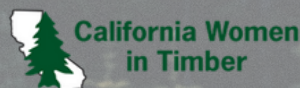

FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES CAREER
MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

2022 - 2023
MENTORSHIP
PROGRAM
ANNUAL
REPORT



Funding for this project provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Business and Workforce Development Grants, with support from the above organizations.

PROGRAM MISSION

The Forestry and Natural Resources Career Mentorship Program (hereafter, Program) aims to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice within the fields of forestry and natural resources. The Program is a collaborative effort supporting historically underrepresented students studying forestry, particularly those who identify as women, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian (BILA), or LGBTQIA by encouraging the inclusion and support for these group within the profession. While all students and professionals are encouraged to apply, this program recognizes that a person's identity and sociodemographic background can limit opportunities for underrepresented students in historically white, male-dominated fields, such as forestry. Navigating the fields of professional forestry and natural resource management can be challenging for students and young professionals post-graduation. This program aims to provide a network of support as they establish a career within these fields.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Allison Erny at allison@placerrcd.org. The application period begins in late August. Please visit clfa.org/mentorship for more information.

"The mission is awesome and I'm so glad the program exists! Would've loved to do this when I was an undergrad looking for mentorship."

-Mentor, 2023

MENTEES

In the 2022 - 2023 academic year, the Program served **57** students from 7 forestry programs at participating California community colleges and universities (Figure 1). All participating students were enrolled in a forestry degree and within two years of graduation.

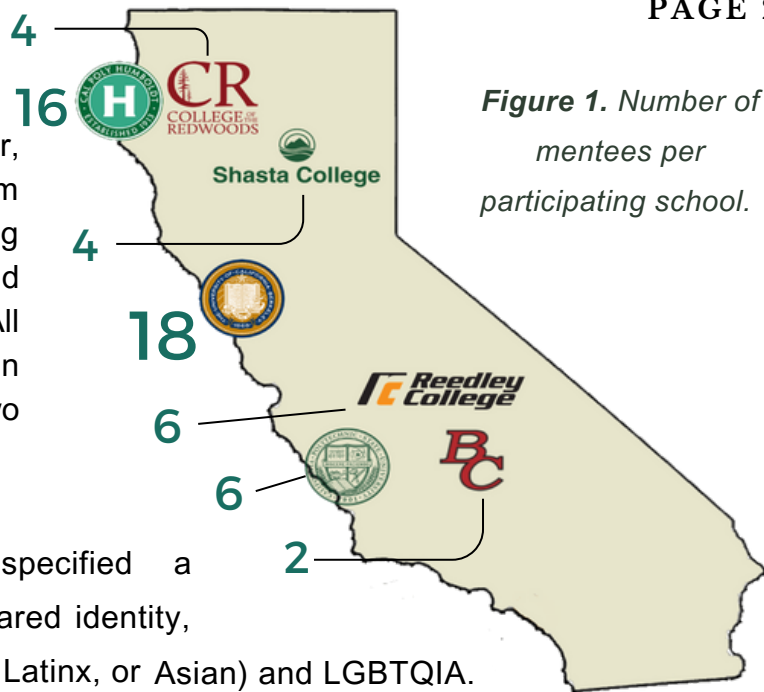


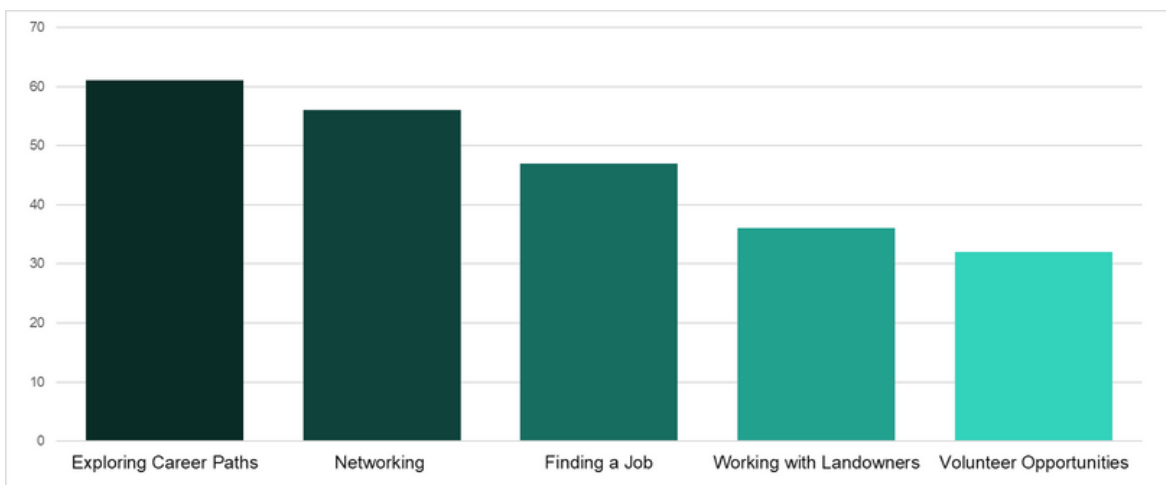
Figure 1. Number of mentees per participating school.

10% of student applicants specified a preference for a mentor with a shared identity, including BILA (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, or Asian) and LGBTQIA.

Asian) and LGBTQIA. Pairing only accounted for identity where it was prioritized by the student or mentor. Student applicants wanted to speak to their mentors about forest health (78%), fire ecology (71%), reforestation (67%), and research (55%). Other topics of interest included silviculture, timber management, recreation management, and GIS. Students also hoped to gain professional skills from the Program (Figure 2).

In a recent survey of mentees, 95% of respondents indicated that they benefitted from mentor support, including help with **job hunting**, **resume review**, and **interview preparation**. Mentees were also introduced to the variety of forestry jobs available, and expressed gratitude for connecting with a professional to help them meet their goals.

Figure 2. Students goals for Program participation.



In the '22 - '23 academic year, **51** forestry and natural resource professionals donated their time to the Program. 40% of mentors are Registered Professional Foresters. Mentors stemmed from a variety of professional backgrounds (Figure 3). 9% of mentor applicants self-identified as LGBTQIA, and 16% self-identified as BILA. 7% of mentor applicants indicated that they would be especially interested in mentoring a student with shared identity.

Figure 4 summarizes the top 5 skills that mentors were eager to pass on to mentees. When compared with student goals (Figure 2), these align well with student mentorship needs. While mentors do not have to be a California RPF to participate, the Program maintains a strong forestry focus and seeks mentors with technical experience in the field. In a recent survey of mentors, most indicated a positive experience with the Program. Many felt their contributions centered on **job hunting, networking** (including connecting students with other professionals), and **insight** into a forestry career.

Figure 3. Mentor occupations by sector.

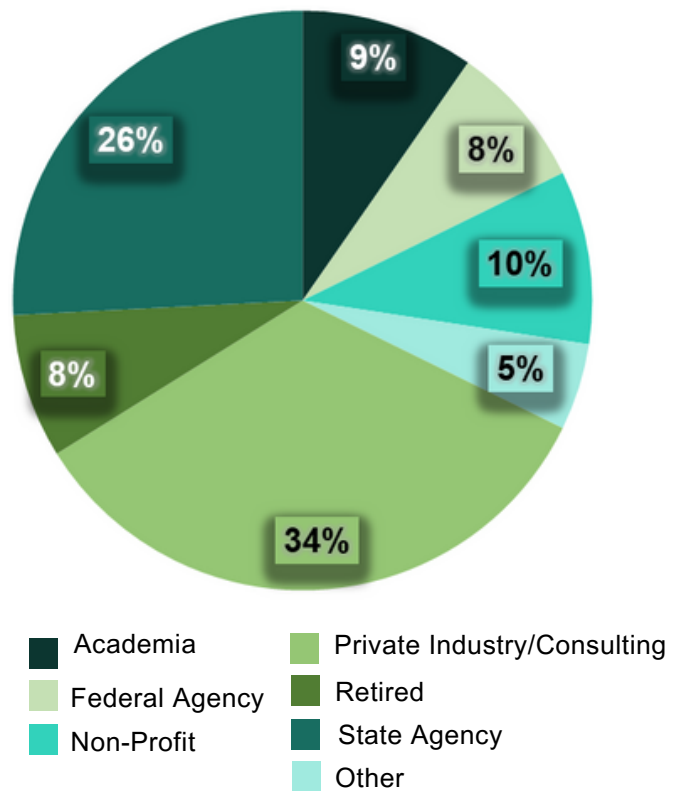
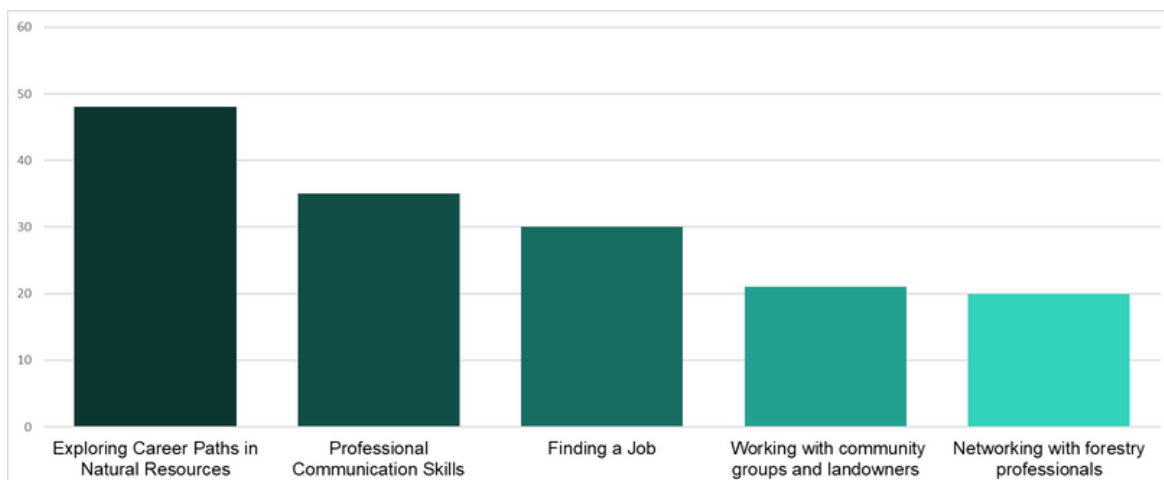


Figure 4. Mentor applicants hope to pass these skills to a student.



Funding from the recently acquired CAL FIRE Workforce Development Grant allowed the Program to expand its offerings in the 2022 - 2023 academic year.



The Program's annual **resume workshop** was held in November.

Students attended a presentation on preparing resumes and met with forestry professionals for feedback. The session also included discussion of the job application process with employers from federal, State, private, and/or academic sectors.

"I gained a lot from talking through specific job requirements and resume recommendations with someone who is in a position to review applicants for a job I may actually apply to."

- Mentee, 2023

In January, the Program offered an **interview workshop** discussing interview etiquette and preparation. Attendees could sign up for a mock interview slot with a professional. Participants of the Forestry & Fire Recruitment Program also benefited from the workshop.



This year, the Program hosted five interactive **career panels**.

Professionals from a variety of personal and professional backgrounds were invited to speak to their experience in the field and answer questions about their career journey. The Program student representative from UC Berkeley also hosted a panel on careers in UC Cooperative Extension.

The Program expanded its emphasis on **diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice** by offering interactive trainings led by Dr. Maria Estrada of the Collective 180. Dr. Estrada has over 15 years of experience facilitating discussions surrounding DEI in the field of natural resources. Her four-part workshop series focuses on creating a safe space for discussion and exploring unconscious bias, being an active bystander, and power dynamics.



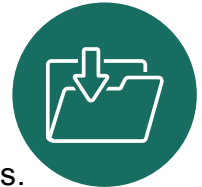
PROGRAMMING (CONT.)



Students and mentors are required to meet at least once a month.

Monthly **discussion topics** were provided to guide conversation on topics including work/life balance, wage/salary negotiation, networking, and professional communication.

Participants have access to an online **resource center** with information on relevant job boards and professional organizations, along with materials related to Program trainings. Participants also have free access to **LinkedIn Learning** to further develop professional skills.



"My horizons have definitely been broadened regarding potential careers, and I've learned about many more job opportunities beyond the seasonal/field jobs I was aware of."

- Mentee, 2023



The Program partnered with California Women in Timber to co-host two in-person **events** for participants. Mentors and mentees gathered for snacks, beverages, and conversation at Sierra Cascade Logging Conference (February) and Redwood Region Logging Conference (March).

Please join California Women in Timber and the Forestry & Natural Resource Mentorship Program for the

RRLC EDUCATION MIXER

Friday, March 17, 2023
4:00-5:30pm
Ukiah Brewing Company
102 S. State St.
Ukiah, CA 95482

UKIAH
BREWING COMPANY

California Women in Timber

PLACER RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Funding for this project provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Business and Workforce Development Grants.



"Fostering a connection with the next generation of forestry majors was **absolutely invaluable**. I learned so much from [my mentee]...this program helped me reconnect with why I love this career path so much. Sharing that with someone and supporting them in their journey with this career was really special."

- Mentor, 2023

"My mentor helped me **figure out my near-future career path**.

This year, I got an assistant forester position working in the Santa Cruz mountains which is a dream of mine."

- Mentee, 2023

"I wanted to see some options in for a career in forestry that wasn't a traditional role involving THPs, or for a career in an urban area. I got to see the cool things my mentor was doing for [their employer] and see that there are a lot of **different options** for me in the forestry field."

- Mentee, 2023

SPOTLIGHT ON DEI/J TRAINING

"Diversity training was a **powerful tool** for me, and highlighted different perspectives of other participants."

- Mentee, 2023

"DEIJ trainings were engaging, but wish we had more time to discuss **solutions or concrete actions**."

- Mentor, 2023

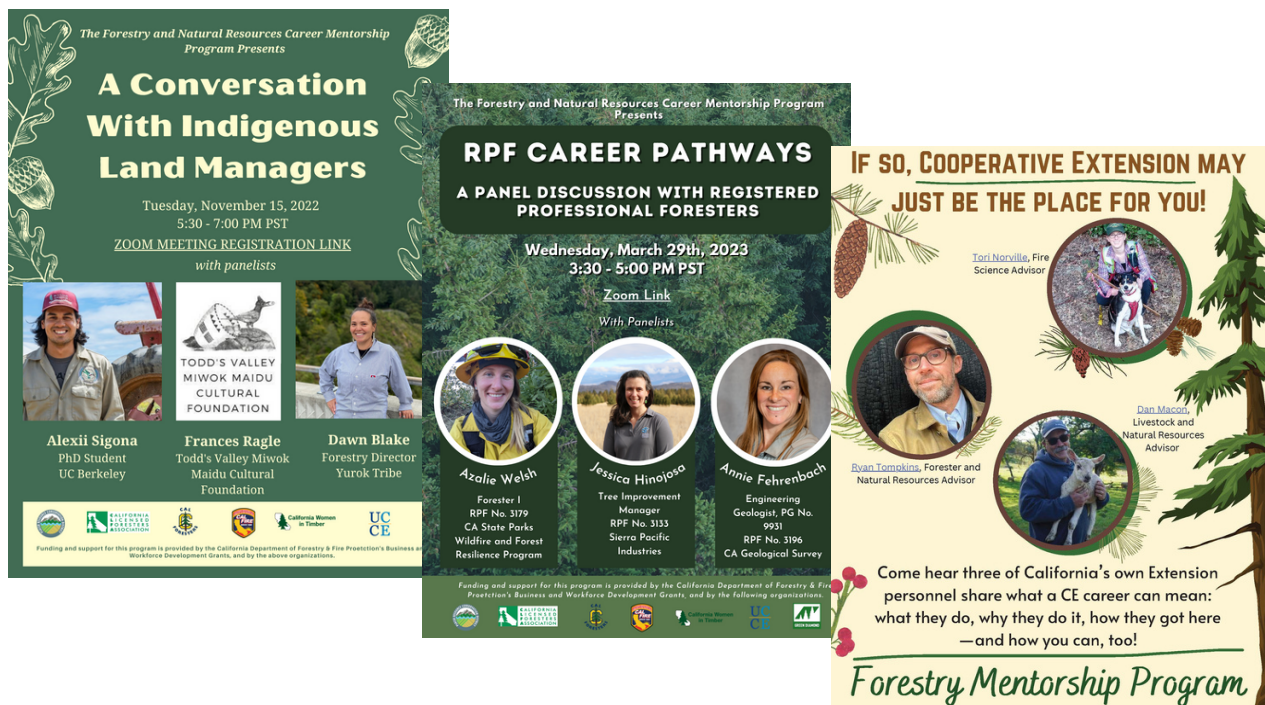
"The DEI/J training was not particularly **oriented to forestry**. We all learn more with each additional training, but it would've been interesting to have the questions and topics more forestry/field oriented."

- Mentor, 2023

An end-of-year survey identified the following focus areas for the next Program year.

More events and field trips. Students and mentors both wanted to spend more time in the woods with their partner. The Program will create more opportunities for in-person learning, especially for students whose mentors may not live nearby.

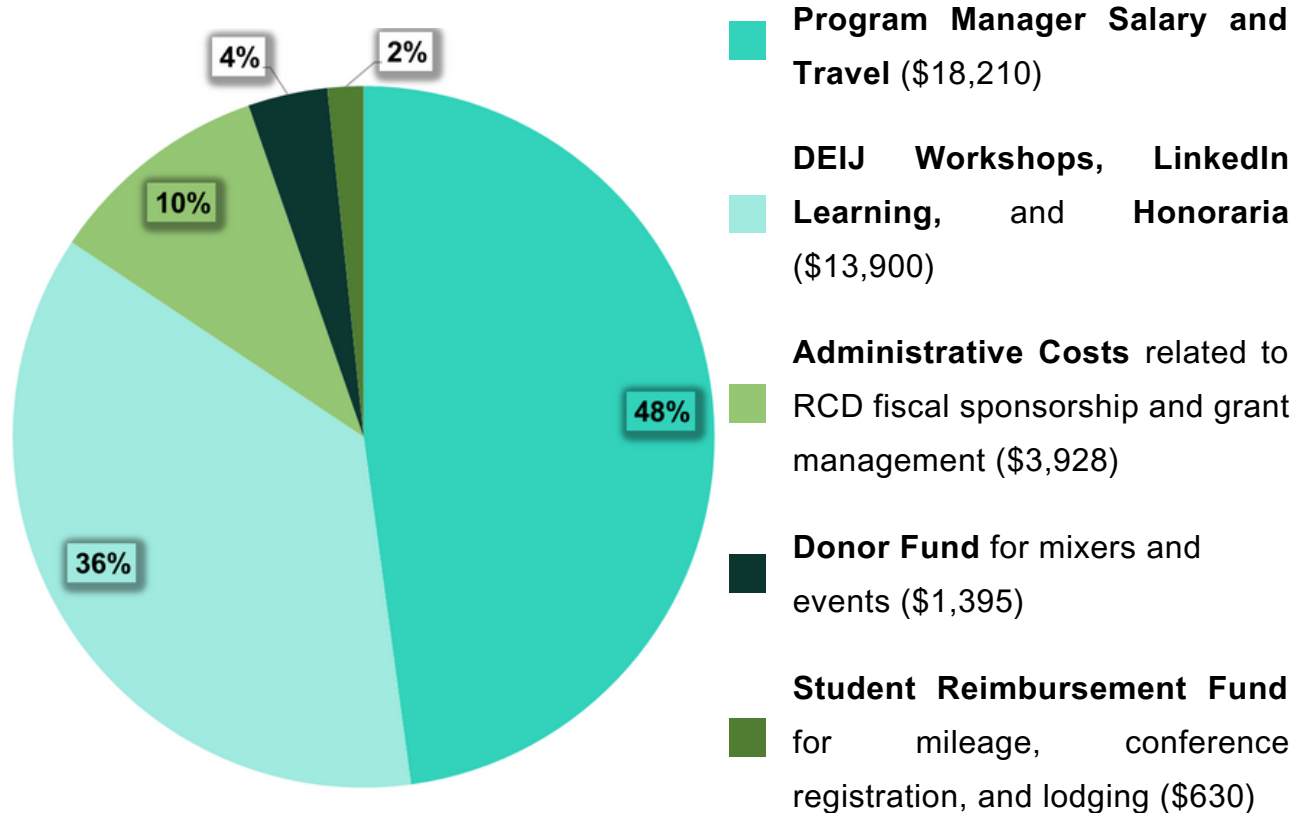
Improved financial assistance program. Students can be reimbursed up to \$300 per academic year for field visits with their mentor or forestry-related conferences and events. This year, many students did not have access to a vehicle, had trouble coordinating travel, or didn't have funds to participate prior to reimbursement. In the coming year, the Program will work with faculty representatives to coordinate travel for students, and will seek solutions to make funding equitable.



Streamlined programming. Students and mentors are busy with jobs, school, and personal lives, making it tough to take advantage of Program offerings. This year, the Program will use application data to tailor events to student interests, consolidate trainings and workshops, and release an early Program schedule for planning purposes.

BUDGET

Between 7/1/22 and 6/30/23, the Program spent **\$38,063** (\$36,668 from the CAL FIRE grant, \$1,395 from private donor funds). The Program budget is illustrated below, with actual expenditures for the 2022-2023 academic year shown in parentheses in the legend.



Donations via check may be written to the Placer Resource Conservation District with "Forestry Mentorship Program" in the memo line:

Attn: Allison Erny • Placer RCD • 11641 Blocker Drive • Auburn, CA 95603



Funding for this Program is provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Business and Workforce Development Grants.

The organizations below contributed funding and fiscal sponsorship to the Program.



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Mary Mayeda, CA Women in Timber

Nic Dutch, Student Representative, UC Berkeley

Rachelle Hedges, Berkeley Forests

Rick Satomi, UC Cooperative Extension

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Faculty Representative: Melissa Markee

Student Representative: Leo Babcock

UC Berkeley

Faculty Representative: Rachelle Hedges

Student Representative: Louis Cimmino

Thank you immensely to our private donors, and to the forestry and natural resource professionals who served as mentors, speakers, and panelists!
