



**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Megan Rodriguez Antone

[rodriguezsm@smccd.edu](mailto:rodriguezsm@smccd.edu)

(650) 306-3148

**Cañada College Awarded \$1 Million to Build the First Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Extended Reality (VR/AR) Developer Program in the State**

**REDWOOD CITY, CALIF. (April 27, 2022)** – Cañada College has been awarded \$1 million (two \$500,000 grants) to create and manage the State's first and only XR game developer pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program through the State of California Division of Apprenticeship Standards Extended Reality (XR) Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Program. The XR Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship Programs were designed to create access for Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) student populations and underrepresented groups to mid- and high-paying tech roles as three-dimensional (3D) and two-dimensional (2D) game and interactive simulations developers.

The California State Chancellor's Office created the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Grant Programs to help meet the State's need for an educated and skilled workforce as well as to promote economic recovery and equity in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The programs will support the creation of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs in non-traditional, emerging and innovative sectors, and increase the accessibility to sustainable, high-wage jobs for individuals from historically marginalized and underserved backgrounds.

In partnership with Foothill College, the funding provides Cañada College an opportunity to create programs such as the not-for-credit Unity Developer program. Unity is a video game engine used to make exciting Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), 2D and 3D video games by thousands of game studios worldwide. Designed for Unity beginners, this course starts with the basics all the way through knowing the basics of creating AR and VR games. The course is virtual so students throughout the state can enroll, although priority registration will be given to students in the Bay Area region. After completing the apprenticeship program, students would be eligible for employment opportunities as technical artists, game developers and VR/AR programmers for companies that utilize the Unity Engine.

With this, students will have access to an emerging tech field that many four-year programs do not train graduates for. These roles do not require a four-year degree removing the barrier for

(more)

more marginalized and underrepresented students and community members to obtain access to careers that historically have been difficult to attain in a reduced time frame within the Tech industry. "Through this partnership, our goal is to create an epicenter for training a new generation of innovative minds that will power the Silicon Valley well into the future," stated Kim Lopez, Interim College President. "This grant will provide Cañada College with funds to connect our students with innovative tools and provide access to achieve the training and experience needed for an in-demand career in Tech."

"Foothill College is excited to be in partnership with Cañada College and serve as their Local Education Agency (LEA) for the State's first Augmented Reality Apprenticeship Program," said Chris Allen, Dean of Apprenticeship Programs, Foothill College. "Our faculty are excited to collaborate and partner with an industry employer like Unity and support this new and innovative apprenticeship pathway aligns with one of our college's core values, innovation."

According to Burning Glass, as of 2020, there has been a 1,400 percent job growth for AR/VR engineers and a 146 percent job growth for game developers with a large majority of these employers headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Cañada College XR programs will work with all Bay Area Community College Consortium Game Design programs to develop a talent pipeline of students who will be eligible for the pre-apprenticeship program, apprenticeship program, and full-time employment upon program completion. Apprentices start earning \$23/hour the first six months, increase to \$25/hour in the second six months, and \$28/hour in the last six months. Journeymen-level developers will earn at minimum \$75,000 annually and can potentially earn more than \$100,000 depending upon skill level.

The Pre-Apprenticeship program, which costs \$99, begins on June 13 and [registration is open](#). Students who successfully complete this course are eligible to apply for an 18-month Registered Apprenticeship in XR beginning in September 2022. The Registered Apprenticeship offers apprentices the opportunity to "earn and learn," working as full-time employees with participating employers and receiving pay increases every six months. For information about the program visit: <https://www.canadacollege.edu/menloparksite/programs/UnityDeveloper.php>

"California has always been a leader in technology, but it's also responsible for pushing the status quo when it comes to who defines what that technology is and what it can be," said Joy Horvath, Senior Instructional Designer at Unity. "The California State Chancellor's Office created the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) stands to change that narrative by bringing vital technical training to the most accessible centers of learning in the state: the community college system. By leveling the playing field, the CAI will help redefine who will lead the fourth industrial revolution."

**About Cañada College:** For more than 50 years, Cañada College has provided enriching and life-changing educational opportunities for the residents of San Mateo County. With the support and guidance from award-winning faculty and staff, residents can pursue certificates and degrees for career training or serve as a transfer gateway to four-year colleges and universities. Located in the heart of the Silicon Valley, Cañada College offers day, evening, weekend, in-person and online courses in more than 40 quality instructional programs, including science, business, multimedia, medical assisting, the arts and technical training. Cañada College provides extensive "wrap-around" student support services in counseling, orientation, certificate and degree planning, transfer assistance and tutoring. Begin your Cañada College experience by visiting [canadacollege.edu](http://canadacollege.edu).

# **MEDIA ALERT:**

## **Cañada College and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula MOU Signing Ceremony**

**Monday, October 23, 2023 at 6 p.m.**

On Monday, October 23 at 6 p.m., Cañada College and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula (BGCP) will celebrate the start of the next level in its partnership with a MOU Signing Ceremony. This formalized partnership renews existing commitments and builds a seamless pathway for middle school, high school and college students in Southern San Mateo County.

The MOU includes:

- Expanded Dual Enrollment college courses for students taught at the East Palo Alto Clubhouse
- Middle School Career Exploration: Provide Middle School grade students with general postsecondary advising, orientation and group workshops
- Future Grads High School: Host Summer Academy for rising high school sophomore and juniors to engage in a week-long program focused on college knowledge
- Future Grads Postsecondary: Host college success managers to meet with Future Grads Cañada students on-campus for academic advising and group workshops
- Cañada College and BGCP will host office space on each other's campuses, providing for special programs, events and resources

**WHEN:** Monday, October 23, 2023 at 6 p.m.

**WHAT:** Cañada College and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula Signing Ceremony

*Visuals:* Speaking program, including community leaders and students.  
Signing of agreement

**WHERE:** Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula East Palo Alto Club House  
2031 Pulgas Ave.  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Parking  
Church of the Living God  
2004 Pulgas Ave.  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

**WHO:** Community leaders and students from San Mateo County, San Mateo County Community College District, Cañada College and Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula, including:

- Diane Papan, Assemblymember, District 21
- John Pimentel, Trustee, San Mateo County Community College District
- Melissa Moreno, Interim Chancellor, San Mateo County Community College District
- Kim Lopez, President, Cañada College
- Jennifer Obiaya, CEO, Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula
- Students from Cañada College and Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula

# # #

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Megan Rodriguez Antone

[rodriguezsm@smccd.edu](mailto:rodriguezsm@smccd.edu)

(650) 306-3148

## **Sequoia Union High School District, Cañada College, San Francisco State University and California State University, East Bay Develop Partnership for College Preparation Opportunities**

**Redwood City, Calif., (May 10, 2022)** - In a significant step towards providing more opportunities to access higher education, Sequoia Union High School District (SUHSD), Cañada College, San Francisco State University (SFSU) and California State University, East Bay (CSUEB) have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase college preparation, access and success for SUHSD students and graduates. A goal of the collaboration is to increase the number of SUHSD graduates matriculating into postsecondary higher education, specifically to Cañada College and then to SFSU and CSUEB. The partnership will also support more SUHSD students participating in early college access, with an intentional focus on increasing the participation of students from minoritized communities. It will also develop aspirational leaders with perspectives and practices rooted in equity, advocacy, social justice, and anti-racism.

The agreement will establish ongoing clear and personalized communication with SUHSD students and families about progress being made and resources to support high school graduation, college, career readiness and transition to college. This includes individualized high school, college and career readiness guides that will be sent to all incoming eighth grade students and their families and sent out twice annually to all SUHSD students and their families. "Sequoia Union High School District is committed to educational equity," says Dr. Darnise R. Williams, Superintendent, Sequoia Union High School District. "This partnership will ensure our students are aware of the requirements of higher education and are prepared to continue their academic journey after high school." In preparation for college, every SUHSD Senior will have access to complete the CCCApply (the application for California Community Colleges, including Cañada College) as well as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or DREAM Act applications.

In addition, the partnership aims to grow the number of students taking dual enrollment courses by increasing the number of sections offered to SUHSD high schools annually. This includes expanding the number of high school students participating in the Middle College Program where SUHSD students finish earning their high school requirements and attend Cañada College to start earning college credits. "Cañada College is proud to collaborate with Sequoia Union High School District, San Francisco State University and California State University, East Bay on establishing joint efforts to increase college preparation, access and success for SUHSD students and graduates," said Cañada

College Interim President, Kim Lopez. "The partnership aligns with Cañada College's commitment to increase participation of high school students, particularly from minoritized communities." The agreement also extends to Sequoia Adult School, establishing articulation and dual-enrollment options where students can earn college credit and promote career pathways at Cañada College. These opportunities provide a critical access point to higher education.

For students who plan to continue their academic journey, the agreement establishes clear and efficient transfer pathways from Cañada College to San Francisco State University and California State University, East Bay. "A college education can transform lives, families and communities," stated Lynn Mahoney, Ph.D., President, San Francisco State University. "This partnership will raise awareness among students of the opportunities available to them in the Bay Area and help them map a path to seizing those opportunities." The agreement includes a program that provides tutoring and counseling for cohorts of underrepresented SUHSD Juniors and Seniors through UC A-G completion and on to guaranteed admission at SFSU and CSUEB. The partnership provides high school pathways that result in a certificate and/or meet Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) requirements needed to gain admission into SFSU and CSUEB.

"Students and their families make an important and life-changing commitment when they continue their journey into college. Our alliance as organizations strengthens the support and guidance we can give students, smoothing the way to make higher education more accessible," stated Cathy Sandeen, Ph.D., MBA, President, California State University, East Bay. "These bright and talented students are our Bay Area future leaders and this partnership is an investment in our vibrant region."

The agreement was signed by representatives from Sequoia Union High School District (SUHSD), Cañada College, San Francisco State University (SFSU) and California State University, East Bay (CSUEB) at a commemorative Signing and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony that took place at Sequoia High School on May 5, 2022. Images from the signing ceremony are available up on request.

**About Sequoia Union High School District:** The Sequoia Union High School District annually serves more than 8,900 9th to 12th grade students through its four distinguished comprehensive high schools (Carlmont, Menlo-Atherton, Sequoia, and Woodside), dependent charter school (East Palo Alto Academy), continuation high school (Redwood), Middle College (in collaboration with Cañada College) and other specialized programs and services. The District is also the sponsoring agency for two independent charter high schools (Summit and Everest). SUHSD's Adult School based in Redwood City serves 2,000 students annually. As part of its vision of engaging and preparing all students to excel in a global society, the District offers a rigorous college prep curriculum and support to all students who aspire to higher education, including first-generation college students. For more information:

<https://www.seq.org/>

**About Cañada College:** For more than 50 years, Cañada College has provided enriching and life-changing educational opportunities for the residents of San Mateo County. With the support and guidance from award-winning faculty and staff, residents can pursue certificates and degrees for career training or serve as a transfer gateway to four-year colleges and universities. Located in the heart of the Silicon Valley, Cañada College offers day, evening, weekend, in-person and online courses in more than 40

quality instructional programs, including science, business, multimedia, medical assisting, the arts and technical training. Cañada College provides extensive “wrap-around” student support services in counseling, orientation, certificate and degree planning, transfer assistance and tutoring. Begin your Cañada College experience by visiting [canadacollege.edu](http://canadacollege.edu).

**About San Francisco State University:** San Francisco State University is a doctoral public university serving students from the San Francisco Bay Area, across California and around the world, with nationally acclaimed programs that span a broad range of disciplines. Nearly 30,000 students enroll at the University each year, and its more than 280,000 graduates have contributed to the economic, cultural and civic fabric of San Francisco and beyond. Through them — and more than 1,900 world-class faculty members — SF State proudly embraces its legacy of academic excellence, community engagement and commitment to social justice. For more information, visit [sfsu.edu](http://sfsu.edu).

**About California State University, East Bay:** For 65 years, Cal State East Bay has served the Bay Area as part of the California State University system, providing access to higher education for a diverse student body and advancing regional engagement through its academic programs and leadership. The university has campuses in Hayward and Concord, as well as a professional center in downtown Oakland. With 49 bachelor’s degrees, 58 minors, 37 master’s degrees, 27 credentials and certificates and one doctoral degree, the Cal State East Bay ranks as one of the most diverse four-year public institutions on the U.S. Mainland by the Chronicle of Higher Education. More than 60 percent of its students are the first in their family to go to college.

# # #



## Please Join Us!

You are invited to a community celebration in support of *Free Community College* in San Mateo County, through Senate Bill 893, which is authored by Sen. Josh Becker and co-authored by Assemblymembers Kevin Mullin and Marc Berman.

This bill has been passed by both chambers of the California Legislature and awaits the Governor's signature.

SB 893 will allow the San Mateo County Community College District to use its existing local funds to pay for enrollment fees, books, educational materials and supplies, and basic needs costs such as transportation, food and housing for students most in need. Current law restricts the use of general fund dollars for such items, and SB 893 will make college more accessible and affordable in San Mateo County.

**DATE:** Thursday, September 22, 2022

**TIME:** 11:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:** Cañada College | 4200 Farm Hill Blvd. | Redwood City, CA  
*Outdoors at the Amphitheatre (Between Bldgs. 3, 9 and 13)*

**PARKING:** Lots 2, 5 and 6

Please RSVP at this [link](#) or by emailing Candice Bell at [bellc@smccd.edu](mailto:bellc@smccd.edu).

