

MENTOR CA

Strategic Plan 2025-2030



MENTOR
CALIFORNIA

MENTOR California | Oakland, California | mentorcaliforniayouth.org | info@mentorcaliforniayouth.org



MENTOR California

About MENTOR California

MENTOR California (MENTOR CA) is an Affiliate of MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, the unifying champion of youth mentoring across the United States. Founded in 2020, MENTOR California seeks to elevate the mentoring field by providing training and technical assistance to mentoring programs, leading statewide recruitment efforts, advocating for increased local, state and federal investment in mentoring, leading research on the field of youth mentorship, and fostering collaborations to transform systems impacting youth.

MENTOR CA seeks to create a thriving culture for all California young people, one caring relationship at a time, where mentoring organizations can be inspired for change, informed and equipped with the knowledge and tools required to best serve California youth. With an unapologetic lens toward social justice and equity, MENTOR CA's customized technical assistance and capacity building support is designed to be responsive to the unique needs and opportunities reflected in various regions across the state.

MENTOR CA's approach to service delivery is centered on the national MENTOR pillars and foundational strategies:

- **Prioritizing Quality:** Identifying, promoting and driving the implementation of evidence-based practices combined with community wisdom to increase the quality of mentoring relationships for young people.
- **Expanding the Movement:** Motivating civic leaders, employers and individual stakeholders to prioritize and invest in ensuring all young people have access to mentoring relationships
- **Influencing Systems:** Creating and guiding innovative solutions that integrate relationship-centered practices and policies while driving resources for the adoption of mentoring structures and mindsets within youth-serving systems.
- **Advancing Local Field Leadership:** Supporting the effectiveness of new and existing MENTOR Affiliates to scale MENTOR's geographic footprint and deepen impact of the mentoring field.
- **Foundational Pillars:** Youth Voice; Equity and Inclusion; Learning and Innovation

Vision, Mission and Core Values

The vision of MENTOR CA is that every young person in California has the supportive relationships they need to grow and develop into thriving, productive and engaged adults.

MENTOR CA's mission is to fuel the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships for California's young people and to close the mentoring gap for the one in three youth growing up without a mentor outside of their family.

As an organization, MENTOR CA is rooted in the following foundational core values:

- **We are guided by inclusivity:** we adopt a human-centric focus in everything we do, with young people at the core.
- **We are guided by love:** we exercise empathy and respect, prioritizing relationships and centering equity in our decision-making.
- **We are guided by self-care:** we honor and pay attention to our (shared) humanity to bring our best selves in our work with others.
- **We are guided by transparency:** we build trust through clarity of our vision and mission

Creating Our 5-Year Plan

Strategic Plan Development Process

The MENTOR CA 2025-2030 Strategic Plan was developed in collaboration with technical assistance partners at Innovation Bridge. Strategic planning took place between September and December of 2024, and included a 3-part virtual planning series with MENTOR CA staff, Executive Leadership, and Board of Directors, including Youth Board Members.

The strategic planning process was designed to integrate key learnings from MENTOR CA's 2023 point in time assessment, [California Love: The State of MENTORing in California](#). The assessment uplifted promising practices in the field of mentorship across five regions in California, which were cross-walked with MENTOR CA's previous strategic priorities and intentionally incorporated in planning activities.

Strategic planning began with a comprehensive reflection on the implementation of priority areas and goals from the previous Strategic Plan (2021-2023). MENTOR CA staff and Board Members completed assessments on progress made toward goals identified in the 2021-2023 plan, relevancy of focus areas and identification of new and continuing priorities, based on current needs and collective visioning for MENTOR CA in 2030. An ad hoc committee comprised of Board members and the MENTOR CA CEO engaged in an additional planning session to review drafted priorities areas and goals and provide insight to inform milestones toward achieving those goals.

Ad hoc Committee Members:

Alejandro Galicia-Cervantes, Board Member; Founder and Lead Consultant, CalMetrics Consulting

Fiona Lu, Youth Board Member; Student- University of California, Los Angeles

Stephen Minx, Board Member; Managing Director, Upmetrics

Florence Parks, Board Member; Executive Director, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the North Coast

Marcus Strother, President and CEO, MENTOR CA

Finally, the full MENTOR CA Board of Directors had opportunity to review drafted priorities, goals and milestones for feasibility, relevancy and clarity prior to the development of the new strategic plan.

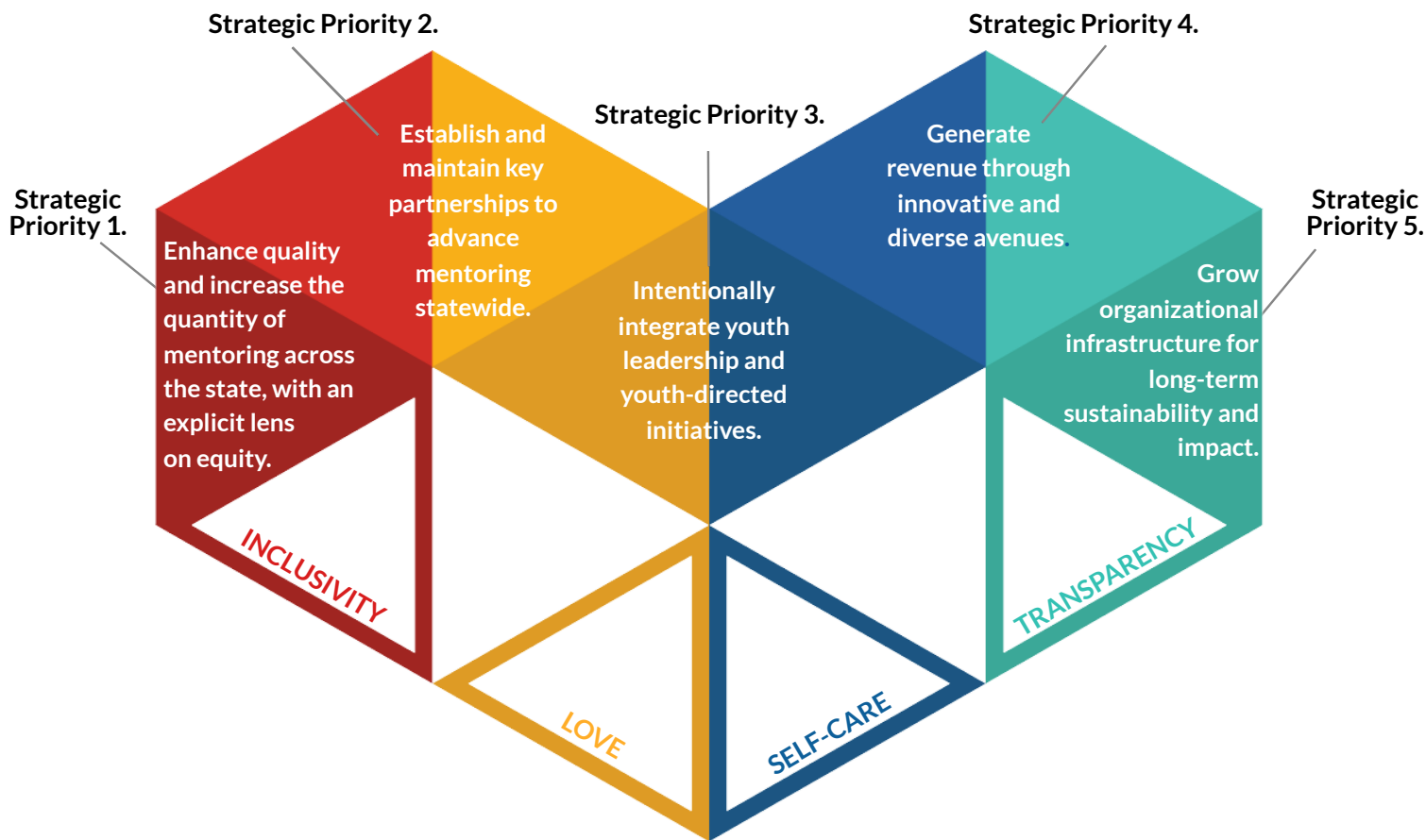
Aligned to What Works

Strategic Plan Alignment

The MENTOR CA 2025-2030 Strategic Plan reflects priorities and action items aligned to the national MENTOR pillars, MENTOR CA's [Framework for Increasing Racial Equity within the California Mentoring Movement](#), and activates findings from the 2023 point in time assessment, [California Love: The State of MENTORing in California](#). Alignment with assessment findings, which are centered on a framework of Radical Love through mentorship, are integrated throughout the plan as *aligned promising practices* associated with each strategic priority. The aligned promising practices are intended to guide and shape implementation efforts toward accomplishing strategic priorities and goal outcomes.

MENTOR CA 2025-2030 Strategic Priorities

The MENTOR CA 2025-2030 Strategic Priorities, aligned promising practices from the point in time assessment, and organizational core values are interconnected, informing a path forward to 2030 that is intentionally designed for impact and fueled by love.



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Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1. Enhance quality and increase the quantity of mentoring across the state, with an explicit lens on equity.

Aligned Promising Practices: Building Trust Through Commitment and Care; Fostering Inclusivity and Challenging Biases; Practicing Empathy and Respect

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Goal A. Continue to build California's mentor base, particularly of BIPOC mentors, by an increase of an additional 5% of mentors annually through mentor recruitment and retention strategies.

Goal B. Deliver statewide capacity building for mentors (including peer mentors) and mentoring programs aligned to best practices from the 2023 point in time assessment, prioritizing regions with limited access to support resources, including but not limited to rural areas and regions experiencing economic hardships.

Goal C. Identify a resource tool for quality self-assessment, informed by the [MENTOR CA point in time assessment](#), [MENTOR CA Equity Framework](#), [MENTOR National Quality Mentoring System](#), and industry-standard operational frameworks.

Milestones

- Increase the number of Mentor Inquiries [Program Connections] as documented in the MENTOR CA Connector, by 5% annually (2025-2030, *baseline* = 336)
- Increase participation in capacity-building sessions (virtual or in-person) for mentoring organizations within Northern California, San Joaquin Valley and Central Valley regions by 15% by 2030, as evidenced by session participant data.
- By June 2025, convene a committee to identify mentoring quality self-assessment tool(s) for recommended use across MENTOR CA Connector organizations.

Strategic Priority 2. Establish and maintain key partnerships to advance mentoring statewide.

Aligned Promising Practices: Supporting Holistic Development; Encouraging Empowerment and Critical Thinking

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Goal A. Increase awareness of mentoring as a strategy to support holistic development and wellbeing.

Goal B. Advocate for the inclusion of mentoring as a public health strategy toward mental and emotional wellness.

Goal C. Deepen collaborative partnerships with post-secondary institutions to advocate for mentorship as a field of study.

Goal D. Build new collaboration opportunities with the California Department of Education (CDE) to support the expansion of statewide service access.

Goal E. Convene regional networking spaces for mentoring practitioners and funders with aligned priorities.

Milestones

- Formalize 2-3 collaborative relationships with post-secondary institutions, county and state partners through established partnership agreements, non-fiscal and fiscal MOU's by 2030.
- Collaborate with partners to identify and spotlight research publication(s) connecting mentorship and mental health to help galvanize advocacy efforts [June 2027 and June 2030]
- Create annual advocacy campaigns, with regional focus, across the five CA regions identified within the MENTOR CA Point in Time assessment, to promote mentoring as a wellness strategy.
- Co-author a legislative ordinance or policy to advance mentorship, in collaboration with regional or state partners by 2030
- Host bi-annual (virtual/in-person) networking opportunities for MENTOR CA Connector partners and regional or statewide funders with aligned priorities.

Strategic Priority 3. Intentionally integrate youth leadership and youth-directed initiatives.

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Aligned Promising Practices: Building Trust Through Commitment and Care; Encouraging Empowerment and Critical Thinking

Goal A. Create a MENTOR CA Youth Advisory to direct initiatives and inform efforts.

Goal B. Develop a process for Youth Board Member onboarding, including capacity-building and ongoing mentorship.

Milestones

- Establish an ad-hoc committee of the MENTOR CA Board of Directors (including Youth Board Members) to design Youth Advisory membership structure, expectations and recruitment strategies by July 2025.
- Launch MENTOR CA Youth Advisory by January 2026
- Establish and document Youth Board Member onboarding procedures, co-designed by the Youth Advisory, by July 2026, with an opportunity to pilot during FY 2026-2027.

Strategic Priority 4. Generate revenue through innovative and diverse avenues.

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Aligned Promising Practices: Fostering Inclusivity and Challenging Biases

Goal A. Enhance fiscal sponsorship collaboration to expand and/or reinforce fund development opportunities.

Goal B. Prioritize funding opportunities that position MENTOR CA to provide support with immediate benefit within regions with limited access, including rural communities.

Goal C. Exploration of a benefactors framework for TA services to assess viability for MENTOR CA.

Milestones

- By March 2025, conduct a feasibility assessment for a benefactors framework to support select MENTOR CA TA services.
- By June 2025, establish a four-year funding and resource development plan including expansion of fund-development opportunities through fiscal sponsorship and benefactors framework feasibility assessment findings.
- By January 2027, implement fundraising strategies to support increased TA within rural communities, including expansion of services in Northern CA, San Joaquin Valley and Central Valley.

Strategic Priority 5. Grow organizational infrastructure for long-term sustainability and impact.

Aligned Promising Practices: Building Trust Through Commitment and Care

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Goal A. Establish a multi-year staffing plan inclusive of intentional statewide expansion toward regional representation.

Goal B. Recruitment of Executive Leadership.

Goal C. Explore partnership with National MENTOR for funder networking and affiliate fundraising/ sponsorship collaboration opportunities.

Milestones

- By July 2027, develop a 5-year staff expansion plan, with diverse funding streams and identified budget targets, to support smart organizational growth and regional staffing representation in each of five CA regions (Northern CA, Greater Sacramento, Bay Area, San Joaquin/Central Valley, Southern CA).
- Design and implement recruitment strategies and selection procedure for Executive Leadership team by January 2029.

Acknowledgements

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MENTOR California Board of Directors

Alejandro Galicia Cervantes, Founder, Lead Consultant, CalMetrics Consulting

Rebecca Goldberg, Founder, Rebecca Goldberg Consulting

Fiona Lu, University of California, Los Angeles Student

Stephen Minix, Managing Director, UpMetrics

Florence Parks, Executive Director, Big Brothers Big Sisters, North Coast

Darrin Person, Executive Director of Community Schools, Fresno Unified School District

Michael Ruiz, Partner of Strategy and Transactions, Ernst & Young

Justice Sanders, Technical Risk & Compliance, LinkedIn

Andrew Shipp, Manager of Partnership and Development, Golden State Warriors

Ragnar von Schiber, Associate Director of Corporate and Employee Giving, Genentech

Miles Warren, Senior Vice President of Strategy and Partnerships, MyVolunteer

The MENTOR California Strategic Plan 2025-2030 was developed in collaboration with Innovation Bridge.



Innovation Bridge
2318 K Street Suite B
Sacramento, CA 95816
innovationbridgeinc.com



MENTOR California
1000 Broadway, Suite 480
Oakland, California 94607
mentorcaliforniayouth.org
info@mentorcaliforniayouth.org