

# Valley Clean Air Now (Valley CAN)

## Promoting Cleaner Air and a Skilled Workforce in California's San Joaquin Valley

### The Challenge

California's San Joaquin Valley is home to some of the worst air quality in the country as well as being one of the most economically disadvantaged regions in the state. The Valley has many rural communities that are far removed from the bustling urban centers nearby. While this presents several challenges, there is also an opportunity to reach often overlooked communities about the Electric Vehicle (EV) lifestyle – from ownership to employment opportunities. EV education and awareness in these areas must start from square one and be accessible and available to these audiences on their terms. Intentional programming that ranges from an introduction to the EV concept to providing the resources to make an actual purchase is also important. In addition to offering education programs centered around getting people behind the wheel, there is also an opportunity, and need, to educate and train the next generation of skilled EV technicians in this region. Developing and implementing EV job training and placement programs will set the San Joaquin Valley on a course of near-term economic growth and long-term stability as we move toward an electric future.

### The Solution

Due to the depth and breadth of their experience and reach in their communities, Valley CAN was awarded funding in 2021 under both Electrify America investments in zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) education, awareness and marketing (\$1.6 million total in STEM and workforce development and \$3 million total in Low Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIC/DACs)). This builds on a 2018 Electrify America investment in a group of California Community-Based Organizations, including Valley CAN.

Their work in the education and awareness space included partnerships with other community groups to implement comprehensive campaigns offering San Joaquin Valley low-income and disadvantaged communities the opportunity to drive ZEVs and provide hands-on help with qualifying and applying for ZEV incentives. In addition to these community Clean Cars 4 All clinics and Tune In & Tune Up events, they also provided extended purchase support, including coordination with ZEV dealerships throughout the qualification and sales process.

On the STEM and workforce development side, they developed and implemented a series of ZEV maintenance and repair courses in coordination with Bakersfield College, which went on to serve as a pilot program for other community colleges. Development of this program included creating a curriculum, training the instructors, and providing job placement assistance after completion, utilizing relationships with local ZEV dealerships throughout the region.

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### About Valley CAN

Valley Clean Air Now is committed to quantifiably reducing air emissions in California's San Joaquin Valley, the region with the worst air quality in the United States. They seek to improve public health and quality of life in disadvantaged communities by qualifying low-income residents for multiple incentive-based programs, primarily focused on vehicle repair and replacement programs, which aim to reduce air pollution, address climate issues and reduce transportation costs.

*Electrify America funded various Valley CAN ZEV education and awareness, and STEM and workforce development programs to promote all aspects of the EV experience.*



**Valley Clean Air Now (Valley CAN), *Continued***

**The Results**

By leveraging their relationships and expertise, Valley CAN had a measurable impact in their communities on all fronts. **Reaching more than 5,000 residents** at Clean Cars 4 All clinics held in every San Joaquin Valley community, **2,500 EV funding applications were submitted** in 2021 and **74% of car buyers chose an EV for their next vehicle**. Additionally, a significant number of people got behind the wheel of a EV for the first time at **eight Tune In & Tune Up events** held in rural communities throughout the region.

The Bakersfield College ZEV maintenance and repair courses were also extremely successful, with full enrollment in both the **introductory summer course (14 students)** and **expanded fall course (16 students)**. In addition to course enrollment, **six participants are now working in some type of ZEV maintenance capacity** in the San Joaquin Valley and **similar courses have been offered at seven California community colleges**.



**More than 5,000** residents reached

**8** Tune In & Tune Up events held

**2,500** EV Funding applications submitted

→

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**14** students

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