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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Pacific Pride Foundation Opens New Office in Santa Maria**

**Santa Maria, Calif., March 28, 2018** – Pacific Pride Foundation (PPF), providing programs and services to more than 10,000 people in Santa Barbara County, opened a new office this month in downtown Santa Maria.

At 123 S. College Drive, PPF holds walk-in testing hours for free and anonymous HIV and Hep C tests along with the only syringe exchange program in the county every Wednesday from 4:00-6:00 pm. Education about harm reduction, PrEP, and opioid overdose prevention is given in the office individually and in presentations across the county in both English and Spanish.

The location will also be a home for youth programs, including a monthly group for LGBTQ+ youth ages 12-17 and their allies to connect, meet new friends, and find support. The group, meeting every second Monday of the month, is run by a licensed therapist and youth specialists from PPF and includes guest speakers from the community, activities, and discussion topics.

PPF's North County office will also host the (90) Days of Summer Program, a 10-week summer program in which Youth Advocate Leaders implement and co-lead a life skills-building curriculum. After organizing and leading (90) Days of Summer, Youth Advocate Leaders also commit to leading their Genders & Sexualities Alliance clubs at their individual schools. PPF provides support for these GSA clubs at middle schools and high schools across the county all year long.

Pacific Pride Foundation is excited to continue being a resource for Santa Maria and surrounding communities, supporting harm reduction efforts and LGBTQ+ youth. Community members can learn more about PPF's North County programs and services by visiting [pacificpridefoundation.org](http://pacificpridefoundation.org) or calling 805-963-3636 x108.

*PPF is the largest LGBTQ+ center between Los Angeles and San Francisco, serving all of Santa Barbara County, and partnering with 35 other educational and nonprofit agencies to create a thriving and visible LGBTQ+ community and prevent the transmission of HIV and HEP-C. PPF provides services and programs to more than 10,000 clients in the inclusive and diverse LGBTQ+ community including youth programs, elder programs, counseling services, sensitivity trainings, community events, and advocacy on LGBTQ+ issues.*

*PPF directly prevents the transmission of disease through its HIV/AIDS and HEP-C testing and prevention outreach and education, delivering 1300 free tests in the past year. PPF is the leader in programs for LGBTQ+ youth, serving 200 kids with mental health, suicide prevention, and anti-bullying programs, while providing them with a safe place and leadership opportunities. PPF is addressing the opioid crisis through the only clean needle exchange program in the county, which collects about 100,000 used needles every year, and distributing Narcan kits, which have saved 90 people from potentially fatal overdoses in the past year.*

*For more information or to make a donation please visit <https://pacificpridefoundation.org>*