



**CAFES Cohort III Partners**

**Santa Cruz County Probation**

**Janus of Santa Cruz**

**Goodwill Central Coast**

**Conflict Resolution Center**

**Santa Cruz County Office of the Public Defender**

**Santa Cruz Superior Court**

**Santa Cruz District Attorney's Office**

**Neighborhood Justice Program**

**Applied Survey Research**

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**Conflict Resolution Center**

***CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER***

**Conflict Resolution Center (CRC) has been working in partnership with the District Attorney's office for the last 4 years to provide first time offenders an alternative to the criminal justice system with the Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP), formerly Neighborhood Courts. NJP offers people charged with misdemeanor charges the opportunity to engage in a restorative justice conference with volunteer community panelists to discuss the impacts of their actions, the harm it caused, and make agreements to repair the harm.**

**The program has grown immensely since it started in 2020 serving more and more participants. In October 2024, we did the 4th Community Panelist training where we trained 18 new community volunteer panelists, including 3 bilingual panelists to serve our monolingual Spanish speaking participants.**

**CRC's Jill Borba works with members of the DA's office to provide monthly meetings for community panelists to continue their learning with expert speakers on topics relevant to their roles in this program. Last year a few of the topics covered included substance use disorder, autism, cultural humility and immigration law. These meetings are also a chance for panelists to connect, get to know each other better, and build community.**

**CRC's Alaya Vautier recently created and led a three-day training for nine select volunteers to become facilitators for the NJP victim-offender dialogue (VOD) process. This is a part of the program that allows people directly harmed by these crimes to meet with the person who caused harm. These dialogues allow the victim to fulfill many needs that are not often met through the more common justice paths. This may include sharing the impacts of the incident, asking questions and finding closure, but it is unique to each individual. This is also an opportunity for the person who caused harm to be held accountable, to "make things right" and to heal feelings of shame.**

**The following quote came from a trainee of the VOD training.**

**"I loved the activities because everyone got to get up and move, but also because I think interactive learning is so much more effective. I appreciated all of the discussion and group learning and support. It was an awesome training."**

**Jill Borba**

**Workplace Mediation and Training Manager**