NON-PROFITS PARTNER TO DRIVE COVID-19 VACCINATION AMONG VULNERABLE POPULATIONS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Markkula Center for Applied Ethics and Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County
Collaboration Supported by Grant from Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

SANTA CLARA, Calif.—Santa Clara University’s Markkula Center for Applied Ethics and Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County will collaborate to increase the COVID-19 vaccination rate in disenfranchised and vulnerable communities in Santa Clara County. The coalition of Catholic groups, nonprofits, and community leaders—recipients of a grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation—will undertake a coordinated education, marketing, and outreach campaign highlighting the value and ethics of vaccination.

The California Catholic Conference, the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in California, will also be contributing to the campaign by helping to distribute information and resources to the deep network of communities they serve every day.

As the seat of Silicon Valley, Santa Clara County has a reputation for wealth, and is home to some of the most expensive zip codes in the entire country. But even within the San Francisco Bay Area, many are unaware of the drastic economic disparities in the county. Thousands of households grappling with poverty and crisis are often obscured in data, reports, and media focused on the area’s technology sector. Many vulnerable populations within the county have been marginalized due to the widening economic gap and face challenges accessing the COVID-19 vaccine.

CDC reports show that non-white Americans are comparatively under vaccinated across the country and have disproportionately high infection, hospitalization, and death rates. Nonprofits that have built strong relationships with these communities and have earned their trust are uniquely qualified to provide the needed services to close the vaccine gap and prevent additional deaths.
“Through collaborating with our partners and connecting directly with the vulnerable populations they serve, we hope to create a model for vaccine education and distribution in marginalized communities that can be replicated across California and nationally,” said Don Heider, executive director, Markkula Center for Applied Ethics.

Heider commented on these organizations’ deep experience offering a variety of services to the most vulnerable, including providing critical health and welfare services and addressing food insecurity and housing issues. “Community organizations, including many places of worship, are well positioned to reach the underserved in their neighborhoods who might be facing challenges getting vaccinated.”

All of the resources produced for this campaign, including the following, are available on the campaign website at: https://www.scu.edu/ethics/get-vaccinated/.

- Public Service Announcements (radio and TV)
- Educational flyers
- Answers to frequently asked questions

The campaign also features an ongoing webinar series, where we bring together a community of practitioners to provide up-to-date medical information, share best practices, and discuss the changing landscape around COVID-19 vaccination efforts. Find more information and register for the webinar series at: https://www.scu.edu/events/#!view/event/event_id/276557.

**About Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County**

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara (CCSCC) creates new and lasting pathways for hope, opportunity, and dignity for those living in poverty. In this last year during the pandemic, CCSCC has distributed food for more than 13,000,000 meals and served over 130,000 people in our community and continues through the ongoing recovery. Our programs, serving people of all faiths and beliefs since 1965, focus on support in five critical areas: food, housing, health, education, and economic security. Catholic Charities’ staff and volunteers are working to build a just and compassionate community by alleviating,
preventing, and reducing poverty. For more information, please visit www.CatholicCharitiesSCC.org

About the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics
Founded in 1986 with a seed grant and initial endowment from Linda and A.C. “Mike” Markkula Jr., the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University brings the traditions of ethical thinking to bear on real world problems. Beyond a full range of programs for the SCU community, the Center also serves professionals in fields from business to health care, from government to the social sector, providing innovative approaches to problems from fake news to privacy protection. Through its website and international collaborations, the Center brings ethical decision-making resources to a global audience. For more information, please visit: https://www.scu.edu/ethics/.

Media Contact
Joel Dibble | Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University | 408-554-5116 | jdibble@scu.edu

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