



HEP Fresno Celebrates 25 Years of Success!

HEP Fresno is celebrating a milestone achievement with the announcement of a new five-year grant to continue providing GED services to the farmworker community.

HEP Fresno Secures Fifth Consecutive Grant for Farmworker GED Program

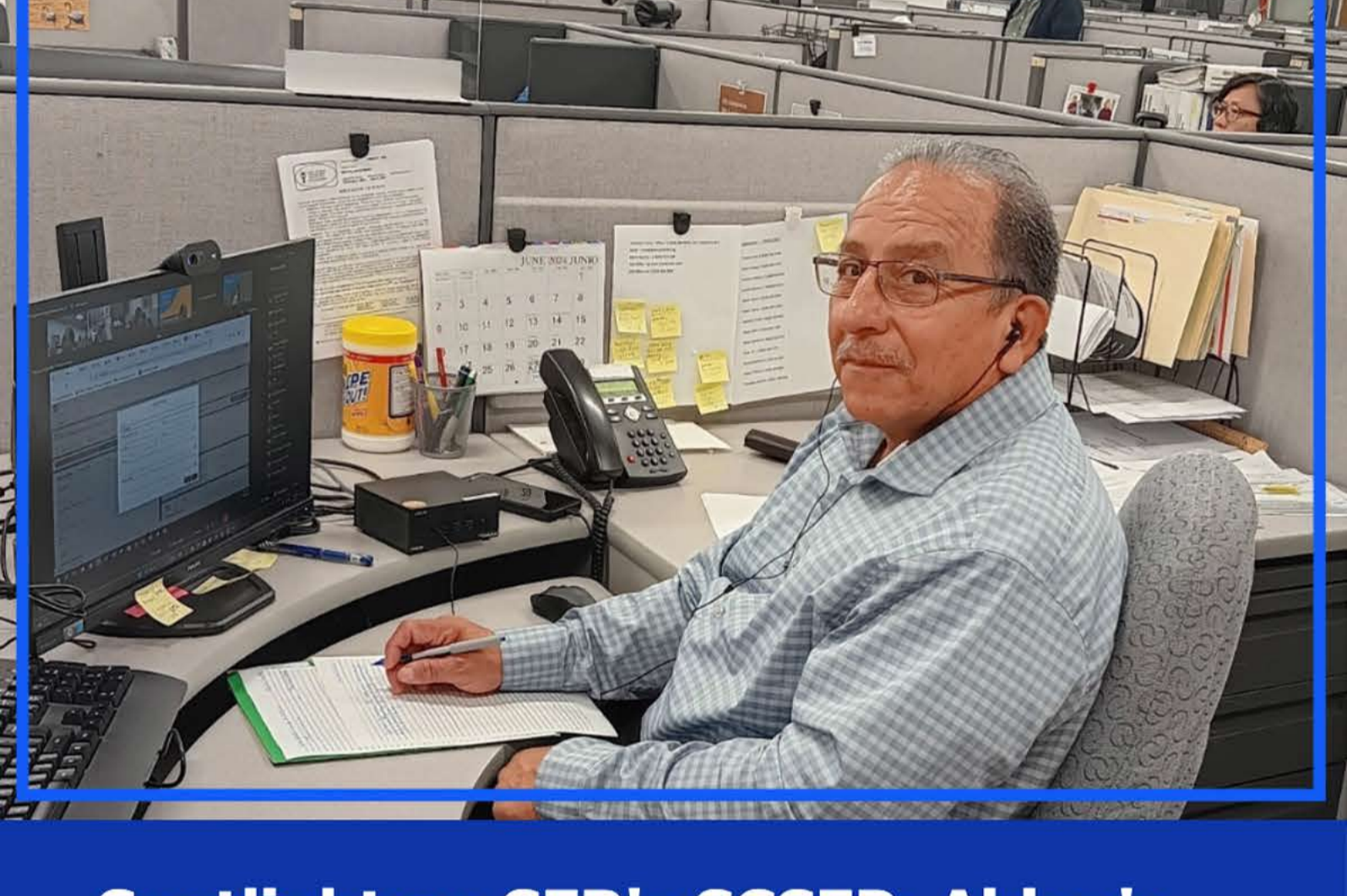
Exciting news for HEP Fresno! We have been awarded the incredible opportunity to provide GED services to our farmworker population for another five years. This marks our fifth consecutive five-year grant, celebrating 25 years of transformative impact. Starting July 1, 2024, we will proudly enter our 26th year of service.

This funding cycle reached the maximum level of \$475,000 per year and received an outstanding 98 out of 100 points on the application. Over the years, Fresno HEP has proudly graduated 2,773 individuals with their GEDs, proving that the GED can and does change lives.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the United States Department of Education, the dedicated staff who assisted in the grant application, all supporting entities, and, most importantly, our resilient students who continue to embody the spirit of "YES we can!"



[Check out more of our graduates](#)



Spotlight on SER's SCSEP: Aldon's Inspiring Journey Through SCSEP

Aldon Avila's journey took a remarkable turn when he became a participant in the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in November 2019, driven by necessity. A proud and responsible man, Aldon had been working full-time while caring for his mother and raising his son. However, life threw him a curveball—he found himself unemployed just as his mother fell ill, all while still supporting his son. This challenging period left him relying solely on General Relief and Cal Fresh for income.

Despite these hardships, Aldon never lost hope. He tirelessly searched for employment, though success eluded him. On the brink of homelessness, he sought help at the Living and Learning Center in Sun Valley. There, he was introduced to SER's SCSEP. Skeptical at first—having never heard of a program that would pay him to learn new skills—he cautiously enrolled and began his training.

It wasn't long before Aldon realized the truth about SCSEP: he was acquiring new skills, gaining valuable experience, and rebuilding his confidence to re-enter the workforce. His unwavering work ethic and determination soon caught the attention of his Employment & Training Specialist (ETS), who promoted him to Participant Assistant (PST). In this role, Aldon excelled, assisting with the daily activities of SCSEP. His outstanding performance led to his selection for the ETS position in LA County when it became available.

We are thrilled to have Aldon on our team and eagerly anticipate the positive impact he will make. His story is a testament to the power of perseverance and the transformative potential of the SCSEP.

[Learn more about our SCSEP Program](#)

HEP Fresno Success Story: Lilia Becerril

Lilia Becerril first heard about HEP through a friend who had enrolled in the program. Inspired by their success, she joined the program and graduated in just five months in 2016. Following her graduation, she enrolled at Fresno City College, but personal struggles and her legal status forced her to leave and focus on work.

Undeterred, Lilia channeled her determination into founding her own non-profit organization, Familias en Acción. This organization is dedicated to empowering low-income families by connecting them with beneficial programs and resources. Lilia's passion for serving her community shines through in her work. She often says, "Although some of us weren't born here, we should do our best to better our community because this is our home."

Lilia credits SER-HEP for the support and opportunities that helped her improve academically. She now hopes to inspire others to pursue their dreams and make a significant impact in their communities, no matter the obstacles they face.



Lilia Becerril

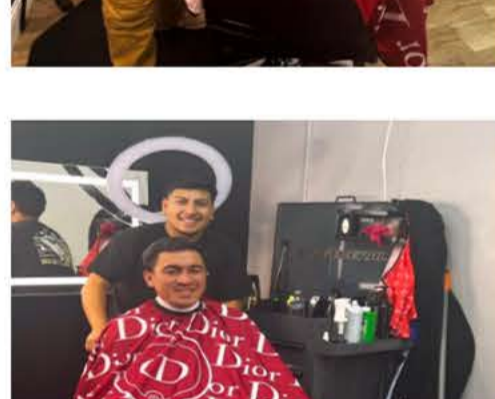
NFJP of Santa Maria Success Story: Pablo Pantoja

Pablo Pantoja, a 22-year-old with a passion for hair, is the proud son of Mexican immigrants who have worked in agriculture since arriving in the United States. From a young age, Pablo enjoyed cutting hair and often practiced on his relatives. Despite his growing passion, the dream of becoming a professional barber seemed unattainable due to financial constraints.

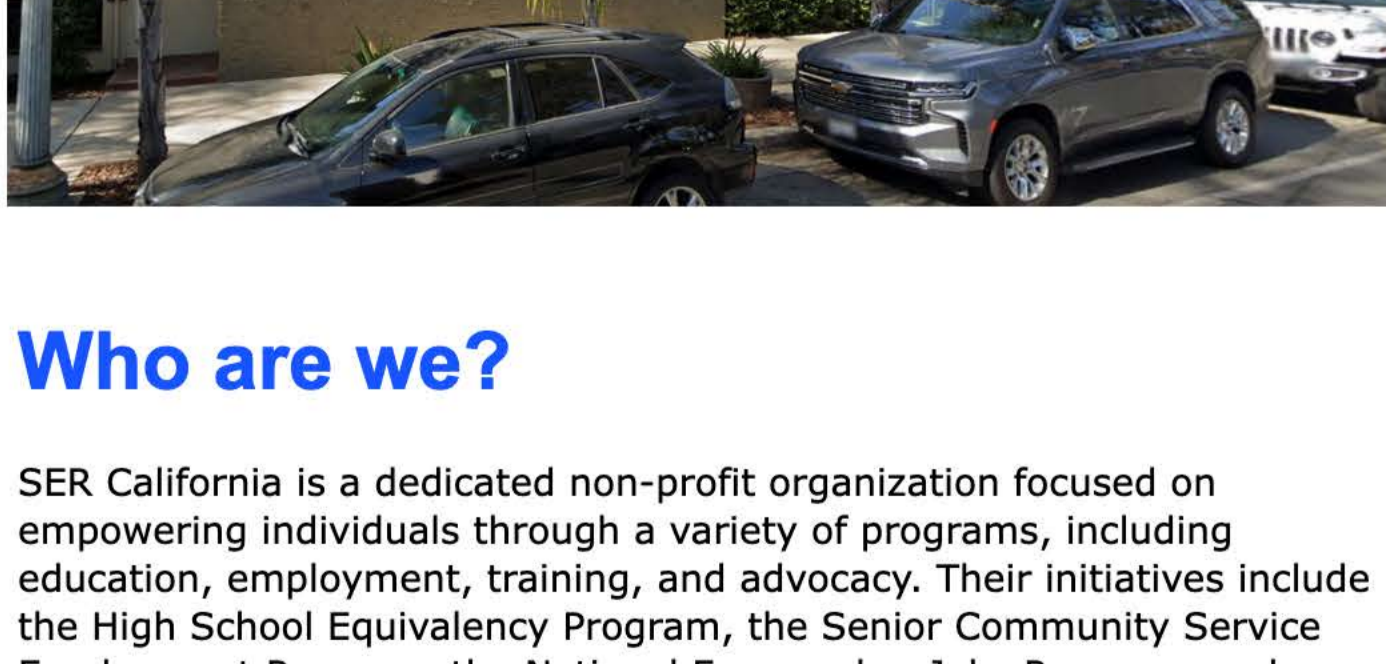
In 2021, Pablo's prospects changed dramatically when he discovered the National Farmworker Jobs Program. With their support, he enrolled in the Cosmoton Barber Academy, with the tuition covering his \$17,000 tuition. His journey wasn't without challenges. During his second year, personal issues threatened his attendance, but his dedicated case manager provided the encouragement he needed to stay on track.

On February 20, 2024, Pablo proudly graduated from Cosmoton Barber Academy. He is now diligently studying to take his California state exam to become a licensed barber. This program granted him an invaluable opportunity that he could never have afforded on his own. Determined to honor the investment SER-Jobs for Progress, Inc. in Santa Maria made in him, Pablo worked hard and never gave up.

Pablo extends his heartfelt gratitude to the amazing staff at the Santa Maria office. Their support and belief in him have turned his dream into reality. Now, he is ready to embark on his career as a professional barber, a testament to the power of perseverance and the transformative impact of the National Farmworker Jobs Program.



Pablo "Mr.Barber" Pantoja



Who are we?

SER California is a dedicated non-profit organization focused on empowering individuals through a variety of programs, including education, employment, training, and advocacy. Their initiatives include the High School Equivalency Program, the Senior Community Service Employment Program, the National Farmworker Jobs Program, and Housing assistance.

SER California takes immense pride in hearing the success stories of program participants whose lives have been positively transformed.

Their commitment to making a lasting impact on California communities is evident through the personal growth and achievements of those they serve.

If you or anyone you know could benefit from our programs, we encourage you to reach out to us. We are eager to extend our impact and positively change more lives through our comprehensive services.



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