

## **Refugee Children Center**

The [Refugee Children Center](#) supports children and their families who have made the journey from the South of the U.S.-Mexico border and identify as Indigenous from Meso and South America. They provide Immigration Legal Services and social services, including enriching activities and food relief. The families they serve have experienced land displacement and other traumatic experiences causing forced migration and loss of access to their native land.

COFF funding will be used to support the creation of a sustainable edible community garden and programs, and through an existing partnership with Nest Global, they will also expand a play drop-in center for children ages 18 months to 5 years of age to include a multi-generational garden curriculum. Their goal is to provide migrant families a healing space where they can pass down oral histories of their ancestral and agricultural practices such as permaculture, provide curriculum around their teachings, and sustain their families and the local community with culturally nutrient-rich food. The community garden project aims to foster relationships with local organizations and native community members, to support generational healing for communities who have experienced historical trauma, racism, and land displacement. The project will enhance social, economic, and environmental equity for the North Hills community where the nearest community garden is more than five miles away, moving closer toward Indigenous Food Sovereignty for communities of color across and beyond Los Angeles County.

## **Long Beach Forward**

[Long Beach Forward](#) (LBF) works to create a healthy Long Beach with low-income communities of color by building community knowledge, leadership, and power among organizations and BIPOC community members.

LBF will use COFF funding to support parents and caregivers of infant children facing housing insecurity in leading and engaging in community-led research and education about opportunities to advance social housing production and policies in Long Beach. This will include community surveying, data collection, and story collection from parents, caregivers, and families about their current housing needs and the impacts on their children and families. LBF will also support parents and caregivers to develop and lead culturally relevant education sessions for others to learn about the need for safe and permanently affordable housing and the impacts of housing insecurity on children 0-5, with particular emphasis on the prevention of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) through housing affordability and production.

## **Black Californians United for Early Care and Education**

Founded in 2022, [Black Californians United for Early Care and Education](#) (BlackECE) works exclusively for Black children, families and child care workers. Guided by a policy framework developed in response to deficit-based narratives of Black children and their families, BlackECE works to ensure California's ECE system is culturally affirming for Black children, families, and early educators, and that ECE policies and resource allocation are aligned to match this vision.

BlackECE used COFF funding to support their conference, *Say it Loud! Affirming Black Culture in Early Learning and Care Practice, Policy and Research*, which aims to attract system leaders, policy advocates, researchers, members of the Black child care workforce, and Black families. The conference featured panel discussions and keynote addresses that focus on BlackECE's strategic goals: racial wage justice,

cultural affirmation, and reparations, in order to build understanding around the importance of affirming Black culture in ECE work, preventing harm to Black children, families, and the child care workforce, as well as developing policies and supporting research that reflects the Black experience. A joyful short video from the Symposium can be found [here](#).