



EMPOWERING YOUTH. TRANSFORMING FUTURES.



SHAREFEST IMPACT REPORT | 2023-2024

OUR MISSION

Sharefest gives youth facing significant barriers the skills, support, and connections they need to achieve economic success.

OUR VISION

Los Angeles youth will no longer be limited by barriers to economic mobility.

OUR MISSIONAL GOALS

● **ACTIVATE RESILIENCE**

The youth we work with are survivors. They have persisted through challenges some of us would never dream possible. It is our job to help them uncover their resilience and channel it into their college and career goals.

● **INCREASE SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Social capital is a web of relationships that has economic benefits. Unfortunately, it has not been evenly distributed among people and groups. But our research shows it is one of the most powerful factors in determining economic mobility.

● **REDUCE COLLEGE & CAREER BARRIERS**

Sharefest works with high school students to help them graduate and create clear, individualized career plans that encourage them to consider a trade or college. We guide, mentor and support students after high school as they transition to the workforce or higher education.



FOLLOW OUR GOALS...

See how elements of our programs place emphasis on different missional goals by following the colored dots throughout the report.





A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For more than 21 years, I've had the privilege of leading Sharefest and witnessing the incredible journeys of the youth we serve. Their resilience, perseverance, and creativity inspire us. What our world often overlooks—their neighborhoods, families, and life circumstances—are the very things that shape their determination to transform their futures.



At Sharefest, we know that change doesn't happen overnight. It takes time, care, and a deep commitment to helping young people discover the brilliance beneath their challenges. This work requires us to listen, stay curious, and adapt to meet each student's needs.

I've never been more confident in what we're building. Our team approaches every barrier with tenacity and compassion, creating breakthroughs that last a lifetime.

Your belief in our mission lays the foundation for today's successes and brighter futures ahead. In this report, we're excited to share how your support has created lasting change—and the promise of even more to come.

Thank you for standing with us and believing in the potential of every young person we serve.

Gratefully,



Chad Mayer

THE SCIENCE BEHIND SHAREFEST

Our missional goals inform all of our programming and are grounded in the *Measuring Mobility from Poverty Framework*, which identifies Economic Success, Social Capital, and Resilience as critical keys to overcoming poverty. We are also informed by principles of Social-Emotional Learning Theory.

We achieve these goals through programming that blends carefully crafted curriculum with college and career pathways to help young people move toward their career goals. Facilitated group and individual mentoring, combined with targeted instruction, are core components of our approach. Our Workforce Development Program, now available for both college and career pathways, strengthens our ability to support all youth in achieving economic success.

Here are some of the key elements in our programming that contribute to our success:



ROBUST CURRICULUM

- Content exposure
- Speakers
- Workshops



CONTINUOUS MENTORING

- Individual mentoring sessions
- Group mentoring
- Ongoing case management



DEDICATED JOB DEVELOPMENT

- Industry speakers and field trips
- Networking opportunities
- Job and internship placement

THE SHAREFEST STUDENT EXPERIENCE



MEET SHAREFEST

Youth meet their Instructor Mentors and build relationships. They participate in initial classes and workshops.

Key Takeaways:

- A relationship with a trusted adult
- An initial pathway to post high school
- Awareness of services and resources available to them
- Introduction to life skills and healthy emotional regulation techniques
- Professional development skills building



MENTORSHIP

This is where Sharefest's alchemy truly happens. Our team guides youth to remove barriers as they progress through our programs.

Key Takeaways:

- Increased problem solving skills
- Willingness to share personal and academic struggles and use mentor as a resource
- Ability to identify and dissect barriers to success
- Self-awareness to understand where support is needed



CAREER EXPLORATION & PLANNING

Youth are exposed to many careers and learn about a variety of industries, available jobs and what steps are needed to work in those industries.

Key Takeaways:

- Personalized career or post high school plan
- Expanded knowledge of career options and potential fields of interest
- Polished, professional documents such as a resume and cover letter
- Strengthened professional etiquette



LEVI

FROM HOMELESSNESS TO LA HARBOR COLLEGE

Levi faced intense pressures throughout his youth, from bouncing between schools, being separated from his mom and even experiencing homelessness. These hardships could have crushed him, but instead, Levi learned to harness the strength that pressure can create.

His turning point came at Avalon, where he connected with Sharefest. We helped him gain essential skills, and provided mentorship and support. Through Sharefest's guidance, Levi became a high school graduate, enrolled in LA Harbor College, and now aims to enter the electrical lineman program at LA Trade Tech.

Levi's story is one of resilience, proving that even the hardest challenges can be transformed into stepping stones toward a bright future.



GRADUATE

Our goal is for youth to graduate with a career plan and have a pathway highlighted to community college or university, trade program, internship or job.

Key Takeaways:

- Vision for their future
- High School Diploma
- Post high school plan
- Confidence in oneself and abilities
- Opportunities to access college, jobs and careers
- Wraparound support system



CAREER CONNECTIONS INTERNSHIP

The Sharefest 6-week paid program amplifies Sharefest's lessons and focuses on job and career development and supporting students with concrete next steps.

Key Takeaways:

- Career plan with action items to meet goals
- Mock interviews with a variety of industry professionals
- Job and internship placement
- Mentoring check-ins for one year after internship completion



CAREER LAUNCH

Youth work with the Career Workforce Development Team to be placed into a job leading to a career. The innovative FlexLA platform we are launching will also support this transition.

Key Takeaways:

- Continued connections and placements in job opportunities, internships and apprenticeships
- Job application and professional support
- Profile on FlexLA platform to showcase academic and professional efforts to connect with potential employers



243 PERSONALIZED CAREER PLANS CREATED

- Youth explored their aspirations and ambitions and researched career options they were interested in
- They created visions and plans for their future with action steps to reach each of their goals

86 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Youth had opportunities to hear from local unions, a TV producer, financial institutions, numerous trades, the military, college representatives, a respiratory specialist and even entrepreneurs!

105 IMPACTFUL MENTORING SESSIONS WITH YOUTH

- Instructor Mentors facilitated group and individual mentoring sessions to build connection among peers

31 YOUTH FITTED HEAD-TO-TOE WITH PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

- Youth received interview-ready outfits including suits, shirts, and accessories such as ties, belts, and purses through our partnership with Working Wardrobes

During a speaker engagement event at Moneta High School with a local electrical union, 10 students remained afterward to network, gather information on applying for the electrician apprenticeship, and get copies of the study guide. Given the significant interest among the youth in pursuing trades, this was a victory, providing tangible support on the path to becoming electricians.



HIGHLIGHT REEL

17 TRANSFORMATIONAL FIELD TRIPS TAKEN

- Students had the opportunity to visit colleges, explore trade opportunities first-hand, experience team building and got behind the scenes at real world jobs



82 FINANCIAL LITERACY ACTIVITIES

- Youth learned how to manage expenses, pay bills and taxes, and even build credit
- Youth discussed the importance of savings, budgeting and debt management

Participating in the financial literacy course was a game-changer for me. Our instructor made complex financial concepts accessible, providing practical knowledge. Before the course, managing finances seemed hard, but now I feel confident and informed about budgeting and credit decisions.

51 WELLBEING ACTIVITIES PROVIDED

- Students experienced wellness activities focused on the brain and behavior
- Students gained an understanding of self-awareness and regulating their emotions

13 STUDENTS JOINED OUR BRAND NEW AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

- Opportunities to overcome fears and strengthen public speaking skills, practice vulnerability to build trust and experience wins
- Student Ambassador, Jerimyah, even interviewed former USC Quarterback Matt Leinert!





ALAN

FROM FALLING BEHIND TO SELF-DISCOVERY

Alan struggled to stay motivated in school and found himself drastically behind on the credits he needed to graduate. At Angel's Gate Continuation High School he was able to rediscover his love of learning and graduate.

Alan was invited to join Sharefest's Career Connections Summer Internship Program where he learned how to present himself professionally, network and prepare for a career of interest. Through the internship, Alan was connected to the Cedars-Sinai LADDERS program. He successfully completed the program and was connected with professionals who are committed to helping him achieve his goal of becoming an IOR Inspector.

Now, Alan is feeling hopeful about his future and his career path. He credits Sharefest for helping him use the skills and passions he already had in new and impactful ways and looks forward to continuing his career journey.



INEZ

FROM OVERWHELMED YOUTH TO DETERMINED DREAMER

Inez always felt like life wouldn't be easy. Growing up, she faced trauma and overwhelming emotions, yet her family's love and the independence of the strong women around her inspired resilience. In high school, her struggles led to poor grades and, eventually, expulsion. Sent to Angel's Gate, she felt out of place—until she met Ms. Phonnyta, Sharefest Instructor Mentor, whose care helped Inez regain trust, focus on her studies, and graduate a year early.

Through Sharefest's Career Connections Internship, Inez gained confidence and clarity about her future, with goals like getting her driver's license and pursuing her love for art, architecture, and design. Now, with Sharefest's support, Inez sees her mental strength as a powerful asset.

Inez says, "Remember: Despite what anyone will tell you, you were made for more, your mental health doesn't have to be your weakness, it can be your strength, and you can overcome whatever you put your mind to."

NATALIE

FROM OVERLOOKED TO UNCOVERED GEM

Growing up, Natalie felt overshadowed and labeled as just another statistic, but she was determined to change that. In high school, a difficult situation nearly led her to juvenile detention, but instead, she ended up at Avalon Continuation High School, where she connected with Sharefest and our Instructor Mentor Mr. G, who introduced her to new possibilities.

With Sharefest's support, Natalie completed years of credits in record time and adopted a mantra, "Stick to the plan," which became her guide to success. Through Sharefest's Career Connections Internship, she gained practical skills, confidence, and a community of peers with big dreams, helping her see her own potential.

Today, Natalie is a proud high school graduate, a full-time student at LA Harbor College, and a Sharefest Ambassador. She shared her story at our Hidden Gems Gala this fall and is driven to help other young people uncover their own hidden gems.



Scan to see highlights from Natalie's speech at the 2024 Gala!

MIGUEL

FROM STRUGGLING STUDENT TO CONSTRUCTION INTERN

Miguel faced early struggles with school, losing motivation during the COVID shutdown and later battling social anxiety, which caused him to fall behind in credits. Determined to graduate, Miguel transferred to Simon Rodia Continuation High School, where he worked hard to stay on track.

His turning point came when he connected with Sharefest. Our Instructor Mentors introduced him to career paths, including becoming an electrician. Through Sharefest's Career Connections Summer Internship, Miguel gained professional skills and landed another internship with Cedars-Sinai. After his successful completion of the LADDERS internship, Miguel accepted an apprenticeship position with Eco-Mac Electric.

Today, Miguel is excited about his future, showing that with the right guidance and determination, even difficult beginnings can lead to a promising career path.

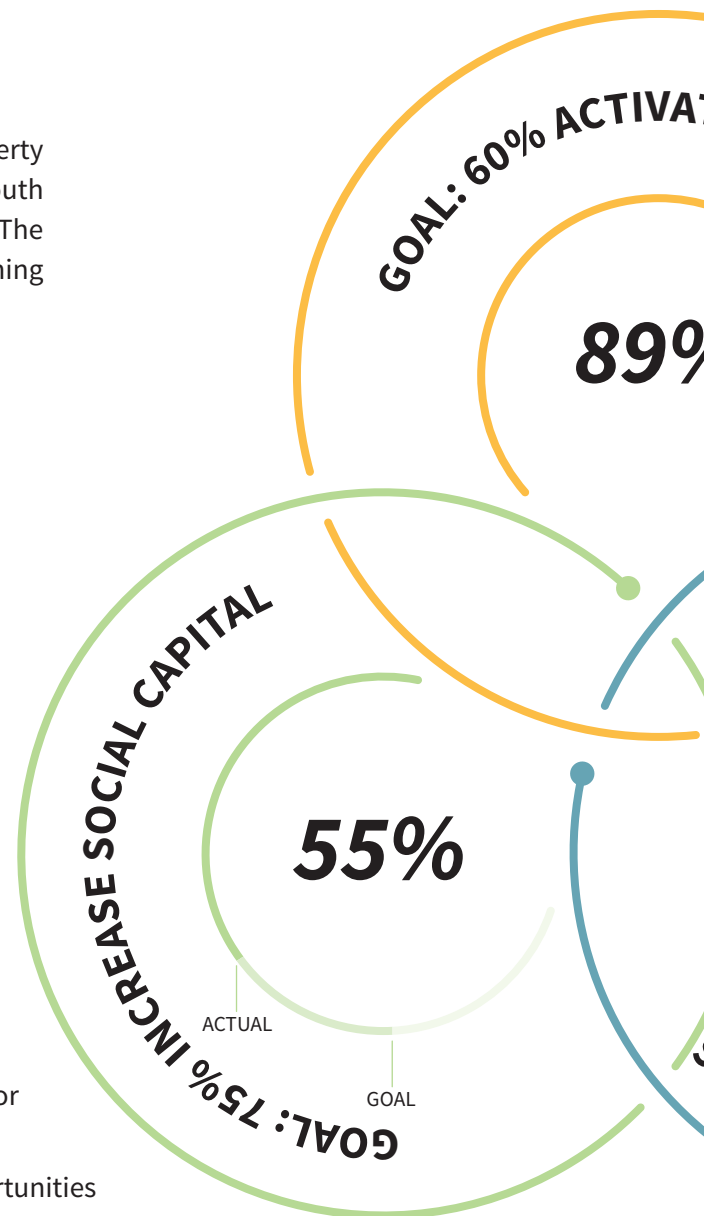


IMPACTS & OUTCOMES

Across our programs, we are studying our mobility from poverty model to ensure that we meet our bold goal: Los Angeles youth will no longer be limited by barriers to economic mobility. The last year provided a tremendous amount of growth and learning for our team and we are proud of the results we achieved.

I learned so much—how to write a resume, apply for jobs, cash a check, and fill out a W2. But the most important thing I gained was confidence. The Sharefest team welcomed me with open arms. They never judged me, and they made me feel like I belonged.

- 85% said they feel more confident in communicating with adults
- 37 professionals from a variety of trades led workshops for or spoke to our students
- Student Ambassador Program launched to give more opportunities to build personal and professional networks



I love how I gained such valuable things I need to know in order to succeed in my internship, I now feel confident to

538

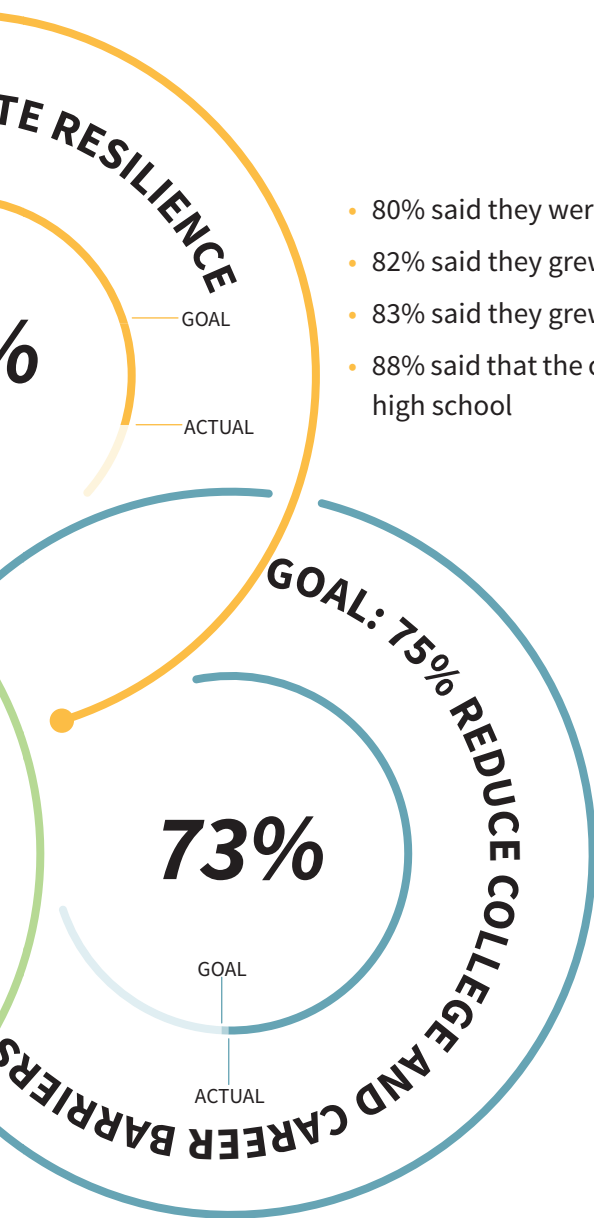
**STUDENTS
ENROLLED**

337

**COMPLETED
ONE OR MORE
SEMESTERS OF
SHAREFEST**

109

**HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATES**



- 80% said they were more likely to attend school because of Sharefest
- 82% said they grew in self-confidence
- 83% said they grew in their ability to make mistakes and try again
- 88% said that the course increased the likelihood that they would graduate from high school

The best part of the program was how much valuable information I learned for my future. I came everyday because I knew each day I would be learning important information that could benefit me later on and I didn't want to miss out. I don't think I would have learned this anywhere but here at Sharefest.

- 88% said they understand the necessary next steps in their career path
- The number of students who completed at least one semester with Sharefest increased 33% over last year
- 92% of Summer Interns say they grew in professionalism

able information about life and to be successful. Because of this take on the world and my future!

18

**DEDICATED
STAFF MEMBERS**

26

**SUMMER
INTERNS**

152

**JOB & INTERNSHIP
PLACEMENTS
SINCE 2023**

SHAREFEST CAREER CONNECTIONS

THE MANY PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Sharefest is a vital bridge between high school and employment for youth facing significant barriers and often on the verge of dropping out. Sharefest guides them to boost their skills and readiness for the workforce or college. Youth work with us through one of our partner schools or our Career Connections Internship. We're dedicated to helping every youth begin a career path that sets them up for a brighter future.

TRADES

An estimated 3 million skilled trades jobs will remain open by 2028. Many of these trades offer a pathway to economic security. More than half of our students will pursue a trade. Sharefest prepares, connects and places qualified students in apprenticeships, internships and entry level positions in well-paying careers.



| gained confidence in myself. | gained a second family that | never knew | needed.

COLLEGE

A college degree is still a goal for many of our students. But many aren't familiar with federal aid and don't know how to access the many resources available to them. Sharefest helps break down the barriers to college and supports students on their journey to achieving a college degree.



FEATURED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

CEDARS-SINAI LADDERS TO SUCCESS PROGRAM

This summer marked the second year of our partnership with Cedars-Sinai. Youth had the opportunity to interview and several were selected for the 11-week Cedars-Sinai LADDERS of Success Internship. This program provided hands-on training in a variety of construction and engineering environments -- making them immediately hireable!

The LADDERS program exposed them to a wide range of skills from essential construction terminology and understanding structural integrity to complex lighting design. Each youth discovered a trade that matched their interests. For example, Alan developed an interest in becoming an IOR Inspector while Priscilla was drawn to organizational collaboration.

The best part? Every Sharefest youth who was selected successfully completed the program and all were offered jobs! Our partnership with Cedars-Sinai is just one of the many ways Sharefest prepares youth for and connects them to real-world careers.



We welcome individuals from all backgrounds, providing them with the opportunity to learn and grow through the expertise we have honed in our craft. Our goal is to nurture their development and elevate them to new heights of success..
- FARREL STEVINS, TIS CONSTRUCTION



PRISCILLA

FROM INSTABILITY TO A PROMISING CAREER

Priscilla spent her childhood in and out of foster care, lost her dad when she was 12, and attended numerous schools. At 17, determined to shape her future on her own terms, she made the difficult decision to run away.

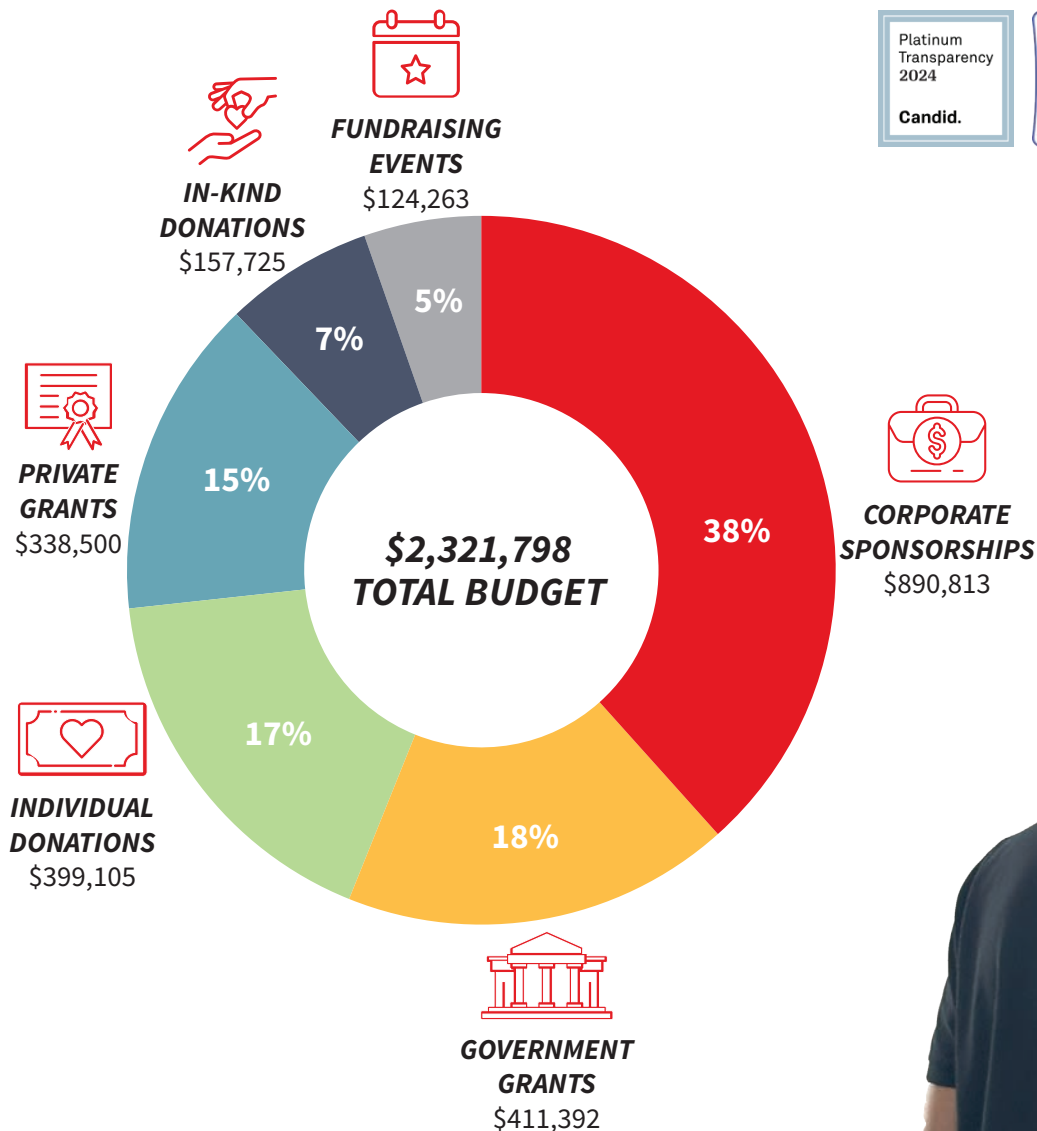
Her turning point came when she enrolled at Angel's Gate Continuation High School and joined Sharefest, where our Instructor Mentors helped her build essential career skills. With their guidance, she was accepted into and graduated from the Cedars-Sinai LADDERS to Success Program.

Upon completing the program, Priscilla was offered a full-time role as a project assistant at TIS Construction. She is now training in estimation and looking forward to a bright future.

I don't know where I would be without Sharefest.

2023 FINANCIALS

Since 2009, Sharefest has been the only community-based organization consistently working inside continuation high schools with youth who are under-served, under-resourced AND underestimated. We invest more resources into each student than schools or other organizations can. Following a student from high school into college or the workforce is simply the most effective way for youth to achieve economic mobility and success.



The biggest impact that Sharefest had on me was honestly teaching me the skills that I would need for the workforce. It just helped me grow as a person.





FEATURED CORPORATE PARTNER

PACIFIC PREMIER BANK



PACIFIC PREMIER BANK®

Since 2021, Pacific Premier Bank has been a vital supporter of our mission, providing funding and volunteer support to Sharefest in various capacities. This year, they brought a team of volunteers to run a “Game of Life” activity for our summer interns. This hands-on simulation helped interns face real-world financial challenges and learn the importance of budgeting. Students embarked on an interactive journey with the guidance of Pacific Premier employee volunteers. Each participant was given a fictional occupation, salary, family, student loan debt, etc., and challenged to make responsible financial decisions and plan for their future, all while dealing with the many expected and unexpected events that happen in our daily lives. The event was a tremendous success and we’re excited to continue sharing this impactful experience with our interns in the years to come. Not only does Pacific Premier play a key role in the financial literacy education we offer to youth, but Pacific Premier’s dedicated team also serves as hosts for our annual gala.



“At Pacific Premier Bank, we’re proud to support Sharefest’s mission to provide real-world financial literacy education to our youth,” said Sherri Scott, Sr. EVP / Chief Corporate Responsibility Officer. “This partnership creates meaningful opportunities to empower and equip this generation of youth with the skills they need to succeed.”

Pacific Premier Bank is dedicated to partnering with organizations like Sharefest to enhance community resilience and address key barriers to economic mobility in underserved areas. Pacific Premier’s investment of time and resources empowers Sharefest’s youth with skills to gain financial freedom, independence, and new opportunities.

JOSE SANCHEZ

FROM SHAREFEST TO PACIFIC PREMIER BANK AND BACK

Over 15 years ago, Jose participated in Sharefest and was personally mentored until he graduated from high school, attending the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he graduated with a B.S. in Financial Math and Statistics.

Now a successful Credit Analyst at Pacific Premier Bank, Jose returned this summer to help lead Pacific Premier’s “Game of Life” youth program.

“Going back to volunteer at Sharefest was a truly rewarding full-circle moment for me. It was wonderful to see the kids so into it, and I look forward to more events like this,” said Jose Sanchez, Credit Analyst at Pacific Premier Bank.



Scan to see the
Sanchez Family
Story



WHERE ARE THEY NOW

AN UPDATE FROM EVER

At our 20th Anniversary Gala in 2023 our guests were privileged to hear from a remarkable young lady, Ever. She bravely shared about how after spending years in the foster care system, experiencing difficult living conditions, family instability, and trauma, she came to believe her situation was her fault. When she was diagnosed with depression and anxiety during a stay in a mental hospital, she felt completely lost.

Thankfully, Ever was able to turn her life around. She shared how her turn-around wouldn't have been possible without the love of her grandparents who took her out of the foster care system, and Sharefest who taught her that a better future was within her reach.

Today, Ever is thriving as a psychology major at Cal State Dominguez Hills. We asked her to give us an update on her life today. Enjoy!

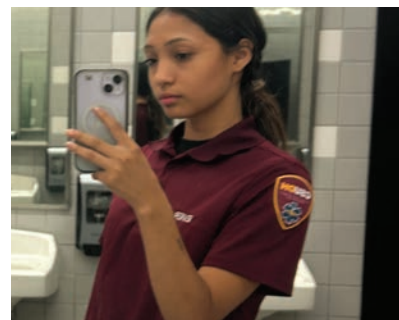
Scan to watch Ever's
Story on Instagram



My journey with Sharefest started through my school when Ms. P asked if I needed a mentor. That simple question led me to Sharefest, an organization that has played a huge role in shaping my future from high school all the way into my college journey. They helped me find my voice and become my own guardian, empowering me to get into college and pursue my dreams.

Right now, I'm studying psychology at Cal State Dominguez Hills, and I'm also about to graduate from EMT school. I made the tough decision to quit my job and focus on school full-time, attending both day and night classes to soon start working with a private ambulance company.

Throughout this process, Sharefest has been a constant support, helping me with social connections and personal development. From high school to college, they've been there every step of the way, always providing guidance when I needed it most. When I felt overwhelmed or ready to give up, Ms. P was always there, giving me the space I needed to recharge while encouraging me to keep going. Sharefest has a unique way of helping students like me embrace our backgrounds while pushing us to aim higher and believe in our potential. Their guidance has been invaluable, and they truly know how to empower students to see the possibilities for their futures.





2025 AND BEYOND

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SHAREFEST?

Sharefest has evolved significantly since its inception. We've intentionally focused on building a data-driven model, fostering professionalism, and expanding our team with some of LA's best and brightest. We are excited and energized by what lies ahead.



A NEW SOURCE FOR WORKERS IN LA

Public agencies and businesses face staffing challenges despite a surplus of motivated young professionals seeking opportunities. The online FlexLA platform is actively bridging this gap by connecting young talent directly with employers.



FlexLA is diligently assembling a skilled workforce from these individuals, ensuring they are thoroughly vetted, developed, and certified to excel in entry-level positions within the local job market.



EXPANDING TO SERVE MORE YOUTH

In addition to the 7 campuses where Sharefest currently offers programming, we are also looking at expanding our reach even further by working with other school districts, charter schools, and juvenile detention centers.



AFTER-SCHOOL INTERNSHIP COMING SOON

Sharefest is expanding our offerings to include a new after-school internship program, providing even more ways for us to reach students. The after-school internship will mirror the in-school and summer programming.

SUPPORTING SHAREFEST FOR OVER A DECADE

DEBI RAASCH & FAMILY

Debi Raasch and her family have been involved in Sharefest since 2010. She and her late husband, Greg, participated in numerous service projects during Sharefest's early years. Debi connected with the school's principal during one project and asked if she could volunteer with the kids. He took her up on it and she followed him from school to school, leading workdays and volunteering until he was promoted.

Still wanting to volunteer with students, Debi reached out to Chad, and he connected her with Harry Bridges Span School, where she continues to volunteer today. Sharefest has also helped Debi facilitate many service projects at Harry Bridges.

When we asked Debi why she continues to support Sharefest faithfully, she shared, "I appreciate Chad and his heart for underserved students. I understand their emphasis on mentoring kids and letting them know someone really cares about them. I love Sharefest's vision and the way they are able to provide the tools, resources, and opportunities youth need to succeed."

As a retired teacher who volunteers with elementary kids from similar backgrounds as Sharefest youth, Debi gets a firsthand look into what mentoring means to students. She believes mentoring makes a difference because students see there is someone who knows their name, cares about them, believes in them and puts in time and effort to encourage and help them. Debi sees tremendous value in a mentor coming alongside a student and saying, 'You've got this! I care about you and I will be here for you.'

Debi has seen the difference Sharefest's work is making in youth's lives. She hopes Sharefest can expand to serve more youth, as she knows the need is great. Additionally, Debi hopes Sharefest can grow our partnerships with industry partners to further the effectiveness of our work.

To the Sharefest team and supporters, Debi says, "Thank you for what you are doing! I have total faith in Sharefest's work, and I really appreciate that you are there for these kids. It makes a difference!"



THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR FUNDERS WHO GAVE \$10,000 OR MORE!

- Angell Foundation
- Balfour Beatty
- CalCRG
- California Community Foundation
- Chris & Rebecca Chapman
- Christopher Brink
- Cornerstone Construction Group
- County of Los Angeles Probation Department
- Crail-Johnson Foundation
- Crystal Cadence
- Debi Raasch
- Doug Lowe
- DPR Construction
- Dwight Stuart Youth Fund
- Fielding Electric, Inc.
- GG's Family Foundation
- Golden State Water Company
- Greater Los Angeles SIOR Chapter
- Hammel, Green & Abrahamson, Inc.
- Hoag Family Foundation
- Jamie & Misha Bedner
- Janet Johnson
- Jessica and Bernard Ibarra
- Kaiser Permanente
- Klabin Company
- LA County District 2
- Marathon Petroleum
- Maureen & Stanley Moore
- Melanie & Richard Lundquist
- Mitsui USA Foundation
- NBBJ
- Olson Duncan Insurance
- Pacific Crane Maintenance Company
- Pacific Premier Bank
- Pearlman Geller Family Foundation
- Phillips 66
- PNG Builders
- Rich Development Company
- Rudolph & Sletten, Inc.
- SA Recycling
- SoCal Edison
- Union Pacific Railroad Company
- Valero Energy
- Watson Land Company

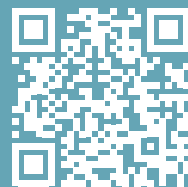
A NOTE FROM SHAREFEST ALUMNI, LORENZO WHY SUPPORT SHAREFEST?

Words cannot fully describe the impact Sharefest has had and still has on my life. I would not be the person I am today if it wasn't for the mentoring and support Sharefest offered me in high school. It was with the help of Sharefest I was able to find my voice and my identity. I know this work would not be possible if it wasn't for the amazing Sharefest team and donors that help fund life-changing projects that I have witnessed first-hand change, not only in my life, but the lives of so many others.





SCAN TO GIVE TO SHAREFEST



*LEARN MORE AND KEEP UP WITH
WHAT'S NEW AT [SHAREFESTINC.ORG!](https://www.sharefestinc.org)*

