

LA OPPORTUNITY YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

Impact Report



2023

Serving Los Angeles Youth



L.A. OPPORTUNITY
YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

Building Opportunity

The LA Opportunity Youth Collaborative (LAOYC) is building a community of organizations working in concert to ensure that every youth is served in a holistic way with a coherent array of complementary services. We are strengthening bridges among more than 115 public agencies, community based organizations, young adults with lived experience, philanthropic partners, and educational institutions to better connect young adults to education, jobs, and opportunity.

Contents

- 2 - Our Mission and Vision
- 3 - Message from the Director & Message from a Young Leader
- 5 - Performance Partnership Pilot (LAP3) and Strategic Plan
- 7 - Foster Youth at Work
- 9 - Foster Youth College Advancement Project (FYCAP)
- 11 - OYC Young Leaders
- 15 - Who We Are
- 17 - Thank You to Our Supporters



OUR MISSION

We strive to build multi-sector partnerships to improve education and employment outcomes for transition age foster youth to thrive.

OUR VISION

Transition age foster youth in Los Angeles County have the knowledge and skills to allow them to achieve economic mobility and flourish in their personal lives.

Message from the Director



DEAR FRIENDS,

Imagine a world where all 1,000 transition age youth who age out of foster care in Los Angeles County each year have access to safe and stable housing, and persist toward their education and career goals, with the holistic support they need to thrive. Designed in partnership with young people who have lived expertise in the foster care system, the LAOYC partners continue to create more equitable systems, and is committed to reimagining the foster care, workforce development, and education systems in coordination with our public and community partners.

As we look forward, we are excited to continue to leverage our work in collaboration with the Los Angeles Performance Partnership Pilot's strategic plan, and with the California Opportunity Youth Network and other local and statewide coalitions. Every young person deserves holistic support and quality programs and services delivered with respect, love, and compassion. Together with our youth and adult partnerships, Los Angeles can pave the way for more integrated, effective, and equitable systems.

With love,

Lauri Collier
Director

Message from a Young Leader



My name is Ka-Leah Mutchison and I am a first-year OYC Young Leader. I am a mother and a full-time senior student at UC Irvine. My experience as an OYC Young Leader has been amazing and fulfilling. I have access to many resources, trainings, and peer support. I have reflected on my experience in foster care, and have developed a better understanding of the far-ranging impacts of the foster care system on other youth and the communities involved in that system.

In my time as a young leader, I have gained more confidence in my abilities as a leader and public speaker. The training and support provided have allowed me to become more comfortable with sharing my own lived experience, and have also enhanced my networking skills. All of this guidance expands my knowledge and strengthens ability to advocate for other young people. This journey is allowing me to learn from myself and my peers, and energizes my passion for social work and community development.

I appreciate the LAOYC for investing in youth, for affirming that our voices matter, and for creating a safe space where I feel my story has great impact.

In partnership,

Ka-Leah Mutchison
OYC Young Leader

Los Angeles Performance Partnership Pilot (LAP3)

The Los Angeles Performance Partnership Pilot (LAP3) is a collective impact initiative in Los Angeles, created to coordinate and integrate the delivery of education, workforce, and social services to opportunity youth—including systems-involved youth (youth impacted by foster care, homelessness, or the juvenile justice system) ages 16-24—so that they can secure quality education, training, and employment opportunities.

Launched by the LA City Economic & Workforce Development Department (EWDD) in 2017

Convened by EWDD, LA County Department of Economic Opportunity, and the LAOYC (Alliance for Children's Rights and UNITE-LA)

PARTNERS

- Alliance for Children's Rights
- Los Angeles City Economic & Workforce Development Department
- Los Angeles City Youth Development Department
- Los Angeles Community College District
- Los Angeles County Office of Education
- Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity
- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
- Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection
- Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative Young Leaders
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- New Ways to Work
- ReLAY Institute
- UNITE-LA



Los Angeles P3 Strategic Plan

In 2023, LAP3 partners engaged in a strategic planning process to address the soaring rate of youth disconnection. The OYC held 12 convenings where youth and cross-sector system leaders met to develop an updated regional strategic plan. Research published in 2022 shows that the Los Angeles region has about 143,000 Opportunity Youth, with about 62,500 living in the City of Los Angeles. **Our ultimate desired impact is to reduce the number of opportunity youth by 22% (32,000) in the Los Angeles region by 2028.**

At the LAP3 Strategic Planning Convening, Lisa Salazar, General Manager of the Youth Development Department of the City of Los Angeles, moderated a powerful youth panel organized by the LAOYC. OYC Young Leaders Taneil Franklin, Iziko Calderon, and Alexis Obinna took the stage, emphasizing the significance of incorporating youth voice and leadership in program design and strategic discussions. Addressing an audience of over 80 public and private sector leaders, these inspiring young adults shared practical insights, illuminating the path toward seamless integration of the expertise of young adults and sensible practices to serve youth.

SNEAK PEEK 2024

The City of Los Angeles Economic & Workforce Development Department, the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity, and the LAOYC continue to co-convene the LA P3 initiative – in partnership with educational institutions, government agencies, youth, community based organizations, and philanthropy.

We are excited to launch the Los Angeles Performance Pilot Strategic Plan in Spring 2024!



June 2023 | LAP3 Strategic Planning Working Session
Featuring: Edgar Castillo



August 2023 | LAP3 Strategic Planning Convening
Left to Right: Alexis Obinna, Taneil Franklin, Lisa Salazar, Iziko Calderon

Foster Youth at Work

The LAOYC's Foster Youth at Work initiative engages with LA County public workforce and child welfare agencies to devise collaborative, systemic solutions to improve transition age foster youth (TAY) connection to work readiness training, early work experiences, and pathways to sustainable careers.

Campaign launched by the LAOYC in 2013
Convened by the Alliance for Children's Rights and UNITE-LA

PARTNERS

Alliance for Children's Rights
California Department of Rehabilitation
Foothill Workforce Development Board
iFoster
L.A. City Economic & Workforce Development Department
L.A. County Department of Children and Family Services
L.A. County Office of Child Protection
L.A. County Department of Economic Opportunity
Pacific Gateway Workforce Development Board
SELACO Workforce Development Board
UNITE-LA
Verdugo Workforce Development Board

**Aspen Institute
Fall Convening**
Left to Right: Anthony
Kim, Amber Chapman,
Vincent Malone, Lauri
Collier, Renee Buckley,
Melanie Ferrer-Vaughn



"Beautiful things can be achieved when collaboration, creativity, and resiliency meet. There were many moments in Aspen where I was encouraged to see so many people and organizations doing so many different and creative things for opportunity youth. It gives me such hope for the future."

Vincent Malone
October 2023
Aspen Institute Opportunity Youth Forum:
Healing Power and Restorative Power

IMPACT

In the 2022-2023 program year, **755 foster youth were referred to Youth@Work.**

LAOYC YOUTH ENGAGEMENT CASE STUDY

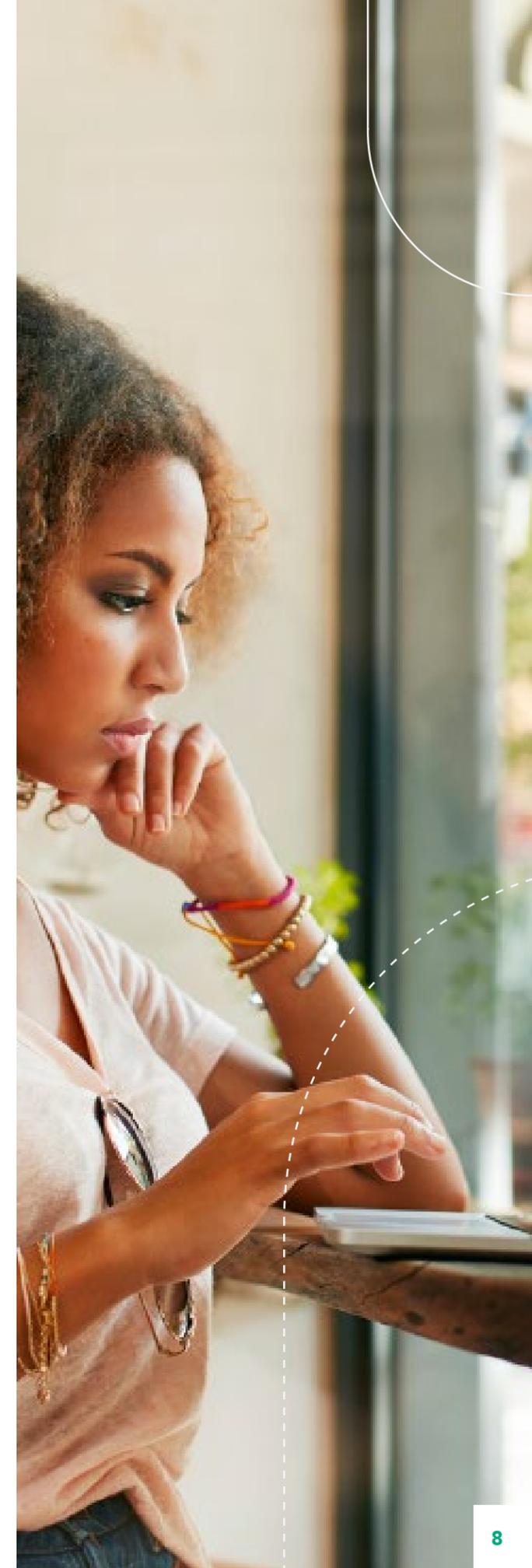
The LAOYC partnered with Social Policy Research Associates (SPRA) to explore how workforce programs can effectively engage young people. The case study identifies current processes in Los Angeles County's youth workforce development system that pose significant barriers for opportunity youth—specifically, for transition age and former foster youth. The study offers local and national best practices for outreach and enrollment, and provides supportive recommendations utilizing a youth-centered design framework.

ARS DIRECTIVE

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the LAOYC partnered with DEO to provide updates to the Automated Referral System (ARS) directive. The updated directive is to provide guidance and improved referral process procedures to the Youth@Work workforce providers. Highlights from this update include best practices for outreach methods and new strategies for successfully enrolling foster youth in workforce opportunities.

2024 SNEAK PEEK

The LAOYC is partnering with the Nonprofit Finance Fund to engage six youth workforce programs contracted by the City or County of Los Angeles in a "True Cost" analysis. This project seeks to better understand the true fiscal cost of delivering high-quality work programs for TAY and other opportunity youth. Findings will be released in 2024.



Foster Youth College Advancement Project (FYCAP)

The FYCAP campaign is committed to increasing post-secondary educational attainment for youth in the foster care system, whether it be career technical education or a 2-year or 4-year degree.

Campaign launched by the LAOYC in 2017
Convened by John Burton Advocates for Youth



PARTNERS

Alliance for Children's Rights
California Community College Chancellor's Office
Cal Poly Pomona
Children's Law Center of California
First Star
Foster and Kinship Care Education
Los Angeles City College
Los Angeles College Promise
Los Angeles Community College District
Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services
Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection
Los Angeles County Probation Department
Los Angeles Mission College
Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles Valley College
National Center for Youth Law
Next Up programs across Los Angeles County
UNITE-LA
United Friends of the Children



IMPACT

LA County achieved a **71% FAFSA/CADAA completion rate** in 2022-2023 for high school seniors in foster care.

NEW POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION DATA FOR LA COUNTY

In collaboration with JBAY, the LA County Office of Education (LACOE) executed an MOU with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to obtain student level data on college enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates for Los Angeles County's youth in foster care. LACOE analyzed this data through an equity lens, in conjunction with LA County's financial aid completion data, revealing that students from the senior class of 2021-2022 who completed financial aid applications were **15 times more likely to enroll in college the next fall than those who did not complete applications, at a rate of 34.72% compared to just 3.54%.**

STATEWIDE EFFORTS TO SUPPORT NEXTUP IMPLEMENTATION

Due to the expansion of NextUp (a community college based foster youth support program), JBAY engaged in a variety of strategies to support successful implementation of this program statewide. This included the development of a series of NextUp implementation tools, such as the **NextUp Implementation Toolkit**, individualized technical assistance, training, and a two-day NextUp convening in collaboration with the California Community College Chancellor's Office to support both new and returning NextUp campuses.

INCREASED POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL PLANNING SUPPORT FOR DCFS YOUTH

DCFS and JBAY partnered to increase post-secondary educational planning support for youth in foster care. Strategies included a training on how to support foster youth in pursuing post-secondary education, followed by a three-part, "micro" e-learning training series for all social workers countywide. In addition, DCFS launched a countywide dashboard to track and monitor compliance of Senate Bill (SB) 12. SB 12 requires that a post-secondary education support person is identified in each youth's case plan, to assist all youth ages 16 or older with their college and financial aid applications. DCFS also launched a new Child and Family Team Action Plan form which requires that an educational goal and plan be made for all school-aged youth in LA County.

VOICES UNVEILED: A Qualitative Exploration of the Post-secondary Journey of Foster Youth in LA County

The co-conveners of the LAOYC partnered with the Los Angeles Community College District to explore the LA College Promise (LACP). The LAOYC gathered extensive youth and stakeholder feedback to determine if the LACP was an effective approach for foster youth and to better understand the experience of foster youth transitioning into post-secondary education.

This report highlights the findings from this qualitative research study and opportunities for local and state policy and practice changes that could improve the post-secondary educational outcomes of youth in foster care.

2024 SNEAK PEEK

Looking ahead to 2024, the FYCAP will continue efforts to ensure compliance with SB 12 at DCFS and the Los Angeles County Probation Department. FYCAP partners also will be developing youth-facing marketing materials to increase awareness of expanded financial aid for foster youth.

OYC Young Leaders

The OYC Young Leaders program is a one-year leadership program for young adults, training participants in leadership development, public speaking, advocacy, and more. We believe young adults should join us as equal decision makers to co-create systems for the programs that serve them. The LAOYC works to clear the path for young adults to exercise their power, and we offer our platform to amplify their voices and vision.

*Campaign launched by the LAOYC in 2015
Convened by the Alliance for Children's Rights*

PARTNERS

- California Mentoring Partnership
- California Youth Connection (CYC)
- City of Los Angeles Youth Development Department
- Coalition for Responsible Community Development
- Foster Together Network
- Housing Justice Collective
- Journey House
- Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture
- Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services
- Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council (ECC)
- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
- Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection (OCP)
- Los Angeles County Youth Commission
- Los Angeles LGBT Center
- National Foster Youth Initiative (NFYI)
- National Center for Youth Law
- Reproductive Health Equity Project (RHEP)
- United Friends of the Children



IMPACT

200 Young Leaders participated in 28 convenings, youth listening sessions, or trainings that included 270 practitioners.

DCFS TAY SECTION — DIRECTOR'S YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (DYAC)

The DCFS and the OYC Young Leaders continue to co-convene the DYAC to provide living and lived expertise insights and recommendations of the TAY experience in Los Angeles, ensuring the voices and perspectives of young people who experience foster care are central to decision-making processes. Through this collaboration, Director Brandon Nichols approved the creation of the DCFS Authentic Youth Engagement Section, which will be a specialized section dedicated to fostering belonging and addressing the unique needs and resources that TAY require to successfully transition out of care. This initiative underscores the commitment to inclusivity and empowerment, recognizing the importance of creating a supportive environment where young people feel valued, heard, and included in shaping their futures.

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH FORUM

BEYO Intern and OYC Young Leader Taneil Franklin delivered a compelling presentation at the **Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions—Opportunity Youth Forum Spring 2023** convening in Austin, Texas.

Presented in partnership with JBAY, the talk titled "Re-imagining Youth Engagement: Two Approaches to Improving Belonging, Meaning Making, Wellbeing and Purpose" shared meaningful approaches to youth engagement. Their presentation showcased the ways these principles can positively transform practices at the local and state levels.



TRAVELING WITH THE YOUNG LEADERS

Through our initiatives, we have provided invaluable opportunities for youth to attend conferences across the United States in cities like Austin, Texas, and Washington, D.C. and to Mombasa, Kenya. These experiences encourage young people to broaden their worldview, engage with peers from different cultures, and enhance their leadership and advocacy skills. By exposing our youth to these diverse environments, we empower them to become informed, empathetic, and internationally-aware advocates, capable of understanding and addressing national and global challenges.



Aspen Institute Spring Convening | Austin, Texas
 Left to Right: Taniel Franklin, Lauri Collier, Melisa Urbina, Brisia Gutierrez



Aspen Institute Spring Convening Austin, Texas
 Left to right: Taniel Franklin, Brisia Gutierrez, Linda Ramos



“Texas was the first conference I have ever presented with my colleagues, which was a really big deal for me as a youth advocate. I learned so much. I was able to bond with my team over meals and work. It was an amazing experience.”

Taniel Franklin, BEYO Intern & LA OYC Young Leader
 May 2023 | Aspen Institute Opportunity Youth Forum: Cross-Site Convening in Austin, Texas

The Aspen Institute Global Opportunity Youth Network Convening in Mombasa, Kenya
 Left to right: Brisia Gutierrez, Taneil Franklin, Jacqueline Robles



“Mombasa, Kenya proved to be a transformative journey for me, igniting a renewed sense of purpose to champion possibilities for opportunity youth in the United States. The warmth of the people, the captivating ideas that filled the air, and the unwavering hospitality etched an indelible mark, fueling my determination to make a meaningful impact. The memories of Mombasa now serve as a powerful catalyst, driving me to work tirelessly for the betterment of opportunity youth back home.”

Jacqueline Robles, LA OYC Young Leader
 November 2023 | Aspen Institute Global Opportunity Youth Network: *The Future is NOW!*
Accelerating Inclusive Pathways to Economic Resilience in Mombasa, Kenya

National Youth Employment Coalition: United States Capitol Building
 Left to right: Lauri Collier, Brisia Gutierrez, Jacqueline Robles, Christopher Hall



“Having the opportunity to attend a national conference and speak to members of the senate was an invaluable and eye opening experience for myself and my fellow young leaders. Being able to expand the reach our voices have while learning more about the systems we advocate for is essential to the work we do and I feel we’ve been able to accomplish both.”

Christopher Hall, LA OYC Young Leader
 September 2023 | National Youth Employment Youth Coalition: *Youth Days in Washington D.C.*

2024 SNEAK PEEK

DCFS and the OYC Young Leaders will be working together to co-design the TAY Section. Together they will dream and design what this new and exciting unit will be!

About the LAOYC



The Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative brings together a multi-sector collaborative to address the systemic barriers facing transition age foster youth in Los Angeles County.

The LAOYC was born in 2013 out of the Aspen Institute’s Forum for Community Solutions’ Opportunity Youth Forum, a national network of urban, rural, and tribal communities seeking to improve education and employment pathways for young people ages 16-24 who are disconnected from school and work. The Aspen Institute Forum sought to create a national model for improving outcomes for opportunity youth by investing in local collaboratives, rather than boutique programs, to develop community-driven and systemic solutions. The LAOYC adopted this model in LA County and focused its mission on implementing innovative, collaborative solutions for TAY, a sub-population of opportunity youth with unique barriers to achieving self-sufficiency.

The LAOYC, spearheaded by its backbone agency the Alliance for Children’s Rights, has built unprecedented trust and collaboration between public and private agencies to improve TAY education and employment opportunities. The LAOYC launched the inaugural Foster Youth at Work campaign, co-convened by UNITE-LA and the Alliance for Children’s Rights, in 2014 to examine TAY’s access to subsidized work experiences. In 2015, the LAOYC then followed with the launch of the iFoster Jobs Program aimed at connecting TAY to employment. In 2016, the LAOYC embarked on the Foster Youth College Advancement Project, led by John Burton Advocates for Youth, to advance TAY access to post-secondary education. Also in 2016, the OYC Young Leaders program was launched by the Alliance for Children’s Rights.

The LAOYC builds partnerships across sectors to improve education and employment outcomes for transition age foster youth. We work collaboratively with partners, including government agencies, education institutions, philanthropic and community-based organizations, youth, and private sector employers. Utilizing the following five strategic priorities, we believe we can improve the systems designed to support TAY through a long-term, sustainable, collective impact approach:

Our Approach to Impact Change

Promoting Awareness

Distribute information about the needs, barriers, and realities of TAY and communicate about how to access available resources.

Making Connections

Create a platform for information-sharing by bringing together organizations that serve and interact with youth who have experienced foster care.



Foster Youth Voice

Engage youth to voice their experiences and utilize their expertise to inform systemic solutions

Building Capacity

Provide education and training to help partners learn, adopt and improve their capacity to support youth who have experienced foster care transitioning to independence.

Transforming Systems

Improve the impact agencies serving youth by enhancing service coordination, institutionalizing best practices, driving systems change, expanding resources and developing shared measurements to drive continuous improvement.

ALLIANCE
for **CHILDREN'S**
RIGHTS

JBAY **JOHN BURTON**
Advocates
for **Youth**

UNITE LA
Education Innovation Through Collaboration

Thank You to Our Supporters



We are proud to recognize the many public agencies, community-based organizations, young people, networks, and foundations that have championed our collective work in the past year.

FUNDERS

Angell Foundation
 The Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions
 Ballmer Group
 The Carl & Roberta Deutsch Foundation
 Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**
 Goodwin Family Memorial Trust
 May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust
 Pritzker Foster Care Initiative**
 The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
 Stuart Foundation

PARTNERS

A Sense of Home
 Alliance for Children's Rights**^^
 Angell Foundation
 Antelope Valley College
 Anthony & Jeanine Pritzker Family Foundation
 Archdiocese Youth Employment
 Aspen Forum for Community Solutions
 Ballmer Group
 Better Youth
 Bridges from School to Work
 Brotherhood Crusade
 Cal Poly Pomona
 Cal State University, Dominguez Hills
 Cal State University, Long Beach
 Cal State University, Los Angeles
 California Community College Chancellor's Office
 California Department of Rehabilitation
 California Opportunity Youth Network
 California Youth Connection
 CASA – LA
 Cerritos College
 Children's Hospital Los Angeles
 Children's Law Center of California
 Citrus College

City of LA Economic & Workforce Development Department**
 City of LA Youth Development Department
 Coalition for Responsible Community Development (CRCDD)**
 Compton College
 Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
 DemocraShe
 East LA College
 El Camino College
 Extraordinary Families
 Faith Foster Family Network, 3FN
 First Place for Youth**
 First Star
 Foothill Workforce Development Board
 Foster and Kinship Care Education (FKCE)
 Foster Care Counts
 Foster Ed
 Foster Nation
 Foster Together Network
 Fostering Dreams Project
 FosterMore
 Friends of the Children – Los Angeles
 Glendale Community College
 Glendale Youth Alliance
 Goodwill Southern California
 Happy Trails for Kids
 Hillside
 Housing Justice Collective
 iFoster**
 John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY)**^^
 Journey House
 Kids in the Spotlight
 L.A. Compact
 LA Tech
 Learn4Life
 Long Beach City College
 Long Beach Forward
 Long Beach Health & Human Services
 Long Beach Office of Youth Development
 Long Beach Unified School District
 Los Angeles College Promise

Los Angeles Community College District
 Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
 Los Angeles County Dept of Arts and Culture
 Los Angeles County Dept of Children and Family Services**
 Los Angeles County Dept of Economic Opportunity (DEO)**
 Los Angeles County Dept of Human Resources
 Los Angeles County Dept of Mental Health
 Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council
 Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection (OCP)
 Los Angeles County Office of Education**
 Los Angeles County Probation Dept
 Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board
 Los Angeles County Youth Commission
 Los Angeles Harbor College
 Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)
 Los Angeles LGBT Center**
 Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative Young Leaders**
 Los Angeles Performance Partnership Pilot
 Los Angeles Pierce College
 Los Angeles Southwest College
 Los Angeles Trade Tech College
 Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)
 Los Angeles Valley College
 Mt. San Antonio College
 Music Forward Foundation
 National Center for Youth Law
 National Foster Youth Institute (NFYI)
 Next Up programs across Los Angeles County
 New Ways to Work
 Office of Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass
 Olive Crest
 Pacific Gateway Workforce Innovation Network
 Para Los Niños
 Pasadena City College
 Peace4Kids
 Public Counsel
 Ready To Succeed
 REDF
 ReLAY Institute (ReConnecting Los Angeles Youth)
 Reproductive Health Equity Project

Rio Hondo College
 Safe Place for Youth
 Santa Monica College
 School On Wheels
 Seen & Heard
 She Ready Foundation
 South Bay Workforce Investment Board**
 South East Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board
 South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone (Slate Z)
 St. Anne's Family Services
 Stuart Foundation
 Sycamores
 The Academy Project
 The Community College Foundation
 The Imprint
 The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
 The RightWay Foundation
 Think of Us
 UCLA YouthSource Center
 Unite-LA**^^
 United Friends of the Children**
 University of California, Los Angeles
 University of Southern California
 Verdugo Workforce Development Board
 Walden Family Services
 Watson Consulting
 Wayfinder Family Services
 Wellnest Los Angeles
 West Los Angeles College
 Yo Watts

** denotes Stewardship Board
 ^^ denotes Co-Convener



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