



**Valencia College District Board of Trustees
Foundation Report
May 9, 2024**

PepsiCo Partnership

In 2021, PepsiCo Foundation launched a \$40 million comprehensive scholarship initiative to reduce barriers that community college students face in accessing higher education, completing their programs, and entering promising careers. The initiative is comprised of two scholarship programs—the **Uplift Scholarship** program for students seeking an associate degree or trade certificate and the **S.M.I.L.E. (Success Matters in Life and Education) Scholarship** for graduating community college students transferring to four-year degree colleges and universities. Both initiatives give students an inside track to career opportunities at PepsiCo and deepen the workforce partnership between PepsiCo and the selected colleges.

Valencia College was selected to participate in the Uplift Scholarship program for a third year and is one of 20 community colleges in the program. Since 2021, Valencia College Foundation has received grants totaling \$750,000 to support scholarships and emergency financial assistance for students enrolled in select associate degree and accelerated skills training programs. The grant also includes funding for a dedicated coordinator to provide students with individualized wraparound support to ensure their success. To date, 164 Valencia College students have been PepsiCo Foundation Uplift Scholars—45 associate degree students and 119 accelerated skills training students.

This year, Valencia College was one of two new community college's selected to participate in PepsiCo Foundation's S.M.I.L.E. Scholarship program. Only five community colleges in the country have been selected to participate in this program since its inception. Ten Valencia College S.M.I.L.E. Scholars will be selected to receive a transfer scholarship of up to \$25,000 per year for a maximum of two years (totaling up to \$50,000) to pursue a bachelor's degree at a transfer institution.

In addition to scholarships, PepsiCo Foundation's S.M.I.L.E. Scholars receive comprehensive professional development including:

- one-on-one mentoring by PepsiCo leaders,
- financial literacy training through webinars and personalized one-on-one coaching,
- exposure to PepsiCo careers through the Kickstart Sophomore Leadership Program, and
- opportunities to engage with PepsiCo executives through fireside chats and skills development workshops.

Valencia College's ten S.M.I.L.E. Scholars will be notified and announced in late May.