



STRATEGIC PLAN

2027 - 2031

When the Stakes Rise, So Do We.

92K+

Students Served

\$123M

Scholarships Awarded

80%

4-Year Grad Rate

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Shao-Shiang Liao
University of California, Berkeley, 2028
City College of San Francisco, 2026



*This plan is both a response to this moment in time
and a commitment to a more vibrant future.*

We are living through a period of tumultuous change. Shifts in public policy, rapid advances in AI and technology, widening income inequality, rising costs, and a changing labor market are reshaping what it takes for students from low-income backgrounds to access, afford, complete, and succeed after college.

For more than four decades, 10,000 Degrees has helped students navigate these barriers with a model grounded in an unwavering belief in every student's potential—and the exceptional outcomes that result from that belief. Today, our work is more urgent than ever. Financial barriers remain one of the greatest risks to college completion, and students need deeper support to persist, transfer, graduate with minimal debt, and enter careers that offer economic mobility.

A recent transformational gift by Mackenzie Scott and Yield Giving has created a rare opportunity for 10,000 Degrees to accelerate our next chapter. This catalytic investment allows us to deepen our impact, strengthen the pathways where students face the greatest barriers, invest in technology and organizational capacity, and help shape the future of college and career success.

This plan is both a response to this moment in time and a commitment to a more vibrant future. With the continued support of our extraordinary community, we will meet this opportunity with focus, ambition, and discipline—helping more students build lives of promise, purpose, and economic security so that we can help them, in the words of our mission, realize their full potential and positively impact their communities and the world.

Guy Lampard

Chair, Board of Directors

Deborah Freed Goldman

Vice Chair, Board of Directors

Kim Mazzuca

President & CEO

ABOUT 10,000 DEGREES

92K

students served since 1981

\$123M

in scholarships awarded

80%

4-year grad rate

THE VALUE OF A HIGHER EDUCATION

10,000 Degrees® is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating opportunities for students from low-income backgrounds to access a quality college education and achieve career success.

Since 1981, 10,000 Degrees has worked with more than 92,000 students from low-income backgrounds, helping to break the cycle of generational poverty. We provide a comprehensive college success program that combines scholarships with near-peer support to, through, and beyond college.



Diego Robledo
Sonoma State University, 2026
Santa Rosa Junior College, 2024

CLOSING THE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY **DIVIDE**

The value of higher education is indisputable, especially for students who are from low-income backgrounds. A college degree can transform the course of a student's life, family, and future:

- **A degree leads to a healthier and happier life, upward mobility, employment resiliency, and civic engagement.**^{1 2}
- **A degree breaks the cycle of generational poverty.** The median household income of those with a bachelor's degree is twice as high as someone with only a high school degree.³
- **A degree creates a ripple effect.** Students inspire family and friends to see college as possible for themselves.

Yet getting through college has never been more complex for students from low-income backgrounds. The challenges and systemic barriers impeding these capable students make it impossible to graduate—let alone apply to college. Students don't lack talent, only opportunities.

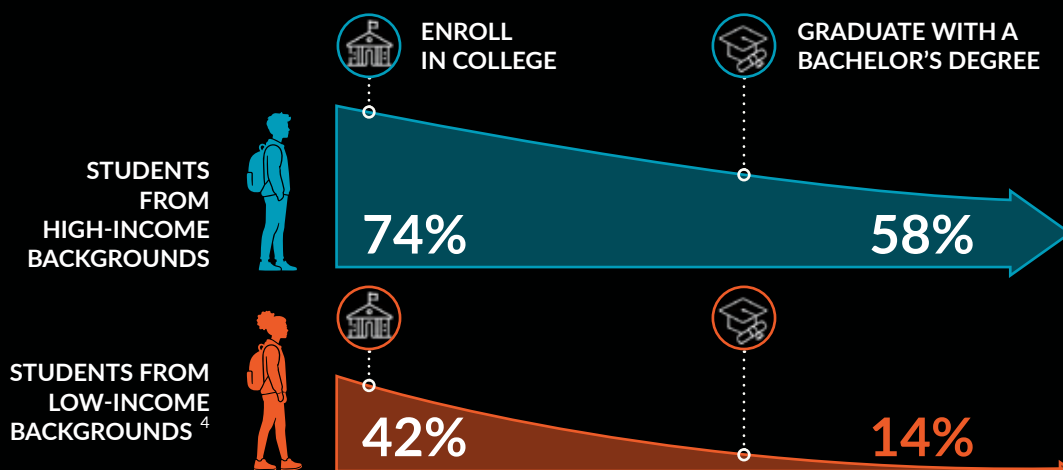
¹ Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

² Notre Dame

³ US Census Bureau

⁴ Pell Institute, Indicators of Higher Education Equity In The United States, 2026

This Education Opportunity Divide between low- and high-income students is a staggering loss of human potential, and devastating to our communities.



THE NEED FOR OUR WORK HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER

As students from low-income backgrounds face a more hostile and uncertain educational landscape shaped by shifting policies, financial aid changes, and growing opportunity gaps, our proven model offers the guidance, resources, and support they need to succeed.

Today, 10,000 Degrees is better positioned than ever to close this opportunity divide with strategic focus, urgency, and creative solutions. Building on 46 years of proven impact, experienced leadership, a strong network of partners and supporters—and leveraging our recent \$42 million gift and philanthropic momentum—we are embarking on a bold 2027-2031 Strategic Plan to help more students from low-income backgrounds reach their full potential.

Strategic Goals

- 01** Grow College Success: Significantly Increase College Graduation and Career Attainment for Students From Low-Income Backgrounds
- 02** Embed Innovation, Technology, and AI Across Our Programs and Organization to Drive Deeper, Faster Impact
- 03** Expand Our State and National Influence on College Completion Equity
- 04** Build Organizational Adaptability and Resiliency Powered by Strong Systems, People, and Culture
- 05** Ensure Long-term Financial Stability and Growth

To achieve these goals, the Strategic Plan provides an ambitious, data-informed roadmap to strengthen our college success model by:

- Deepening our high school, community college, and Fellowship programs
- Increasing scholarships and financial aid support
- Expanding our reach in existing and new communities
- Leveraging innovation, technology, and partnerships to improve student outcomes, increase efficiency, and build long-term organizational and financial sustainability

This plan is a call to action for our supporters, partners, and institutions to assure the future health, wealth, and well-being of our students, their families, and our nation.



Amy Tu
University of California, Berkeley, 2026

THE 10,000 DEGREES DIFFERENCE

Our equity mission and exceptional outcomes are what set us apart. 10,000 Degrees is the most efficient, effective college success model with an impact that scales.

OUR MISSION

To achieve educational equity and to support students from low-income backgrounds to and through college to realize their full potential and positively impact their communities and the world.

OUR VISION

We envision a world where all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background will have the full range of educational opportunities, support, and resources to graduate college, establish a meaningful career, and live a happy, healthy, and prosperous life.

Natasha Scott
San Jose State University, M.A., 2028
Sonoma State University, B.A., 2026
Santa Rosa Junior College, A.A., 2023



OUR COLLEGE & CAREER SUCCESS MODEL

We remove barriers, expand opportunities, and connect students with the resources and relationships to enroll, graduate, and thrive.



Eliminates disqualifiers like GPA and test scores.



Demystifies the financial aid process for debt-free degrees.



Meets students where they are with multiple pathways, such as community college.



Near-peer mentors help students navigate life both on and off campus.



Inspires belief in our students' unlimited potential.



Provides personalized, adaptable support at every step—to, through, and beyond college.

CORE VALUES:

We believe...



In the great potential of all students.



Education is the foundation of a just and equitable society.



Every student should have equitable opportunities to a quality education, to graduate from college, and to establish a meaningful career.



All our students and alumni are changemakers.



Students and their families, schools, and communities each play a critical role in educating our youth and strengthening our communities' economic and social health.



Educating all students to achieve their full potential is an urgent moral, social, and economic imperative.

WHO WE SUPPORT

100%

Low-income Background

84%

First in Their Family to Go to College

94%

Black, Indigenous, Latine, & People of Color

WHAT WE DO

- Early college awareness in high school
- College and financial aid advising
- Scholarships and financial aid management
- Near-peer mentoring, providing navigational support throughout the entire college success journey
- Community college transfer and 4-year college completion support
- Career pathways development

EXCEPTIONAL OUTCOMES:

Our Students Are Breaking All the Odds

80% OF OUR 4-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS GRADUATE

—double the national average ¹

2X TRANSFER RATE

Our community college students transfer to four-year colleges at double the rate of their peers ²

85% OF OUR STUDENTS GRADUATE DEBT-FREE

—vs. 16% nationally ³

\$9.8M IN 10,000 DEGREES SCHOLARSHIPS

awarded in FY26

\$70M IN ADDITIONAL FREE FINANCIAL AID

leveraged in FY26

4,400 COLLEGE STUDENTS

received scholarships + support this year

2,000+ COLLEGE GRADUATES

from the classes of 2022 - 2026

¹ For low-income, first-gen students nationally; Pell, 2024

² Public Policy Institute of California

³ For Pell students, Pell, 2024

NATIONAL AND STATE **RECOGNITION**



REPUTATION, REACH, AND INFLUENCE

- Charity Navigator Four-Star Rating for 14 consecutive years, placing 10,000 Degrees in the top 9% of evaluated charities.
- We've earned a 2026 Candid Platinum Seal of Transparency.
- Featured in *Associated Press*, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy, Inc.*, *EdSource*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *The New York Times*, *Telemundo*, and others, such as CBS, ABC, and NBC.



TRANSFORMATIONAL UNRESTRICTED INVESTMENT

- \$42 million unrestricted gift from MacKenzie Scott and Yield Giving to accelerate our strategic plan, deepen impact in existing regions, and expand our reach.



MAJOR INVESTOR SUPPORT

- Significant support from 2,000+ individual and 100+ scholarship donors.
- One of only 14 financial aid assistance grant recipients selected by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.



SEASONED LEADERSHIP

- 35% of our staff are alumni, with a growing number advancing into leadership roles.
- Long-tenured executive team with national sector leadership, including college board roles with NCAN and NSPA.
- 100+ volunteer leaders across our Board of Directors and six Regional Advisory Boards.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A BLUEPRINT FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

From fiscal years 2027 through 2031, 10,000 Degrees endeavors to achieve greater mission impact by significantly increasing the number of students from low-income backgrounds who graduate college with baccalaureate degrees.

Joshua Pena
University of California, Davis, 2028
Santa Rosa Junior College, 2026



1

Grow College Success:

Significantly Increase College Graduation and Career Attainment for Students From Low-Income Backgrounds

We will expand our college and career success model in existing and new communities in California and beyond.

KEY STRATEGIES



Expand high school college readiness in existing and new communities through workshops, online resources, leadership opportunities, and family engagement.



Build strategic partnerships with schools, community organizations, and scholarship funders to strengthen college-going culture, enrollment, and completion.



Expand Scholarships + College Success program by increasing the number of scholarship recipients awarded.



Deepen investment in Community College transfer program, a critical college pathway.



Integrate career guidance into college programs to support sustained enrollment, degree completion, and post-graduation career success.

2

Embed Innovation, Technology, and AI Across Our Programs and Organization to Drive Deeper, Faster Impact

We will accelerate student success by strategically integrating advanced digital tools and data systems to deliver more effective, scalable, and personalized support.

KEY STRATEGIES

We will integrate data-driven innovation, emerging technologies, and AI to:



Build and integrate a comprehensive technology ecosystem that will optimize student reach and engagement, and improve systems, programs, and operational efficiency.



Enhance student-guided, personalized support through our mobile-friendly portal and scalable virtual programming.



Deploy predictive analytics and real-time data systems to differentiate and deliver student interventions that improve student outcomes.

Ryan Feng
San Francisco State University, 2026
City College of San Francisco, 2024



3

Expand Our State and National Influence on College Completion Equity

We will drive systemic educational change by advocating for policies, sharing evidence-based practices with practitioners, and championing student and alumni success.

KEY STRATEGIES



Invest in public relations to champion the success of our students and alumni, secure national media opportunities and train spokespeople.



Advance our educational equity and college value advocacy platform through an internal policy task force and by actively engaging in school, state, and national policy conversations and actions that advance our platform.



Expand state and national partnerships and coalition engagement with organizations, funders, and higher education networks advancing college completion equity.



Disseminate 10,000 Degrees' proven practices and college-going knowledge to empower practitioners to guide more students from low-income backgrounds to and through college.



Haley Mariana Yedra
University of California, Berkeley, 2026

4

Build Organizational Adaptability and Resiliency Powered by Strong Systems, People, and Culture

We will cultivate excellence through exceptional talent, operational efficiency and values-driven leadership to effectively scale our mission.

KEY STRATEGIES



Build and sustain a high-impact governing Board of Directors.



Strengthen student support by positioning Fellows where they can have the greatest impact, keeping near-peer mentorship central to our programs and interventions.



Launch a scalable volunteer management framework.



Raul Juarez Gongora
Sonoma State University, 2026
Santa Rosa Junior College, 2024

5

Ensure Long-term Financial Stability and Growth

We will optimize our resources, broaden revenue streams, and deepen philanthropic engagement—securing 10,000 Degrees' future.

KEY STRATEGIES



Leverage the extraordinary \$42 million gift as **catalytic capital** to accelerate educational opportunity at scale.



Invest strategically in the programs, people, systems, and strategic partnerships to grow our reach and serve more students while inviting donors to build on this transformational momentum.



Strengthen the financial foundation for **sustained growth** by expanding recurring contributions, diversifying funding, increasing unrestricted reserves, and growing our endowment—ensuring our promise of a college degree for generations to come.

Peri Zoe Yildirim-Stanley
University of California, Berkeley, 2026

Join the Next Round of Impact Philanthropy!

Discover how your investment can build on the most transformational investments ever made in education to expand educational opportunity at scale.



Learn more at
10000degrees.org/impact-giving



WHERE WE'RE GOING **BY 2031**

FIVE-YEAR CUMULATIVE IMPACT | 2027-2031

By the end of the five-year Strategic Plan, we aim to have:

100k

high school students from low-income backgrounds reached with college access programming

50k

college students supported with scholarships + college and career guidance

5k

college graduates who earned a bachelor's degree and prepared to pursue a meaningful career

80%

alumni who report that they are in meaningful careers

5

new regions in California and across the U.S. where 10,000 Degrees provides support

Leidy Perez Hernandez
University of California, Berkeley, 2026
College of Marin, 2024



ANNUAL TARGETS		2026	2031	
	High school students reached	11,000	20,000	
	College students supported	5,000	10,000	
	Community college transfer rate within 4 years—vs. 19% of students from low-income backgrounds statewide ¹	44%	60%	
	College students engaged in career success programming	30%	80%	
	6 year bachelor attainment rate of community college transfer students	53%	70%	
	6 year bachelor attainment rate of 4-year start students—double the national average ²	80%	80%	
	Total scholarships awarded	\$9.8M	\$15M	
	Free financial aid leveraged	\$70M	\$160M	
	Average per-student loan debt	<\$1,000	<\$1,000	

¹ Public Policy Institute of California² For low-income, first-gen students nationally; Pell, 2024

WHY INVEST IN 10,000 DEGREES?

The smartest investment you can make to transform lives, strengthen communities, and create lasting change for generations.

EDUCATION MULTIPLIES IMPACT

Every graduate strengthens a family, community, and future generation—making education one of the most powerful investments in lasting change.

TRANSFORMATIONAL MOMENTUM

The \$42 million MacKenzie Scott-Yield Giving gift affirmed our scalable model and impact, and is accelerating our ability to reach more students in more communities.

LOCAL INVESTMENT. LASTING CHANGE.

Your investment helps students in your community earn college degrees, launch careers, and contribute their talents where they live and work.

THE TIME TO INVEST IS NOW

This is a rare opportunity to build on that momentum and expand educational opportunity at scale to shape the future.

TALENT IS EVERYWHERE. OPPORTUNITY ISN'T.

As the path to college grows more difficult, too many talented students are being left behind because of circumstance, not potential.

PROVEN RESULTS INSPIRE CONFIDENCE

For 46 years, 10,000 Degrees has turned investment into measurable impact through exceptional outcomes, personalized support, and continuous adaptation.

Stephanie Fayette
Dominican University of California, 2026
College of Marin, 2024



STUDENT

REJINE RHIANNA BARLES

San Francisco State University, 2028

City College of San Francisco, 2026

“ 10,000 Degrees gave me the confidence to seek help, and went above and beyond in supporting me in ways that range from counseling to networking opportunities. I am transferring to a 4-year university at the end of this semester. I felt I finally found my footing at community college, and was nervous for the transition. I went to a one-on-one meeting with my Fellow, and she helped me discover resources at the school I am transferring to. I find comfort in knowing that 10,000 Degrees is situated there as well and will continue to support me every step of the way.



ALUMNI

PERLA MUÑOZ GARCIA

University of California, Berkeley, 2026

“ I was able to land my first summer internship through the resources that 10,000 Degrees provide for their scholars. After multiple meetings with my Fellow, I was able to decide which summer internship program would be best for me. With 10,000 Degrees' support, I applied and was able to get into the program. I hope to impact my community by sharing the resources and opportunities that have helped me succeed. 10,000 Degrees' belief in my college journey has helped me believe in myself.





10,000 DEGREES ALUM & SUPPORTERS SINCE 2004

GRAHAM & TALIA BRANDT



As a former scholarship recipient, I am intricately aware of the transformative impact that 10,000 Degrees has on the students and communities they support. Having served on the Board from 2005 to 2015, I saw firsthand how effectively this organization unlocks life-changing educational equity. Rejoining the board now, I am inspired by the organization's momentum. 10,000 Degrees has a proven track record of scaling deep, lasting impact. Talia and I have unwavering confidence in 10,000 Degrees' leadership and vision to successfully execute this audacious new strategic plan. The work has never been more urgent for our community and our society. We implore you to join us in supporting 10,000 Degrees as they work tirelessly to empower the next generation of leaders.



SUPPORTER SINCE 2021

MR MACGILL



MacKenzie Scott's extraordinary gift gives 10,000 Degrees powerful momentum—and gives every donor's investment even greater leverage. Now is the time to build on that momentum, helping the organization scale its proven college and career model in the communities it serves today and bring it to new communities where students urgently need this support. We have tremendous confidence in 10,000 Degrees' leadership and new Strategic Plan, which is why we are increasing our own commitment and inviting others to invest in the extraordinary opportunity ahead.



SUPPORTERS SINCE 2010

MITCH & SUSAN COHEN



As 10,000 Degrees supporters for more than 16 years, Susan and I have seen firsthand its unwavering commitment to educational equity and its extraordinary impact on students, families and entire communities. Its exceptional leadership, proven model, strong track record and ability to scale leave no doubt that 10,000 Degrees will achieve the ambitious goals of this Strategic Plan. For anyone committed to making a meaningful impact, 10,000 Degrees is one of the smartest investments you can make and should be part of your core philanthropic portfolio.



CORPORATE PARTNER

MICHAEL LANGSTON

President & Chief Operating Officer, OMW Corporation

OMW Corporation is a contract manufacturer focused on the New Space and Defense industries. While manufacturing faces a shortage of skilled labor and questions about the value of college degrees, recruiting and developing young people with degrees in engineering, supply chain, economics, and other disciplines has made us a better company. Through 10,000 Degrees' internship program, we've developed a pipeline of bright, ambitious students—three alumni work with us, and several former interns now work for our customers. Their contributions to our growth and culture will continue to help us improve for years to come.



CORPORATE PARTNER

JEFF BELKORA

Professor, Health Policy and Surgery, Faculty Director, UCSF Patient Support Corps

Our strategic partnership with 10,000 Degrees is a highlight in UCSF's work to expand health career pathways. What began a decade ago with one summer intern, has since grown to 16 paid, multi-year internship positions through collaborative grant-writing and program development. 10,000 Degrees identifies entering college students who are overcoming barriers to opportunity, and UCSF employs those students as healthcare navigators helping patients overcome barriers to health care. Together, we are advancing patient care and launching promising healthcare careers—two outcomes we are deeply proud to achieve simultaneously through this partnership.

Guy Lampard, *Chair*
Deborah Freed Goldman, *Vice Chair*
Luis Silva-Behrens, *Treasurer*
Monica Mehra, *Assistant Treasurer*
Janelle Charles, *Secretary*
Sheila Larsen, *Assistant Secretary*
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Katey Mokelke

Lizbeth Najera Semeniuk
Peg Pike
Dr. Albert “Bert” Richards
Janie Richardson
Nikhil Sharma
Madeleine Sinclair
Bhupinder “Sonu” Singh Chandi
Tracy Solomon
Tam Tiet
Jeremy Wenner
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Judy Edgar, *Founder*
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John Scarborough
Sharon Segal
Bill Smith
Wanden Treanor
Giulia Welch

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Stephanie Fayette
Dominican University of California, 2026
College of Marin, 2024

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Noemi Mejia Zelaya
University of California, Merced, 2026



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**To learn how you can support
our work, please contact:**



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