



### building a

# HEALTHY

## SACRAMENTO

### Training Community Leaders

Raising three teenagers as a single mom doesn't hold Mindy Romero back from finding time for community action. In fact, her children are part of the reason for her activism - Mindy wants to set a good example. She believes that taking an active role in her community is the only way to improve her community, and furthered this commitment with her recent graduation from the Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (BCLI).

BCLI - a program of Sacramento Housing Alliance's project CORE - identifies and trains community members in

for the program. In the six months of training, Mindy built relationships with those training alongside her who also shared her goals for community improvement. Together, they expanded their knowledge about how government functions and how to affect equitable change.

"The program was amazing," said Mindy. "We all have a deeper understanding of equity, and we are all inspired by each other. It has deepened my commitment to making my community better."

Mindy graduated from the program feeling enriched in

“The BCLI is about supporting and developing leadership that can best serve the community”

leadership skills with a focus on understanding the health and equity impacts of government action. BCLI's goal is to increase representation of diverse communities on boards and commissions in the Sacramento region.

"The BCLI is about supporting and developing leadership that can best serve the community," said Mindy. "A key mechanism is bringing folks together that are equity minded."

Even before attending BCLI, Mindy was already affecting community change with equity in mind. After graduating from UC Davis with a degree in sociology and political science, she began work for the UC Davis Center for Regional Change while finishing up her doctorate. Here, she researches ways to create equitable, sustainable and healthy regional change. For example, Mindy helped with a two-year study of the well-being of local youth and their connection to the overall health of the community.

She also serves as President of the Sacramento-Yolo Mutual Housing Association Board. She started as a resident attending council and worked her way up. As a resident of a SMHA property, she feels her role as president empowers others in her community.

She tells people "If I can do it, you can do it," she said. "Residents get to self-govern, but it only works if people are really involved."

The SMHA Board led Mindy to BCLI by nominating her

every aspect of her life. The relationships she built continue to support her, and the knowledge she gained helps her in her current job and board appointment. The program even enriched her role as a mom as she seeks to model leadership to her children.

She hopes it will also land her a seat on a commission in her community where she can help improve health and education outcomes for vulnerable groups.

ZIP CODE  
**95219**  
Life Expectancy

**73**

ZIP CODE  
**92657**  
Life Expectancy

**88**

Your ZIP code shouldn't predict how long you'll live - but it does. Staying healthy requires much more than doctors and diets. Every day, our surroundings and activities affect how long - and how well - we'll live.

Health Happens in Neighborhoods. I Health Happens in Schools. Health Happens with Prevention.

### Equitable Policies Benefit Everyone

The Sacramento Housing Alliance - formed in 1989 to advocate for housing services and amenities for disadvantaged communities - created CORE in 2007. CORE is a coalition of community groups that come together with the help of the California Endowment to create a sustainable, equitable and healthy region. Leadership is a key component of this effort, and CORE develops leaders with its Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (BCLI) by training members of the communities it serves.

The BCLI is the second program of its kind, modeled after the Bay Area non-profit organization Urban Habitat's BCLI. Training focuses on land use, environment, health, economic development and transportation. Students also learn logistical and proce

The BCLI benefits the community by providing community members with the skills needed to effectively advocate and represent themselves. Regional boards and commissions benefit from improved diversity and accountability. The end goal is more equitable policies that benefit everyone.



To learn more visit us at

[www.calendow.org](http://www.calendow.org)



PAID WITH A GRANT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT