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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 2023

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San Mateo County Board Invests in Training Opportunities, Mentoring for Entrepreneurs and Job Seekers

Redwood City, CA – The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously today to invest nearly \$1.5 million to help entrepreneurs launch businesses and make them grow.

The funds will also help job seekers gain the skills they need to compete for in-demand careers. Programs that include how to gain access to capital will launch through the North Fair Oaks Economic Advancement Center.

“This will be an important step to bring families and individuals closer to economic independence, giving them the right tools and training for advancement” said Supervisor Warren Slocum, who represents that 4th District that includes North Fair Oaks, parts of Menlo Park including Belle Haven, East Palo Alto and Redwood City. “We know there is much talent and treasure within our vulnerable communities, and with the right services, they too can become enterprising small businesses here, or gain employment at some of our local businesses. It is also about equity – and giving others opportunities.”

The investment builds upon work underway for several years to build entrepreneurship for residents in the North Fair Oaks area and to help job seekers gain valuable skills.

Over the last several years, the Board has taken extensive steps to assist households and small businesses that have been impacted by the negative economic consequences of the COVID 19 pandemic. This work will continue.

Two service provider organizations were selected and approved grants to begin the work of the North Fair Oaks Economic Advancement Center. Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center was selected to provide services for local small businesses and entrepreneurs. Their work will be funded from a \$500,000 grant from Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and funds from the federal American Rescue Plan

Act. JobTrain was also selected to provide employment services, including job training, to individuals, households and small businesses in North Fair Oaks.

Classes, tutorials and materials will be available in English and Spanish with a focus on:

- Programs for women.
- Skill building and industry-specific workshops (finance, marketing, operations).
- Technology training.
- Website development.
- Legal workshops on small-business topics (leases, intellectual property, contracts).

The program will also provide specific assistance for entrepreneurs seeking grants for Latinx-owned businesses and information on access to California Microbusiness COVID-19 Relief Grants.

Until a site for the North Fair Oaks Economic Advancement Center is located and leased, the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center and JobTrain will begin their work at Casa Circulo in North Fair Oaks.

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