

# 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT



FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
CAREER MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



# WHO WE ARE

The mission of the Forestry and Natural Resources Career Mentorship Program is to increase recruitment and retention of early-career forestry professionals by: pairing university and community college students with a professional mentor, providing networking and training opportunities, and offering insight into a forestry career.

The Program recognizes that a diverse and expanded workforce is essential to addressing current and future challenges facing the field. We encourage support for underrepresented groups in the profession, including women, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and LGBTQIA+ by: providing training on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) for participants, pairing participants based on shared professional interests and identity (when requested), and highlighting the diversity of identities and specialties that exist within the field of forestry.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Liana Vitousek at [liana@placerrcd.org](mailto:liana@placerrcd.org). The application period begins in late August. Please visit [placerrcd.org/mentorship](https://placerrcd.org/mentorship) for more information.



CALIFORNIA  
LICENSED  
FORESTERS  
ASSOCIATION



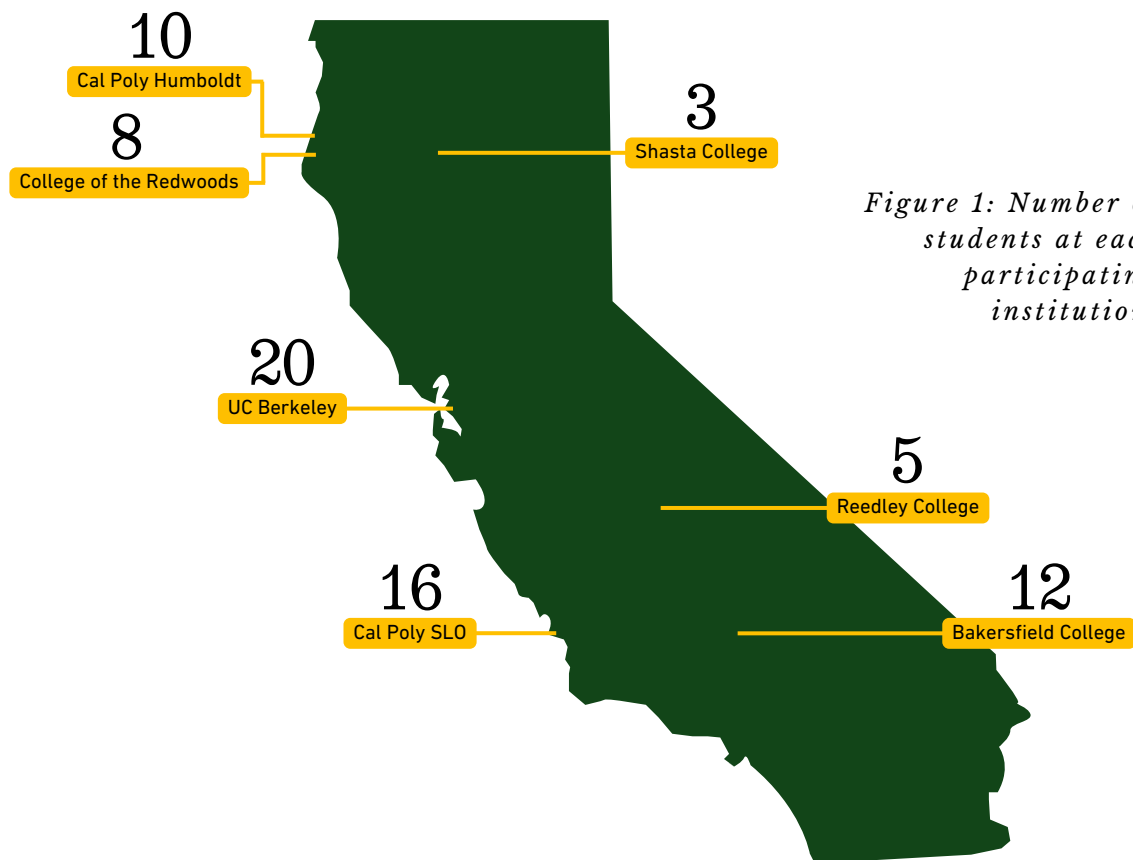
California Women  
in Timber

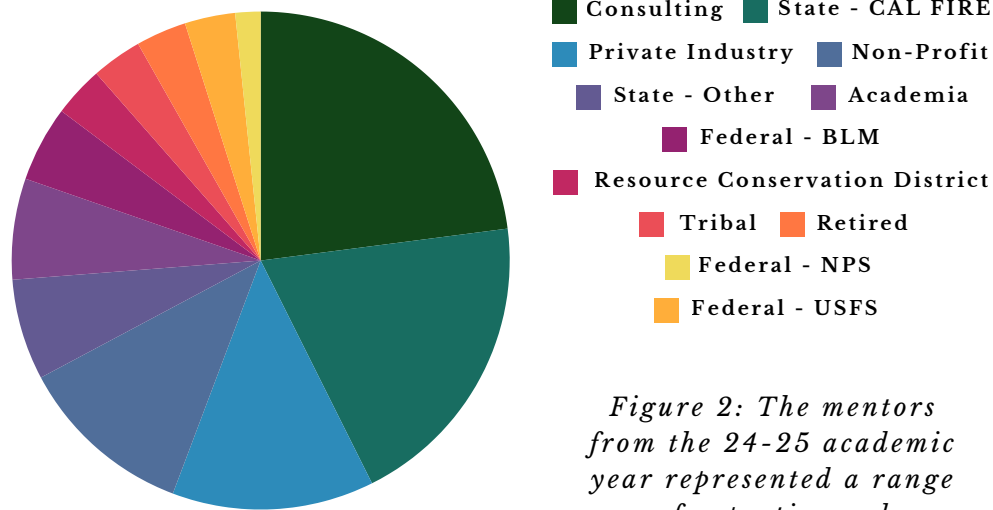


*Funding for this project is provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Business and Workforce Development Grants, with support from above organizations.*

# OVERVIEW

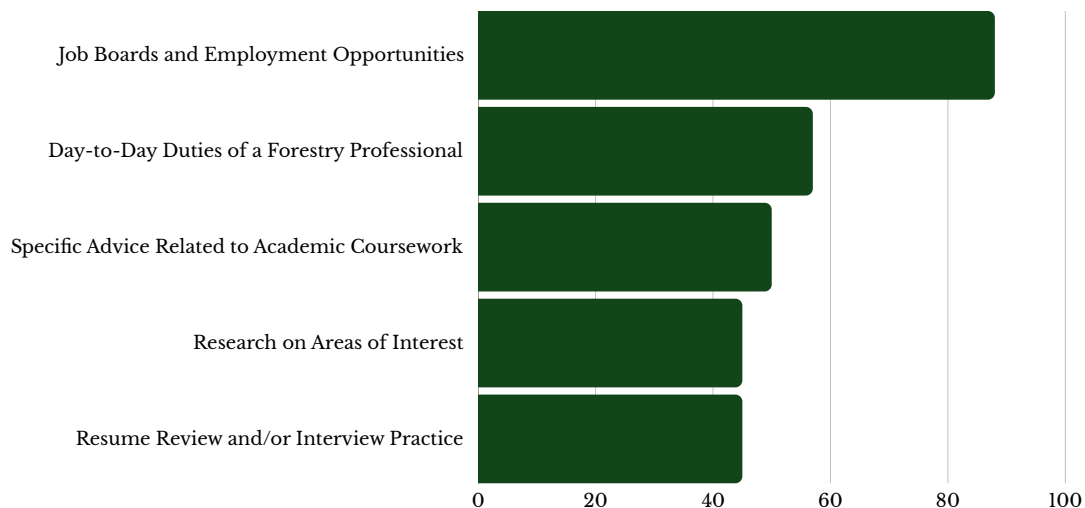
In the 24-25 academic year, the Program served 74 students from 7 community colleges and universities throughout California (Figure 1). These students were mentored by 59 mentors from various forestry and natural resource-related sectors (Figure 2).





*Figure 2: The mentors from the 24-25 academic year represented a range of expertise and professional sectors.*

61% of pairs met once per month or more, and used their time to discuss job boards and employment opportunities, academic coursework, research within their areas of interest, resume review and interview practice, and more (Figure 3).



*Figure 3: During the 24-25 end of year survey, mentors and mentees were asked what topics of discussion they engaged in, and were given a list of options, with the five most common topics shown here*



# PROGRAMMING

The Forestry and Natural Resources Career Mentorship Program provided 10 unique opportunities for mentors and mentees to meet, expand their understanding of forestry and natural resources careers, and for students to enhance their professional development skills. This year, the Program offered one in-person diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) hybrid training for participants to deepen their knowledge of DEIJ and understand how to apply those principles to their professional careers. Three of these events were in-person.

### CAREER PANEL & NETWORKING EVENT

*At the California Forest Science Symposium, hosted by the California Fire Science Consortium and the Forestry and Natural Resources Career Mentorship Program*

Learn about the career journeys and experiences of five forestry/fire professionals, and take part in round table discussions!

**TUESDAY, MARCH 25th**  
AT 12:45 PM - 1:30 PM  
MAXI'S ROOM

Funding for this project is provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Business and Workforce Development Grants. The organizations below contributed funding and fiscal sponsorship to the Program.

### ALTERNATIVE CAREER PATHWAYS PANEL

**MAYA HOTZ**  
Assistant Nursery Manager  
CAL FIRE

**VALERIE ELDER**  
Professor of Forestry  
College of the Redwoods

**CORDI CRAIG**  
Prescribed Fire Program Manager  
Placer RCD

**TUESDAY**  
**APRIL 15th**  
**5:30-6:30 PM**

Learn about the different paths you can take in your forestry career from three professionals in the field!

**REGISTER HERE!**

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### BECOMING A REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL FORESTER

*An Interactive Career Panel*

Learn about the career journeys and experiences of three RPFs, and understand what it takes to become one yourself!

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15th**  
AT 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

**REGISTER NOW**

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#### RPF PROCESS

**DAN STAPLETON**  
Assistant Executive Officer,  
Foresters Licensing

#### PANELISTS

**LEWIS CAMPBELL**  
Forestry Project Manager

**ANNE FEHRENBACH**  
Engineering Geologist

**TANNER MAR**  
Regional Urban Forester

NOV 2024	Program Kickoff Meeting Job Applications and Interviews Workshop
DEC 2024	Financial Request Form Recap Meeting
JAN 2025	Career Panel: Becoming a Registered Professional Forester Mid-Year Mentor Check-In
FEB 2025	Mixer: Sierra Cascade Logging Conference Forestry Strategies and Innovations Conference
MAR 2025	DEIJ Workshop, Mill Tour, and Mixer Redwood Region Logging Conference California Forest Science Symposium Career Panel and Networking Event
APR 2025	Alternate Career Pathways Panel





A group of people, likely mentors and mentees, are on a tour of a logging mill. They are wearing yellow hard hats and high-visibility safety vests. One person is measuring a large log with a tape measure. The background shows stacks of logs and industrial buildings under a cloudy sky.

*Mentors and Mentees tour Mendocino Forest Products' mill in Ukiah.*

*In March 2025, The Program hosted a DEIJ training and Mill Tour in Ukiah, which was attended in-person by approx. 30 mentors and mentees. The training had a hybrid option, and an additional 25 mentors and mentees attended remotely.*



# SUCSESSES

Overall, mentors and mentees of the 24-25 academic year came out of the program excited about the success of their mentoring pair and the pairing process. They provided overwhelmingly positive feedback about the Program's monthly discussion topics, networking events and resources, as well as professional development opportunities.





**“I gained a friend! I feel very well-supported and excited by what I've learned.”**

*- Mentee, 2025*

**“This program has so much to offer in terms of networking opportunities, job announcements and support questions to help you build a relationship with your mentor.”**

*- Mentee, 2025*

**“My mentee is not graduating for a couple years, but it was amazing to hear that this program has provided them so much more insight to a career in forestry than they could have gleaned from any coursework at school.”**

*- Mentor, 2025*

**“It is rewarding as a mentor to connect with folks just embarking on their careers and learn what makes them passionate about entering our profession. “**

*- Mentor, 2025*

**“I sent my mentee job postings that seemed like they would be of interest to him. He ultimately got a job for the summer via one of the postings I sent to him. ”**

*- Mentor, 2025*



*In addition to tabling at the California Forest Science Symposium, Program Representatives gave presentations, judged and funded the Student Quiz Bowl, and moderated a career networking event.*





# BY THE NUMBERS

**\$9,067**

REIMBURSED  
TO STUDENTS  
AND MENTORS  
FOR TRAVEL &  
EVENTS

**\$4,313**

TO WORKSHOP  
HOSTS AND  
GUEST  
SPEAKERS

**\$650**

AVERAGE SPENT  
IN TOTAL PER  
IN-PERSON  
EVENT

In addition to supporting the Program Manager's salary and travel, as well as Placer RCD's Administrative costs, funding for the Program directly supports in-person events and networking opportunities, student and mentor travel and training, and honoraria and payment for workshop hosts and guest speakers.



The Program Manager, incoming Chair, and Steering Committee will continue to utilize funding with care in order to best support students and professionals in California's robust forestry community.

With your support, the Program can continue to bolster early-career forestry professionals and create a more diverse and equitable workforce for the future.

Donations via check may be written to the Placer Resource Conservation District with "Forestry Mentorship Program" in the memo line.

Attn: Liana Vitousek • Placer RCD • 11641 Blocker Drive  
• Auburn, CA 95603

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**STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Christie Pollet-Young**, SCS Global Services  
**Allison Erny**, Mason, Bruce & Girard  
**Henry Herrera**, CAL FIRE  
**Corrie Munger**, UC Berkeley  
**Joseph King**, Sierra Pacific Industries  
**Cole Humphrey**, California Licensed Foresters Association  
**Katie Low**, UC Cooperative Extension  
**Mary Mayeda**, CA Women in Timber  
**Denisse Hernandez**, Student Representative  
Cal Poly Humboldt  
**Renaldo Arroyo**, Bakersfield College  
**Ricky Satomi**, UC Cooperative Extension

**FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES**

**Cal Poly Humboldt**  
Faculty Representative: **Erin Kelly**  
**Cal Poly SLO**  
Faculty Representative: **Lilli Kaarakka**  
**Bakersfield College**  
Faculty Representative: **Renaldo Arroyo**  
**UC Berkeley**  
Faculty Representative: **Rachelle Hedges**  
**Reedley College**  
Faculty Representative: **Kayla Rodriguez**  
**College of the Redwoods**  
Faculty Representative: **Valerie Elder**  
**Shasta College**  
Faculty Representative: **Melissa Markee**

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THANK  
YOU