



What Can CBOs Teach Us About Achieving Equity in Workforce Development?

AT A GLANCE

A group of community-based organizations in the Inland Empire are on a mission to shift the narrative about what it takes to do workforce development in a way that centers equity. These leaders have proposed a set of investments needed to achieve equitable economic empowerment in their communities.

OCTOBER 2022

AUTHORS

Alex Avila, Youth Action Project
Cindy Corrales, GRID Alternatives
Alex Fajardo, El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center
Karla López del Río, Community Action Partnership of Riverside County
Jackie Melendez, IEGO
Tremaine Mitchell, Youth Action Project
Jessica Rodriguez, Goodwill Southern CA
Alison Schmitt, JFF
Ashleigh Smallwood, JFF
Terrance Stone, Young Visionaries Youth Leadership Academy
Karen Suarez, Uplift San Bernardino at Making Hope Happen Foundation

About Inland Economic Growth & Opportunity (IEGO)

Inland Economic Growth & Opportunity (IEGO), a regional cross-sector, bi-county collaborative, is a network of community-based organizations, businesses, institutions, and stakeholders committed to growing middle-class jobs and pursuing inclusive economic development to improve the quality of life for all Riverside and San Bernardino County residents. IEGO's work focuses on building industry clusters in sustainable logistics, cybersecurity, advanced manufacturing, and green technology. Our success draws from the spirit of collaboration and the shared values of equity, innovation, and sustainability.

About Inland Empire Community Foundation (IECF)

The Inland Empire Community Foundation is the IE's largest, nationally certified community foundation, and has hosted IEGO since 2019. IECF supports innovative work within the IE's nonprofit ecosystem, working to build a culture of philanthropy for long-term resilience and growth.

About JFF

Jobs for the Future (JFF) drives transformation of the American workforce and education systems to achieve equitable economic advancement for all. www.jff.org

About JFF's Language Choices

JFF is committed to using language that promotes equity and human dignity, rooted in the strengths of the people and communities we serve. We develop our content with the awareness that language can perpetuate privilege but also can educate, empower, and drive positive change to create a more equitable society. We will continually reevaluate our efforts as language usage continues to evolve.



Introduction

The Inland Empire has a rich ecosystem of community-based organizations (CBOs) that have a direct connection to community members and have deep expertise in assessing and addressing community needs. Many of these CBOs perform the essential functions of workforce development on a daily basis—they recruit, train, and mentor individuals, often providing or connecting them to the wraparound supports they need to launch successful careers and unlock their full potential. Their deep community connections and historical neighborhood-specific knowledge make them a trusted resource for residents who seek training and career support. For these reasons, they are well positioned to fill some of the gaps of traditional workforce actors, particularly when it comes to preparing workers from historically underrepresented communities for high-quality careers. But they are **undervalued** and **under-resourced** for the critical role they can and do play in workforce development.

In early 2022, Inland Economic Growth & Opportunity (IEGO) was awarded funding by the Kresge Foundation to explore this relationship between CBOs and the broader workforce preparation ecosystem, and over the last six months, this funding has been used to embark on a learning journey to identify, elevate, connect, and resource the critical role that CBOs play in workforce development. Facilitated by JFF, eight Inland Empire-serving CBOs came together to discuss their shared strengths, challenges, and opportunities, culminating in this report designed to inform institutions that fund workforce activities, such as foundations, corporations, and government agencies, about the group's collective service offerings and a set of investment priorities to guide a comprehensive strategy.

We, the partner organizations that comprise IEGO, care deeply about creating more quality jobs and careers in the Inland Empire, and are working to ensure that all residents, especially those from historically underrepresented communities, have equitable access to these economic opportunities. Rather than take a traditional approach to workforce development that focuses on institutional actors, IEGO decided to **challenge the existing paradigm** and approach workforce innovation from a community-based perspective. Together we hope to change the narrative about how workforce development gets done and what is needed to effectively close economic equity gaps.

Our Learning Journey

Collectively, our group of eight CBOs (Community Action Partnership of Riverside County, El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center, Goodwill Southern California, GRID Alternatives, Sigma Beta Xi, Uplift San Bernardino at Making Hope Happen Foundation, Young Visionaries Youth Leadership Academy, and Youth Action Project) serve approximately 179,550 individuals across the Inland Empire. We each have unique missions and theories of change about how to serve our communities, but we are united in our desire to help residents build prosperous and fulfilling lives.

When we think of workforce development, we often think of large institutions like workforce development boards and community colleges providing training to workers who are unemployed or need to shift careers. These traditional workforce actors have many strengths, including secure funding sources and staff capacity to execute programs. However, they often fall short in their quest to prepare workers who are underrepresented and excluded for high-quality careers, and this talent mismatch results in a missed opportunity to build community wealth and economic growth.

Facilitated by our partner, JFF, we engaged in five collaborative design sessions to unearth key truths about what it takes to support workforce development at the community level and discuss what innovative solutions are possible.

Each design session focused on a different area of workforce development and explored the following questions:

- ▶ What roles do CBOs currently play in workforce development? What is the ideal role?
- ▶ What lessons have CBOs learned from working with employers, government, and education? What power dynamics exist that CBOs are navigating?
- ▶ What barriers inhibit CBOs from engaging in workforce solutions?
- ▶ What supports do CBOs need to move ahead in this work?
- ▶ How can CBO participation in local and regional workforce development efforts ensure greater equity in training and employment outcomes for youth and adult workers?
- ▶ What evidence-informed best practices can be utilized to design effective strategies?



What Is Workforce Development, and Who Does It?

How Should We Define It?

Without a standard definition, the meaning of workforce development can be influenced by legislation (e.g., the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ([WIOA](#))) and/or a person or organization's positionality in the system.¹ Therefore, before we could engage in meaningful discussion, we had to establish some shared language about workforce development among the group.

For the purpose of this learning journey, we have chosen to define workforce development as a **community- and equity-centered approach to economic empowerment through wealth-building, quality jobs and careers, and thriving communities**. This definition of workforce development is built upon the following action-oriented values:

- ▶ Empowerment
- ▶ Shared understanding
- ▶ Community-centered approach
- ▶ Mutual respect
- ▶ Ownership and asset-building
- ▶ Upward mobility

These values do not just define workforce development, they also reshape the narrative from a deficit or “fix-it” approach to a growth mindset that empowers individuals, communities, and businesses by building off existing assets. Moreover, these values embed the voices of everyone that can transition the workforce development system into a thriving workforce development *ecosystem*.

In addition to defining workforce development, we must articulate for whom we are engaging in this work. A commitment to equity is the driver of our collective approach and we are committed to designing strategies that serve individuals from groups that are underrepresented in higher education, training, and quality jobs. Collectively we serve a number of target populations, including Black, Indigenous, and Latinx individuals, opportunity youth, individuals experiencing poverty and housing insecurity, and individuals involved in the criminal justice system. We remain committed to serving these groups, identifying those most in need of support, and adjusting our language and strategies over time.

Who Does It?

The organizations and individuals engaging in workforce development activities are diverse in size and scope. While this list is not exhaustive, the following organizations and groups are actively engaged in workforce-related activities:

- **Government workforce agencies (e.g., local workforce boards, city or county workforce departments)**
- **Educational institutions (e.g., K-12, community colleges, four-year universities)**
- **Employers (e.g., corporations, small businesses, entrepreneurs)**
- **CBOs**
- **Nonprofit training providers and intermediaries**
- **Families/caregivers**
- **Labor unions and other worker-led groups**
- **Churches and faith-based organizations**

What Do They Do?

When you think about the activities that comprise workforce development, you may think about technical training programs. These include a computer certification program, a construction apprenticeship, or career preparation activities like interview coaching and resume-writing support. While those activities are necessary for employment acquisition, they represent a fraction of what is needed over the long-term. If we are looking at workforce development as a comprehensive mechanism to foster individual economic empowerment and sustainable financial prosperity beyond job placement, there is an entire spectrum of collaborative activities needed to supplement the training and career readiness services. The graphic below illustrates the core categories of workforce development activities and a brief description of what is involved in each.

Workforce Development Activities



Planning and Governance

Participating in the planning, leadership, or oversight of local, regional, or statewide workforce initiatives (e.g., sitting on a local workforce development board).



Data Collection and Research

Collecting, analyzing, and presenting data about industry demand, learner and worker needs, and overall labor market trends to inform program design and delivery. This can also include community surveys or listening sessions.



Community Awareness, Recruitment, and Placement

Understanding the values, conditions, culture, and existing power dynamics of communities to design and facilitate training programs and deliver support services that reflect community needs. This understanding will lead to more inclusive practices, including the recruitment and placement of community members into training programs and jobs.



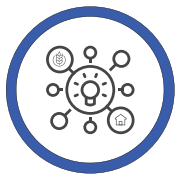
Community Activation and Leadership

Including community voice and leadership in the design and implementation of solutions.



Workforce Service Delivery

Delivering training programs and services that are directly connected to workforce development (e.g., job training, pre-apprenticeship, career counseling, etc.).



Other Support Service Delivery

Providing or connecting to direct or indirect services (e.g., food assistance, child care, transportation assistance) that provide additional support for success and can further enable an individual's workforce journey.



Advocacy

Working to secure or influence funding, policies, or programs with a workforce focus.

Through our learning journey, we discovered that **CBOs are actively involved in each of these core workforce categories**. We also discovered two areas that are consistently under-resourced but arguably the most critical levers for closing economic equity gaps: community awareness, recruitment, and placement and community activation and leadership. As a collective, **CBOs are uniquely positioned to lead in these two categories** because community members are already centered in every facet of their work.

Challenges of the Current Landscape

While the workforce development system aims to support the economic advancement and upward mobility of individuals and equip companies with the talent they need to succeed, the existing infrastructure has produced a current state in which there is inequitable access to and attainment of training, supportive services, and quality jobs.² While there are numerous factors that have contributed to these unequal outcomes, we have focused on a few that most directly affect our role as community-serving organizations: fragmentation, restrictive funding regulations, lack of community understanding, and misconceptions of CBOs.

Fragmented and Duplicative Workforce System

The existing workforce system is fragmented: the lack of alignment and communication among workforce actors has led to duplication of services and inefficiency.³ For example, an IT employer hosts an information session, open to the public, about how to write a resume for the IT industry. A community college and a One Stop Career Center in the same city also host their own resume writing workshops to help prepare jobseekers for IT careers. This duplication is an inefficient use of resources, resulting in an oversupply of resume writing prep without the proper wrap-around supports to help a jobseeker move beyond the resume writing process and secure full-time employment. Without effective coordination and communication among service providers, jobseekers must navigate multiple, potentially conflicting sources of information that are not tailored to meet their unique needs.

Restrictive Funding and Indicators

While the workforce development system strives to improve outcomes for all individuals with barriers to employment, the restrictive nature of the existing funding infrastructure does not allow those barriers to be addressed in a comprehensive and equitable way. For example, WIOA has a defined list of individuals with specific employment barriers that determines who can and cannot be targeted by WIOA-funded programs. Moreover, organizations running WIOA-funded programs must track and report on data that is focused on a narrow set of outcomes such as employment status after completion of a program or the median earnings of participants placed in a job.⁴ While these indicators may demonstrate progress toward long-term employment, they fail to account for other key components of economic mobility such as if the job provides a living wage or stable

benefits.⁵ As a result, organizations are incentivized to tailor their programs and services to comply with strict funding regulations and a limited set of metrics, rather than focus on comprehensive solutions that result in long-term impact.

Lack of Understanding of Community Needs

Many practitioners in traditional workforce institutions do not represent the individuals that are actively seeking training and quality employment. For example, 60% of California community college faculty are white, while 71% of students are from non-white racial and ethnic backgrounds.⁶ This lack of shared identity and understanding can result in training programs that aren't designed to meet the unique needs of jobseekers, or classes that are under-enrolled. Moreover, as discussed above, in a workforce system that rewards outputs, rather than impact, there is little incentive for traditional workforce players to deepen their understanding and cultural competency to better serve populations that experience barriers to employment. This is evidenced by the common practice of “creaming,” which is defined in a 2022 UCLA Labor Center report as the practice of “favoring clients who are more likely to be placed in jobs over those who face additional barriers to employment.”⁷ In conjunction with exclusionary practices, the lack of understanding of the community can lead to inequitable service provision, with individuals with the most barriers to employment left unsupported in their training and career navigation.



Misconceptions of Community-Based Organizations

Across all systems, CBOs are often overlooked and undervalued.⁸ Despite CBOs’ invaluable role in uplifting and empowering the communities they serve, they are often either excluded or engaged in a way that is transactional and extractive, frequently being asked to share their expertise for grant applications without compensation or authentic partnership. Some common misconceptions include:

| Misconception | Reality |
|---|--|
| Community-based work can be completed and outcomes can be demonstrated within a single grant cycle. | The work and outcomes move at the speed of trust—community-based work requires intentional relationship building that can take months or years to nurture. |
| CBOs don’t run like businesses. | CBOs have the same administrative, financial, legal, and operational duties and obligations as any other traditional business or institution. |
| CBOs can function well with limited financial capital and capacity (i.e., do more for less). | While CBOs can and will go beyond their call of duty and surpass expectations for the greater good of the people they serve with the available capital, a lack of proper financial and operational support can result in limited impact and staff burnout. |

When CBOs are not embedded into the workforce system and communities are not at the center of workforce services, strategies, and development, it removes a built-in accountability mechanism for non-CBO workforce players to understand the communities, expand their cultural awareness, and, ultimately, forgo responsibility to address equity gaps. As detailed in Chicago Beyond’s guidebook, funders, researchers, and other organizations should be held accountable for understanding not only the value and impact of CBOs but also see CBOs as leaders, with the power and authority to build, shape, and empower the work that benefits the communities they serve.⁹

The Collective Power of CBOs: A Community-Centered Approach to Workforce Empowerment

From an external perspective, it may appear that CBOs are unfocused and not grounded in what they want to accomplish because they engage in a wide range of activities. However, the reality is that CBOs are rooted in the communities they serve, and their goals fluctuate to align with changing community needs. This community-centered approach further validates that CBOs are key assets to advancing the upward economic mobility of individuals and are necessary components to the success of the workforce development system. Whether or not they have an explicit focus on workforce development in their mission, CBOs perform functions that complement the core competencies of traditional workforce providers. By leveraging CBOs' superpowers, the workforce development system can move beyond the current status quo and transcend to a system that is built for the benefit of all individuals.

CBO Superpowers

CBOs are agile and innovative.

They go above and beyond to meet community needs, regardless of what it takes.

CBOs live and die by their partnerships.

Their strong, trust-based relationships with partner organizations reduce duplication of services and deepen their impact.

CBOs are community translators.

They can communicate relevant information about jobs, training, technology, and support services in culturally competent ways to ensure community understanding and engagement.

CBOs are the bridge between sectors like housing, transportation, education, workforce, and health.

They have a comprehensive view and understanding of the issues that affect an individual's well-being.

CBOs de-risk public and private investments.

For instance, when a company invests in a new training program, CBOs provide complementary supportive services like mentorship or counseling that help trainees persist and reduce turnover.

CBOs are employers and economic engines of the community.

They employ people from the community with local knowledge and deep social networks.

Examples of Service Offerings



PLANNING & GOVERNANCE



What It Looks Like:
Serving on local or regional boards

Real-Life Example:
Goodwill Southern California is a member of the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board. Through this leadership position, Goodwill pushes for the Board to fund supportive services that help jobseekers gain access to quality careers.



DATA COLLECTION & RESEARCH



What It Looks Like:
Community surveys
Listening sessions

Real-Life Example:
Youth Action Project engages youth leaders to design and deploy surveys, listening sessions, interviews, and community canvassing to ensure program components meet their unique needs.



COMMUNITY AWARENESS, RECRUITMENT & PLACEMENT



What It Looks Like:
Community education events
Career fairs
Job placement

Real-Life Example:
Uplift San Bernardino and its network of partners host community events including career fairs to connect students and families in the city of San Bernardino with local education, training, and employment opportunities.



COMMUNITY ACTIVATION & LEADERSHIP



What It Looks Like:
Co-design community solutions

Real-Life Example:
Through their leadership in IEGO, this CBO cohort is creating collaborative spaces for community members, businesses, and others impacted by workforce development policies and programs to shape how solutions are designed and implemented.



WORKFORCE SERVICE DELIVERY



What It Looks Like:

Technical training
Job-readiness training

Real-Life Example:

El Sol utilizes a community health worker and *promotor* model for the delivery of its job training, a peer-to-peer empowerment approach in education, prevention, and early intervention for social and health services.



OTHER SUPPORT SERVICE DELIVERY



What It Looks Like:

Mentorship
Career Navigation

Real-Life Example:

Youth Action Project's Young Workers programming provides out-of-school, opportunity youth and young adults with targeted case management, educational assistance, paid work experience, work readiness training, and supportive services to enhance participants' access to jobs with sustainable wages.



ADVOCACY



What It Looks Like:

Work to change neighborhood-level conditions needed for economic advancement (housing, transportation, environmental justice, job quality)

Real-Life Example:

GRID Alternatives advocates for environmental justice efforts and increased access to solar and electric vehicles for individuals in low-wage jobs.

Conditions Needed for CBOs to Do Their Best Work

CBOs are clearly well positioned to address some of the shortcomings of the traditional workforce development actors, particularly when it comes to closing racial and gender economic equity gaps. However, CBOs are not always recognized and appropriately resourced for this critical role they play. The following is a list of conditions needed for CBOs to leverage their core strengths most effectively:

- ▶ **CBOs have the financial resources and time horizon to support the activities that are most critical to their success: building trust, relationships, and partnerships.**

It is worth repeating that CBOs move at the speed of trust. Community-level work is dependent on relationship building and partnership development, which doesn't happen overnight. CBOs need financial support for these activities, and they need it over a significant time horizon. Typical one-year grant cycles require CBOs to spend a great amount of time reporting and re-applying for additional funding, which takes away from the critical work they are funded to do. CBOs need patient capital from funders that recognize that equity work takes time.

- ▶ **CBOs have access to unrestricted capacity-building dollars.**

CBO funding sources are often restrictive in how dollars can be spent—prioritizing service delivery over overhead. However, many small nonprofits lack the structures for administrative functions like human resources, grant writing, and fiscal, and additional overhead support would strengthen overall operating efficiency, leading to more effective service delivery.

- ▶ **CBOs get paid for their expertise in addition to service delivery.**

When a consultant provides strategic advising or technical assistance, they are paid for their expertise. Yet, CBOs are often asked to provide ideas for diversity and inclusion strategies without compensation for their ideas or participation in planning efforts. For instance, a large institution may ask a CBO to act as a partner for a grant application to “check the equity box” but fail to include funding for them in the application. We need to treat CBO leaders as the experts they are and compensate them for their time and insights.

- ▶ **CBOs are respected as community leaders and are equipped with the tools and knowledge they need to participate fully in workforce and economic development efforts.**

Participating in the planning, design, and/or governance of cross-sector initiatives requires a set of skills and knowledge that may differ from the core competencies CBOs need to serve communities on a daily basis. CBO leadership and staff, therefore, need onboarding time and other resources to learn what is required to serve in these new functional roles. We need CBO leaders to be supported as pillars of local and regional ecosystems, and not included in key workforce processes as an afterthought.

Our Investment Priorities

While fully embedding CBOs into the workforce development system will take time, we have identified several specific opportunities for which we seek additional funding to address both short-term pain points and the longer-term goal of changing the narrative about how workforce development gets done and coordinating regional workforce activities to maximize impact.

1. Platform for CBO Service Offerings (\$3 million)

As we outlined above, the activities we engage in as CBOs provide value to a diverse set of stakeholders including corporations, educational institutions, and government agencies. To diversify our funding sources and maximize the effectiveness of our individual services, we seek to build and operate a platform to coordinate and advertise our collective offerings. This includes the development of a market analysis through a needs assessment of potential customers for our solutions and expertise, and funding for communications and marketing products (e.g., pitchbook materials, IEGO website development, and promotional materials showcasing our success stories and impact).

2. Community-Industry Workforce Partnerships (\$2 million)

In partnership with anchor industry partners, we seek to launch innovative training pilots to support the critical reskilling and upskilling needs of our underrepresented populations. We will choose employers committed to quality jobs and career advancement opportunities in one of IEGO's priority sectors (i.e., green tech, advanced manufacturing, sustainable logistics, cyber/IT) to ensure our workforce training efforts are connected to broader regional economic development strategies.

3. CBO Workforce Equity Fund (\$10 million)

We seek to establish a flexible fund that CBOs can apply to for a wide range of activities that support more inclusive and equitable workforce development, with a particular focus on activities that traditional funding sources do not cover. These include (1) organizational capacity building and professional development needs, (2) student or community member stipends or supportive services, and (3) existing program support and expansion. This fund will have an easy application process, minimal reporting requirements, and an unrestricted use of funds.

4. Investment in Community Ownership Models (\$10 million)

We seek to raise social impact investment capital for strategies and vehicles that build and preserve local ownership and wealth for disinvested communities. Examples include technical assistance for entrepreneurs interested in alternative ownership models like B corporations or cooperatives; investment in community development infrastructure; and purchase of community infrastructure like electric vehicle charging stations and community solar.¹⁰

Community-based organizations are more than organizations. They are leaders, advocates, familiar faces, and pillars of support for their community members. Their deep understanding and community-centered approach make them integral components in closing equity gaps and advancing upward economic mobility for all. By building authentic partnerships with CBOs and investing in the core activities they do best, institutions that fund workforce development can help to dismantle the existing inequitable infrastructure and work together to support a more community-centered ecosystem. To learn more about these investment priorities and how you can support this work, please contact Jackie Melendez, IEGO's Executive Director, at jmelendeziego@iegives.org.



Endnotes

1. Emma Rose Gallimore, “What Is the Difference Between Job Training and Workforce Development?” The Penn Foster Blog, January 8, 2020, <https://partners.pennfoster.edu/blog/2020/january/the-difference-between-job-training-and-development>.
2. Marina Zhavoronkova, “Meeting the Moment: Equity and Job Quality in the Public Workforce Development System,” Center for American Progress, February 17, 2022, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/meeting-the-moment-equity-and-job-quality-in-the-public-workforce-development-system/>.
3. Kate Markin Coleman and Stephen Goldsmith, “Now is the Time to Build a Better, More Equitable Workforce Development System,” Horizons, JFF, accessed July 20, 2022, <https://horizons.jff.org/blog/now-is-the-time-to-build-a-better-more-equitable-workforce-development-system>.
4. Marina Zhavoronkova, “Meeting the Moment: Equity and Job Quality in the Public Workforce Development System,” Center for American Progress, February 17, 2022, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/meeting-the-moment-equity-and-job-quality-in-the-public-workforce-development-system/>.
5. Marina Zhavoronkova, “Meeting the Moment: Equity and Job Quality in the Public Workforce Development System,” Center for American Progress, February 17, 2022, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/meeting-the-moment-equity-and-job-quality-in-the-public-workforce-development-system/>.
6. Thomas Peele and Daniel Willis, “California’s Failure to Diversify Community College Faculty Tied to Arcane State Law, EdSource, March 1, 2021, <https://edsource.org/2021/californias-failure-to-diversify-community-college-faculty-tied-to-arcane-state-law/648977>.
7. Kevin L. Lee, Magaly Lopez, and Ana Luz Gonzalez-Vasquez, New Directions in Racial and Economic Justice: How California’s Worker Centers are Bringing Workers Power into Workforce Development (Los Angeles: UCLA Labor Center, 2022), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/597fa76dbf629a4168bba451/t/627db707bde83831032a2cd9/1652406023384/Worker-Centers-and-Workforce-Development_v5.pdf.

8. Alex Fajardo et al., “Addressing Systemic Inequities and Racism in Community-Based Organization Funding,” Vaccine Equity Cooperative, https://vaccineequitycooperative.org/news/blog_cbo_funding/.

9. Why Am I Always Being Researched? A Guidebook for Community Organizations, Researchers, and Funders to Help Us Get from Insufficient Understanding to More Authentic Truth (Chicago: Chicago Beyond, 2018), <https://chicagobeyond.org/researchequity/>.

10. One specific investment opportunity is CHERP Solar Works, a 501(c)(3) focused on the creation of quality green-sector jobs in economically disinvested and environmentally burdened communities. CHERP is looking to expand its solar panel manufacturing facilities and we are looking to raise capital to facilitate their expansion to the City of San Bernardino.

CBO Profiles



Community Action Partnership (CAP) Riverside

Whom do you serve?

Residents with low incomes.

Where do you serve?

CAP Riverside targets the areas with the highest level of poverty in each of the five supervisorial districts within Riverside County.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

Providing upward mobility by connecting residents with low incomes to economic development programs.

What is your superpower?

Partnerships. CAP Riverside convenes and connects public, private, and community efforts to create upward economic mobility opportunities for residents with low incomes.



Whom do you serve?

Populations with low incomes and Promotores (community-health workers).

Where do you serve?

The Inland Empire.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

El Sol is working with Promotores through its career pathway and community coach career model at El Sol's Training Center. The career pathway initiative promotes, upholds, and recognizes the identity and personal and professional growth of the Promotores, regardless of their educational degree and/or title/position. Promotores work with employees to increase capacity in integrating CHWs and Promotores' approach.

What is your superpower?

Community facilitation.



Goodwill Industries of Southern California

Whom do you serve?

Goodwill Industries of Southern California serves individuals age 14 and older. While Goodwill aims to serve everyone, its target populations are individuals with the most barriers, including uniquely abled, disconnected youth, veterans, justice-involved and individuals without homes, as well as local businesses.

Where do you serve?

San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Goodwill Industries of Southern California has offices in Victorville, San Bernardino, Riverside, and La Quinta.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

Goodwill Industries of Southern California serves community members through training, providing work experience and job-placement services. To support businesses, Goodwill Industries supports with recruitment and addressing their workforce needs. Each activity is multilayered and comes with supportive services such as case management, scheduled follow-ups, and business assessment.

What is your superpower?

Engagement, partnership, and playing the intermediary role.



GRID Alternatives Inland Empire

Whom do you serve?

GRID Alternatives services families seeking assistance with high energy bills and access to solar. In addition, GRID Alternatives serves individuals seeking training and careers in renewable energy.

Where do you serve?

Riverside, San Bernardino, and Inyo Counties.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

GRID Alternatives is a nonprofit solar contractor and job-training organization that provides solar training programs for underserved/underrepresented populations including women, youth, and justice-involved First Nations; BIPOC, unemployed, and underemployed individuals.

What is your superpower?

Building trusted, long-standing community partnerships through effective collaboration, community/cultural sensitivity, and delivering on what GRID commits to doing. Addressing environmental and economic justice issues through the installment of and training in clean, renewable, and cutting-edge technologies (solar, batteries/storage, EV/electric vehicles) exclusively for communities not often centered in the clean energy movement.



Sigma Beta Xi Youth and Family Services

Whom do you serve?

Children and families of color.

Where do you serve?

Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

Providing pre-apprenticeship programs.

What is your superpower?

Creating innovative programs to meet the unique needs of our target populations.



Uplift San Bernardino at Making Hope Happen Foundation

Whom do you serve?

San Bernardino high school students and their families.

Where do you serve?

The City of San Bernardino and unincorporated Muscoy.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

Uplift San Bernardino offers work-based learning opportunities for career pathway students. This includes connecting students to work opportunities and existing workforce development support. Uplift San Bernardino partners with the Human Resources Leadership Council, which is made up of local employers to increase opportunities for youth (under 18) employment. To support individuals who are 18 and older, Uplift San Bernardino amplifies existing employment, training, and apprenticeship opportunities.

What is your superpower?

Connector extraordinaire.



Young Visionaries Youth Leadership Academy

Whom do you serve?

Young Visionaries Youth Leadership Academy works with elementary, middle, and high school youth, and at-risk youth and young adults.

Where do you serve?

San Bernardino County, West Valley, and High Desert.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

The Young Visionaries program, Successful Occupational Strategies (SOS), provides job training, soft skills development, and career counseling to at-risk youth. The SOS program focuses on Supply Chain Logistics training and soft skills.

What is your superpower?

Community outreach and engagement.



Youth Action Project (YAP)

Whom do you serve?

The primary populations are youth and young adults, ages 16 to 24 with barriers to employment. Through other programs, YAP serves all populations with programs targeted to Black youth, adjudicated youth, opportunity youth, foster youth, and unhoused youth.

Where do you serve?

YAP primarily serves in the City of San Bernardino and surrounding cities. In the future, YAP plans to expand into Riverside County.

What role do you currently play in workforce development?

YAP prepares the next generation of workers by providing youth and young adults with transformative experiences coupled with professional development training, career coaching, and paid worker experience that enables youth and young adults to find their passion and develop marketable skills. YAP's work centers provide youth in underserved communities a path to careers with sustainable incomes through supporting their academic achievements, access to higher education, vocational training, creating awareness of in-demand job sectors, soft-skills coaching, and incubating entrepreneurial aspirations.

What is your superpower?

Embedding and uplifting youth voice and authentic relationships. Adult partnerships focused on exposure, exploration, and transformation and connecting youth to schools and elected officials.



50 Milk St., 17th Floor, Boston, MA 02109

122 C St., NW, Suite 280, Washington, DC 20001

505 14th St., Suite 340, Oakland, CA 94612

TEL 617.728.4446 **WEB** www.jff.org