BUILDING CAREER
PATHWAYS AND
EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

2020 Annual Report
A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We live in a time of rapid change. This year, workers and their families endured unprecedented challenges as they weathered the storms of a global pandemic, an ailing economy, and a tumultuous presidential election. Yet, we also live in an age of incredible collaboration and generosity. I am not only humbled and inspired by the resilience of our communities, but by the bold action of our partners whose vision and support has laid the groundwork for a more equitable recovery and society.

For over 10 years, BSP has responded directly to the needs of the workforce, the industry, and the broader community through innovative and holistic programming that advances quality jobs and community success. This year was no different, as the BSP staff and Board of Directors rose to the challenge in our pivot to address the needs of working families in our pandemic era and beyond. We hold the utmost gratitude to our supporters who have made this work possible and we look forward to deepening our partnerships under our common purpose.

As I make my transition from Interim to official Executive Director, I am incredibly proud to serve at the helm of Building Skills Partnership with our amazing staff as we work to tackle the challenges ahead. Thank you for standing with essential workers and BSP this year. Your confidence and partnership has made a difference in the lives of many families. I look forward to your partnership in the coming year.

With Gratitude,
Luis Sandoval, Executive Director

OUR MISSION

To improve the quality of life of workers in low-wage industries by increasing their skills, access to education, and opportunities for career and community advancement.
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JANUARY

BSP concludes the second round of the Floor Care Technician Training Program in Southern CA.

Feb
BSP convenes key partners in Silicon Valley through a Labor-Management Committee (LMC) to plan the first Floor Care Technician Training Program in Northern CA.

Mar
Shelter-in-place orders go into effect. All in-person BSP programming is suspended.

BSP conducts rapid response outreach to identify worker needs and connect individuals to community resources.

BSP collaborates with SEIU-USWW & the State of CA Employment Development Department to provide assistance with filing unemployment insurance.

BSP opens an emergency hotline for USWW members to address pressing needs.

BSP convenes LMC partners to discuss IDC training.

Apr
BSP creates 75 videos on topics such as health resources, food banks, unemployment insurance, public safety net programs & more.

BSP launches a food & rent stipend, reaching 1,026 families and releasing $161,600 in financial assistance.

BSP reaches 2,630 workers in rapid response initiatives.

Jun
BSP launches the IDC training with first cohort & 129 janitors.

BSP hosts a community food caravan in Los Angeles reaching over 700 residents.

BSP collaborates with industry leaders & workplace health experts to develop the Infectious Disease Certification Program (IDC).

May
BSP collaborates with industry leaders & workplace health experts to develop the Infectious Disease Certification Program (IDC).

BSP celebrates the first IDC cohort through a virtual graduation with key partners & guest speakers including Julie Su & Mary Kay Henry.

Jul
BSP wraps its VITA program, assisting 587 workers with filing their taxes.
DECEMBER 2020 AT A GLANCE

**Aug**
BSP launches a voter & census engagement campaign on social media.
BSP launches the first virtual Green Janitor Education Program in Los Angeles.

**Oct**
BSP adds its voice to urgent demands for a just & equitable recovery for frontline property service workers in a new policy framework.

**Nov**
BSP hosts COVID-safe flu shot clinics in Los Angeles & Orange County for USWW members.

**Sept**
BSP completes the IDC program for janitors at Apple & Google.
BSP is announced as a winner in the Worker’s Lab 2020 Innovation Fund for its IDC program.

**Dec**
BSP launches a year-end giving campaign to get technology & internet tools into the hands of workers and their families.

DECEMBER
AT A GLANCE

OUR IMPACT IN 2020

3,303
Workers trained in in-person & online classes.

670
Workers certified in the Infectious Disease Certification Program.

2,630
Workers and their families supported with COVID-19 & other rapid response information.

1,000+
Workers reached in BSP’s ‘Voces y Votos’ civic & voter engagement campaign.

26
Worksites participated in BSP programs statewide.

$161,600
Awarded in direct financial relief.

$31,750
Awarded in scholarships.

4,324
People viewed BSP’s COVID-19 training video.

“Without BSP’s help, I would not have been able to complete the unemployment insurance application and would have struggled greatly to pay my bills or buy food during this pandemic. I am so grateful to BSP for their assistance.”

-Sundararajah Senathiraja, LAX Wheelchair Attendant
THANK YOU LETTER TO OUR STAFF

We are especially grateful to our dedicated staff who provided unparalleled levels of support for workers and their families to navigate this challenging year. As the COVID-19 pandemic forced our organization, and other organizations around the globe, to adopt a work from home model, BSP staff immediately stepped up to develop new work and living routines while discovering new strength in our shared commitment to support our communities.

We would like to acknowledge the strength of the BSP team. Each member has worked tirelessly to meet the needs of workers and their families, doing whatever it takes to get the job done despite the ongoing disruption to everyone’s lives.

Through online training, collaboration and support services, they have provided the tools for workers to develop new knowledge and remedies for success that fit today’s rapidly evolving work and public safety standards.

Now more than ever, we are reminded of their commitment and dedication to the work, and one that we can always count on.

With Gratitude,
The BSP Leadership Team
OUR PANDEMIC RESPONSE

When Californians were ordered to shelter in place in March 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, property service workers were called to the frontlines of the chaotic scramble to help mitigate its spread, specifically in commercial properties and airports. The dual public health and economic crisis that followed has laid bare the deep-rooted inequities in our society, while also exacerbating them. Hardest hit are those who were already most vulnerable, among them the property service workers and their families that BSP is proud to serve.

BSP immediately recognized the need to train and inform workers about the spread of the novel Coronavirus as information was being published and updated by public health organizations. In April, BSP convened statewide partners in both industry and labor to develop an Infectious Disease Certification Program that would equip workers with the tools to protect themselves and maintain clean, healthy work spaces for building tenants. In understanding new building standards, protocols and control measures, the Infectious Disease Certification Program addresses the need for upskilling workers during a time of economic crisis, while enabling commercial buildings and businesses to safely reopen.

While property service workers were deemed essential in the fight against COVID-19, many experienced lay-offs and reduced work hours. In response, BSP dedicated significant capacity and resources to drive the digital strategies needed to connect workers to multiple informational and resource videos via its social media and website platforms.

BSP created and produced over 75 online and on-demand videos offering information and training on various topics that would assist workers in accessing vital health information, food banks, unemployment insurance, public safety net programs and more.

Thanks to the partnership of several philanthropic foundations, BSP activated a rent and food stipend program for families in dire need of financial assistance. Offering direct economic support for workers has helped to ease financial pressures and provide the temporary relief for workers to make ends meet and provide for their families during this difficult time.

Despite the challenges ahead, we are deeply grateful for the ongoing support of our industry, labor, philanthropic and community partners, as well as inspired by the resiliency of our communities. As we continue to accelerate our impact, we look forward to working together to build vibrant, cohesive and empowered communities, where frontline workers and their families are truly valued for their essential service to us all.
This year, BSP added its voice to urgent demands for local and state policy change in pursuit of a just and equitable recovery for all. BSP called on policymakers and philanthropic leaders to approach the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to advance policies and investments that dismantle systemic barriers and reflect our highest values of inclusion, equity and shared prosperity.

Despite their essential service to us all, California’s frontline janitors and airport workers labor and serve at the intersection of myriad crises: inadequate healthcare, lack of worker protections, unaffordable housing and childcare, poverty, income loss and more. California’s hope for a full reopening and recovery relies directly on these essential workers ensuring clean, healthy workplaces and commercial spaces, and through them, the safety and confidence of employees and consumers. Simply put, there is no path to recovery without our frontline janitors.

BSP proposed the following steps for policymakers and funders to take in order to support frontline workers:

>> Make robust investments in workforce strategies that create equitable pathways to good, stable jobs that are safe. Pay family-supporting wages, welcome worker voice and provide for career advancement.

>> Ensure adequate training standards for frontline janitors in recognition of their essential role as environmental stewards and public health defenders.

>> Ensure a safety net for all Californians, regardless of immigration status.

>> Strengthen support services for low-wage workers, including housing and childcare subsidies, and broadband for all.
The COVID-19 pandemic has put into sharp relief the extent and stakes of the digital divide. As schools shift to distance learning, public services transfer resources online and workers become displaced from their jobs, the need for affordable internet access and reliable devices are more critical than ever. Yet, today’s health crisis has exposed the harsh reality that many families are cut off from this essential service. Property service workers are among those for whom digital access continues to be a day-to-day challenge, and equity an elusive goal.

BSP believes that we must do more to develop and support programs for digital skills training as part of the road to recovery for unconnected communities. Understanding that digital equity intersects with all areas of a worker’s wellbeing -- including the very ability to access and participate in our economy and democracy -- BSP will embark upon a series of initiatives that aim to close the digital divide. This programming will center equity to ensure that workers who are most vulnerable are not left behind in our transition to online work and learning environments.
BSP’s collaboration with its longstanding partners in labor, management and the broader community reflects the truth in the saying, “It takes a village.” When the COVID-19 public health crisis began to disrupt all sectors of our economy and livelihoods, BSP convened its partners in preparation for the next normal and its implications for workers. BSP is proud to partner with SEIU-USWW to center worker voices in the development of new career pathway programs and in building inclusive local economies.

COMING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS TODAY’S WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

BSP strengthened its partnerships with core industry leaders, including 10 employers and 26 worksites to meet worker and industry needs for training in this new era of COVID-19. In the process of creating the Infectious Disease Certification Program curriculum, BSP forged new partnerships with subject matter experts - UCLA LOSH, UC Berkeley LOHP and the Ashkin Group. We are grateful for their thought leadership and feedback in the development of win-win solutions to address today’s most pressing workplace challenges.

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT KEEPS FAMILIES AFLOAT DURING THE PANDEMIC

Amid the shutdown of schools, businesses, and public programs, BSP pivoted to provide rapid response programming and relief to workers and their families searching for assistance. BSP’s philanthropic partners stepped up to support BSP’s rapid response to the crises that many workers and their families were facing. Through their generous and critical support, BSP has provided over $161,600 in direct financial relief to 1,026 families throughout California, while providing financial case management, referrals, and unemployment insurance assistance to over 2,000 workers. Together, BSP and its philanthropic partners have served over 2,500 clients through COVID-19 relief efforts that help workers and their families weather the COVID-19 storm while setting the stage for a more equitable future for working families.
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

DESIGNING INNOVATIVE WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY SOLUTIONS

This year, property service workers were recognized on a national scale for their essential role as environmental stewards and public health defenders. In response, BSP worked collaboratively with multi-sector partners to adapt to the evolving needs of the workplace while continuing to upskill workers in sustainability and quality jobs.

When the pandemic struck in mid-March, BSP tapped into its relationships with labor and management to discuss the development of a training program that would address the rapidly evolving cleaning procedures in commercial buildings. Within a seven week time frame, BSP launched the Infectious Disease Certification Program with leading industry employers, including ABLE, ABM Industries, Allied Universal, Brilliant General Maintenance, DMS Facility Services, Paragon Janitorial, and Service by Medallion. In addition, BSP engaged UCLA LOSH, UC Berkeley LOHP and The Ashkin Group to develop the virtual curriculum covering COVID-19, common infectious diseases transmitted through airborne or bloodborne pathogens, and how proper cleaning and disinfection protocols contribute to workplace health and safety.

To date, 670 workers have been trained in the Infectious Disease Certification Program at 26 sites throughout California. In bringing together labor and management, BSP addressed the urgent need for worker training that mitigates the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases in public spaces. Additionally, the program centers around the worker’s voice, empowering them to protect themselves and others from COVID-19, paving career pathways through industry recognized certification and elevating their role within the industry.

EMPOWERING WORKERS IN NEW DISTANCE LEARNING MODELS

In response to the disruption of BSP’s traditional in-class and in-person training delivery model, BSP embarked on an initiative to build its capacity for distance learning. In partnership with Google and the EdTech Center at World Education, BSP began its search for a Learning Management System and virtual education approach in order to continue providing workers with training opportunities while not leaving any workers behind.

BSP piloted a virtual learning model through its Infectious Disease Certification Program. BSP will evaluate initial results to modify and prepare the model for expansion to other BSP programs and services. As BSP adopts a Learning Management System and further develops its pedagogy around distance learning in 2021, it will continue to focus on learner-centered approaches to meet the needs of workers.
“Providing this training to the janitors as we begin to move towards the ‘new normal’ is critically important to help ensure that our teams, as well as the facilities they service, are maintained in a manner that is consistent with what we know to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.”

-Chris Hall, Operations Manager at ABLE Services
SUCCESS STORY

EQUIPPING WORKERS WITH THE TOOLS TO MEET THE COVID-19 CHALLENGE

Proper cleaning and disinfection is considered to play such a major role in combating the spread of infectious diseases. Yet, the frontline janitors and other property service workers charged with this responsibility are often limited in their education and training on infection control. To address the need for training, BSP and its partners developed the Infectious Disease Certification Program with the conviction that protecting worker health is central to protecting public health. For Marley Castro, the program has empowered her to make safe and effective decisions at work and at home, while living with a chronic health condition. Before participating in the program, Castro lived in fear of contracting COVID-19 that could put herself and her family in a dire position. Castro is a janitor at the Stoneridge Corporate Plaza building in Pleasanton, CA.

For Castro, the knowledge of how to protect herself from contracting COVID-19 was especially important, but it wasn't the only top outbreak of concern in the training that proved useful. She also learned about other airborne and bloodborne pathogens that are commonly transmitted in community spaces.

“I am happy to be one of the pioneers in this program because now I know how to protect myself, others, and especially my family,” said Castro. “I would like this program to be extended to more workplaces, since there are many essential workers that have the responsibility to clean and disinfect, so the virus does not continue to spread.”

With 670 workers certified, the Infectious Disease Certification Program protects the property service workforce while creating safe building environments.
As part of its emergency response, BSP facilitated four webinars connecting workers to health and unemployment services. In addition, BSP partnered with Los Angeles World Airport (LAWA) to help workers navigate and access new job opportunities.

**SHIFTING TO DISTANCE LEARNING**

BSP shifted its in-person EPT training to a virtual model in order to continue reaching workers in workplace training. To date 212 workers have participated in the 16 hour EPT course. As part of the training, BSP focused part of its curriculum on increasing workers’ digital literacy skills through the use of mobile and tablet applications as a means of communication and interaction between worker and instructor.

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE CERTIFICATION TRAINING BEGINS FOR AIRPORT WORKERS AT LAX**

In late October, BSP in collaboration with SEIU-USWW and G2 Secure Staff launched the Infectious Disease Certification Program for 450 airport workers, addressing a worker and industry need for training. Despite serving as the frontline to the public and guests at the airport, passenger service workers are often limited in their education and training on infection control. Workers participated in the Infectious Disease Program’s eight hour distance learning sessions at LAX that will continue through January 2021.

The training comes as airport employers move to adapt new strategies that advance worker knowledge about common infectious diseases, exposure control procedures and how worker contribution in cleaning and disinfection can help to break the chain of transmission.

~

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**WORKERS CREATE SAFER TRAVEL EXPERIENCES AT THE AIRPORT**

In early 2020, BSP completed its Emergency Preparedness Training Program (EPT) for 2,000 workers at LAX airport. The training has not only addressed a community safety issue, but relieved an immense source of stress among workers who feel better prepared to respond to emergency situations at the airport.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in mid-March, many airport workers faced lay-offs and reduced work hours. BSP immediately pivoted to support workers with rapid response programming in one of the hardest hit industries since the onset of the pandemic. BSP enacted an emergency hotline number to assist airport workers in accessing unemployment insurance and other local assistance programs.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in mid-March, many airport workers faced lay-offs and reduced work hours. BSP immediately pivoted to support workers with rapid response programming in one of the hardest hit industries since the onset of the pandemic. BSP enacted an emergency hotline number to assist airport workers in accessing unemployment insurance and other local assistance programs.
When the COVID-19 pandemic began to disrupt the lives of workers and their families, BSP shifted its strategy to helping communities endure and prepare for the crises at home. This year, workers and their families faced extraordinary challenges impacting their housing, food security, health, education, and careers. Thanks to the support of several philanthropic partners, BSP deployed rapid response resources and economic relief to families in need. Specifically, BSP launched a food and rent stipend for families, releasing over $160,000 in financial support. In doing so, BSP filled a gap in economic relief, allowing workers and their families to stay afloat during the pandemic.

BRIDGING THE INFORMATION GAP

With the shutdown of schools, businesses, and public programs, BSP immediately shifted to connecting workers to essential emergency, health, and employment resources. BSP leveraged its direct relationship with the community to initiate one-on-one phone calls, directing them to resources such as food banks, free COVID-19 testing, free school lunches for their children, rental and mortgage assistance in their region and more.

In addition, BSP transformed its Facebook and YouTube pages to serve as online resource hubs, allowing workers to access informational videos that ranged from topics in Zoom online conferencing, mental health tips, navigating the unemployment insurance form and more.

With the support and leadership of several philanthropic partners, BSP filled a gap in economic relief for 1,026 families statewide.
ADDRESSING FINANCIAL INEQUITIES

Johanna Bernal is the face of how the economic implosion brought on by the coronavirus pandemic has impacted the working poor.

“I only work half time now and it’s been difficult,” said the single mom who has been working as a janitor in downtown San Diego for more than 20 years. “Before the pandemic, I had two or three other jobs that helped cover expenses.”

Immediately following the onset of the pandemic, BSP pivoted this approach to fill a gap in economic relief for immigrant families in San Diego. In partnership with The San Diego Foundation and the Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation, BSP developed an emergency food and rent fund for workers. Offering direct economic support for workers like Johanna has helped to ease financial pressures and provide temporary relief for her and her family.

“The food stipend was essential for my family, since I am a single mother living with my kids. It helped us be able to buy our food. In addition, the funds we received to help pay our rent helped us even more, because I am currently working part-time, and am not earning enough,” she said.

In this new era of COVID-19, BSP is proud to work with community partners to address the immediate and long-term challenges workers face to accessing the resources they need to achieve financial stability and professional success.
CREATING FINANCIALLY RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

It is no surprise that with the shutdown of businesses across the state, many workers and their families struggled financially. BSP’s Financial Capability Program seeks to promote financial inclusion through one-on-one case management and training that helps families build assets, attain positive financial habits and achieve financial security.

This year, BSP shifted its approach to helping families navigate financial pressures as a result of the pandemic, while helping workers be more prepared and resilient for future crises. BSP worked directly with 108 workers who received financial coaching and assistance in preparing a financial plan for their future. To reach workers in financial education, BSP conducted five Facebook live webinars on topics from ‘Accessing Cash in a Time of Need’ to ‘Managing Credit’ and ‘Reducing Debt.’ In addition, BSP continued to work with the community over the phone to file 587 taxes free of charge from March to April.

BSP is proud to partner with key organizations in our mission to help families adjust and prepare financially for when disaster strikes. We are grateful for the continued support of the following partners: The Sobrato Family Foundation, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, United Way of the Bay Area, Destination: Home, Sacred Heart Community Services, IRS, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), United Way of Greater Los Angeles, America Saves, UCLA Iris Cantor Institute, Jewish Free Loan Association, Self-Help Credit Union and the National Association for Latino Community Asset Buildings (NALCAB).

DIRECTING WORKERS TO VITAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT

After being furloughed without pay, Rogelina V., a single mother living in San Jose, struggled to pay her rent and provide for her daughter. Luckily, she was referred to BSP’s VITA program by a coworker. Since the onset of the pandemic, BSP has assisted USWW workers and community members online and over the phone in completing their taxes for free. In working with individuals one-on-one, BSP has also been able to screen and help workers access additional relief programs available to communities in need.

“I am so grateful to have found BSP and to have been able to file my taxes,” said Rogelina. “I waited so long to file my taxes because I had no money, not even to pay my rent.”

After filing her taxes with BSP, Rogelina received a refund that allowed her to pay her rent. In addition, BSP was able to connect her to the Destination Home program, where she received an additional $1,000 in direct financial assistance.
HEALTH & WELLNESS + COVID-19 OUTREACH

ENCOURAGING WELLNESS DURING COVID-19

This year, BSP’s approach to health and wellness centered around supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of workers and their families by providing a range of health education webinars, social media content, and direct outreach. As soon as the COVID-19 pandemic began to affect California, BSP began assisting workers in navigating COVID-19 information and county mandates.

BSP launched a COVID-19 training video to clarify myths and misunderstandings as to how COVID-19 can be acquired and spread. This video was viewed by more than 4,000 people on BSP’s Youtube channel and shared 1,600 times on BSP’s Facebook page.

In addition, BSP transitioned its health education content to new online sources. Starting in August, BSP hosted 16 Facebook Live webinars covering topics in nutrition, virtual cooking demonstrations, and men’s health, with a strong emphasis on mental health. BSP partnered with Kaiser Permanente to feature health experts and guest co-hosts in its webinars. BSP’s Health and Wellness Facebook live sessions have become a trusted resource for workers, leading many to share their health experiences and coping strategies during the pandemic.

Beginning in October, BSP hosted two Health Ambassadors in its program. Health Ambassadors are key stewards of the program, assisting with webinars and events and sharing valuable health information with their colleagues. This year, the Health Ambassadors conducted hundreds of calls to connect with workers with COVID-19 and other health information.

FLU CLINICS KEEP WORKERS SAFE AND HEALTHY DURING THE PANDEMIC

In mid-November, BSP hosted two flu clinics, one in Los Angeles, and a second in Orange County with 20 participants each. The flu vaccines were administered by a Kaiser Permanente Pharmacist and attendees received a box of food and a hygiene kit with an estimated value of $50. One participant felt grateful that she did not have to go into a doctor’s office in order to get her flu shot this year. She said:

“The flu vaccine is very important especially during this uncertain time with the COVID-19 pandemic. I get the flu shot every year at Kaiser, however I didn’t want to go this year because I was afraid of going to a hospital and getting sick. I went to BSP’s flu clinic because it seemed easier and more comfortable. I knew that I was going to be safe since the event was by appointment and followed all of the safety protocols. I’m grateful to BSP for the clinic and information that was provided at the event.”
BUILDING VIBRANT, COHESIVE, AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES

This year, BSP leveraged its expertise as a trusted messenger within the community to ensure that traditionally hard-to-count property service workers and their families felt empowered to participate in key democratic processes: the 2020 Census and the United States general election. With so much at stake for low-income communities of color, BSP’s objective was to increase awareness of the census and election process, combat misinformation, and increase participation by encouraging workers to become active and informed civic participants.

BSP engaged several foundations, including the California Community Foundation, the Orange County Community Foundation, and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, to embark on a statewide outreach and communications campaign to ensure that property service workers and their families had access to accurate information that motivated them to be civically engaged in the census count. Through direct phone banking, social media content, and direct in-person outreach, BSP reached 1,536 property service workers throughout the state. In Silicon Valley, BSP and SEIU-USWW were key partners in a census outreach caravan that educated the Bay Area community on the importance of being counted.

Finally, BSP launched a voter engagement campaign called ‘Voces y Votos’ with the goal of helping workers learn about the policy issues and prepare a plan for how to register and vote safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. ‘Voces y Votos’ reached over 1,000 workers online, equipping workers with the tools to make their voice heard and be full participants in our democracy.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

FOOD AND CENSUS CARAVAN REACHES 700+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS

On June 23, BSP, SEIU-USWW, Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, and LA Regional Food Bank hosted a community food distribution caravan, providing food baskets and census information packets to over 700 essential property service workers and Los Angeles residents.

Attendees received much needed groceries as many coped with financial hardship due to COVID-19, in addition to other census resources that would empower them to shape outcomes for a better future.
NEW PROGRAMS ADDRESS INTERGENERATIONAL CHALLENGES OF THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

The transition to distance learning has exposed intergenerational challenges for families to fully participate and realize digital inclusion. Even before the pandemic, low-income families often depended on public Wi-Fi from libraries, coffee shops, and buses to complete school assignments or access services online. When both parent and child are unable to attain the necessary skills, devices, or connection to succeed in distance learning, academic gains and opportunities for support are lost, further entrenching the cycle of poverty. To enhance access and inclusion, BSP will launch two new programs with the goal of equipping students and parents with the skills to support one another in today’s pandemic era and beyond.

DIGITAL NAVIGATORS: STUDENTS INSTRUCT PARENTS IN TECH

Today’s students often bear the responsibility of translating culture and supporting integration opportunities for their immigrant parents. With the understanding that parents might rely on their tech savvy children for support, BSP will train 30 children of janitors, aged 15 to 24, to become ‘Digital Navigators’ and peer trainers for their families.

Participants in the program will attend several online trainings that will allow them to guide their parents from the comfort of their homes to learn such things as: ‘How to use the Kaiser health app’, ‘How to use online grocery store apps’, ‘How to use Gmail’, and more. Participants in the program will also receive a small stipend for their commitment to serving as trainers for their families.

IMMERSING PARENTS IN TECH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

Using expertise in two-generational engagement and leadership development through its Padres Comprometidos program, BSP will create a cadre of tech savvy parents who can better support their families in distance learning.

BSP will partner with UnidosUS to train 50 parents in common online learning systems, including Zoom and Canvas. The curriculum will encourage the frequent use of technology through these platforms and other social media platforms to instill comfortability while using and navigating new technology. In addition, BSP hopes that parents will become more engaged in their children’s education via new distance learning models. As a result, parents will become leaders and advocates for others, sharing the knowledge gained through the program with their colleagues.
SUPPORTING FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS IN THEIR JOURNEY TO A HIGHER EDUCATION

BSP is thrilled to announce that it has awarded 38 students the Mike Garcia Scholarship for the 2020-2021 academic school year! Each year, BSP awards the scholarship to the children of property service workers to honor the legacy and vision of Mike Garcia, former president of SEIU-USWW and a fierce advocate for working families across California.

This year, students faced significant challenges in meeting their educational goals and responsibilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped higher education, as many colleges moved to distance learning and students transformed their home into a learning space. In addition, these full-time students and scholarship recipients faced the need to support younger siblings and parents in adapting to distance learning and navigating support services online.

Despite the ongoing disruptions to their education, this year’s applicants and their families demonstrated incredible resilience, dedication, and perseverance amid the uncertainty. We are proud to amplify their stories as we continue to serve as a resource for students in their journey to a higher education through the Mike Garcia Scholarship.

“I learned something very important about myself this semester; how to balance personal and academic life when they occur in the same space.”

-Shelsea M., Cal State Los Angeles & 2020 Recipient

COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT

SUPPORTING FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS IN THEIR JOURNEY TO A HIGHER EDUCATION

FROM KENIA CASTILLO, LA TRADE TECH COLLEGE & FORMER AMERICORPS VISTA

Since the pandemic began, I worried about how I was going to pay for school. I felt stressed and anxious about my outstanding balance in class, textbook, and application fees. This scholarship brought me some peace in knowing that I don’t have to worry financially about school this year.

FROM LESLIE MORALES, CAL STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO

I am a student at California State University, Chico and must admit that my teachers have been amazing this year! Although virtual interaction does not beat face to face communication, I am still learning everyday. Given that my professors require zoom meetings and online textbooks to be successful in class, I had to buy a laptop this year. However, due to the pandemic, I was laid off from my job and used some of my savings to pay some home bills. I feel blessed to have received this scholarship because it allowed me to buy a new laptop and pay for my textbooks. Thank You!
BSP CONGRATULATES THE FOLLOWING 2020 RECIPIENTS OF THE MIKE GARCIA SCHOLARSHIP

JOCELYN ANABEL SALOMAN
LA City College

LESLEY ELIZABETH MORALES HERNANDEZ
Cal State Chico

DAYMARU LONG
Cal State Los Angeles

BRIAN SORIANO
Cal State Los Angeles

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