



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 11, 2021

**Contact:** Liv O’Keeffe

[lokeeffe@sierrahealth.org](mailto:lokeeffe@sierrahealth.org); (916) 802-8750

**California Awards \$5 Million to 18 Community-Based and Tribal Organizations for Youth Substance Use Prevention**

*California Funds Third Round of Youth Prevention and Education Partnerships across the State*

**Sacramento, Calif.** – Elevate Youth California, a project of The Center at Sierra Health Foundation under contract with the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), today announced the awarding of \$5 million to 18 community-based and Tribal organizations throughout California for youth substance use prevention activities.

Funded by revenue generated by Proposition 64, which legalized adult non-medical use of cannabis in California, the *Elevate Youth California: Supporting Capacity Building for Community Organizations* funding opportunity supports a combination of programming and capacity-building activities for emerging grassroots organizations. Awarded partner projects will provide youth social justice, peer support and mentoring in low-income communities of color, including Tribal communities and LGBTQ communities. Elevate Youth California’s investment will build on partners’ operational, programmatic, financial and/or organizational infrastructure to strengthen their ability to fulfill their mission and have a positive impact on their communities.

Partner organizations will work with youth ages 12 to 26 in urban and rural areas of the state. A full list of organizations that received cohort-three awards is posted on the [Elevate Youth California website](#).

“The Elevate Youth California program recognizes the need to invest in building the capacity of organizations that are working directly with young people from communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs,” said Chet P. Hewitt, president and CEO of Sierra Health Foundation and The Center. “This program creates stronger organizations, stronger communities and a stronger field of substance use prevention.”

-more-

Multi-year grants of up to \$300,000 per project will support organizational capacity-building activities, activities building youth leadership and activism, culturally relevant services, and peer-led support and leadership programs. Funding will support efforts through August 2023.

“It is inspiring to see the level of innovation in the culturally responsive youth substance use prevention strategies that each of the 18 partners have presented in their applications,” said Marlies Perez, chief of DHCS’ Community Services Division. “In the midst of a global pandemic, the nonprofit community and Tribal partners have found unique ways to expand the support they are providing to youth in their communities.”

The Center awarded the [first cohort of 26 community-based organizations](#) \$21.5 million in March 2020 when the program launched, and \$29.7 million to the [second cohort of 32 community-based organizations](#) in November 2020 to support racially and culturally responsive, trauma-informed, population-based and place-based approaches, especially for California’s demographic communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs. With this current round of funding, The Center has awarded a total of \$56.2 million in funding to support youth substance use prevention.

Funding for the program comes through the DHCS Proposition 64 California Cannabis Tax Fund, Allocation 3, Youth Education Prevention Early Intervention and Treatment Account.

###

**About The Center at Sierra Health Foundation:** *The Center works to promote health and racial equity in communities throughout California with local, state and national partners. Learn more at [www.shfcenter.org](http://www.shfcenter.org).*

**About Department of Health Care Services (DHCS):** *DHCS provides nearly 14 million Californians – more than one-third of the state’s population – with access to affordable, integrated, high-quality health care, including medical, dental, mental health, substance use treatment services, and long-term care. DHCS’ vision is to preserve and improve the overall health and well-being of all Californians. Learn more at [www.dhcs.ca.gov](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov).*

**About Proposition 64:** *Proposition 64 funding prioritizes youth education, prevention, and early intervention, connecting youth and their families to programs that include wraparound care in communities disproportionately harmed by past and current drug policies and criminalized for substance use.*