

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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South32 Hermosa and Santa Cruz County Provisional Community College District Sign Memorandum of Understanding to Explore Educational and Workforce Development Opportunities

MOU solidifies South32's commitment to an 80% local workforce through partnership

South32 Hermosa and the Santa Cruz County Provisional Community College District (SCCPCCD) are pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining terms for collaboration opportunities aimed at designing and developing workforce training and post-secondary educational programs benefitting Santa Cruz County residents.

This partnership reflects the shared commitment of both organizations to build a stronger, more resilient local workforce through targeted training and educational opportunities tailored to meet the needs of Santa Cruz County's evolving economic landscape.

"South32 is committed to developing a homegrown workforce needed to operate Hermosa and support our broader community by prioritizing local hiring," said Skylië Estep, South32 Human Resources Director, North America. "We look forward to defining workforce training opportunities with SCCPCCD, which will help us meet our target of hiring 80 percent of the South32 Hermosa full-time operational employees from Santa Cruz County. SCCPCCD, as the region's authorized provider of post-secondary education, is uniquely positioned to support these workforce development efforts."

Under the terms of the MOU, SCCPCCD and South32 will work together to identify and pursue specific collaborations, including the development of educational programs, training equipment, and more broadly, in partnership with the [Workforce Development Executive Committee](#), educational facilities designed to support current and future needs for all stakeholders in the County.

SCCPCCD will assume primary responsibility for developing curriculum and managing program implementation in line with its institutional standards while South32 will lend its support and expertise to assist in the development and execution of these educational initiatives, ensuring alignment with industry needs and helping prepare residents for meaningful careers in the local workforce.

“We’ve been working with the South32 team for some time now to better understand the county’s training and education needs, as well as the company’s future workforce needs, to develop mutually beneficial programs. This agreement lays the foundation for a long-term partnership between SCCPCCD and South32 that will enhance education, promote career readiness, and create economic opportunities for all County residents,” said Greg Lucero, SCCPCCD CEO.

Electrician Certificate Program to Begin

Just in time for back-to-school season, SCCPCCD, with South32’s support, will begin its first Electrician Certificate Program with a cohort of 16-students, all from Santa Cruz County. The 32-credit course across three semesters offered through Pima Community College will be taught at the Santa Cruz Center. Classes will begin August 21, 2025, and conclude at the end of summer 2026.

South32 Hermosa will invest upwards of \$440,000 to help Santa Cruz Center prepare for the program including full scholarships for all 16 students and classroom modifications.

This program will serve as a blueprint for future programs intended to equip Santa Cruz County residents with the technical skills needed for other skilled trade and operational careers.

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About South32 Hermosa

Located in a historic mining district in the Patagonia Mountains of Southern Arizona, South32 Hermosa is currently the only advanced mine development project in the United States that could produce two federally designated critical minerals — manganese and zinc — both of which are essential minerals for powering the nation’s energy future. Learn more at www.south32hermosa.com.

Hermosa is a polymetallic development comprised of a zinc-lead-silver sulfide deposit, a battery-grade manganese deposit and an extensive, highly prospective land package with the potential for further polymetallic and copper mineralization.

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