

LEADERSHIP PATHWAYS FOR COMMUNITY POWER, SAFETY, AND HEALING

SHINE invests in developing *people* as loving and powerful leaders

SHINE (Safety and Healing in Networks of Equity) California

is a collective of leaders and organizations, stewarded by Prevention Institute, working together across local and state levels to build community power, amplify community narratives, and improve systems toward intersectional racial, gender, economic, and immigrant justice. We envision systems of care and repair that generate shared resources, prevent harm, and foster collective healing, safety, and wellbeing.

- Locally, SHINE supports collaborative action rooted in culture and place.
- Trans-locally, SHINE facilitates learning and solidarity across communities.
- At the state level, SHINE advances policy, systems, and narrative change.



The Center at McKinleyville Youth Leadership Cohort.
Photo credit: McKinleyville Family Resource Center

An evaluation of the first seven years (2019–2025) found that one of SHINE’s clearest and most sustainable impacts came from investments in leadership pathways that strengthen the capacities of the people stewarding change.

- **McKinleyville Family Resource Center (Humboldt County)** invested heavily in emerging leadership pathways by bringing transitional-age, BIPOC, queer youth, and other cohorts together to develop personal, interpersonal, and professional skills through peer learning, coaching, and collaborative community projects.
- **RYSE Youth Center (Richmond)** cultivated youth leadership by creating safe, social justice-grounded spaces where young people co-design programs, build power through internships, organizing, and civic engagement, and are supported to define and lead solutions that reflect their lived experiences and priorities.
- **Mujeres Poderosas Amorosas (Fresno County)** developed community leadership among Latina immigrant women through pláticas and political education that built analysis and confidence. By sharing lived experiences and advocating with local policymakers, they became a visible force on housing and education policy.
- **United Women of East Africa (San Diego)** nurtured community leadership through multiple culturally grounded leadership pathways. The youth advocacy internship developed research, campaign, and strategy skills and supported leadership in schools and with local officials to improve the school climate for Muslim students.

Individuals leading local collaborative work report being transformed through the experience, gaining new skills and ways of thinking, and showing up differently in their organizations and communities as a result. Community leaders leveraged their collective power through greater trust, shared skills, and civic engagement.

Prevention Institute supported these community-led efforts through a trust-based approach with flexible funding, learning opportunities, and in-person convenings. Prevention Institute offered training and facilitated peer learning, including on community power ecosystems, story sharing, and generative conflict. One local partner described the impact of the peer support: *“You become a different person when you hear other people’s stories and how they navigated through. And after every meeting, every interaction, I was more motivated and inspired.”* Prevention Institute also connected local partners to national audiences through webinars and publications.

“As a leader, SHINE has given me tools to lead with both strength and care. It’s not just about what we do, it’s about how we do it, and how we sustain ourselves in the process.” – Aristeia, McKinleyville Family Resource Center

Embodied and Sustainable Leadership Matters Now

Community leaders are experiencing the overwhelming impact of structural stressors, like the dismantling of safety nets and rising attacks on targeted communities, contributing to distress and burnout. In response, more organizations are investing in embodied leadership training and coaching. This approach emphasizes wholeness, integrating the mind, body, and emotions for greater clarity and presence, while supporting personal and strategic sustainability. Embodied leadership development programs train cadres of leaders to develop social, emotional, and strategic intelligence. Embodied leaders build high-trust community power ecosystems with wide-ranging capabilities, strengthening alignment, and sustaining collective action.

“Embodied leadership means creating spaces where youth can heal, thrive, and lead. We are integrating this into every aspect of our work, and hope others can do the same.” – Chelsea, Collective Healing and Transformation Project



SHINE was seeded by Blue Shield of California Foundation and is blossoming through broader engagement.



Mujeres Poderosas Amorosas leadership gathering. Photo credit: Kiana Shoots

What’s Next for SHINE

SHINE is advancing a new phase of investment in embodied and sustainable leadership to meet this moment. In this next phase, SHINE will build on our accomplishments, expand local leadership development opportunities, and facilitate applied learning through practice labs, learning communities, and coaching. By cultivating community leaders who are embodied, strategic, and sustainable, SHINE will grow community power ecosystems that advance safety and well-being.

To learn more and explore partnership and investment opportunities, please visit www.preventioninstitute.org/shine and contact shine@preventioninstitute.org.