



PRESS ROOM – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Must! Charities Youth Board Raises \$12,500 to Invest in Future Leaders Through People's Self-Help Housing's CELEBRE Program

San Luis Obispo County, CA — At Must! Charities, we believe leadership is learned through action, and this year, our Youth Board brought that belief to life.

Twenty-seven high school students stepped into their roles as community leaders, dedicating the year to volunteering with and evaluating twelve nonprofits across San Luis Obispo County. Along the way, they asked thoughtful questions, built meaningful relationships, and gained a deeper understanding of the needs and opportunities within their community.

And then, they made a decision.

Together, the Youth Board selected CELEBRE, a program of People's Self-Help Housing, as their fundraising partner and raised \$12,500 to support its mission.

CELEBRE (College Enrollment for Leaders Entering Bright Rewarding Educations) supports low-income and first-generation high school girls on their path to higher education through mentorship, family engagement, workshops, and college tours, helping students access opportunities that might otherwise feel out of reach.

“Thank you to the Must! Charities Youth Board for investing in our students and the future of our community,” said Itzelt Santos, who leads the CELEBRE program. “This investment will ensure that CELEBRE students keep getting the opportunity to tour colleges and build skills that will help them graduate and continue on to successful careers.”

The impact of this investment is already creating powerful full-circle moments.

During a recent visit to Santa Barbara, CELEBRE alumna Michelle, now in her second year at UCSB, gave current students a campus tour. As she reflected on her own experience in the program, she asked what was new with CELEBRE.

When she learned that this year’s Youth Board was raising funds to help sustain the program, her reaction was immediate.

“I can’t wait to give back when I graduate!” she shared, energized by the opportunity to support the next generation.

Michelle spoke about how meaningful it was to see others investing in the same program that helped shape her path, and she offered to return as a mentor for current students, continuing the cycle of impact.

That sense of responsibility and connection is exactly what the Must! Youth Board experience cultivates.

“We’re really aware of the opportunities we’ve had, and we don’t take that lightly,” said Youth Board member Amelia Peterson. “Supporting CELEBRE feels like a way to make sure more students our age have access to those same opportunities.”

The Must! Charities Youth Board is a one-of-a-kind, hands-on leadership program where students engage directly with local nonprofits, gaining a deeper understanding of community needs and the role they can play in addressing them. Through this experience, students don’t just learn about philanthropy; they practice it.

This transformative program is proudly sponsored by JB Dewar, whose continued support helps Must! Charities empower and inspire the next generation of philanthropic leaders in San Luis Obispo County.

At its core, the Youth Board is about action: learning by doing, leading with intention, and recognizing that meaningful change can start at any age.

More information and applications for the 2026-2027 Must! Youth Board will open in July and will be available on our website: mustcharities.org/who-we-are/youth-board/

About Must! Charities:

Must! Charities is a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the model of philanthropy by uniting donors, pooling resources, and investing strategically in our region while empowering nonprofits and educating our community. From the outset, Must! Charities made a bold promise: 100% of donations from the community are used exclusively to directly fund the projects we support. This commitment remains at the heart of everything we do. Must! overhead is funded separately through “Must! Roots,” ensuring that every community dollar goes directly to impact.

About CELEBRE

CELEBRE (College Enrollment for Leaders Entering Bright Rewarding Educations) is a program of People's Self-Help Housing that supports low-income and first-generation high school girls in accessing higher education through mentorship, family engagement, and college readiness programming.

Contact: Cara Wright, Director of Development and Community Engagement, Must! Charities, 805-459-6330 or cara@mustcharities.org