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SoCalGas Names 2019 Environmental Champions Initiative Grant Recipients

Utility awards \$400,000 in funding to 26 nonprofits for projects related to clean air, energy, or organic waste diversion

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 3, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Southern California Gas Co. (

today announced the winners of its 2019 Environmental Champions Initiative, which awards grants of up to \$25,000 for projects related to clean air, energy, or organic waste diversion. Twenty-six nonprofits were selected to receive a total of \$400,000 in funding.

"SoCalGas is proud of our annual Environmental Champions initiative and thrilled to partner with this year's group of champions," said George Minter, regional vice president of external affairs and environmental strategy at SoCalGas. "Each organization is leading the way towards improving the quality of air and energy in our region. We are excited to see our champion's projects grow and the impact they make in the community."

Cal Poly Pomona Foundation Inc. (

is a two-time grant recipient for its Healthy Soils & Clean Air project for 2020. The project encourages

Southern California farmers and gardeners to adopt healthy soil practices and improve our environment on a grass-roots level. Soil, if properly managed, can trap carbon and prevent it from escaping into the atmosphere.

"With the SoCalGas Environmental Champions grant, students have been able to connect with communities across Southern California and encourage them to take care of their soil. People we've talked to find it eye-opening that soil is not 'just dirt,' and that taking care of soil improves air quality and mitigates climate change by capturing carbon," said Dr. Aaron Fox, Assistant Professor, Urban and Community Agriculture at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona).

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(<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413->

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"Los Angeles has the largest food insecure population in America and many of the young people in our Corps understand that challenge all too well," said CEO Wendy Butts. "This program is allowing at-risk young adults to gain valuable paid work experience and put food on their own tables by providing food to thousands of others in need. At the same time they are bringing awareness to the growing environmental challenge of food waste. The impact on people and the planet is exponential and we hope to see it grow."

Two-time grant recipient North East Trees ([https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-](https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413)

1&h=1046554367&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.northeasttrees.org%2F&a=North+East+Trees) will use this year's grant to plant 300 drought tolerant trees and renovate an underutilized park within Romana Gardens, a section 8 public housing development in Boyle Heights.

"Not only do trees beautify our community, but they also provide oxygen, improve air quality, lower depression/stress, and are beneficial to the environment in so many other ways. On behalf of North East Trees, I am proud of the growth that our Urban Greening in South LA project has had over the past few months, and the impact it has had on our community," said Joe Laskin, Project and Development Manager at North East Trees. "We thank SoCalGas for recognizing our work and for its generous contribution to our cause."

Other 2019 SoCalGas Environmental Champions include:

- **BREATHE California of Los Angeles County** (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=874648363&u=https%3A%2F%2Fbreathela.org%2F&a=BREATHE+California+of+Los+Angeles+The+Blue+Sky+LA>) The Blue Sky LA program will help the organization clean Southern California's air as Los Angeles prepares for the 2028 Olympics. The organization will engage Los Angeles residents through monthly volunteer opportunities and will promote collaboration while establishing Los Angeles as a global leader in the reduction of harmful pollutants.
- **The Santa Monica Bay Foundation:** The organization's Table-to-Farm Composting for Clean Air

(<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=1398113531&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.santamonicabay.org%2Fexplore%2Four-communities%2Ftable-farm-composting%2F&a=Table-to-Farm+Composting+for+Clean+Air>)

program is a solution for food waste and air pollution in the South Los Angeles community. As part of the program, the Bay Foundation will install four edible garden beds in South Los Angeles parkways, and will educate the community on gardening and food equity.

- **DIY Girls:** Funding will support Invent Girls (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=3629881492&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.diygirls.org%2Fprograms&a=Invent+Girls>), an intensive year-long program that guides thirty high school girls through the engineering design process to build prototypes that address issues in their community.
- **CHOC Foundation:** The Breathmobile Program (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=1741613602&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.choc.org%2Fprograms-services%2Fbreathmobile%2F&a=The+Breathmobile+Program>) is Orange County's only mobile asthma clinic dedicated to increased asthma control for low-income children at Orange County schools and community sites. The Breathmobile brings a range of diagnostic services, education, evaluation, and treatment to more than 300 school-aged children monthly, removing barriers to consistent and comprehensive asthma treatment and providing continuity of care for children and their families.

Since its inception in 2015, the Environmental Champions Initiative, which is funded by Sempra Energy shareholders, has awarded more than 150 grants totaling nearly \$2 million. A complete list of this year's twenty-six grantees can be found here (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=2489931734&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.socalgas.com%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F2019-12%2FN19D0197A%2520-%25202019%2520Environmental%2520Champion%2520Winners%2520v1.pdf&a=here>).

About SoCalGas

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is the largest natural gas distribution utility (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=3541444673&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aga.org%2Fknowledgecenter%2Ffacts-and-data%2Futility-rankings&a=largest+natural+gas+distribution+utility>)

in the United States. SoCalGas delivers affordable, reliable, clean and increasingly renewable natural gas service to 21.8 million customers across 24,000 square miles (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=4118848963&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.socalgas.com%2Fabout-us%2Fcompany-profile&a=24%2C000+square+miles>)

of Central and Southern California, where more than 90 percent of residents use natural gas for heating, hot water, cooking, drying clothes or other uses. Natural gas delivered through the company's pipelines also plays a key role in providing electricity to Californians – about 45 percent of electric power generated (https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=2831477530&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.energy.ca.gov%2Falmanac%2Felectricity_data%2Ftotal_sys) the state comes from gas-fired power plants.

SoCalGas' vision is to be the cleanest natural gas utility in North America (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=0&l=en&o=2660413->

1&h=1390868394&u=https%3A%2F%2Fsempra.mediaroom.com%2Findex.php%3Fs%3D19080%26item delivering affordable and increasingly renewable energy to its customers. In support of that vision, SoCalGas is committed to replacing 20 percent of its traditional natural gas supply with renewable natural gas (RNG) by 2030. Renewable natural gas is made from waste created by dairy farms, landfills and wastewater treatment plants. SoCalGas is also committed to investing in its natural gas system infrastructure while keeping bills affordable for our customers. From 2014 through 2018, the company invested nearly \$6.5 billion to upgrade and modernize its natural gas system to enhance safety and reliability. SoCalGas is a subsidiary of Sempra Energy (<https://c212.net/c/link/?t=O&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=2154928078&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sempra.com%2F&a=Sempra+Energy>) (NYSE: SRE), an energy services holding company based in San Diego. For more information visit [socalgas.com/newsroom](https://c212.net/c/link/?t=O&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=1796567595&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.socalgas.com%2Fnewsroom&a=socalgas.com%2Fnewsroor) connect with SoCalGas on Twitter ([socalgas.com/newsroom](https://c212.net/c/link/?t=O&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=4068100136&u=https%3A%2F%2Ftwitter.com%2Fsocalgas&a=Twitter)) (@SoCalGas), Instagram ([socalgas.com/newsroom](https://c212.net/c/link/?t=O&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=3230137946&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.instagram.com%2Fsocalgas%2F&a=Instagram)) (@SoCalGas) and Facebook ([socalgas.com/newsroom](https://c212.net/c/link/?t=O&l=en&o=2660413-1&h=1885881155&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FSoCalGas%2F&a=Facebook)). (



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