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Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties are among the top counties in the U.S. for numbers of food-insecure individuals. According to California Food Advocates, in 2018, there are almost two million food insecure community members in these counties. To address this situation, Joe Prickitt, Sr. Director at UC San Diego Center for Community Health, in partnership with Northgate Gonzalez Market, secured \$6.8 million from the US Department of Agriculture to develop and implement the Más Fresco! More Fresh Program in these three counties, reaching food stamp recipients (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP) by allocating financial incentives toward the purchase of fruits and vegetables to alleviate hunger and improve access to healthy food, while also educating consumers about healthy eating. The program provides a seamless process that allows participants to instantaneously earn and redeem financial incentives by buying fresh fruits and vegetables with SNAP benefits on their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards at participating Northgate Gonzalez Markets. For every dollar spent on fruits and vegetables, program participants earn a free dollar, up to \$100 a month for the duration of the grant, to purchase and consume more fruits and vegetables for better health.

In addition to the development of this national model benefit redemption program for large retailers, key program results to date indicate a statistically significant increase in the purchase of fruits and vegetables among program participants, as well as a statistically significant increase in program participant food security levels, along with increased affordability and consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Additional successes include a recent award that will increase the reach of Más Fresco to 41 stores via online enrollment, enrolling up to 30,000 low-income residents facing hunger in southern California. Joe also continues to secure match dollars (\$3.4 million to date) and engage non-traditional partners to implement new market strategies. These include promotional discounted pricing and in-store and circulated publication promotions on fruits and vegetables. He has also been key to securing the initial buy-in and on-going support at the corporate level. He was influential in securing the necessary support from the Northgate Information Technology team and their technology providers toward the development of a truly innovative benefit redemption point-of-sale system.

Joe has engaged over 100 partners across the state, including local health department SNAP-Ed implementing agencies, SNAP offices, healthcare, produce vendors and non-profits that integrate with existing Northgate health promotion programs and partner with Mas Fresco. This work generated extensive local and national media attention, including CNN, LA Times, San Diego Tribune, Orange County Register, National Public Radio, Kaiser Health News, PEW Charitable Trust News, USA News, NIFA USDA Impacts and HealthLine. This resulted in an invitation from the Chilean Ministry of Health and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization for Joe to present in Chile on programs and policies to increase the purchase, consumption and production for fruits and vegetables.

Additionally, this project appears to be the only such project nationally with a Latino-focused supermarket chain, and it has stimulated a number of company-initiated community and business initiatives with potential to transfer to similar medium-size independent supermarket chains. Más Fresco is not just like any program. It is a food and social justice program that if scaled, can positively affect our local economies, healthcare and food insecurity. The goal of Más Fresco is to institutionalize financial incentives under the Farm Bill and make this incentive available for all U.S. residents facing hunger, including our college students.

Joe's innovation, creativity and dedication to reducing health disparities has defined his entire career. Another example of his work is the development of the Rethink Your Drink Campaign, one of the nation's most successful health promotion chronic disease prevention programs now under the California Department of Public Health and Center for Disease Control. This initiative advocates for policies and programs aimed at reducing the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages at the state and national levels.

Joe has created breakthrough programs that attack one of the most 'wicked' constellations of public health problems in California: hunger and healthy food access. His innovation, leadership and his commitment to excellence have benefited thousands of low-income families and make him an ideal candidate for the UCSD Exemplary Staff Employee of the Year Award.