

The Education Fund

Empowering potential since 2004.

SEIU-UHW & JOINT EMPLOYER EDUCATION FUND

2025 | YEAR IN REVIEW



2025 Year in Review

In 2025, the Education Fund had the privilege of supporting 23,960 learners on their journey to advance their careers, strengthen their skills, and unlock new opportunities.

Their achievements are reflected by the stats below, and through their success stories, such as those on the following pages. We are proud of every one of our learners, and continue to be inspired by them, their accomplishments, and the care and dedication they bring to their jobs and their communities every day.



23,960

Learners served — highest since 2021



13,670

Continuing Education learners in 2025, up 29% from prior year



1,465

Degree and certificate completions – all time record, up 28% from prior year



45%

Average \$15 hourly wage increase for learners who changed careers – highest in 5 years



11,001

Learners made use of one-on-one career advice services.



3,108

Learners enrolled in Preparation & Critical Skills courses



75%

Of learners were women; approximately 80% identified as people of color



Career Pathways in Action

The Education Fund's Career Pathways programs prepare workers to qualify for new positions in allied health, combining coursework, financial support, and career planning to help learners move forward without leaving their jobs behind.

1,361

Career Pathways learners in 2025 — up 25% from prior year

Leslie Perez started out at Kaiser Permanente in Environmental Services. A colleague told her about the Education Fund's Radiology Pathway program and Leslie applied right away. During her second year in the program, she had her first baby, but she completed the program. She is now a Radiologic Technologist and her hourly wage went up by a life-changing 163%.

Leslie describes working with the Education Fund as:

"The best thing that happened to me. It was a smooth experience, and I tell everyone to look into it."

"I am truly grateful for the support I received from the Education Fund program. Without this assistance, I would not have been able to afford completing the phlebotomy course. Because of your help, I now have the confidence to pursue further opportunities."

— Sharon Payan, Phlebotomy Pathway Program participant; Nutrition Aide, Dignity Health Southern California

Building a Career

The Education Fund's Tuition Support program reimburses eligible learners up to \$5,250 toward tuition, textbooks, and fees for degree and certificate programs — helping working adults complete credentials they might otherwise have had to set aside.

2,060

Learners who participated in Tuition Support in 2025



Sarah Gutierrez came to California from Massachusetts and started in patient registration at Dignity Health, hoping to build toward a nursing career. With Tuition Support covering her costs, she earned her nursing degree while continuing to work as a Medical Assistant and Phlebotomist. Her Education Fund Career Counselor provided guidance throughout. In 2025, the Education Fund supported 2,060 Tuition Support learners — and 316 of them, like Sarah, earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.



Removing Barriers to a New Role

While working as a Diet Tech at Tri-City Medical Center, Jacqueline Morales chose to go back to school to pursue Respiratory Therapy.

A timely text from the Education Fund connected her to the Tuition Support program for her Bachelor's degree in Respiratory Therapy, helping reduce her financial stress. She successfully completed her associate degree and advanced into a Respiratory Care Therapist role.

“I would definitely recommend the Education Fund to my peers. There's a barrier that can stop someone from furthering their future or taking a step into a dream they never got to attempt because of financial struggles. Any type of tuition support or way to make education more accessible to people is so important.”

— Jacqueline Morales, Respiratory Care Therapist, Tri-City Medical Center

Getting Ahead Through Continuing Education

The Education Fund offers a variety of on-demand and in-person Continuing Education classes, as well as offering reimbursement of up to \$1,500 annually toward CEUs, CMEs, AHA certifications, licenses, and more — helping working healthcare professionals keep their credentials current and their careers moving forward.

13,670

Continuing Education learners in 2025 — up 29% from 2024



After starting as a receptionist at Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center in Northern California, Arianna Coleman learned about the Education Fund and decided to explore her education options. She first completed a Medical Assistant program, then later pursued a Bachelor of Social Work degree with major support from a variety of Education Fund programs, including Continuing Education.

“The Education Fund was great for me financially.”

— Arianna Coleman, Medical Assistant, Kaiser Permanente Vallejo Medical Center

Bringing Classes to Our Facilities

In 2025, The Education Fund hosted more than 25 in-person continuing education classes across California, Colorado and the Northwest, serving more than 650 learners from a diverse range of employers, including Kaiser Permanente, Dignity Health, Hospital Corporation of America, Prime Healthcare, Alameda Health System, Watsonville Community Hospital, and more.



Dignity Health Certified Nursing Assistants from St. John's Regional Medical Center take part in an in-person continuing education class in Oxnard, CA.

Classes took place at facilities spanning the San Fernando Valley, Ventura County, the Inland Empire, the Greater Los Angeles area, the Bay Area/Central Valley, Denver and Portland — covering topics such as CNA skills, rehabilitative nursing, respiratory and critical care, neonatal/pediatric care, and infection control. These events were made possible through the support and instruction of our trusted educational providers.

Degree Completion

The Education Fund connects learners with local community college options for General Education and prerequisite courses — building the academic foundation needed to move into degree or certificate programs.

Mohammed Shabeeb works as a Cook II at Legacy Health, Good Samaritan Hospital in the Northwest Region. With a clear career goal of becoming a dietitian, he began working on his associate degree with support from the Education Fund's College Courses program.



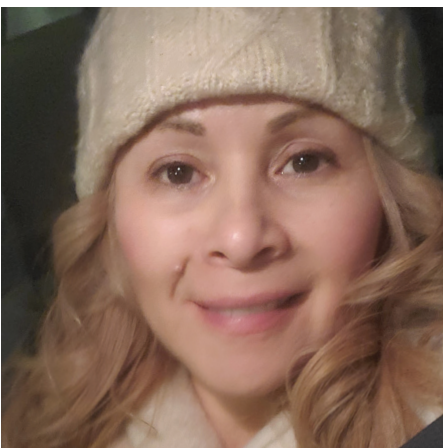
“The benefits I received through the Education Fund have been a great support. They have helped ease the financial burden of pursuing education, allowing me to focus more on my studies and career planning. The support has also motivated me to stay committed and confident in making this career change, knowing that I have resources and guidance available to help me succeed.”

— Mohammed Shabeeb, Cook II, Legacy Health Good Samaritan Hospital

In Her Own Words

“I earned the top GPA in my class while working a full-time job and learned time management skills that have helped me in my new career. The Education Fund’s benefits are helping me to pay for my college courses and textbooks for my education plans.”

— Enues Gaffney, Clinical Lab Assistant, Kaiser Permanente Colorado



Enues Gaffney is a Clinical Lab Assistant at Kaiser Permanente Wheat Ridge in Colorado, taking college prerequisites toward her Associate of Science degree while working full time. She is using Education Fund benefits to cover the cost of coursework and textbooks.

733

College Courses
learners in 2025

Nearly 2,000 course
enrollments

A New Direction

The Education Fund's Wage Replacement program is available to learners at select participating employers, providing up to \$10,000 to help learners reduce their work schedule while attending classes, completing clinicals, or studying for their education program.

1,290

Wage Replacement
learners served in 2025



After eleven years as a Dental Assistant at Kaiser Permanente Northwest, Natosha Newton decided she was ready for a career change. She enrolled in programs covering both Cybersecurity and Network Administration, using the Education Fund's Pathways and Wage Replacement programs along the way. Wage Replacement helped free up the time she needed for coursework and for her family. She graduated with honors in both subjects and has since transitioned into the IT field.

“The Wage Replacement program was a huge help to allow me to have extra time to spend on school. This also helped by freeing up time to spend with my family when they are home. The Ed Fund is a great tool to use.”

— Natosha Newton, Dental Assistant, Kaiser Permanente Northwest



Learning on the Job

The Education Fund's Registered Apprenticeship programs combine structured on-the-job training with classroom instruction so that learners earn while they learn and graduate with recognized credentials.

97

Active apprenticeship participants in 2025

In 2025, three apprentices from Kaiser Permanente's Redwood City facility completed the Education Fund's Surgical Technologist Apprenticeship. The program combined 25 weeks of online coursework with weekly hands-on skills labs and a 1,000-hour clinical externship that included scrubbing in on 125 surgical cases. Within three weeks of starting on-the-job training, all three were working in the OR. All three completed the program and moved into Surgical Tech Trainee roles, with an average pay increase of \$5.36 per hour.

“The Surgical Tech Apprenticeship program has constantly pushed me to learn, adapt, and improve, so I can show up as a skilled, confident Surgical Technologist who contributes to patient safety and a strong surgical team every single day.”

— Johnny McDowell, Surgical Tech Apprentice, Kaiser Permanente

Community Health Centers and Public Sector Partnership Growth

Through grant-funded partnerships with SEIU Locals 521 and 1021, the Education Fund has worked to bring more career development programs to community health center workers and public sector workers across California, including Pathways, Tuition Support, and Career Counseling.

“The Ed Fund helped me through this process, especially with the financial burden.”

— Lexly Avelar, Medical Assistant,
La Clínica de la Raza, Local 1021



Lexly Avelar is a Medical Assistant at La Clínica de la Raza and a member of SEIU Local 1021. She completed the Education Fund’s Phlebotomy Pathway, finding classes and locations that worked with her schedule. Without the financial support, she says the program would have taken much longer to afford. She completed her required internship hours at a clinic and is working in the phlebotomy field.



Full-Time Teacher, Masters Graduate

With help from the Education Fund's Tuition Support program, Fatima Ahmed was able to complete her Masters degree in Special Needs Education. She earned a 4.0 in her studies, while serving as a full-time public school Special Education teacher.

Her goal is to be an educator who can “provide an inclusive and accessible education for students with Special Needs.”

“The Education Fund is a great financial opportunity. It helped me with the financial stress of going to graduate school and teaching full-time as a SPED educator in a public school.”

— Fatima Ahmed, Special Education teacher, City of San Francisco, SEIU Local 1021

The Education Fund's work with public sector, clinic, and community health center employees reflects a broader commitment to expanding access to education. As these partnerships continue to grow and evolve, we remain focused on bringing further career development opportunities to new communities and new sectors.

Our Learners



Partners & Staff

The Education Fund is made possible through the partnership of SEIU local unions and our employer partners who have committed to investing in their workforce through collectively bargained education benefits.

Shirley Ware Education Center

The Shirley Ware Education Center (SWEC) is the Education Fund's nonprofit affiliate, raising grant funding from public and private sources to expand access to programs and reach workers beyond the core membership. SWEC's work is integral to the Education Fund's mission.



Learn more:

Union Partners:

theedfund.org/about/participating-unions/

Employer Partners:

theedfund.org/about/participating-employers/

Our Board of Trustees and Leadership Staff:

theedfund.org/about/leadership/

Shirley Ware Education Center:

theedfund.org/about/shirley-ware-education-center/

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