

For Immediate Release

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City of Ventura partners with Aera Energy to provide Thanksgiving meal kits to local community members

Ventura, Calif.– This week, the City of Ventura and Aera Energy partnered to provide 120 Thanksgiving meals to low-income families enrolled in the Ventura Unified School District. Each Thanksgiving meal included a turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables, a pie, and other traditional thanksgiving meal sides.

"Many of these families, identified by the school district, rely on this program each year to help make ends meet," said City of Ventura Recreation Manager Emily Fox. "The holidays can be financially challenging for many. We're grateful to local community partners that help us alleviate some of those burdens during this season of giving."

Thanks to a more than \$4,300 donation from Aera Energy, the City purchased ingredients for the Thanksgiving meal kits. Meals were packed into reusable bags by employees and volunteers from the City and Aera on Monday, November 21, at the Westpark Community Center. The bags were dropped off at schools throughout the Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) by City staff and distributed to select families by VUSD staff before the Thanksgiving holiday.

"Aera is committed to improving the lives of citizens in the communities where we live and work," said Aera External Affairs Advisor Amy Fonzo. "We see that rising costs for life's necessities are making it even more difficult for people to justify spending their limited funds on a single Thanksgiving meal. We hope this food allows our residents a moment to pause and enjoy time spent with family over a hearty meal this Thanksgiving."

According to market research firm IRI, Thanksgiving meals this year will cost 13.5% more than they did a year ago, putting an additional burden on families this holiday season. IRI measures items including turkey and other meat, baking essentials, beverages, and popular side dishes in its list of Thanksgiving foods.

For more information about the City of Ventura's Parks and Recreation Department, please visit www.cityofventura.ca.gov/ParksRecreation.



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