



SHAREFEST IMPACT REPORT

2024 - 2025



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.



A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For 22 years, I've had the privilege of walking alongside the youth we serve, young people who carry enormous challenges yet show up with grit, hope, and a determination to build something better.

This year that determination was matched by something we've been working toward for a long time, real recognition for continuation high school students at the state level. After more than a decade of strengthening our work in continuation schools, I had the opportunity to advocate in Sacramento for a bill that finally acknowledges these students and the barriers they face. The policy passed with zero opposition and, for the first time, continuation schools can now partner directly with organizations like Sharefest for expanded instructional time and deeper career development support.

This year, we worked with more than 600 students across 19 school locations. We helped them gain confidence, build career plans, and step into real jobs and post-secondary opportunities. The stories of students like Marcus, Priscilla, Diego, and so many others remind us why staying with young people after high school is where transformation truly takes root.

Thank you for believing in this mission, for believing in our students, and for helping us stand in the gap during such an important moment for the future of this work.

Gratefully,

Chad Mayer



“Being a Sharefest Instructor Mentor means showing up, keeping it real, and being someone they know has their back. Sometimes that’s helping them prep for a job interview, sometimes it’s just listening when they’re frustrated or scared. The little wins—they matter. And getting to see them grow and know I played even a small part? That’s why I do this.”

- Dameane, Instructor Mentor

THE SHAREFEST STUDENT EXPERIENCE

MENTORSHIP

Mentorship is the through-line of everything we do at Sharefest.

It's where transformation truly happens as youth gain problem-solving skills, activate resilience, and receive ongoing guidance to overcome barriers, and thrive in their careers and beyond.

MEET SHAREFEST

Youth meet Sharefest at 19 schools across the LA area, working with Instructor Mentors who help them build essential skills and explore career pathways. From the start, they gain a trusted adult and tools to take their next step with confidence.

GAIN REAL WORLD SKILLS

Sharefest gives students the everyday life skills many have never been taught but urgently need.

From understanding how to open a checking account and build credit to learning how to budget, communicate effectively, manage time, and advocate for themselves, students gain practical tools they can use immediately. These real-world lessons not only build confidence—they empower students to navigate adulthood with greater stability, independence, and clarity about their next steps.

CAREER CONNECTIONS

Youth discover career pathways and skills such as teamwork, punctuality, workplace etiquette, and goal setting. They build professional resumes, explore industries, and create personalized plans for life after high school.

The Sharefest Career Connections internship expands on this growth through hands-on experiences, mock interviews, and ongoing mentoring that supports job and internship placement.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Sharefest helps students build the social-emotional skills that make daily life and big transitions, more manageable. They learn how to recognize and regulate their emotions, manage stress in healthy ways, communicate what they're feeling, and respond to challenges with intention rather than impulse.

By practicing mindfulness, resilience and self-awareness, students gain tools which strengthen their relationships, improve their decision-making, and support their well-being as they navigate school, work, and life.

CAREER LAUNCH

Guided by the Career Workforce Development Team and supported by the FlexLA platform, youth move from preparation to placement with confidence. The Sharefest Team provides ongoing job application support, networking opportunities, professional mentoring and coaching, and direct connections to jobs, internships, and apprenticeships that can launch long-term careers.



"What makes Sharefest stand out is our support doesn't stop when a student graduates or gets their first job. We stay connected for a year, and sometimes longer, walking alongside them as they take their next steps. It's really about long-term mentorship and genuine relationships, not a one-time program. We're in it with them for the long run."

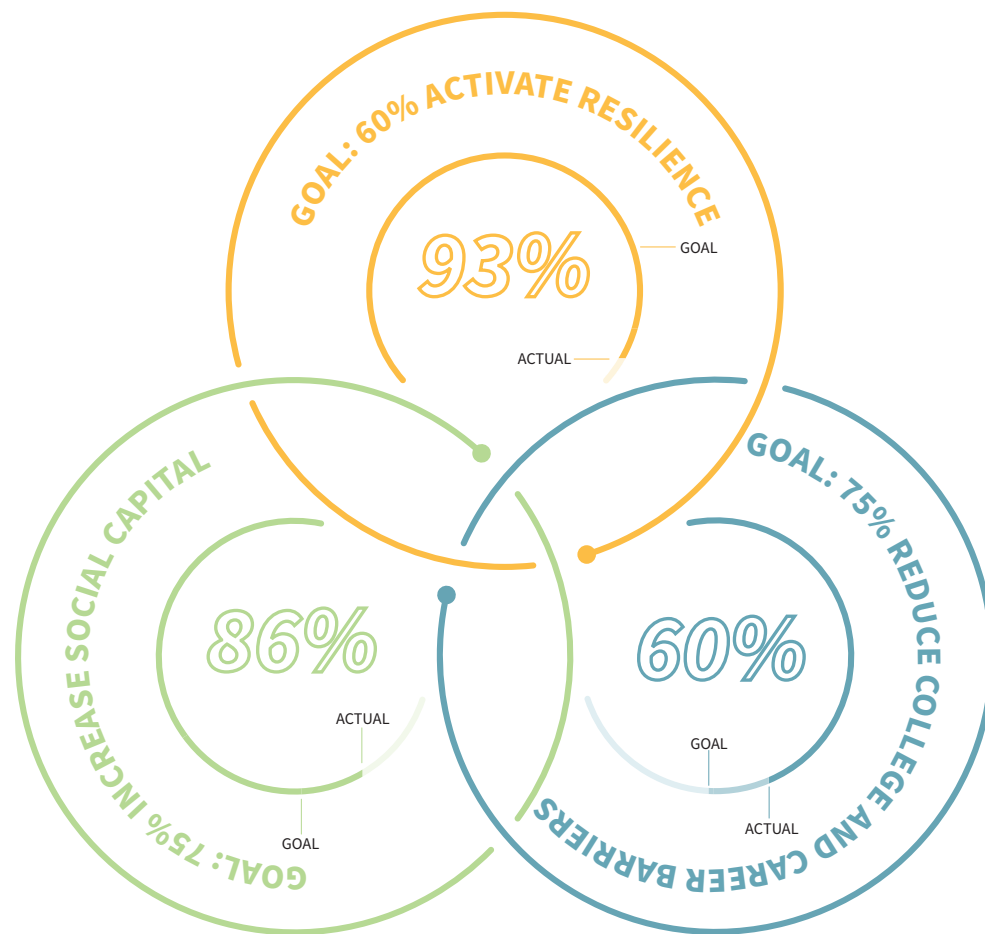
- Tiffany, Career & Workforce Development Coordinator





IMPACT & 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.



632
total youth served

300
youth placed into
jobs, internships,
and college programs
over the past 2 years!

91%
improved communication
with adults

87%
were more likely to
attend school because
of Sharefest

94%
grew in self-confidence

90%
demonstrated they
could show up even
when it's hard



“At Sharefest, we don’t just collect data—we listen. Every survey, every conversation with our students helps us understand what’s truly meaningful to them and what stands in their way. Continuation high school students face extreme barriers, and unless we’re addressing those head-on through our programming, mentoring, and approach, none of us can be successful. Our focus is always on achieving and surpassing our missional goals, but it’s the ‘why’ behind those numbers—seeing real change in students’ confidence, stability, and hope—that tells us we’re making an impact.”

- Gretchen Downey, Vice President, Programs



2024-2025 HIGHLIGHTS

What a year it has been! Sharefest has continued expanding to reach more students while deepening our partnership with LAUSD.

Our program team has worked diligently to refine curriculum and build stronger bridges to adulthood for our youth. More youth are discovering career pathways and leaning on our team as mentors as they apply for jobs and enter the workforce.

Enjoy a look at just a few highlights!



1
*impactful visit from
LAUSD Superintendent
Alberto Carvalho*

95%
*gained clarity on their next
steps in their career path*

19
*schools served
Up from 8 last year!*

87%
grew in self-advocacy

66
*industry partners
introduced to our
youth*

92%
*increased the likelihood
that they would
graduate high school*

100%
*of summer interns
became Sharefest
Certified for the
workforce*

94%
*increased their
professionalism*

NAYANNA: UNCERTAIN TO UNSTOPPABLE

Nayanna found more than career guidance through Sharefest. She found belief in herself. When she joined the program, she had big dreams of becoming a lawyer but wasn't sure where to start. Through mentoring and hands-on workshops, she learned how to speak with confidence, prepare for interviews, and manage her finances. More importantly, she discovered a sense of purpose and pride that carried her through graduation and into college, where she's studying business and planning for a future in law.



STANLEY: LOST TO PURPOSE FOUND

Stanley found more than job training through Sharefest. He found belonging and belief in himself. After years of instability and feeling unseen, he joined the Career Connections Internship and began to change his path. With steady mentorship, he learned confidence, consistency, and pride in his work. He was accepted into the Cedars-Sinai LADDERS Internship, completed the program, and proved to himself that he can build a strong future.



ANAHI: HOPE TURNED INTO ACTION

Anahi found more than guidance through Sharefest. She found the courage to keep going. Despite health challenges that disrupted high school, she stayed determined to build a better future. With mentoring support, she poured her story into a scholarship essay that reflected her resilience and drive. Her hard work paid off when she received a \$15,000 scholarship and enrolled in an ultrasound technician program, turning her challenges into a pathway toward healing and purpose.



DIEGO: FROM INTERN TO ENTREPRENEUR

Diego found more than career experience through Sharefest. He found the confidence to create his own business. As a Summer 2024 intern, he worked with his mentor to design and launch a mobile auto detailing company. He completed test runs, researched permits and insurance, and created marketing materials and a booking system. In May, Diego ran his first pilot day at Sharefest, arriving fully prepared and professional, ready to turn hard work into opportunity.



PRISCILLA: TRANSFORMATION TO IMPACT

Over the past year, Priscilla has continued to thrive in her full-time role at TIS Construction after completing the Cedars-Sinai LADDERS Internship. She is now training in estimation, supporting major projects, and growing her professional confidence every day. What has meant most to her is returning to Sharefest as a mentor, helping new interns navigate the same journey she once walked. She now wakes up excited for her future and grateful for Sharefest and her community who helped her discover her own potential.



ANDREW: PASSION TURNED INTO PURPOSE

Andrew always loved cars, from collecting Hot Wheels as a kid to rebuilding engines as a teen. But school never clicked until he met Sharefest, where encouragement and hands-on learning helped him believe in his potential. Through the summer internship and mentoring, he built confidence, communication skills, and a plan for his future. Now a certified mechanic, Andrew even returned to speak to new interns, inspiring them to chase their own goals.



LEVI: FROM SETBACK TO STRENGTH

Levi's story is about persistence. After losing his home and moving away from Los Angeles, he struggled to stay motivated and keep up with school. When Sharefest reached out about the Cedars-Sinai LADDERS Internship, he took a long bus ride just to attend orientation. That chance changed everything. He completed the program, saved money, and got his own studio. Now he is joining the Carpenters Union.



JAIRO: FROM WAITING TO WORKING

Sharefest first met Jairo in 2019 and has supported him ever since. He graduated from high school in 2020 and kept working toward his goals. In late 2024, he began applying for a job. When there were still no updates by May 2025, a Sharefest team member used his connections to step in and help move things forward. By September, Jairo completed training and was hired by PNG Builders, where he's thriving under one of their top general contractors.



SHAREFEST CERTIFIED

TAKING EMPLOYMENT READINESS TO A NEW LEVEL

At Sharefest, we prepare our students with the essential skills employers expect—and then go further, ensuring each young person is Sharefest Certified, equipped with the habits, mindset, and confidence to succeed in the workplace. Our students learn how to communicate effectively, collaborate on teams, manage their time, complete professional tasks, and navigate the hiring process with self-assurance.

To support and track their growth, we use FlexLA, our digital platform that gives students a clear road map for success. FlexLA holds their resumes, career plans, and allows them to earn badges demonstrating they have the kind of skills employers look for.

FLEXLA TRACKS KEY MILESTONES TOWARD SHAREFEST CERTIFICATION, SUCH AS:

- Completion of core Career Connections lessons
- Career plan and goal setting
- Communication and teamwork skills
- Time management and reliability
- Financial literacy and workplace readiness
- Resume and professional documents
- Interview preparation and practice



Once students have completed essential milestones, consistently shown professionalism, and demonstrated they are ready for real responsibility, they are Sharefest Certified! Our team connects these young adults directly to hiring partners across industries — from maritime and construction to manufacturing and more. Instead of being one in a sea of applications, they are known, vetted, and recommended by our team who is invested in their success.



**FLEXLA LAUNCHED
LESS THAN A YEAR
AGO. SINCE THEN...**

258
**youth “workers”
in FlexLA**

18
FlexLA Employers

**+More being added
every month!**

93
**Sharefest
Certification
badges available**

3,523
**badges earned
to date!**



WHY SHAREFEST’S WORK MATTERS

FROM DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, JAMES LINDAMOOD

“I was a kid who went to a continuation school with no structure and no real guidance. My parents cared deeply, but they didn’t know how to help me navigate today’s job world. I didn’t learn about career paths or workplace skills until I was 25, and I wish I’d had that support much earlier. A lot of our youth don’t have resources or people to trust. Sharefest gives them access to a trusted adult, trusted resources, and the ability to change their own pathway.

Our platform, FlexLA, is a direct connection to employers and opportunities, and a road map they can follow at their own pace. It shows students exactly what steps they need to take through fun, motivating badges that work like a checklist: you want the job, here’s what you do! It puts everything in their hands at their own pace and shows them, visually and clearly, that they can reach those goals.

When that preparation meets our long term mentoring, something powerful happens. They aren’t just ready for the workforce, they are stepping into it with confidence and a supportive team behind them.”

THE SHAREFEST JOURNEY IN REAL LIFE

ONE STUDENT’S PATH FROM UNCERTAINTY TO A CAREER

Sometimes it is challenging to demonstrate the many ways Sharefest shows up in each student’s life. Our wraparound support and ongoing mentoring are the difference makers in transforming futures. Over the past few months, we’ve gotten to witness a young man’s journey from a continuation high school into a career. We’ve changed his name and some key details at his request, but the power of his journey demonstrates why we do what we do.

SEE MORE SHAREFEST STORIES

We love sharing stories from our students! Follow along to see more transformational stories like these!



MARCH



Marcus first connected with Sharefest during a classroom visit from one of our industry partners. He was intrigued by the stories he heard about real careers and real growth. At the time, he was figuring out how to balance new responsibilities as a new dad and wanted to find a stable path forward.

JUNE



While caring for his new baby, Marcus joined Sharefest’s Career Connections Internship. It wasn’t easy balancing sleepless nights and early mornings. He struggled at first to stay consistent, but by the end of the program he began taking ownership of his progress and showing signs of real growth.

AUGUST



After the internship, Marcus took a material handler job. It wasn’t his dream role, but it became a proving ground. He showed up on time every day, determined to set a better example for his family. When he met again with his Sharefest mentor, he said simply, “I want more.” That’s when things started to shift.

SEPTEMBER



Marcus and his mentor met to explore companies in fields that aligned with his interests and existing certifications. He shared that a relative who worked in the maritime industry and spoke highly of it, so together they researched opportunities. The Sharefest team worked together to connect Marcus with an employer in the industry and he was offered an interview.

OCTOBER



Marcus got ready for his interview with his mentor, reviewing questions and practicing his responses to highlight his experience. He walked in feeling confident, professional, and ready. The interview team noticed his reliability and forklift experience, and by the end of the process, he was offered a job.

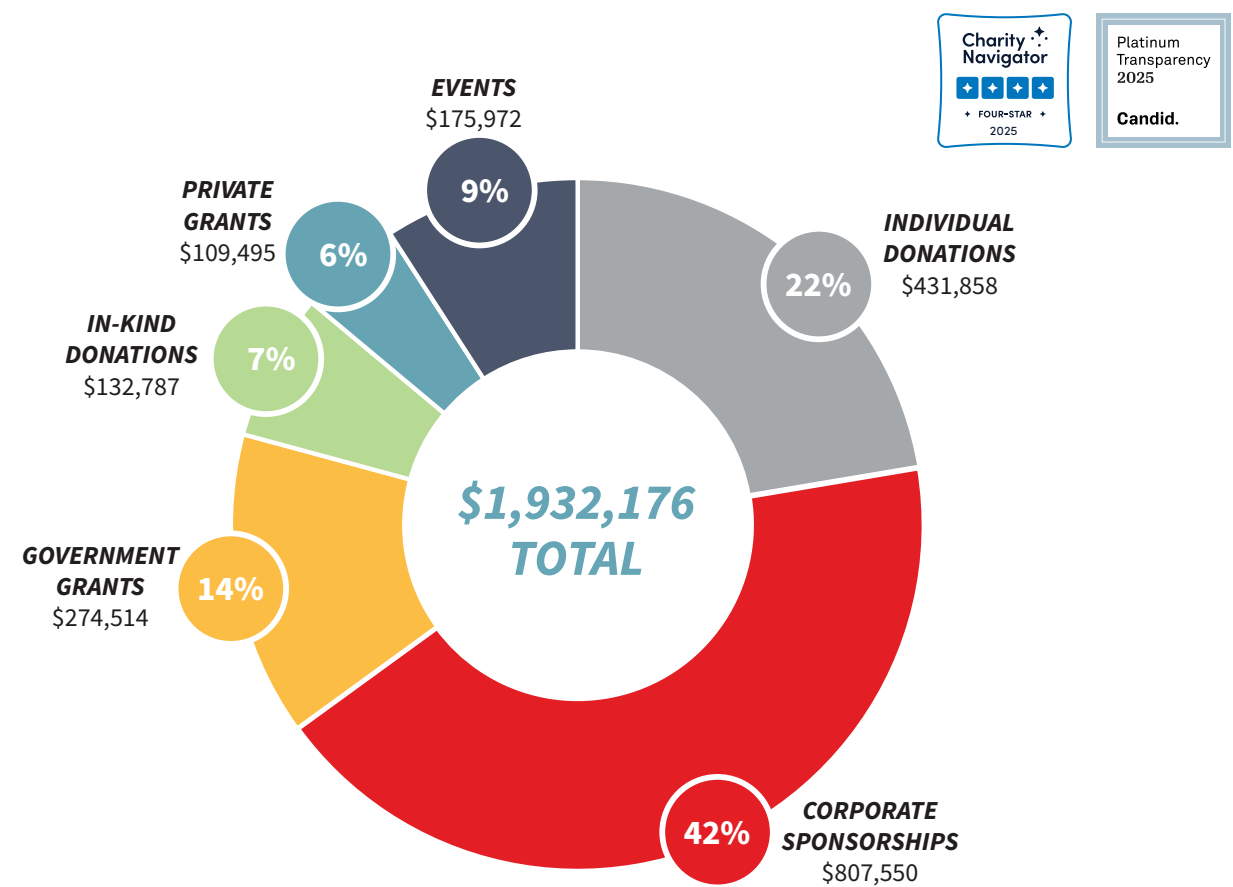
TODAY!



Marcus is now completing onboarding for a full-time job in the maritime industry and continuing to grow. He and his family are settling into a more stable home environment while he saves for the future and supports his partner as she finishes school. He’s proud of how far he’s come and grateful for the people who believed in him along the way.

2024 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.



A LUMINARY FOR SHAREFEST

MEET JAMIE BEDNER

Jamie first connected with Sharefest in 2016 through her work at Wedgewood, where a school renovation project sparked a long partnership and led to many more projects, including the Sharefest Youth Center. As Sharefest expanded its work with youth, she deepened her involvement and joined the Board of Directors.

Jamie believes every young person deserves the kind of encouragement, guidance, and opportunity that shaped her own life. She sees Sharefest filling that gap for students with fewer resources. As Sharefest’s first Luminary Award recipient, Jamie continues to champion the mission with her time, expertise, and generosity.

“Supporting Sharefest is one of the most meaningful investments I make each year. I give because I’ve seen how deeply Sharefest believes in young people who are too often overlooked — continuation high school students, who rarely receive the attention, resources, or advocacy they deserve. Sharefest has built a model grounded in experience, consistency, and real results. Put simply, Sharefest moves the needle in a way few organizations can.”

- Jamie Bedner, Sharefest Board of Directors

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS



2025 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
EDISON HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARD



SHAREFEST EARNED WASC
CERTIFICATION THIS YEAR,
VALIDATING THE QUALITY
OF OUR CURRICULUM



CHAD MAYER
WILMINGTON MAN OF
THE YEAR AWARD



SURPRISE! \$1,000,000

Melanie and Richard Lundquist surprised the room at Sharefest’s 22nd Annual Gala with a second one million dollar investment! Their first investment in 2019 was a true catalyst that helped propel Sharefest to where it is today, and they have continued to champion strategic and impactful giving that drives lasting change. This renewed commitment will keep powering the momentum behind Sharefest’s growth and deepen the impact for the youth we serve.

A FOUNDATION FOR TRANSFORMATION



The Angell Foundation is a collaborative, and community-focused foundation. Within their education portfolio, they invest in organizations advancing post-secondary success and career readiness, especially those creating opportunities for overlooked youth to build fulfilling careers, families, and lives.

This year, the foundation deepened its investment in Sharefest with a multi-year grant of \$350,000. The Angell Foundation believes the Sharefest model is ready to meet a critical moment. As the educational landscape shifts toward workforce development, they see Sharefest as uniquely positioned to walk alongside more underserved students as they navigate post-secondary pathways and step confidently into meaningful careers.

One of the foundation’s core values is bringing like-minded people together to strengthen impact. Program Officer, Marisa Colon plays a key role in this partnership, serving as a connector who helps weave powerful networks. She introduced Sharefest to peer organizations like Hope Builders in Santa Ana, a collaboration that helped accelerate the launch and growth of the Sharefest Career Connections Internship. These connections reflect the Angell Foundation’s belief that transformation happens when organizations work together toward shared goals.

Sharefest is deeply grateful for a partner so committed to long-term, transformational change.

“Sharefest helps students see themselves differently. They start to believe they belong in careers and spaces that once felt out of reach and Sharefest helps get them there. That’s the kind of transformation we want to be part of.”

- Marisa Colon, Angell Foundation Program Officer

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

- Annenberg Foundation
- Arup US Inc
- Balfour Beatty
- Chris & Rebecca Chapman
- Christopher Brink
- Cindi & Michael Krippendorf
- CO Architects
- Columbia Bank
- County of Los Angeles Probation Department
- Crail-Johnson Foundation
- Debi Raasch
- Degenkolb
- Frank & Devan Schulz
- GG’s Family Foundation
- George Hoag Family Foundation
- Golden State Water Company
- Greater Los Angeles SIOR Chapter
- Hammel, Green & Abrahamson, Inc.
- Jamie & Misha Bedner
- Joshua Fein & MaryJo Lauterio
- Kaiser Permanente
- Klabin Company
- LA County District 4
- Loren Sweet
- Los Padrinos
- Marathon Los Angeles Refinery
- Mark & Heidi Duncan
- Melanie & Richard Lundquist
- Mitsui USA Foundation
- NBBJ
- Olson Duncan Insurance Service, Inc.
- Pacific Crane Maintenance Company
- Pearlman Geller Family Foundation
- Phillips 66
- PNG Builders
- Rich Development Enterprises
- Rudolph & Sletten, Inc.
- SA Recycling
- Southern California Edison
- The Green Foundation
- The Rose Hills Foundation
- Taira Family Foundation
- TIS Construction Services, Inc.
- Valero Energy
- Watson Land Company



IN MEMORIAM JACKY GLASS

We honor the life and legacy of Jacky Glass, a longtime supporter whose generosity and compassion touched countless lives. Jacky cared deeply for children and families in their most vulnerable moments. Her kindness was matched by a vibrant spirit. Jacky believed in Sharefest’s mission and supported our youth with the same conviction she brought to all her philanthropic passions. We are grateful for her years of friendship and partnership, and we hold her family in our hearts as we remember a woman who loved deeply and gave generously.

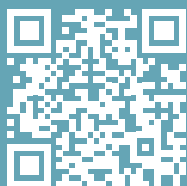




EMPOWERING YOUTH. TRANSFORMING FUTURES.

\$2,500 funds a full year of life-changing programs for one student. Whether it's a one-time gift or a monthly donation, your support breaks down barriers and builds brighter futures.

SCAN TO GIVE TO SHAREFEST



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

