center



Stewards of the Youth Center





MERCED COLLEGE

IS READY TO
LAUNCH!



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Questions?

