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NEWS RELEASE

SoCalGas Champions Restaurant Recovery with Additional \$525,000 in Support for the Restaurants Care Resilience Fund

Grants will support equipment upgrades, employee retention, and deferred maintenance, for local-owned restaurants

LOS ANGELES – April 11, 2022 – SoCalGas today announced a second \$525,000 donation to the California Restaurant Foundation's (CRF) Restaurants Care Resilience Fund. Last year, SoCalGas co-founded the Fund to help small businesses recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic and was also a leading donor, committing \$525,000 in 2021. Qualifying restaurants throughout SoCalGas' service area are encouraged to apply for a \$3,000 grant starting April 15th. These grants aim to support equipment upgrades, employee retention, and deferred maintenance, allowing small restaurants to recover after nearly two years of incurring debt, losses, and shouldering rising costs.

The [application](#) period closes on April 30.

"Restaurants and the families and employees that run them showed incredible resilience and strength as they adapted their businesses to serve all of us during the pandemic," said David Barrett, vice president and general counsel at SoCalGas and California Restaurant Foundation board member. "Last year's grants provided essential support to local restaurants as they struggled to keep their doors open. This year, grant funds will provide support for kitchens or crews, while overall supporting restaurant resiliency."

"We are honored that SoCalGas has returned as a partner for this year's Resilience Fund, and extremely grateful they identified the program as being worthy of one of their largest charitable donations planned for this year," said Alycia Harshfield, Executive Director of California Restaurant Foundation. "SoCalGas' generous contribution will help independent restaurant owners across central and southern California invest in their people, their equipment and ultimately, the long-term health and success of their business."

This year, the Restaurants Care Resilience Fund will award nearly \$1.5 million in grants to small businesses in 2022. Last year, 318 restaurants statewide received grants including Rajas con Crema, in

the City of Maywood, run by wife-and-husband team Alicia and Javier Solorzano, who opened their dream Mexican restaurant after more than 16 years in the catering business. The dishes are inspired by Alicia's travels, recipes from friends, and family, while adding her own touch.

"We are extremely thankful to the California Restaurant Fund and SoCalGas for the grant, and for creating this fund to help local restaurants," said Javier Solorzano, owner of Rajas con Crema. "Our concern was to survive, and the grant helped us give back to our community in a time of need. We were able to donate warm meals to local families while paying for our employee's time. I highly encourage other restaurants to apply for this grant, it can make all the difference."

"We are grateful to SoCalGas for their ongoing commitment to community and small businesses through this grant opportunity and many other efforts, including their food distributions in the City of Maywood and Southeast Los Angeles during the pandemic," said Maywood Mayor Heber Marquez.

Another grant recipient from 2021, Natalia Pereira of Woodspoon, a Brazilian restaurant in downtown Los Angeles said, "The Resilience Fund is such a special program on so many levels-the people and the program are wonderful, and this initiative has such an incredible impact on the restaurant community throughout the region!" Woodspoon recently received the MICHELIN Bib Gourmand award that recognizes restaurants with "value for money."

The Zagat-rated Shiro Restaurant in South Pasadena has been serving French food over 34 years and received a grant award last year. According to Shiro owner Irene Yokoi, "There are no words to express our gratitude for receiving your funds during our turmoil to cope with Covid-19 closures. It has helped us great deal especially for covering the cost of payroll."

In addition to providing financial support to restaurants, SoCalGas offers [programs](#) and services for selecting energy-efficient equipment for any commercial customer. Restaurant owners can schedule a "try before you buy" equipment demo to test-drive gas cooking equipment before making a purchase, sign up for an energy survey by a utility expert, and receive information on rebates and incentives on qualified gas cooking equipment, water heating, heat recovery products and installation of eligible energy-efficient upgrades.

Restaurants Care Resilience Fund applications will be open from April 15-30, 2022 and can be found at www.restaurantscare.org/resilience. Grants will be available to all California-based restaurant owners with less than three units and less than \$3 million in revenue. Priority will be given to restaurants owned by women and people of color. Last year, the Resilience Fund awarded 318 grants to independent restaurant owners, 65 percent of which were women-owned and 83 percent person of color-owned.

SoCalGas' partnership with the California Restaurant Fund is part of the company's [ASPIRE 2045](#) sustainability goals, which includes a commitment to invest \$50 million to drive positive change in diverse and underserved communities over the next five years. In addition to supporting the Restaurant Care Resilience Fund, in 2021, SoCalGas contributed \$9.6 million in total community investment, \$4.8 million to support health & human services, and \$2.3 million to education causes. In 2021, SoCalGas' Fueling Our Communities program provided over 9,800 free meals, over 2,600 grocery bags, and 2,520 restaurant gift cards totaling \$60,400 in support of 25 local restaurants.

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About SoCalGas

Headquartered in Los Angeles, [SoCalGas®](#) is the [largest gas distribution utility](#) in the United States. SoCalGas delivers affordable, reliable, and increasingly renewable gas service to 21.8 million consumers across [24,000 square miles](#) of Central and Southern California. Gas delivered through the company's pipelines will continue to play a key role in California's clean energy transition—providing electric grid reliability and supporting wind and solar energy deployment.

SoCalGas' mission is to build the [cleanest, safest and most innovative energy company in America](#). In support of that mission, SoCalGas is committed to the goal of achieving [net-zero greenhouse gas emissions](#) in its operations and delivery of energy by 2045 and to replacing 20 percent of its traditional natural gas supply to core customers 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 gas delivery infrastructure while keeping bills affordable for customers. SoCalGas is a subsidiary of [Sempra](#) (NYSE: SRE), an energy services holding company based in San Diego.

For more information visit socalgas.com/newsroom or connect with SoCalGas on [Twitter](#) (@SoCalGas), [Instagram](#) (@SoCalGas) and [Facebook](#).

About the California Restaurant Foundation (CRF):

California is home to more than 90,000 eating and drinking places that ring up more than \$72 billion in sales and employ more than 1.6 million workers, making restaurants an indisputable driving force in the state's economy. The California Restaurant Foundation is a non-profit that empowers and invests in California's restaurant workforce. Founded in 1981, CRF supports the restaurant community through relief grants for restaurant workers facing a hardship, job and life skills training for 13,500 high school students each year, and scholarships. For more information visit www.calrestfoundation.org.