

# *Chabot College*

## *For Immediate Release*

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### **Chabot College and the City of Hayward Connect on Project Addressing Water Needs of the Community**

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(Hayward, CA) - Chabot College and the City of Hayward have teamed up to conduct research that will address the water needs of the Tennyson Corridor community.

Spearheaded by Chabot College instructors Tom deWit, Sean McFarland and Eric Heltzel, and students in Chabot's Student Initiative Center, the project uses Proposition 1 funds to research the water needs of the community.

"We're sharing a holistic picture of water in Hayward and crafting questions and ways for citizens to give feedback," said deWit. "We're sharing information about Hayward's water assets and how water works in the city and treating the city's water treatment plant as an asset. It's one of the most cutting-edge, environmental treatment plants out there."

The project stems from last year's Tennyson Corridor project. Funded by a grant from Pepperdine University's Davenport Foundation, the project involved students interviewing 150 Tennyson Corridor residents about the challenges faced within the community, writing essays on their findings and translating citizen concerns into artwork that was displayed at Hayward City Hall. From that project, students this past summer read the essays, studied the art, searched for trends and came up with projects that could address the issues faced within the community.

Within the scope of the work Chabot is undertaking, students will host community workshops, conduct interviews with residents in Hayward's Tennyson Corridor, and present their findings to the Hayward City Council. Organizers will also participate in bi-weekly progress report phone calls and coordinate with Rising Sun's California Youth Energy Specialists (CYES) program to obtain research the group collected over the summer. Students will then take the findings and craft vision plans on how the community's goals can be attained.

"We have teams of students who are turning up some of the pavement to expose soil to create community gardens," said Heltzel. "There are projects around sustainable food systems in South Hayward that are related to Hayward's vision plan but are also tied to the water project."

All work on the water project is to be completed in spring 2019.

"We are interacting with city planners and students are learning the language of city planning and how to fit our work into how the city categorizes their projects," said Heltzel. "Part of the reason Davenport gave us the money to do these projects is because they had never seen or heard of a city collaborating with a school to create a revitalization project and do a vision plan. For us, we're really interested in learning if a relationship between a college and a city can work. So far, it has been working but we also want to see if we can take it on the road and other cities and colleges can collaborate and adopt what we've been doing."

"The students have been loving it," added deWit. "They've been giving a lot of testimonials about how it's quite literally changing their lives. For us, that's the big picture. This is not abstract work. They can see and experience that what they're learning has application and they respond to that."

As part of the project, Chabot will host a symposium on December 7 where the relationship between the city, college and community will be explored.

### **About Chabot College**

Chabot College in Hayward is a comprehensive community college in the heart of a thriving, diverse community where students of all ages and backgrounds can get a high quality education at an affordable price. The college awards associate degrees and certificates, and specializes in university transfer, workforce training, and lifelong learning opportunities. <http://www.chabotcollege.edu/>

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