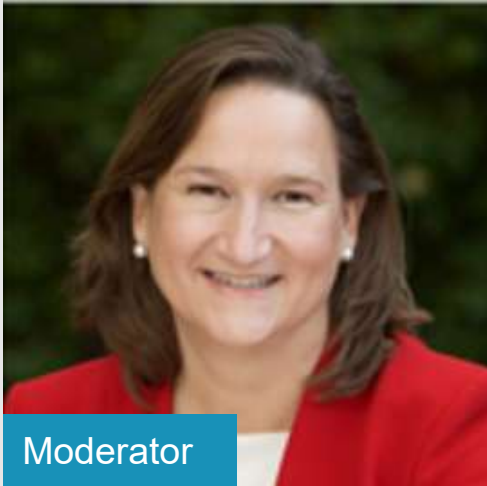


# The Path to Shared Prosperity: Advancing Economic Mobility from State to Local Action



Moderator

**VICKI VEENKER**

**MAYOR  
PALO ALTO, CA**

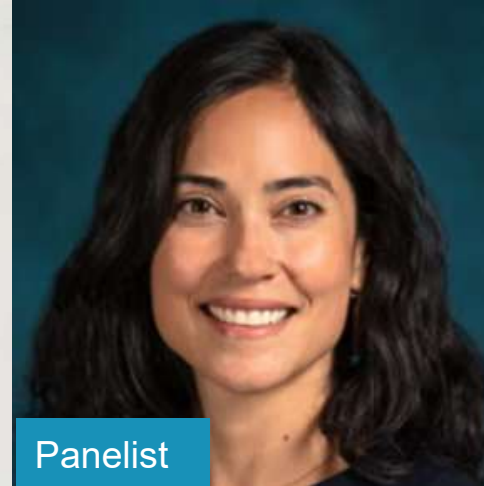


Panelist

**SARAH BOHN**

**VICE PRESIDENT AND  
DIRECTOR OF THE  
ECONOMIC POLICY  
CENTER**

**PPIC**



Panelist

**SHIREEN MALEKAFZALI**

**CHIEF EQUITY OFFICER  
SAN MATEO COUNTY**



Panelist

**PETER HARTZELL**

**CHIEF OPERATING  
OFFICER  
JOBTRAIN**

# The Path to Shared Prosperity



**PPIC**

PUBLIC POLICY  
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA



**SARAH BOHN**

**VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF  
THE ECONOMIC POLICY CENTER**

**PPIC**

# Economic Mobility in California

CalCities Conference

September 2026

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Sarah Bohn and Sean Cremin

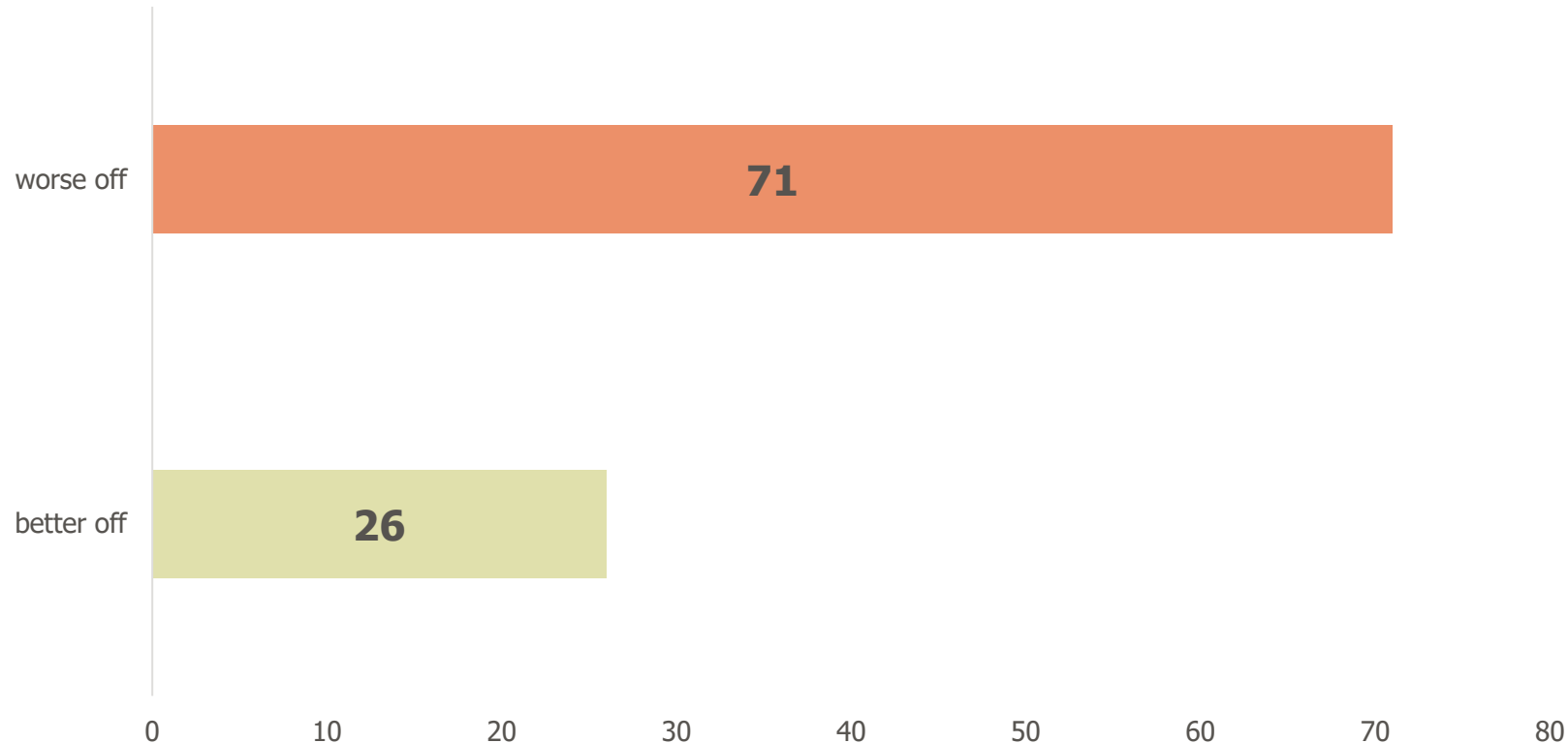


**PPIC**

PUBLIC POLICY  
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

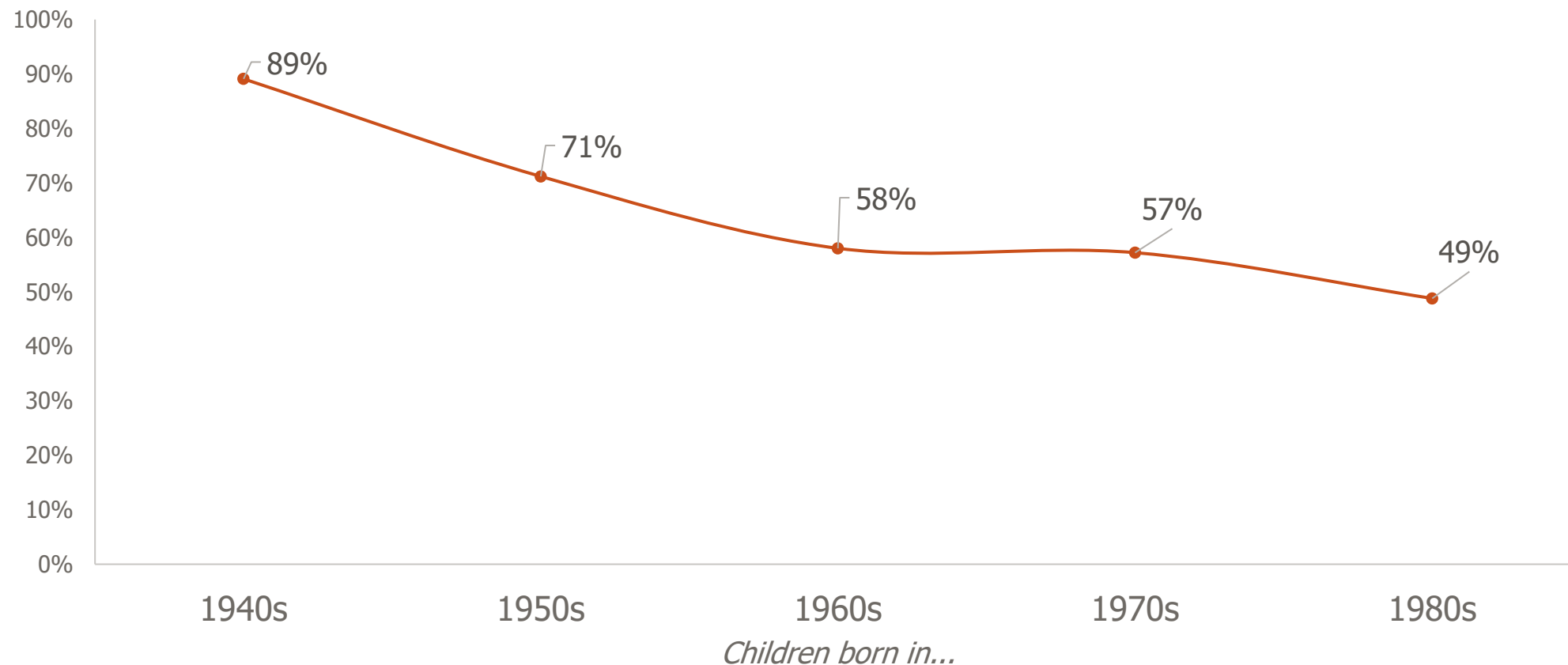
# Most Californians believe children today will be worse off financially than their parents . . .

*PPIC Survey: when children in California grow up, will they be better off or worse off financially than their parents? (%)*



# The odds of children out-earning their parents has declined

Share of Californians earning more than their parents, by birth cohort

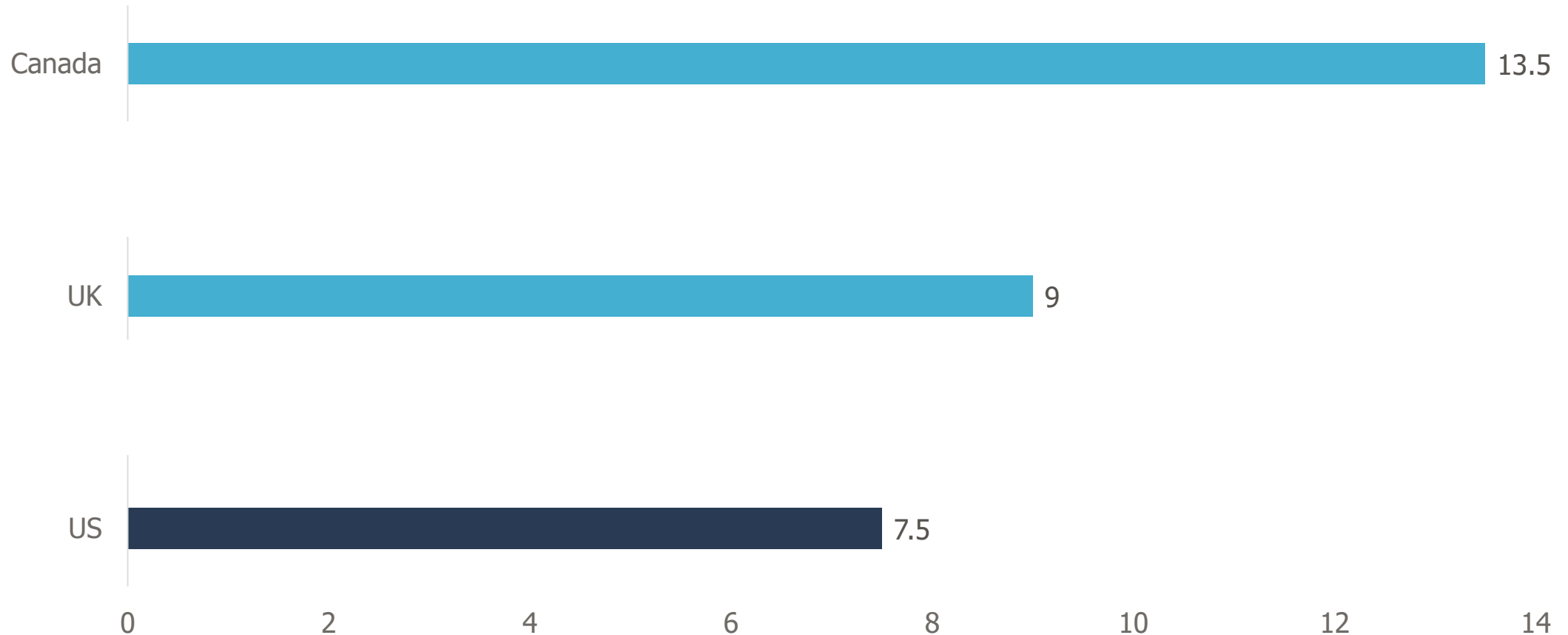


# Let's be clear about what we mean by economic mobility

- **General definition:** changes in the economic status of individuals or groups over time, generally upward
- Efforts to improve economic mobility vary across
  - **Time horizon:** Improvement across generations, within one's lifetime, within a certain period of time
  - **Groups:** Improvement for whom? Mobility from poverty, moving from middle to upper-class. For children vs adults.
  - **End goal:** achieve economic security, self-sufficiency, independence, freedom

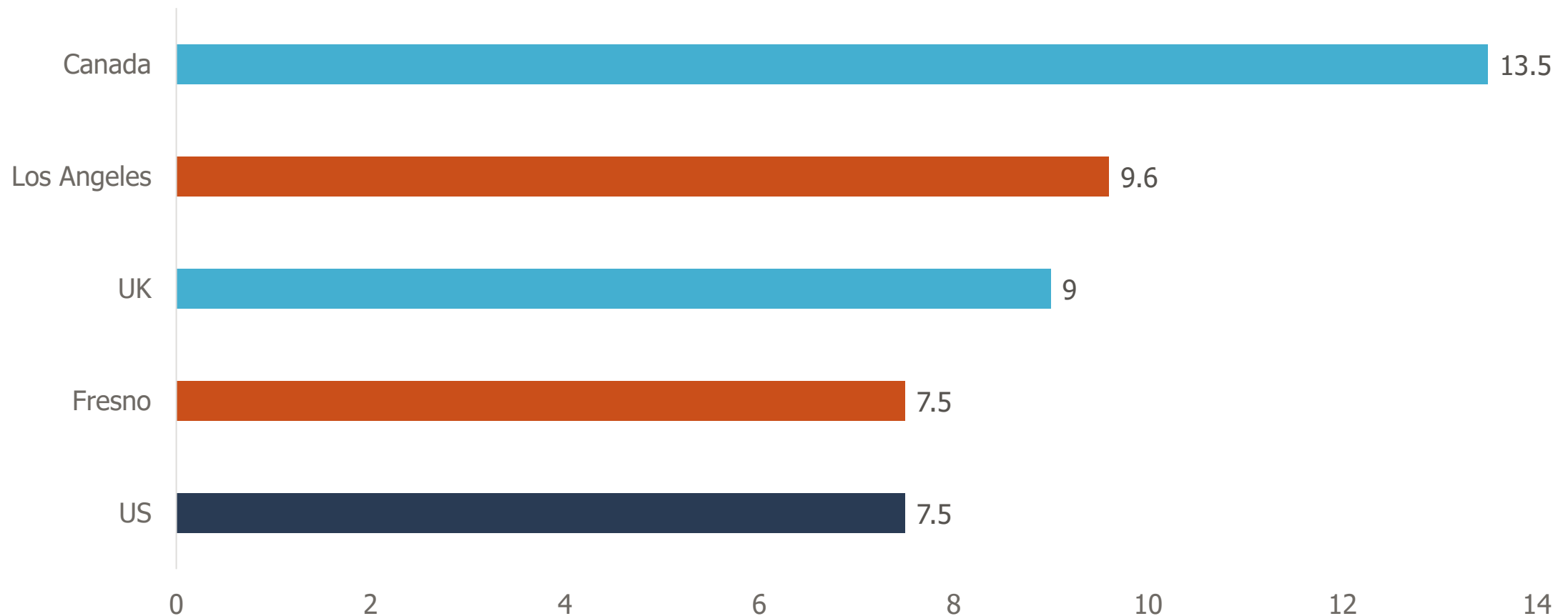
# Concerns about economic mobility across generations stem from surprising U.S. statistics

Probability that a child born in bottom makes it to top of income distribution

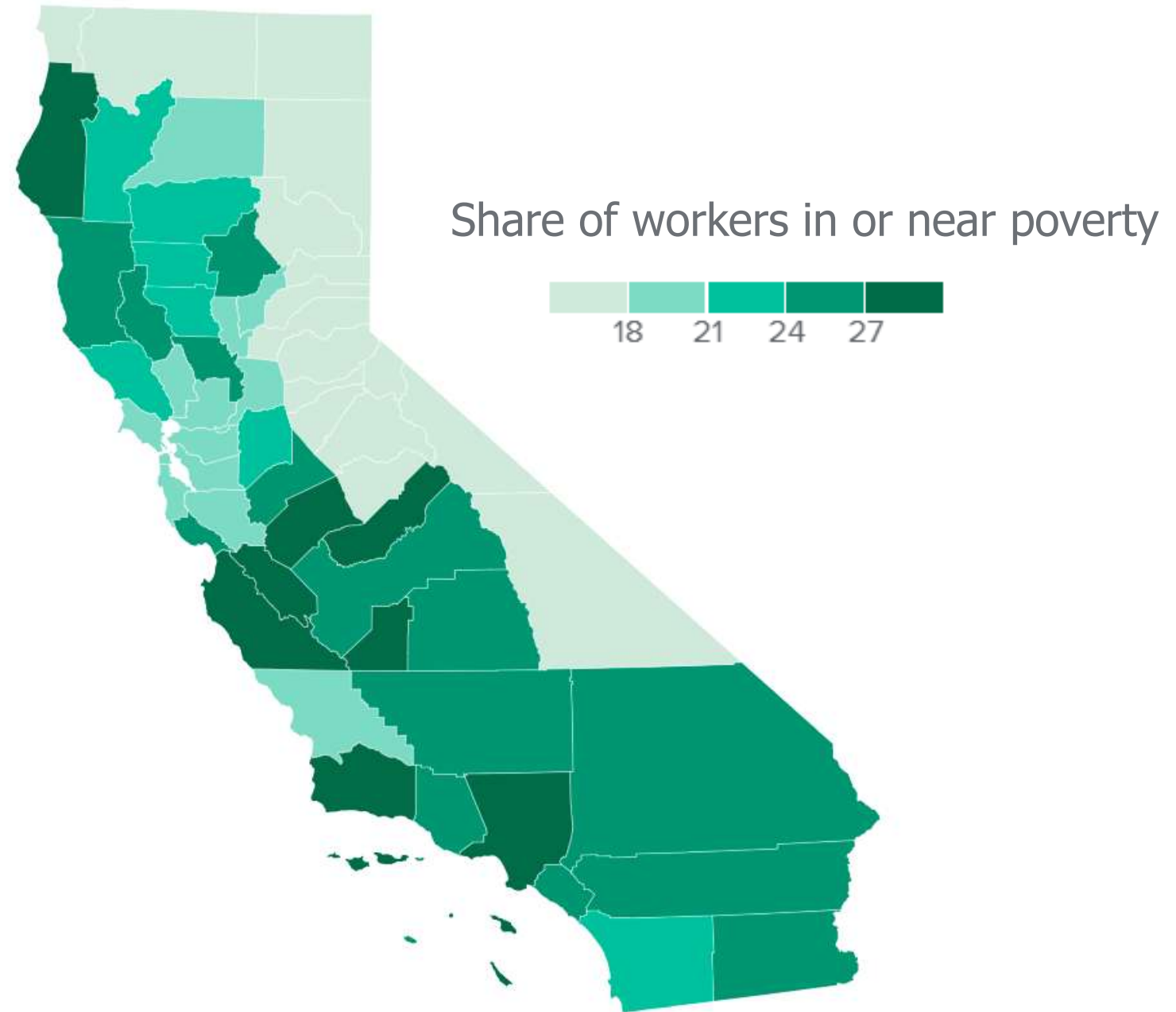


# ...though California fares a bit better than the U.S. on measures of mobility across generations

Probability that a child born in bottom makes it to top of income distribution



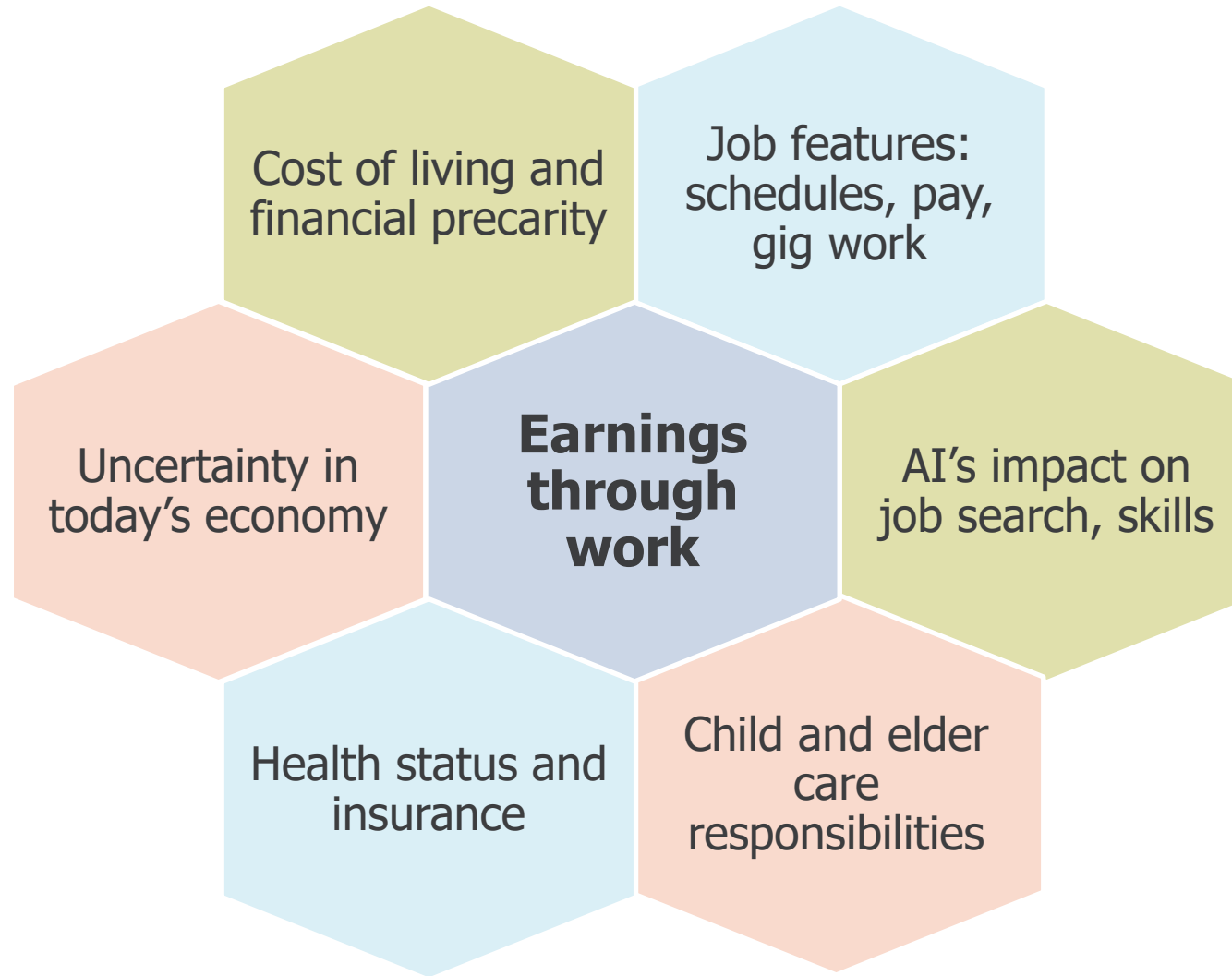
**However, our research shows that many California workers struggle to access economic opportunity**



**Even over a 10+  
year period, most  
California workers  
do not experience  
economic mobility**

|                         |        | Earnings quintile, 2019 |            |            |            |            |
|-------------------------|--------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                         |        | Bottom                  | 2nd        | Middle     | 4th        | Top        |
| Earnings quintile, 2005 | Bottom | <b>41%</b>              | 28         | 17         | 9          | 5          |
|                         | 2nd    | 24                      | <b>28%</b> | <b>25</b>  | 16         | 7          |
|                         | Middle | 16                      | 20         | <b>25%</b> | <b>25</b>  | 14         |
|                         | 4th    | 11                      | 13         | 19         | <b>29%</b> | 27         |
|                         | Top    | 8                       | 7          | 10         | 20         | <b>55%</b> |

# Improving earnings is at the core of mobility, but a constellation of issues factor in



# Policy plays a critical role in economic mobility, though there is much more to learn

## Federal

- Strong macroeconomy!
- Infrastructure, industry, and R&D investments
- Safety nets in health, food, income, housing

## State

- Education investments from early childhood through workforce
- Supplementing safety net
- Child and elder care

## Local

- What works in your area?
- How we learn from each other about different approaches?
- What state and federal support do you need?

# Thank you!

Feel free to reach out: [bohn@ppic.org](mailto:bohn@ppic.org),  
[cremin@ppic.org](mailto:cremin@ppic.org)

And [sign up for updates](#) from PPIC

# Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

Sarah Bohn (bohn@ppic.org)

Sean Cremin (cremin@ppic.org)

Thank you for your interest in this work.

# The Path to Shared Prosperity



**SHIREEN MALEKAFZALI**

**CHIEF EQUITY OFFICER**

**SAN MATEO COUNTY**

# Pathways to Shared Prosperity

## Creating a Unified Approach to Upward Economic Mobility in San Mateo County

Shireen Malekafzali Taidi, County of San Mateo

September 2026

### Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council



# Shared Prosperity Coordinating Council

Increasing economic mobility through opportunity

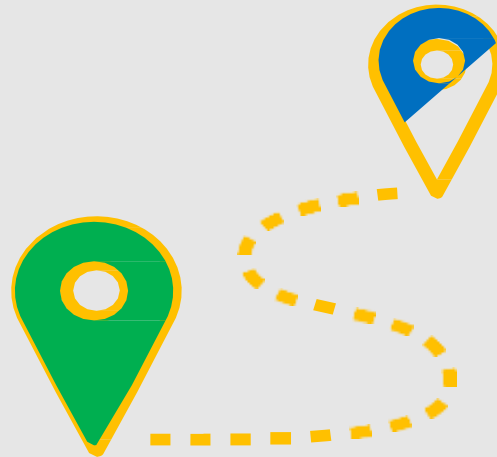
## Economic Mobility

*Increasing Economic Opportunity & Outcomes for All*



### Stability Outcomes

Ability to Meet Basic Needs

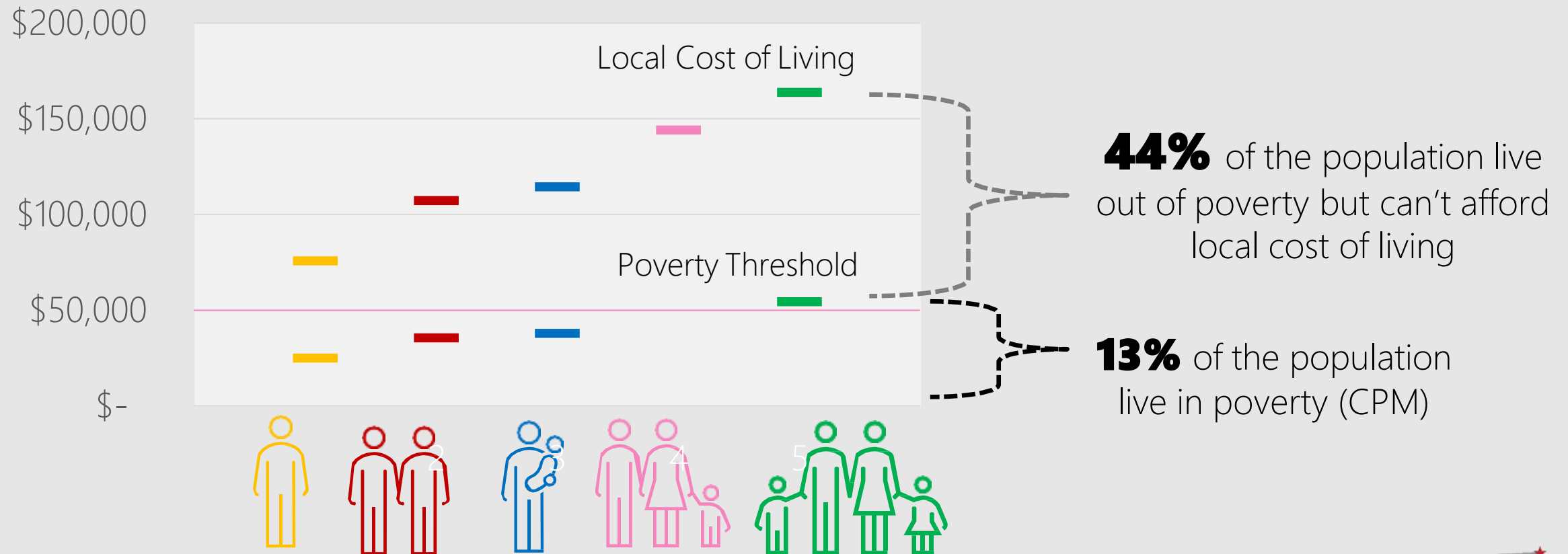


### Mobility Outcomes

Self-Sufficiency and Pathways to Prosperity



# Key Challenge: San Mateo County's Hourglass Economy



More than half of San Mateo County households cannot afford the local cost of living.

# Urban Institute Upward Mobility Framework

Adoption of data-driven framework and universal prosperity goals

Does the  
national  
framework  
match local  
needs?

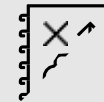
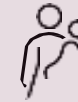


# Community Identified Priorities: Recent Countywide Rankings

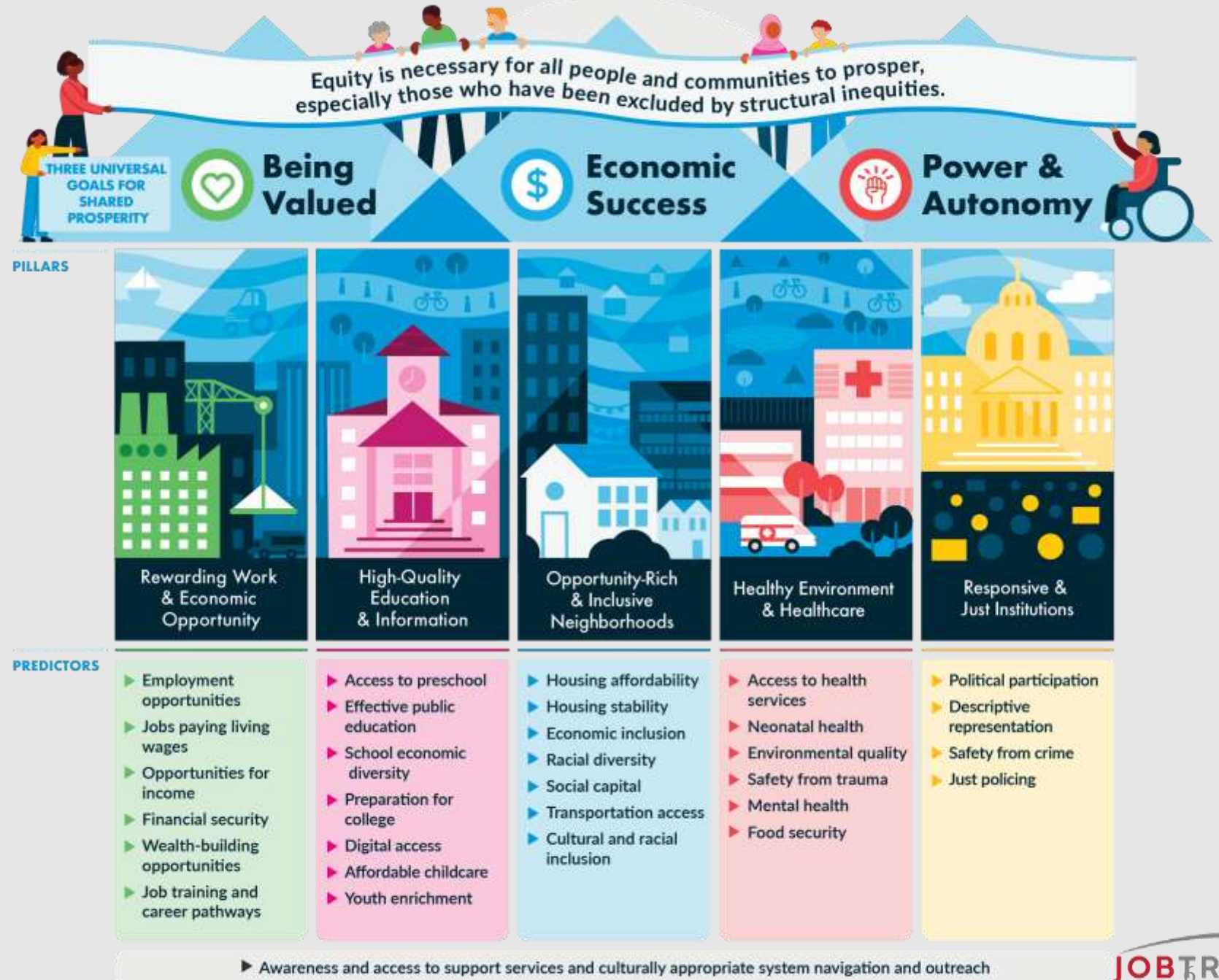
## Pandemic Recovery Community Priorities

## Immigrant Survey "Most Useful" Services

## Measure K Community Priorities

|                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Housing & Shelter                                   |  Affordable Housing                  |  Housing & Homelessness                                                                 |
|  Food & Nutrition                                    |  Healthcare Coverage                 |  Emergency Preparedness                                                                 |
|  Childcare (ages 0-5) / Out-of-School Care (ages 5+) |  Food Assistance                     |  Children & Families                                                                    |
|  Job Training & Assistance                           |  Educational Assistance              |  Mental Health                                                                          |
|  Mental Health & Wellness                           |  Legal Assistance                   |  Culturally Sound Engagement, Tailored Program Design, and Experienced Administration |
|  Culturally Responsive Navigation Support          |  Mental Healthcare                 |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                                       |  Equitable and Accessible Services |                                                                                                                                                                            |

# Guiding Framework: San Mateo County Economic Mobility Framework



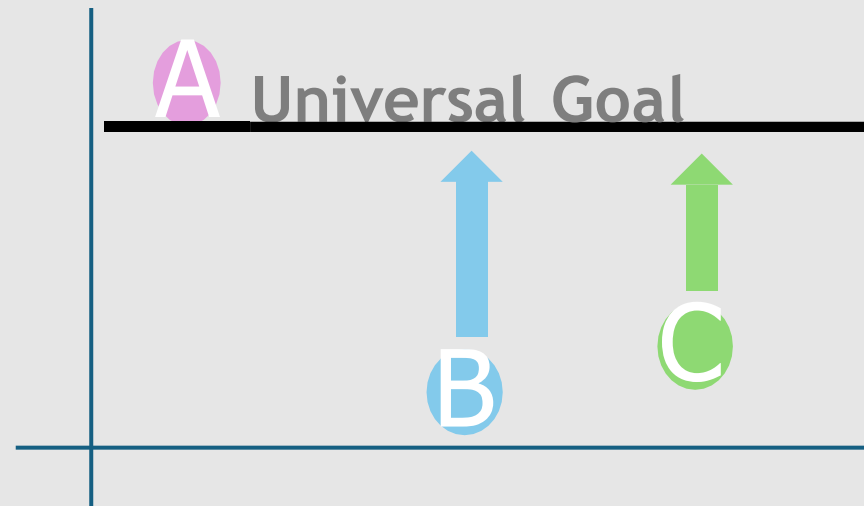
# Mobility Metrics

Key data points to measure each predictor

| Metric                                                                                                                 | Predictor                     | Pillar                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Share of adults ages 25 to 54 who are employed                                                                         | Employment opportunities      | Rewarding Work         |
| Pay on an average job compared with the cost of living                                                                 | Jobs paying living wages      | Rewarding Work         |
| Household income at 20th, 50th, and 80th percentiles                                                                   | Opportunities for income      | Rewarding Work         |
| Share of adults with debt in collections                                                                               | Financial security            | Rewarding Work         |
| Ratio of the share of total home values owned by a racial or ethnic group to the share of households of the same group | Wealth-building opportunities | Rewarding Work         |
| Share of 3- and 4-year-old children enrolled in nursery school or preschool                                            | Access to preschool           | High-Quality Education |
| Average annual improvement in English Language Arts                                                                    | Effective public education    | High-Quality Education |
| Share of students attending high-poverty schools, by race or ethnicity                                                 | School economic diversity     | High-Quality Education |
| Share of 19- and 20-year-olds with a high school degree                                                                | Preparation for college       | High-Quality Education |

# Targeted universalism

Approach to analyzing mobility metrics to identify priority strategies

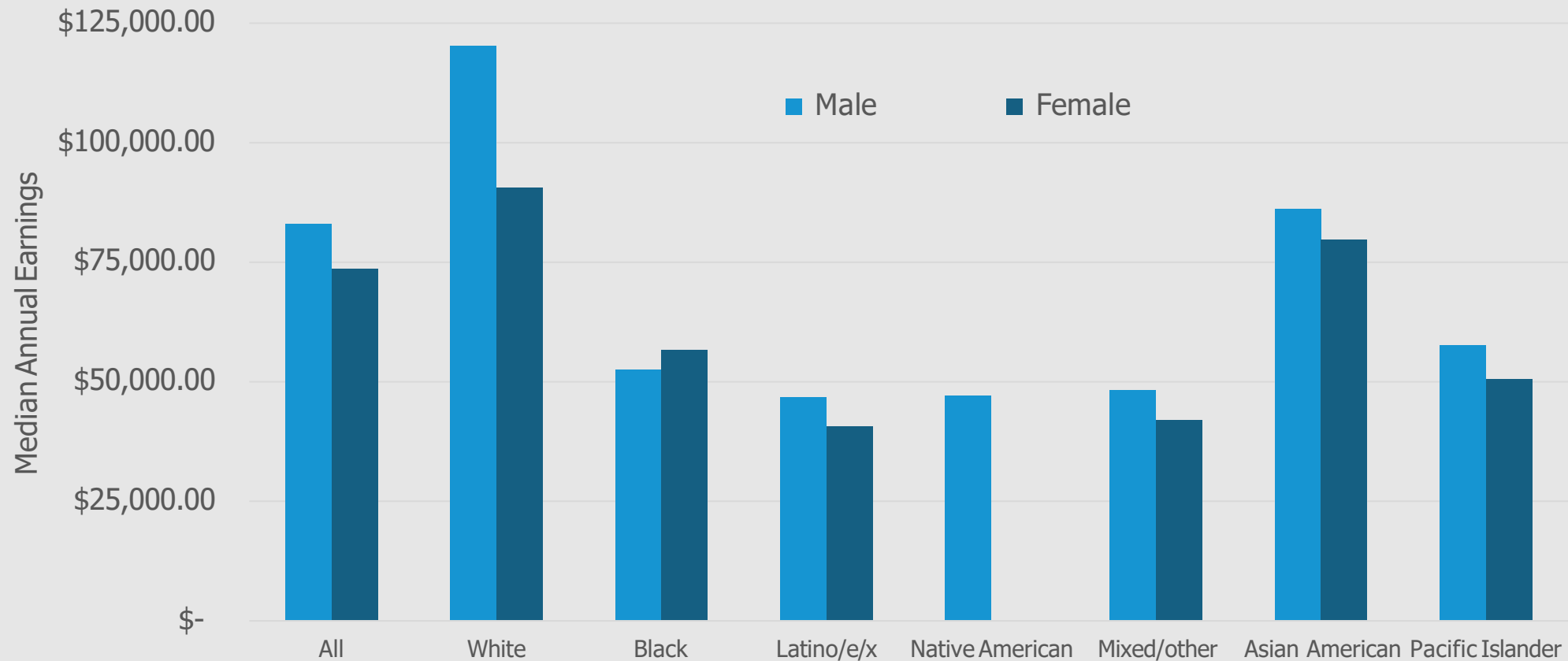


1. Set a universal goal
2. Disaggregate data to identify populations most challenged
3. Identify the priority population's specific issues and barriers to achieving the goal
4. Develop targeted strategies to address the key barriers for priority sub-populations

# High Cost of Living + Uneven Distribution of Prosperity

## Median Annual Earnings

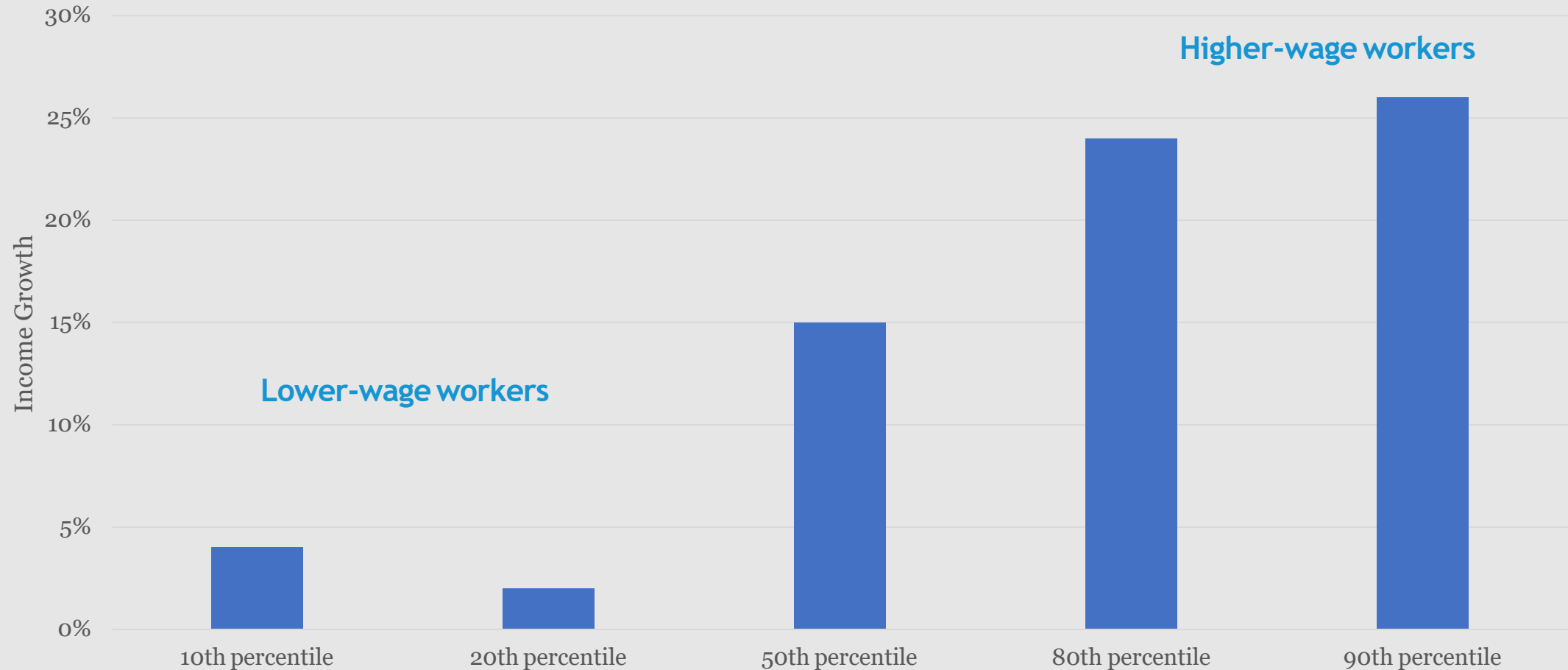
Annual income by race/ethnicity and gender



Data source: American Community Survey, 2020

# Income Growth Over Time in San Mateo County

Increase in wages for full-time and salary workers over 10 years.



**Data Dashboard**  
A localized data portal on  
shared prosperity

[communitydata.smcgov.org](https://communitydata.smcgov.org)

## Identifying Solutions

- SPCC reviewed existing efforts underway to address needs
- Identified gaps or where efforts were nascent
- Selected strategies to address gaps in ways that are feasible and impactful



# Recommended Strategies

## Anchor Institutions

Leverage major employers to create employment opportunities, invest in workforce development, and procure locally

## Career Pipelines

Develop pathways for individuals to progress from entry-level positions to higher-paying and more fulfilling jobs

## Employee Ownership and Entrepreneurship

Provide resources to support startup of COOPs and career pathways for undocumented workers

## Housing Stabilization

Policies and resources for renters and homeowners to maintain safe, secure, and affordable housing

## System Navigation Support/Promotoras

Peer-to-peer support for case management, connections to services, and assistance navigating systems

## Benefits Calculator

An online tool to estimate eligible benefits and how benefits change in different scenarios

## Narrative Strategy

Cultivating fair inclusion and belonging in our community

## Community Resource Mapping

Accessible platform with available programs, services and supports



## Pipeline for Diversifying Representation in Appointed and Elected Roles

Provide outreach, training, and resources for youth and future leaders in underrepresented communities

## Technical Assistance for Existing Representatives

Provide training and resources for existing representatives working in support of underrepresented populations

# Implementati

- Support, lead, and generate momentum to advance the priority strategies
- Secure commitments to the framework, principles, strategies, and data analysis
- Support and track collective impact, adjust progress as needed, and coordinate in support of shared prosperity



# Next Steps

- Share SMC Economic Mobility Action Plan & Community Data Portal
  - Develop web landing pages, 2 Trainings on Community Data Portal, Schedule 2 Convenings

# Thank you

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Shireen Malekafzali Taidi (she/her), Chief Equity Office and  
Director of Economic Mobility & Labor Standards

[smalekafzali@smcgov.org](mailto:smalekafzali@smcgov.org)

# The Path to Shared Prosperity



**PETER HARTZELL**

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**

**JOBTRAIN**

The background of the image is a scenic view of San Francisco at sunset. The Golden Gate Bridge is on the left, with cars visible on its deck. The city skyline, including the Transamerica Pyramid, is in the distance. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and lens flare. A white curved line with a red star at its end points from the left towards the city. The text 'JOB TRAIN' is overlaid in the center.

# JOB TRAIN

For the Bay Area,  
**Economic  
Mobility**  
is the **defining issue**  
of our time



An aerial photograph of the San Francisco skyline at dusk. The city's dense collection of skyscrapers is visible, with the Transamerica Pyramid and the Transamerica Pyramid being prominent. The Golden Gate Bridge is visible in the distance, and the city is surrounded by water. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting sunset or sunrise.

# Economic Mobility

It's how

**our regional economic engine and leadership will persist**

It's how

**our full human potential will be realized**

It's how

**skills gaps and a reshaping of the workforce will be solved**





Today's Economic Mobility Imperative

How do we build an

# Opportunity Economy?

The new possible

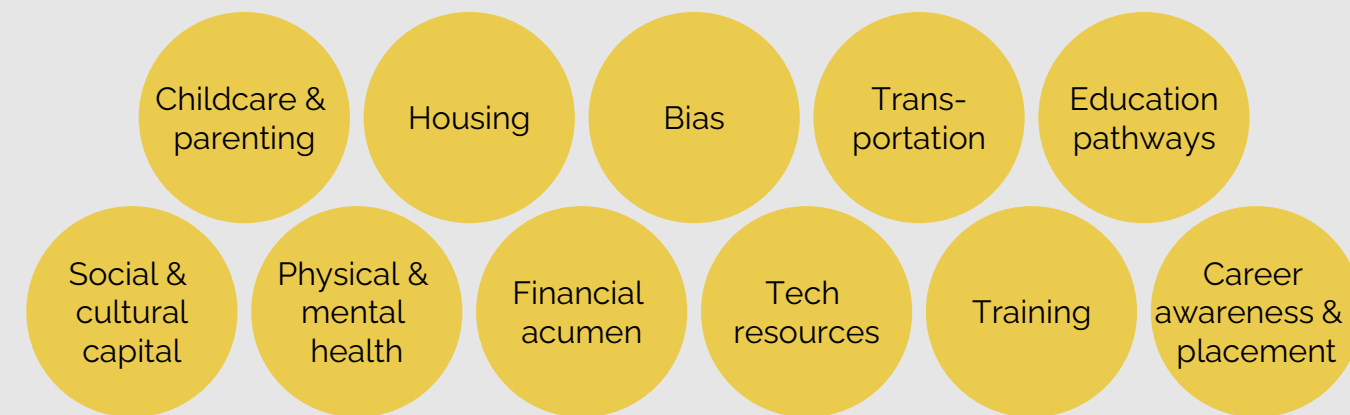
**A future of work that offers  
opportunity for everyone**



Why is Economic Mobility So Hard for These Communities?

## A complex maze that goes beyond skill-building

### Multiple Barriers to Success





The Way Forward

**Building a sustainable  
Opportunity Economy  
requires something  
different than  
the past  
has offered**

# Making a Fundamental Shift

## Yesterday

We know best

---

Limited timeframe

---

Every community treated the same

---

Employers “receive” talent

---

Fragmented service networks

---

Donor

to

## Today

Client leads the way

---

Continuous journey

---

Curated to each community

---

Employers play an active role

---

Cohesive partner ecosystem

---

Investor

**Immersed in communities**  
Localized solutions

**Innovation**  
Staying one step ahead  
of careers and needs

**Multiple pathways**  
Awaken more opportunities



**JOBTRAIN**  
**Opportunity**  
**Success**  
**Model**

**Continuous journey**  
Engagement at every step

**Individual-directed**  
Take on your own life

**Whole person design**  
Address barriers to success

**Ecosystem of curated services**  
Career building and support



Household Stability

Housing

Childcare & Parenting

Supports



Well-Being

Physical & Mental Health

Social & Cultural Capital



Financial Management

Debts

Savings & Asset Formation



Education & Training

2ndary, GED & Career Awareness

College Pathways



Employment & Career

Placement and Coaching

## Economic Success

- Anchor Institutions
- Local Career Pipelines
- Employee Ownership & Entrepreneurship
- Housing Stabilization Supports

## Power & Autonomy

- Pipelines for Diversifying Representation
- Technical Assistance for Existing Representatives

## Being Valued

- Narrative Change Strategy
- Community Resource Mapping
- Service Navigation Support
- Benefits Calculator



Household  
Stability

Housing

Childcare  
&  
Parenting

Supports



Well-Being

Physical &  
Mental  
Health

Social &  
Cultural  
Capital



Financial  
Management

Debts

Savings &  
Asset  
Formation



Education  
& Training

2ndary,  
GED &  
Career  
Awareness

College  
Pathways

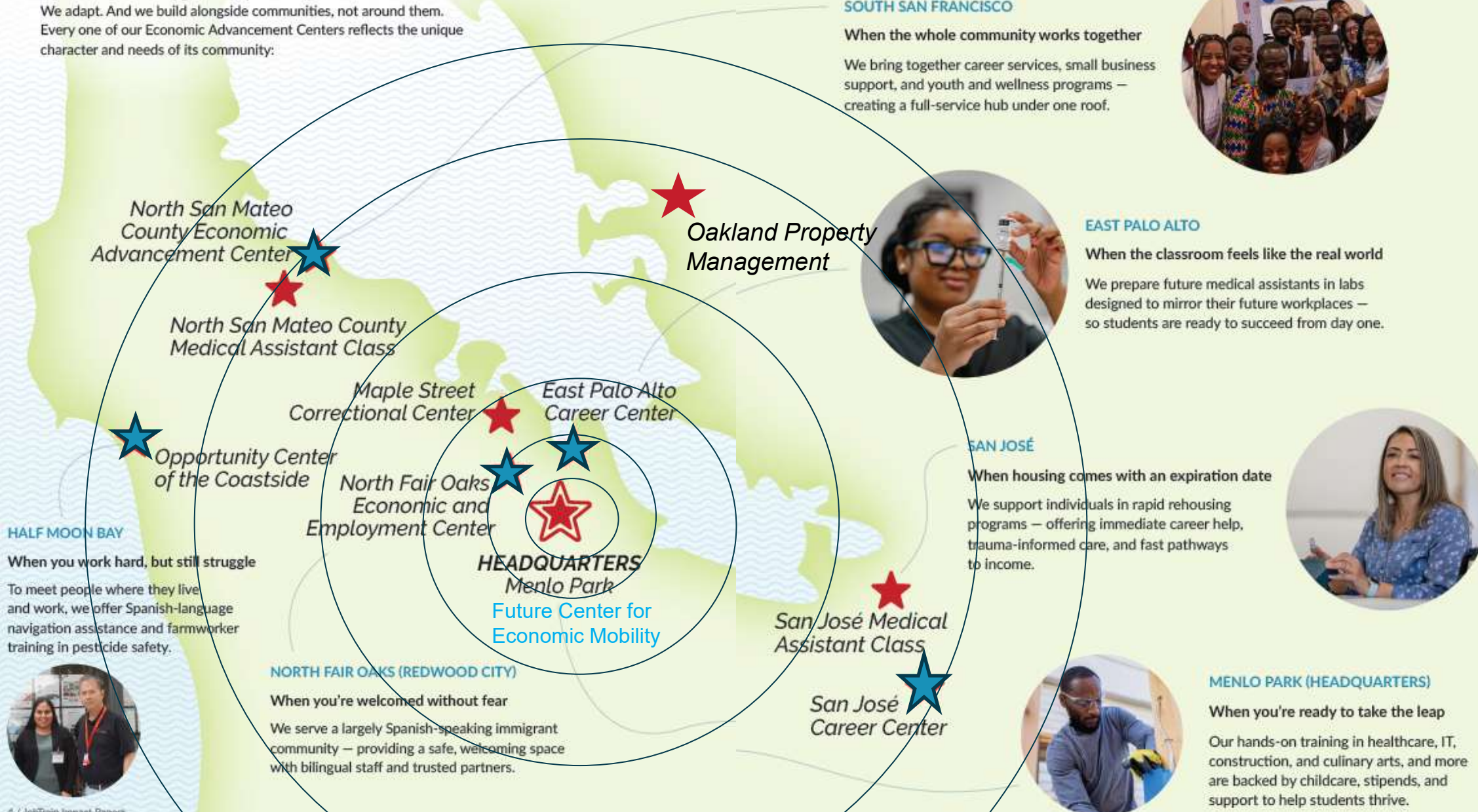


Employment  
& Career

Placement  
and Coaching

# How We Customize Services in Each Area — Because One Size Doesn't Lift All

JobTrain's model isn't rigid. It's responsive. We don't assume. We ask. We adapt. And we build alongside communities, not around them. Every one of our Economic Advancement Centers reflects the unique character and needs of its community:



JobTrain is an engine of opportunity, helping people move from economic hardship to stability and upward mobility.

Through job training programs with supportive services and a network of Economic Advancement Centers offering job search and employment assistance, JobTrain propels people toward meaningful, sustainable careers.

5,498

CLIENTS SERVED

9,900

SERVICES PROVIDED



#### CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

### From a Fresh Start to \$32/hour Jonathan's Journey

AFTER SERVING SEVEN YEARS in prison, Hayden Kennedy — who goes by Jonathan — was released in February with nothing but a construction background and a willingness to work. Originally from the Valley, the judge sent him to a transitional living program in East Palo Alto, hoping a new environment would help him build a different kind of future.

That's where everything changed. The executive director of the program connected Jonathan to JobTrain.



Though he had doubts about school and about himself, Jonathan enrolled in the Building Maintenance/HVAC program. He showed up, worked hard, and graduated with renewed purpose.

Today, Jonathan is earning \$32 per hour. He's supporting himself, rebuilding his life, and inspiring others at his housing program and in the classroom. He reminds people that it's never too late to take the first step and proves what's possible when you have the right support at the right time. ★

## CAREER TRAINING

640

clients enrolled in Job Training

87%

completion rate

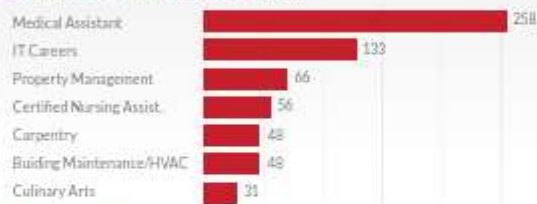
77%

placement rate

\$27.21

average hourly wage

#### Number of Students in Each Program



#### Completion Rates



## ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT CENTERS

1,966

clients received Career Center services

885

resumes created

214

attended workshops

5,800

supportive services delivered\*

823

attended skills upgrade classes

580

received a job placement



\$22.47

average hourly wage

\*Clients may receive more than one service.

# Building an Opportunity Economy

## *Innovation at Ground Level*

### CONTINUOUS JOURNEY



### INDIVIDUAL DIRECTED

Mobility Mentoring -EM  
Path (Operational)

Motivational  
Interviewing/Trauma Informed  
Care (Operational)

Incentives and Coaching App  
(Pilot)

### IMMERSED IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Economic Advancement  
Centers (Operational)

Impact Employers – JFF (Pilot)

### ECOSYSTEM – WHOLE PERSON DESIGN

Partner Eco System (in  
design)

Center for Economic  
Mobility (In Design)



Fernando was a single father in a temporary shelter with his two young sons.

Limited marketable work skills, utilizing part-time gig work to get by.

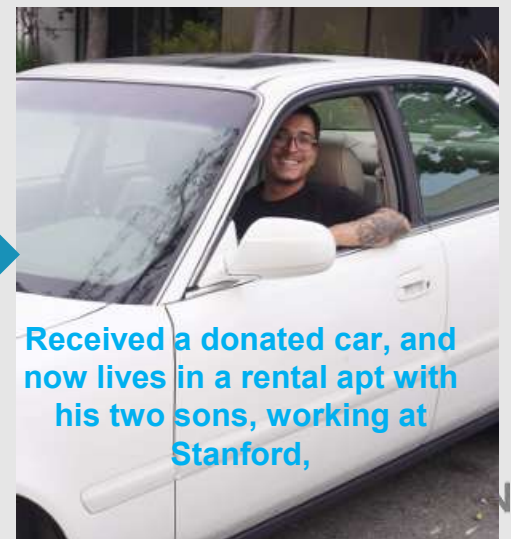
Enrolled in JobTrain's allied health Medical Assistant career training program.

Completed the course.

Completed 4 week clinical externship at Stanford Health

Landed a full-time Medical Assistant role at Stanford Health.

Couldn't accept the position due to lack of transportation.





## What Each Community Needs, Where They Need It



“You were the kind of tough we didn’t ask for but ended up grateful for. You saw more in us than we saw in ourselves. You held us to our highest potential and never let us settle for less.”

Bryan – Student Graduation Speaker

