

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME MESSAGES	03
VISION & MISSION	05
2024 HIGHLIGHTS	10
DEVELOPMENT UPDATE	34
FINANCIAL SUMMARY	35
MEET THE TEAM	37



Dr. Diana Z. Rodriguez

Chancellor, San Bernardino
Community College District
GIA Board Chair

WELCOME

Thank you for believing in the potential of our hard-working students and families in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. At Growing Inland Achievement (GIA), we are focused on ensuring every student in our region has the opportunity to earn a degree or career training that leads to a good job and a brighter future. This mission is personal to me. I grew up in eastern Riverside County, attended public schools in Blythe, started my higher education journey at Palo Verde College, and went on to earn my undergraduate and master's degrees at California State University, San Bernardino. Like so many of our students, I was the first in my family to go to college. I know how daunting it can feel to navigate this process, and I relied on mentors, teachers, and community members to guide me. That experience drives my work as Chancellor of the San Bernardino Community College District and as Board Chair of Growing Inland Achievement: to ensure others have the same opportunities to succeed.

Many local students and families feel the weight of the high cost of living and wonder if college or career training is even possible. GIA is here to help. We work with regional leaders from 56 K-12 school districts, 12 community colleges, six universities, and over 1,000 nonprofits and industry partners to share ideas, learn from each other, form partnerships, and advocate for policies and funding that make education more accessible. From making financial aid easier to get, to creating clear paths to four-year universities, to expanding hands-on job training programs at our community colleges, our goal is simple: to make college and career training real options and a launching pad for families to get ahead in life.

The impact of this work causes a ripple effect. Every new college graduate doesn't just achieve personal success—they strengthen our communities and economy. For every graduate, nearly five additional local jobs are created in the region. These graduates spend their earnings here at home—on housing, groceries, healthcare, and local businesses. They're the nurse who cares for your family, the teacher inspiring your child, and the entrepreneur opening a business in your neighborhood. When we help students succeed, we all succeed.

I want to thank GIA's Board of Directors, President and CEO Dr. Ashish Vaidya, our dedicated staff, and the many partners who make this work possible. Your leadership, collaboration, and vision drive our progress. As we celebrate our successes and plan for the future, I look forward to working with all of you to shape the next chapter of education and opportunity in Riverside and San Bernardino counties.



Dr. Ashish Vaidya

President & CEO
Growing Inland
Achievement

On January 10th, 2024 I began a new adventure as the President and CEO of Growing Inland Achievement. Prior to joining GIA, my entire professional career had been in postsecondary education – first as a professor of economics, then as an academic administrator, serving as dean, provost and eventually president at two different regional public universities. My family and I spent over a decade in IE-adjacent Claremont, so when the opportunity to serve the Inland Empire in this new and unique capacity presented itself, I was both intrigued and excited.

While I am passionate in my belief that public state colleges and universities are “stewards of place,” it also became clear to me that developing a robust and diverse talent pipeline for regions to prosper, requires a coordinated effort across the cradle to career continuum.

Nine years ago, the education and non-profit leaders of the region came together with a common mission to uplift the postsecondary aspirations of the region. They were inspired by “collective impact” a term first coined in 2011 by the Stanford Social Innovation Review to describe work in Greater Cincinnati that led to the creation of the StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network. It was in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky – where I served as President – that this network was formed to solve complex community challenges that limited opportunity for young people. The principle of “collective impact” is built on the premise that by connecting people, ideas and resources, communities can get closer to achieving their vision of the “success of every child, cradle to career.” This is the principle that drives everything that GIA does.

This past year I have observed that, while we still have work to do to improve postsecondary educational attainment in the region, we have a strong foundation on which to tackle this imperative.

- A strong and committed Board
- A network of passionate, collaborative and resilient partners across all sectors in the Inland Empire
- Generous support from national and regional Foundations
- And an amazing team that I have the privilege to work with

The 2024 Annual Report highlights what an exciting and inspiring year it was for GIA and the region. Thanks to the dedication of our partners, funders, and stakeholders, we launched our 2030 Strategic Planning process, shared key insights from the Perceptions of Higher Education study that offered opportunities for building greater awareness of the value of postsecondary education to potential students and families, responded to the urgent need for increased FAFSA completion rates through a three-month intensive financial aid outreach effort, expanded the Governor’s College Corps program, and delivered our most successful Toward a Shared Vision Summit.

Next year, GIA will celebrate its 10th anniversary which will provide an opportunity to celebrate the many contributions of the region’s quest to advance educational attainment and economic prosperity. We will also unveil GIA’s 2030 Strategic Plan with a bold Regional Call to Action.

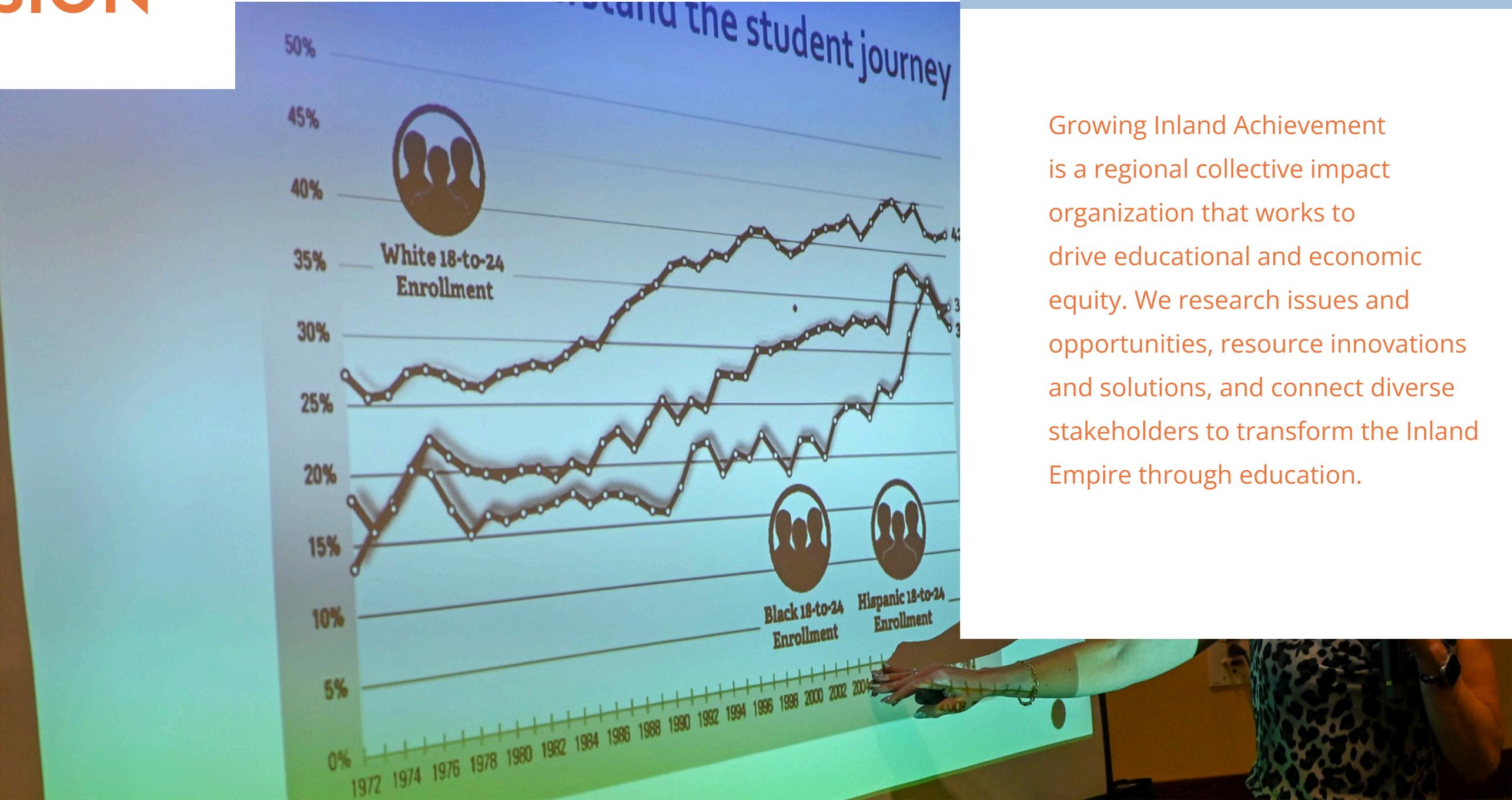
I wish to extend my sincere thanks to Board members, partners, and the GIA Team for their trust and ongoing confidence in our mission and wishing all a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year.

VISION



By 2035, San Bernardino and Riverside counties will be widely recognized for our well-educated workforce, thriving communities, and vibrant economy that creates prosperity for all.

MISSION



Growing Inland Achievement is a regional collective impact organization that works to drive educational and economic equity. We research issues and opportunities, resource innovations and solutions, and connect diverse stakeholders to transform the Inland Empire through education.

VALUES



TRANSFORMATIVE

INNOVATIVE

STUDENT-CENTERED

EQUITY-FOCUSED

COLLABORATIVE

PILLARS OF SUCCESS

01.

Increase educational attainment, with an emphasis on accelerating success for historically marginalized student groups.

02.

Build equitable structures in education to eradicate systemic racism.

03.

Foster an efficient, high-quality education system that creates equitable access for all students.

04.

Fuel a robust future economy that increases equitable career opportunities and employment.

05.

Eliminate the chasms in wealth, income, and poverty rate that disproportionately affect people of color.

A large graphic of the number '4' is positioned on the right side of the page. The top portion of the '4' is outlined in orange, while the bottom portion is filled with a solid blue color. The background of the entire page is a solid orange color.

***GLA doesn't just talk about change –
they provide the resources and
expertise to make it happen.***

2024 HIGHLIGHTS



NOTEWORTHY NUMBERS



43,846

Number of Inland Empire residents who earned a Bachelor's degree or higher over the past year. This represents a 1.1% increase from the previous year.



20,954

Number of Hispanic residents in the Inland Empire who earned a Bachelor's degree or higher over the past year. This represents a 1.3% increase from the previous year.



4.7%

Year-over-year growth in the percentage of Black residents in the Inland Empire earning a Bachelor's degree or higher



2%

The year-over-year increase in A-G requirement completion rates among San Bernardino County students



1%

The year-over-year increase in Riverside County's high school graduation rate

GIA ADDS NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Growing Inland Achievement welcomed five dynamic team members who bring fresh perspectives and expertise to advance the organization’s mission. These additions reflect GIA’s commitment to strengthening its capacity to drive educational and economic success in the Inland Empire.

- **Ashish Vaidya**, President & CEO, leads GIA into a bold new era of impact, shaping strategies to advance educational and economic success.
- **Viri Saldana-Borden**, Executive Assistant, ensures seamless operations through organizational and administrative support.
- **Lisa Des Jardins**, Assistant Director of Institutional Support, collaborates with regional institutions to strengthen initiatives and drive impact.
- **Tariq Azim**, Policy & Governmental Relations Fellow, advances policy initiatives and builds strategic partnerships to support GIA’s mission.
- **Natalie Hinton**, Digital Content & Media Producer, enhances GIA’s outreach through digital content creation and media production.

GIA is excited to leverage the talents of its growing team to further its mission. To learn more about GIA’s staff, visit the [GIA website](#).



Ashish Vaidya
President & CEO



Viri Saldana-Borden
Executive Assistant



Lisa Des Jardins
Assistant Director of
Institutional Support



Tariq Azim
Policy & Governmental
Relations Fellow



Natalie Hinton
Digital Content &
Media Producer

GIA BOARD APPOINTS NEW PRESIDENT & CEO

Growing Inland Achievement began 2024 with a significant leadership transition, appointing Dr. Ashish K. Vaidya as its new President and Chief Executive Officer. Dr. Vaidya's extensive background in higher education leadership and regional collaboration makes him a strong fit to advance GIA's mission of increasing educational attainment and economic success in the Inland Empire.

Dr. Vaidya's career spans leadership roles at Northern Kentucky University, California State University, Los Angeles, and St. Cloud State University. He has also contributed to national initiatives focused on fostering institutional collaboration to better serve diverse communities.

Under his guidance, GIA has continued to drive impactful initiatives such as Higher Endeavor, which supports institutional self-assessment and provides technical assistance to colleges across the region. Dr. Vaidya's collaborative approach has strengthened GIA's position as a catalyst for change in addressing the Inland Empire's educational and economic goals.

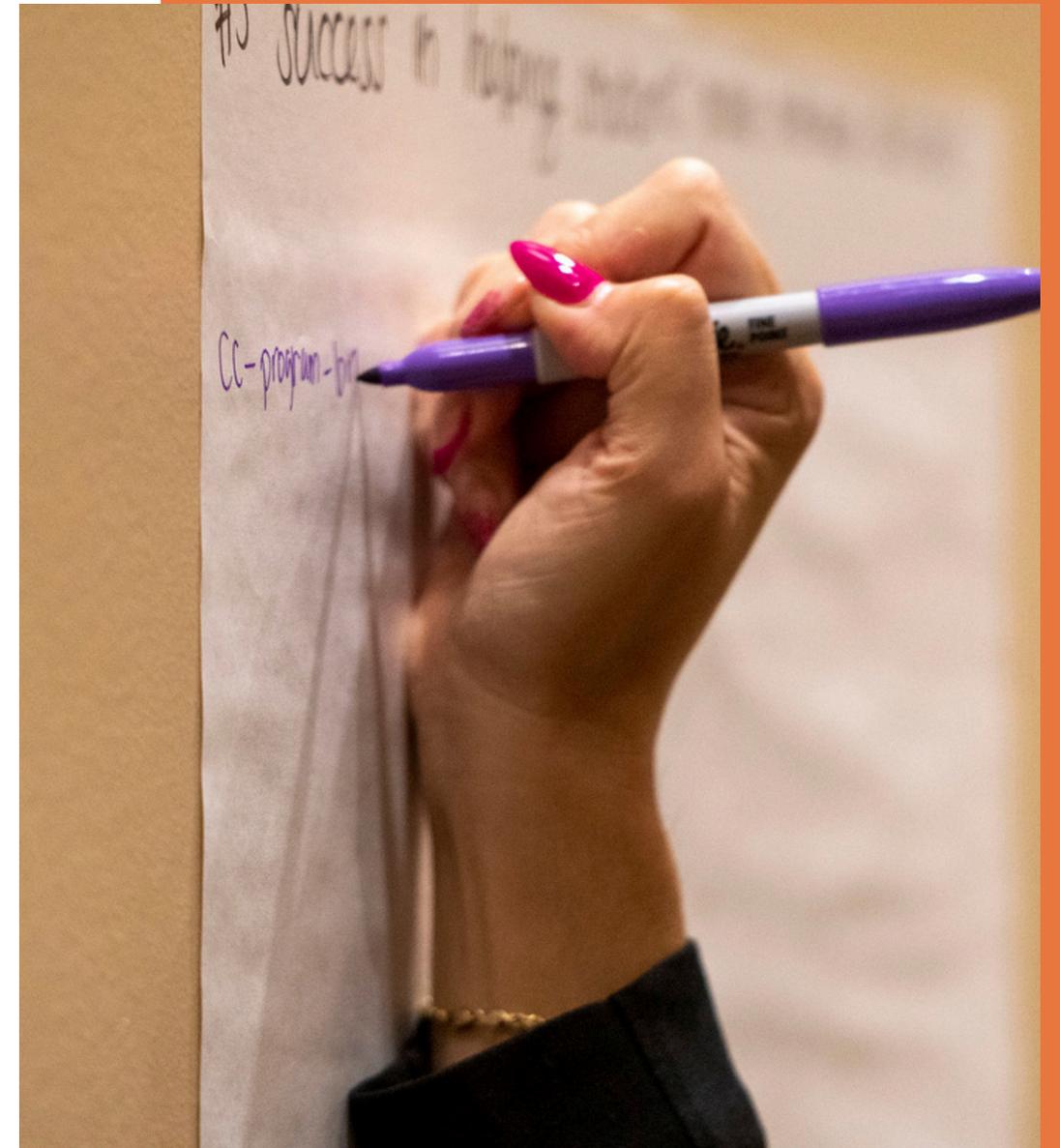


GIA PREPARES TO UNVEIL A NEW FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2024, Growing Inland Achievement worked collaboratively with partners and community members to develop its 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. Set to launch in January 2025, this forward-looking roadmap is designed to address the Inland Empire's most pressing educational challenges, enhance outcomes, and promote economic equity.

The plan reflects extensive input from educators, policymakers, and community leaders gathered through surveys, focus groups, and forums. GIA extends its deep appreciation to everyone who contributed their insights, ensuring the plan aligns with the region's unique needs and opportunities.

As GIA finalizes the plan, the focus remains on fostering collaboration and driving meaningful change. This new strategic plan will guide initiatives that create pathways to success for students and families, building a brighter future for the Inland Empire.



ANNUAL EDUCATION SUMMIT BRINGS INLAND EMPIRE LEADERS TOGETHER FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

The [2024 Toward a Shared Vision Summit](#), hosted by Growing Inland Achievement, united over 300 regional leaders at the Riverside Convention Center on October 8-9, 2024. Now in its seventh year, the Summit has become a cornerstone for addressing the Inland Empire's critical educational and economic challenges through collaboration and innovation.

Themed "Collective Action, Shared Success," the Summit emphasized the importance of partnerships across education, government, nonprofit, and business sectors. Representatives from the region's 56 K-12 school districts, 12 community colleges, universities, nonprofits, and businesses convened to explore solutions for the Inland Empire's most pressing issues.

Attendees engaged in dynamic workshops, discussions, and breakout sessions, tackling topics such as student enrollment strategies, equitable access to resources, and pathways to higher education success. The event opened with the Toward a Shared Vision Awards ceremony, which celebrated organizations and individuals leading equity-focused and innovative initiatives in the region. Honorees included:

- BLU Educational Foundation: For Excellence in Regional Transformation
- Rialto Project Impact, Rialto Unified School District: For Equity-Focused Excellence
- Riverside County Office of Education: For Student-Centered Excellence
- Inland Empire College Corps Consortium: For Excellence in Regional Collaboration
- Randall Lewis: For Excellence in Innovation

The Summit featured distinguished speakers, including Dr. Sonya Christian, Chancellor of California Community Colleges, and Tony Thurmond, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shared insights during a Fireside Chat. Together, these leaders highlighted the power of collective action in driving transformative change for the region's students and communities.



GROWING INLAND ACHIEVEMENT AWARDED \$1,035,000 GRANT FROM ECMC FOUNDATION

This year, Growing Inland Achievement was awarded a \$1,035,000 grant from the ECMC Foundation to advance educational equity and economic mobility in the Inland Empire. This significant funding supports efforts to close equity gaps in postsecondary education, particularly for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students and students from low-income backgrounds.

The grant will enable GIA to collaborate with colleges and universities in the region to review existing systems and processes, identify barriers, and implement long-term improvements. GIA will provide training, coaching, and technical support by engaging regional and national experts to help institutions create student-centered systems that foster greater success for underserved communities.

This initiative complements GIA's Higher Endeavor initiative, which focuses on transforming postsecondary institutions at scale. Through targeted support in areas such as academic advising, strategic finance, and institutional research, the project aims to address inequities and create an environment where all students can thrive.

As a regional K-16 collaborative, GIA continues to address the unique needs of Inland Empire institutions, driving progress toward equitable educational opportunities. This grant represents a critical step in ensuring that race, ethnicity, and income do not predict postsecondary outcomes, empowering students to achieve their full potential.



GIA RELAUNCHES AWARD-WINNING EDUCATION INSIGHT RADIO SHOW AND PODCAST

In August 2024, Growing Inland Achievement celebrated the relaunch of its award-winning radio show and podcast, [Education Insight](#), with an expanded format and weekly episodes. This revamped program offers a deep dive into critical education issues in the Inland Empire and beyond, highlighting innovative strategies, challenges, and opportunities within the field.

The new format features 30-minute episodes airing three times weekly on KVCR 91.9 FM: Thursdays at 2:00 PM and 6:30 PM, and Saturdays at 4:00 PM. Additionally, Education Insight now broadcasts on KCAA Radio (1050 AM and 106.5 FM), KQLH (92.5 FM), and KFXM (98.3 FM), further expanding its reach and impact.

Beyond its broadcast presence, Education Insight has been integrated into the California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) curriculum. The College of Arts & Letters' Liberal Studies program incorporates the show's content to enrich the learning experience for future educators. By providing authentic and relevant insights into education, this partnership equips aspiring teachers with the knowledge and context to address regional challenges and drive meaningful change.

GIA's collaboration with KVCR and CSUSB underscores its commitment to advancing education across multiple platforms and audiences. Through Education Insight, GIA continues to inform, inspire, and support efforts to create a brighter future for students in the Inland Empire.



GIA SUPPORTS STUDENTS AND FAMILIES AMID FINANCIAL AID CHALLENGES



Growing Inland Achievement expanded efforts throughout the year to assist Inland Empire students and families facing financial aid challenges. Amid technical issues with the new FAFSA form and a regional decline in submissions, GIA provided live online office hours, coordinated outreach campaigns, and launched IEsucccess.org, a multilingual resource for college exploration and financial aid guidance.

As the Cash4College Regional Coordinating Organization, GIA supported hundreds of workshops and offered live assistance, helping students navigate the application process. A \$234,840 award from the U.S. Department of Education (via Educational Credit Management Corporation) further accelerated these initiatives, addressing barriers to financial aid and promoting equitable access to higher education.

SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS AWARDS \$60,000 TO GIA



Growing Inland Achievement was awarded a \$60,000 grant from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in July, generated through the Tribe's annual Charity Golf Tournament. This funding will enhance GIA's outreach initiatives, including college financial aid and financial literacy training for students and families, as well as support for adult learners over 25 seeking to return to college to earn certificates or degrees.

The grant reflects the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians' commitment to unity and stewardship, supporting programs that create lasting impact in the Inland Empire. This partnership aligns with GIA's mission to increase equitable educational attainment and promote economic success across the region.



GIA RECEIVES \$25,000 BANK OF AMERICA GRANT TO SUPPORT ADULT EDUCATION

Growing Inland Achievement was awarded a \$25,000 grant this year from Bank of America to expand its efforts to reconnect Inland Empire adults with postsecondary education opportunities. This grant supports GIA's ongoing commitment to adult learners through the Returning Adult Action Network Team (RE ANT), which focuses on research, sharing best practices, and piloting initiatives to help adults complete degrees or credentials.

Since 2018, Bank of America's partnership has enabled GIA to prioritize outreach to adults, providing resources and guidance to help prospective students return to school. These efforts address the Inland Empire's education gap, equipping individuals with the skills needed to succeed in a competitive job market and advancing economic security across the region.

GIA RECEIVES \$234,840 TO BOOST FINANCIAL AID AWARENESS AND COMPLETION

Growing Inland Achievement was selected for a \$234,840 grant from the Educational Credit Management Corporation to address financial aid challenges during the 2023-2024 cycle. Part of the U.S. Department of Education's FAFSA Student Support Strategy, the grant enabled GIA to tackle barriers created by changes and delayed rollouts of the FAFSA and California Dream Act Application (CADAA) forms.

Through extended live office hours, financial aid submission clinics, and targeted outreach campaigns, GIA reached thousands of students and families. These efforts aimed to narrow the regional financial aid submission gap, helping more students access critical funding for their education.

As the Cash4College Regional Coordinating Organization, GIA provided support at hundreds of workshops and events, ensuring Inland Empire students had the resources they needed to navigate the financial aid process. This initiative highlights GIA's ongoing commitment to promoting educational equity and increasing postsecondary success in the region.

Key Findings and Insights from 2024 Financial Aid Campaign



GIA LAUNCHES IESUCCESS.ORG: A RESOURCE FOR COLLEGE EXPLORATION AND SUCCESS

In July, Growing Inland Achievement launched [IEsuccess.org](https://iesuccess.org), a resource website to support students, parents, and educators in the Inland Empire. Offering step-by-step guides for financial aid applications, a directory of regional colleges, and tips for academic success, the site quickly gained traction, attracting over 55,000 unique visitors within five months of going live.

Developed in partnership with regional institutions, IEsuccess.org addresses the need for accessible and centralized resources to guide students through the college decision-making process. While the initial focus is on high school students, future expansions will include resources for adult learners, job seekers, and educators, with planned features like live counseling and apprenticeship opportunities.

This initiative aligns with GIA's mission to close educational attainment gaps and promote equity in the Inland Empire, a region striving to improve its postsecondary completion rates. By empowering students and families with essential information and tools, IEsuccess.org represents a significant step toward creating pathways to educational and economic success.





GIA HOSTS EQUITY IN POLICY SUMMIT

In May, Growing Inland Achievement, in collaboration with Student-Ready Strategies (SRS), hosted the [Equity in Policy Summit](#) at the Riverside Convention Center. This impactful event brought together education leaders to examine how institutional policies shape equitable student experiences and outcomes.

Attendees explored strategies for reviewing and reforming policy frameworks to align more closely with equity goals. Interactive discussions highlighted the importance of involving diverse voices in policy development, ensuring inclusivity and responsiveness to community needs.

The Summit featured insights from model institutions, providing practical tools and approaches for enhancing policy effectiveness. These actionable strategies empowered participants to drive meaningful change within their organizations.

AMPLIFYING GIA'S REACH AND IMPACT

Growing Inland Achievement shared its expertise through presentations at major educational events and conferences throughout the year, advancing equity, innovation, and collaboration.

Key presentations delivered by the GIA team included:

- Ed Trust-West Education Equity Forum – Showcased how GIA advanced financial aid strategies through research, community engagement, and strategic communication.
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Convening – Highlighted the impact of institutional transformation through a collective impact approach.
- Gardner Student Success Symposium – Featured the advising pilot and counseling model in collaboration with Crafton Hills College.
- CSUSB President's Leadership Retreat – Shared how GIA and community organizations drive educational and economic outcomes.
- National College Attainment Network Convening – Co-presented on aligning access, completion, and mobility to improve college attainment.
- Complete College America Annual Convening – Presented GIA's Equity Continuum Tool and strategies to enhance financial aid efforts.
- CSUSB Education Leadership Summit – Addressed education as a pathway to economic justice and upward mobility.
- Gates Foundation Postsecondary Leadership Retreat – Provided updates on progress with the Higher Endeavor initiative.
- Gates Foundation Data Retreat – Participated in a panel discussion on local data case studies.
- CA Competes Board Panel – Discussed higher education and workforce coordination in the Inland Empire.
- Kresge Foundation Panel – Explored how cities build higher education ecosystems for underrepresented communities.
- San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Leadership Academy – Presented on the state of education in the Inland Empire.
- California Association for Institutional Research Convening – Delivered insights on higher education in the Inland Empire through a session titled Uncovering Stories Behind Data.
- National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in Higher Education – Shared how equity is embedded in GIA's institutional transformation work with colleges and universities.

These presentations underscore GIA's leadership in education and equity, fostering partnerships and inspiring action at local and national levels.



HIGHER ENDEAVOR INITIATIVE GAINS MOMENTUM

Growing Inland Achievement advanced the *Higher Endeavor* Initiative in 2024, supporting institutional transformation efforts across the Inland Empire. As of mid-December, 18 campuses have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to join the initiative and secure up to \$200,000 each in funding over three years.

The initiative provides technical assistance to help campuses implement sustainable systems that improve student outcomes. Highlights from this year include:

- One campus completed its first year of services, focusing on gateway coursework and first-year redesign.
- Another campus began enhancing its institutional research capabilities, creating accessible data dashboard systems.
- Four campuses are finalizing contracts for targeted projects to launch in 2025.

This year, GIA also hosted regional workshops on institutional policy, advising, digital learning, and strategic finance, drawing over 235 participants from 13 campuses. These events provided actionable insights and practical tools to support transformative change across the region.

Through Higher Endeavor, GIA continues to drive collaboration and innovation, ensuring Inland Empire institutions are equipped to create equitable and sustainable outcomes for their students.

Watch a Compelling Video About Why this Work Matters



GIA CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR THE COLLEGE CORPS PROGRAM

Growing Inland Achievement continued its support of the College Corps Program, fostering leadership and civic engagement among college students across the Inland Empire. The third cohort, launched in August 2024, included 466 Fellows serving in critical areas such as education (61%), food insecurity (29%), and climate action (8%), partnering with 96 community organizations throughout the region.

To support Fellows' growth, GIA organized regional convenings focused on leadership development and systemic change. Highlights included the October convening at Agua Caliente, where Fellows participated in interactive sessions to enhance their interpersonal skills and leadership capabilities. These events empower Fellows to take on active roles in their communities while gaining professional skills and experience.

The second cohort, which completed its service year in July 2024, achieved notable impact, with 64% of Fellows being first-generation college students and 80% identifying as students of color. GIA also facilitated a student-led group representing all eight campuses, enabling participants to share insights, collaborate on regional initiatives, and engage in statewide advocacy.

GIA's commitment to professional development and public service continues to ensure the College Corps Fellowship Program is a transformative experience for both Fellows and the Inland Empire communities they serve.



A large, stylized graphic of the number '4' is positioned on the right side of the page. The top portion of the '4' is outlined in orange, while the bottom portion is filled with a solid blue color. The background of the entire page is a solid orange color.

GIA has been a catalyst for positive transformation across the Inland Empire's education landscape.

GIA EDUCATION REPORT WINS PODCAST OF THE YEAR

The [GIA Education Report](#), Growing Inland Achievement's weekly education news podcast, was recognized with a prestigious 2024 Best of the West Media Award in the Blog/Podcast of the Year category. This honor, presented at the AdWest Conference in Reno, Nevada, celebrates excellence in media production and service to local communities across ten western states.

The GIA Education Report highlights key developments in education, offering insights and stories that resonate with the Inland Empire and beyond. Hosted by Alyssa Silva, the podcast has become a vital platform for sharing news and perspectives that shape the regional and national education landscape.

This award reflects GIA's commitment to elevating critical education topics and fostering meaningful dialogue. As the podcast continues to grow, GIA remains dedicated to informing and inspiring listeners, amplifying stories that drive change in education.



GIA SHARES INSIGHTS ON PERCEPTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE INLAND EMPIRE

Growing Inland Achievement conducted a study on local perceptions of higher education, uncovering key factors that shape educational decisions. The findings offer valuable insights into community aspirations, challenges, and opportunities related to postsecondary education.

The study revealed that while 86% of Inland Empire residents value higher education, barriers such as perceived costs and limited knowledge of financial aid continue to deter enrollment. Influential factors included the pivotal role of family in shaping decisions, economic pressures, prioritizing short-term needs, and the promise of better-paying jobs motivating educational aspirations.

To address these challenges, GIA launched [interactive web resources](#), including data visualization tools and editable presentation templates, to help educators, policymakers, and community leaders leverage the findings. These resources aim to bridge information gaps, clarify misconceptions, and inspire collaborative solutions to improve access to higher education.

This initiative underscores GIA's commitment to using research to drive meaningful change and support equitable educational opportunities in the Inland Empire.



FACT SHEET HIGHLIGHTS EDUCATION'S TRANSFORMATIVE POWER IN THE INLAND EMPIRE

In August, Growing Inland Achievement released a factsheet on *The Effects of Postsecondary Education in California's Inland Empire*, illustrating the profound economic and social benefits of higher education. This resource emphasizes how postsecondary success drives regional growth, fosters community well-being, and reduces economic inequality.

The fact sheet reveals that for each additional college graduate in the Inland Empire, the region's annual Gross Regional Product increases by nearly \$100,000. Postsecondary graduates also strengthen local economies through homeownership, higher earning potential, and the creation of nearly five support jobs per graduate.

This initiative underscores GIA's commitment to highlighting the power of education as a catalyst for change. The fact sheet serves as a call to action for regional stakeholders to invest in accessible, equitable pathways to higher education, ensuring a prosperous future for the Inland Empire.



PUBLISHED AUGUST 2024
Growing Inland Achievement
and Recon Insight Group, LLC

THE EFFECTS OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN

California's Inland Empire

ANNUAL GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

For each additional post-secondary graduate, the annual GRP of California's Inland Empire will increase by approximately



LIFETIME GRP IMPACT PER GRADUATE

The average increase in the Inland Empire's GRP over the lifetime of the graduate will approximate



4.8
JOBS



For each additional post-secondary graduate, an additional 4.8 support jobs will be generated throughout the California economy.



\$213,752 IN ADDITIONAL
HOME VALUE

Post-secondary graduates are able to afford larger and better homes, on average, than for those without a degree. Graduates in the Inland Empire are able to afford roughly \$213,752 more in home value than those without a post-secondary award.



BROADER TAX BASE

Each post-secondary graduate will expand the tax base by an average of \$3,982 annually, paying back the state portion of post-secondary expenses within **4.2 working years**, thus reducing the pressure on tax rate increases.

\$3,982

▼ Reduced pressure on tax rate increases each year



Post-secondary graduates are more likely to **invest in capital assets**, which will increase the long-run growth rate of the state economy.

IMPROVED INCOMES AND LIFESTYLES associated with college graduates will increase **automotive and transportation spending** by \$3,272 annually per graduate relative to a comparable individual without a post-secondary degree.



\$3,272 ▲

Increased automotive and transportation spending per year

ACTION NETWORK TEAMS DRIVE REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Growing Inland Achievement’s Action Network Teams (ANTs) continue to play a pivotal role in fostering collaboration and advancing student success across the Inland Empire. As the backbone of GIA’s collective impact model, ANTs unite education and community leaders to address regional challenges and craft actionable strategies to support students.

Comprising practitioners and experts from K-12 districts, community colleges, four-year institutions, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies, ANTs serve as dynamic communities of practice. These teams leverage their collective expertise to guide initiatives that enhance educational opportunities, equity, and outcomes for students throughout the region.

Through coordinated efforts and shared vision, ANTs exemplify GIA’s commitment to regional collaboration and collective action, ensuring that the Inland Empire remains focused on creating pathways to educational and economic success for all. Those interested in engaging in GIA’s Action Network Teams should fill out this [interest form](#).

Check out the
Equity Continuum
Tool Developed with
Support from ANTs





“The Growing Inland Achievement Action Network Teams (ANTs) have been instrumental in fostering collaboration and innovation among K-12, college, and university partners to close equity gaps. Through the ANT focused on Advising, I gained valuable insights into strategies being implemented across the region and connected with key partners to advance student success initiatives. For example, at Crafton Hills College, the ANT meetings provided the platform to strategize with our California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) partners, leading to the development of a transfer priority admission MOU. This agreement will create a more seamless and equitable transfer experience for our students, exemplifying the power of regional partnerships in driving systemic change.”



Ivan Peña, Ed.D.
Dean, Student Services
and Counseling,
Crafton Hills College

“Being a member of the GIA Equity ANT has been a rewarding experience for me. This mutually supportive network of practitioners exchanges ideas and works collaboratively toward regional equity goals while also enjoying one another’s company whether in person or virtually. I appreciate the thought partnership and technical support provided by GIA that enables me to engage more deeply and successfully in my work.”



Kristi J. Woods, PhD.
Interim Vice President of
Planning and Development,
Riverside City College

“Being part of the Equity Action Network Team has provided a collective regional space to bring about educational impact that has guided students to success in K-12 and community colleges. The innovative space is second to none, and it keeps me grounded in the needs of under-resourced students in the Inland Empire.”



LaTonya L. Parker Ed.D.
Professor/Counselor, Moreno Valley College
Vice President, Academic Senate for California
Community Colleges
ASCCC Legislative and Advocacy Committee Chair

"GIA’s ANTs have a profound impact on our community, fostering connections, empowering individuals, and providing crucial support for students and families. Through our continued partnership, we have witnessed significant growth and positive outcomes that strengthen our collective efforts to drive lasting change."



Dalia Hernandez, MSPA
Director, TRIO Upward Bound, Office
of Pre-College Programs, California
State University, San Bernardino

“As a member of the Equity Action Team, I have had the privilege of engaging with a diverse array of voices across the K-16 spectrum. Our collaborative approach not only amplifies these perspectives but also drives innovative solutions tailored to the unique challenges our students face. By weaving together the expertise of regional leaders, we are crafting actionable strategies that pave the way for meaningful student success in the Inland Empire.”



Angelica Ibarra
Regional Guided Pathways
Coordinator, California
Community Colleges

GIA SUPPORTS STUDENTS WITH OVER \$50,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2024, Growing Inland Achievement awarded \$40,000 in scholarships to Inland Empire students through its regional Cash for College scholarship program. Over 2,000 students were entered for a chance to win a scholarship after attending a Cash for College workshop and submitting their FAFSA or CADAA. Forty winners were randomly selected to receive \$1,000 scholarship awards.

Another \$10,000 was distributed to 10 local students through the IME-Becas program in partnership with the Consulado de México. Each student received a \$1,000 scholarship.

Scholarship funding is made possible by registration fees from GIA's Toward a Shared Vision Summit and generous community donations.

This initiative reflects GIA's commitment to reducing financial barriers and supporting student success across the Inland Empire.



Aiden Guerra
Chemistry & Criminal Justice



Aiden Rodriguez
Business



Anthony Garcia
Biology



Ariana Guevara Rodriguez
Pharmacology



Brianna Machuca
Nursing



Diana Puente
Cybersecurity



Gary Romero
Aerospace Engineering



Johnny Mojica
Welding



Nathaly Velasco
Nursing



Osvaldo Gonzalez
Design Studies



Rachael Covarrubias
Animation



Sebastian Morales
Business-Finance



Yaniz Aparicio
Biology



Ying Yu
Business

FUNDING OUR REGIONAL WORK



2024 Total Grant Income
\$3,519,254

While 2024 was a transition year for GIA's President and CEO, our funders remained committed, a testament to their faith in GIA's ongoing leadership and the region's commitment to its work. In addition to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's continued support of institutional transformation through Higher Endeavor, they recognized the value of backbone support for regional collective impact with additional capacity building and general operating dollars.

We are also grateful to welcome new funding partners into our work, including the Consulate of Mexico, the ECMC Group (in addition to ongoing support from the ECMC Foundation), and the NASH Catalyst Fund. New outreach for Toward a Shared Vision sponsorships also brought in support from the US Bank Foundation, IEHP Foundation, KVCR, Echo Factory, and Red Mallard.

New Awards		Existing Awards Funds Received	
Bank of America	\$ 25,000.00	College Futures Fdn.	\$ 443,000.00
Gates Foundation Operating	\$ 900,000.00	College Corps	\$ 231,200.00
Gates Capacity Bldg	\$ 250,000.00	Cash for College	\$ 188,626.00
Consulate of Mexico	\$ 10,000.00		
ECMC Group	\$ 234,840.00		\$ 862,826.00
ECMC Foundation	\$ 1,039,500.00		
EqRc	\$72,463.33		
EqRc	\$ 36,250.00		
San Manuel	\$ 60,000.00		
TASV Scholarships (raised through TASV sponsorships)	\$ 28,374.97		
Total New Awards	\$ 2,656,428.30		
Total Grant Income	\$ 3,519,254.30		

This year, GIA was awarded a total of \$2,656,428.30 in new grant funding and received an additional \$862,826 from multi-year grants. Additionally, GIA helped bring funds to the region through the following:

- GIA partnered with CSUSB Watson School of Education to apply for and receive a Hawkins Center of Excellence grant totaling \$3,306,688. GIA will continue to partner on this grant by serving as the evaluator.
- GIA submitted an application on behalf of the region to NASH and was awarded \$10,000 for ongoing support of the collective impact and institutional transformation work.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Reported: December 13, 2024

REVENUE

Grants.....	\$3,519,254
Interest Earned.....	\$77,068
Other Income.....	\$29,532
Total.....	\$3,625,854

EXPENDITURES

Payroll and Related Expenses.....	\$1,617,360
Advertising & Marketing.....	\$487,591
Bank Fees.....	\$7
Continuing Education & Professional Development.....	\$13,597
Dues & Subscriptions.....	\$93
Meals & Entertainment.....	\$63,506
Office Supplies.....	\$2,128
Travel.....	\$57,920
Overhead Business Expenses.....	\$300,481
Total.....	\$2,542,683

REGIONAL SUPPORT & PASS-THROUGH EXPENDITURES

Contractors.....	\$909,325
Charitable Contributions & Sponsorship.....	\$213,370
Total.....	\$1,122,695

2024

TOTAL REVENUE

\$3,625,854

TOTAL EXPENDITURES

\$2,526,128

TOTAL SUPPORT & PASS-THROUGH

\$1,122,695

TOTAL ASSETS

\$10,729,170

GIA has been an incredible partner in bringing diverse stakeholders together to tackle education challenges in the Inland Empire.



MEET THE TEAM



GOVERNING BOARD



Ted Alejandre

San Bernardino County
Superintendent of Schools



Michelle Decker

President and CEO, Inland Empire
Community Foundation



Edwin Gomez

Riverside County
Superintendent of Schools



Paul Granillo

President and CEO, Inland Empire
Economic Partnership



Wolde-Ab Isaac

Chancellor, Riverside
Community College District



Tomás D. Morales

President, California State
University, San Bernardino



Diana Z. Rodriguez

Chancellor, San Bernardino
Community College District
2024 Board Chair



Henry D. Shannon

Superintendent/President,
Chaffey College



Sheila Thornton

President & CEO, OneFuture
Coachella Valley



Kim A. Wilcox

Chancellor, University of
California, Riverside

GIA STAFF



Ashish Vaidya
President & CEO



Ann Marie Sakrekoff
Chief Operating Officer



Sorrel Stielstra
Director of Research



Ida Hermosillo
Director of
Network Engagement



Nicole Hince
Director of Finance
and Operations



Jake Poore
Director of
Communication



Frances Tapper
Director of
Institutional Support



Vanessa Boekenooen
Assistant Director of
Communication



Cindy Sanchez
Financial Analyst



Laurie Schoelkopf
Grant Writer



Julissa Loza Mendez
Assistant Director of
Network Engagement



Paula Di Dio
Senior Research
Strategist



Viri Saldana-Borden
Executive Assistant



Lisa Des Jardins
Assistant Director of
Institutional Support



Alyssa Rae Silva
Communication Associate



Natalie Hinton
Digital Content &
Media Producer



Tariq Azim
Policy & Governmental
Relations Fellow

GIA STEERING COMMITTEE



Alex Ruiz

Director of K-16 Inland Empire Education Collaborative at University of California, Riverside



Angelica Ibarra

Guided Pathways Regional Coordinator, Inland Empire/Desert, Foundation for California Community Colleges



Beth Higbee

Educational Consultant (Retired Assistant Superintendent of Education Support Services for SBCSS)



Carol Tsushima, Ed.D.

Administrator, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools



Cathy Paredes

Bank of America-Community Relations Manager and Vice President in the Inland Empire



Celia Cudiamat

Chief Impact Officer, Inland Empire Community Foundation



Damien O'Farrell

Chief Executive Officer at Parkview Legacy Foundation



Debra Mustain, Ed.D.

Dean of Workforce and Economic Development & Entrepreneurship at Riverside Community College District



Emily Engelschall

Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Services at University of California, Riverside



Tim Bias

Director, College and Career Success at San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools



Jennifer O'Farrell

President & CEO, Healthy Valley Foundation



Joi Spencer, Ph.D.

Dean of the School of Education at the University of California, Riverside

GIA STEERING COMMITTEE



Karen Suarez

Vice President for Collective Impact,
at Making Hope Happen Foundation



Kim McNulty

Vice President of Regional
Strategy, OneFuture
Coachella Valley



LaTonya Parker

Counselor, Moreno Valley College
and Area D- Representative
Academic Senate for Community
Colleges (ASCCC)



Leslie Valmonte

Guided Pathways Regional
Coordinator, Inland Empire/
Desert, Foundation for
California Community Colleges



Lisa Kiplinger-Kennedy

Regional Director, Business &
Entrepreneurship, Inland Empire/
Desert Regional Consortium,
California Community Colleges



Louie Rodriguez

Vice Provost and Dean
of Undergraduate
Studies, UC Riverside



Marcelino "Mars" Serna

Parent/Family Community
Engagement Project Specialist at San
Bernardino County Superintendent
of Schools and Board Member at
Fontana Unified School District



Matt Wells

Director, Mountain Desert
Career Pathways (MDCP)



Catalina Cifuentes

Executive Director of College
and Career Readiness for the
Riverside County Office of
Education



Robert Rundquist

Dean of Institutional
Effectiveness/Acting Dean of
Public Service, Culture, and
Society at Chaffey College



Summer Steele

Executive Director,
Office of Pre-College
Programs, Cal State San
Bernardino

2024 ACTION NETWORK TEAM PARTICIPANTS BY ORGANIZATION



Achievement Network

Carrie Seawright
Teimossa Martin



BLU Educational Foundation

Dina Walker
Dar'rell Jones



California Baptist University

Wayne Fletcher



California State University San Bernardino

Adrian Hermsillo
Conrad Shayo
Francisco Burgos
Vincent Japson



CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

California Student Aid Commission

Israel Flores



Campaign for College Opportunity

Katrina Linden



College of the Desert

Brian Thompson



Crafton Hills College

Trinette Barrie
Ivan Peña
Mariana Macamay



Fontana Unified School District

Hillary Wolfe



La Sierra University

Amy Wolf



Moreno Valley College

Gertrude Lopez
LaTonya Parker



Launch Apprenticeship Network

Charles Henkels



Making Hope Happen Foundation

Gerzon Cesena



One Future Coachella Valley

Kim McNulty



Ontario-Montclair Promise Scholars

Catherine Dahn
Felix Melendez
Mia Ford



PALO VERDE COLLEGE
WHERE KNOWLEDGE TAKES ROOT AND OPPORTUNITY GROWS

Palo Verde College

Biju Ramen



RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Riverside Community College District

Cristina Flores



Sallie Mae

Ventrice Diggs King



NORCO COLLEGE

Norco College

Hilary Wolfe
Brittnee Quintanar



San Bernardino City Unified School District

Randy Olson



San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools

Carol Tsushima



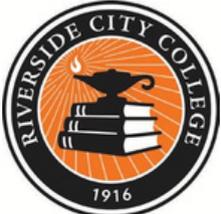
University of Redlands

James Spee



San Bernardino Valley College

Oscar Rodriguez
Fermin Ramirez



Riverside City College

Adrienne Grayson
Kristi Woods
Manny Gray
Michael Peterson



RIVERSIDE

University of California Riverside

Alicia Hernandez
Jose Aguilar
Alex Ruiz



The Institute for College Access and Success

Manny Rodriguez



u-aspire

Parshan Khosravi



Tomorrow's Talent

Ginger Ontiveros



THANK YOU

www.inlandempiregia.org