



# Del Norte and Tribal Lands Opportunity Youth: Year 3 Findings

September 2023

California Center for Rural Policy  
at Cal Poly Humboldt

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# Acknowledgments

This report was made possible by the community and with funding from the Aspen Institute. The California Center for Rural Policy would specifically like to thank:

- » Local area Tribes, including: Big Lagoon Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria, Elk Valley Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria, Smith River Rancheria, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, Trinidad Rancheria, Wiyot Tribe and the Yurok Tribe.
- » Participants from Del Norte and Tribal Lands
- » Nanette Antwi-Donkor, M.P.P., Senior Program Manager, Data Equity & Impact, Aspen Institute
- » Del Norte County Youth Serving Organizations, including the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, Tolowa Dee-ni' Social Services, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation Community & Family Wellness, Yurok Tribe, the Yurok Tribal Education Department, Yurok Wellness Court, Klamath River Promise Neighborhood, Hoopa Valley High School, Two Feathers Native American Family Services, Coastal Connections, The Smart Workforce Center, E3 Summer Youth Program, True North Organizing Network, Gateway Education, Redwood Voice Youth Media, Del Norte Unified School District, College of the Redwoods, United Indian Health Services
- » Keri Mosey, Program Officer, Programs & Community Solutions, Bonnie Smith, Coordinator; Programs, Strategy & Community Solutions, Humboldt Area Foundation + Wild Rivers Community Foundation
- » Michelle Carillo, Executive Director, Think Place West
- » CCRP Staff: Crane Conso, Amanda Hickey, Sydney Lyons, Alisha Hammer, Tracie Wynand, Barbara Browning, Dawn Arledge
- » Connie Stewart, Executive Director of Initiatives, Cal Poly Humboldt
- » Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation

## Suggested Citation:

Conso, C. (2023). Del Norte and Tribal Lands Opportunity Youth Year Three Findings. California Center for Rural Policy, Cal Poly Humboldt.



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# Disclaimer and Acknowledgement of Sovereignty

The California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP) provides quality human-centered research, convening and evaluative support, and data technical assistance. CCRP recognizes the importance of tribal governments as the only authorized entity to speak for a Sovereign Nation and does not replace the voice of tribal governments. CCRP comprises a team of professionals with varied backgrounds and extensive experience working with tribal entities, communities, and individuals.

In examining the complex intersection between work and school, it is essential to acknowledge the historical context of forced assimilation, which has profoundly impacted indigenous communities in the United States. This acknowledgement is informed by a recently released comprehensive report published by the Department of the Interior.<sup>1</sup> The Interior Department report unequivocally affirms that the United States deliberately and systematically targeted American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children as part of a policy aimed at cultural assimilation. This policy unfolded alongside the distressing period of Indian territorial dispossession, reflecting a dark chapter in American history that continues to shape the dynamics of education and labor for indigenous populations and tribal economies.

<sup>1</sup> Newland, B. Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. May 2022. Retrieved from [https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi\\_investigative\\_report\\_may\\_2022\\_508.pdf](https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi_investigative_report_may_2022_508.pdf)

# Executive Summary

In 2022 and 2023, the Humboldt Area Foundation + Wild Rivers Community Foundation, in collaboration with the California Center for Rural Policy, continued work on a project funded by the Aspen Institute. This project aimed to assess the educational and workforce engagement of young people living in Del Norte and Tribal Lands (DNATL). Working closely with organizations dedicated to young people's wellness in DNATL, this partnership developed a survey tool to gain deeper insights into the challenges and factors affecting Opportunity Youth (OY) in the region, as part of the Aspen Institute Opportunity Youth Forum community initiative. This report shares the final outcomes of the second phase of survey distribution, building on the initial findings.

The survey was conducted from March 2023 to September 2023, and 51 DNATL residents participated. Our analysis compared the responses of connected youth with the responses of OY youth. The survey revealed that OY were more likely than their connected peers to indicate myriad supports that could be helpful to them, when it comes to education and work. This finding suggests that OY in DNATL may have a higher demand for assistance in these areas than their connected peers. Additionally, more than three quarters of the OY participants and more than half of the connected participants did not know of local resources or support available to help their efforts in school and the workforce. This indicates a general lack of familiarity among the surveyed youth regarding the assistance and opportunities accessible to them locally. Based on these findings, there appears to be a disconnect between the needs and awareness of support services among young residents in DNATL. Connected youth may require more support than they anticipate, whereas both groups report lacking the important knowledge about the resources available to them. These results highlight the potential importance of improving access to and awareness of local resources and support systems for young people, especially when it comes to education and work.

In practical terms, the survey findings suggest that efforts could be made to bridge the gap between the needs of youth and the availability of support services. This might involve initiatives to increase awareness of local resources and tailor support programs to better address the specific needs of all young people in DNATL.

## Author Note on Context and Perspective

*Beyond the survey data collected and presented in this report, while working on this project I witnessed firsthand experiences in the North Coast that highlighted the significance of work on disconnection and its intersection with the broader challenges our community faces. I believe this report would be incomplete without inclusion of this important context.*

*Amidst the process of administering this survey, the DNATL community, including many of the partners who made this survey work possible, was thrust into a state of emergency as massive wildland fires raged in the region. For an entire month, the impact of these fires disrupted daily life, delaying the start of school and challenging the resilience of the community.*

*During the time that I began drafting the findings from this research, but outside of my role at CCRP, a close friend's child was affected by a mental health crisis. The family has asked that I include this narrative in this report. As the young person's guardian and the young person, who is a Tribal citizen, navigated this experience, it became painfully clear how the risks of disconnection loom large. The lack of local mental health resources, including extremely limited access to psychiatric care, forced this family into a precarious situation. This journey led the family through the bewildering maze of a 51/50 hold at a local emergency room, meetings with local law enforcement, and ultimately, to a facility located far from home to receive care. While the family expressed gratitude that a level of care was achieved, they commented on the lack of cultural relativism by available providers, as evidenced by strange responses they got from care providers who did not understand their lives, and feeling frustrated that the kind of care needed isn't available locally from providers who "get it." This chain of events was a stark reminder that disconnection isn't a mere concept; it's a tangible, life-altering experience. The experience of this family provides a real-world example which encompasses the findings reported on in the Year One Findings report.<sup>2</sup>*

*These contextual factors are not isolated incidents but part of a broader cycle that our community faces. They underscore the urgency and significance of work in the community that aims to foster connection and reduce disconnection, which is the focus of the report. While the overall goal of this project is to improve data on OY in the region, this report isn't just about data; it's about the lives, challenges, and hopes of our community members.*

<sup>2</sup> Conso, C., Del Norte and Tribal Lands Opportunity Youth Year One Findings. California Center for Rural Policy, Cal Poly Humboldt. March 2023. Retrieved from <https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/opportunity-youth-year-one-findings-2022>

# Introduction

This report unveils the findings of a 2023 survey carried out in DNATL, a second phase of an earlier survey conducted in 2021. The first phase of research, which took place during the onset of lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic, consisted of a digitally distributed survey. Drawing from valuable input collected during our initial research and an environment scan that involved consultations with local community service providers, we have fine-tuned our methodology to develop a more streamlined and effective survey tool.

The Opportunity Youth Forum, initiated by the Aspen Institute in 2012, remains the driving force behind this ongoing effort. This network of urban, rural, and tribal communities across the United States was established to address the challenge of the 6.7 million OY in the country through community-driven solutions. With a collective goal to expand pathways to reconnection and improve educational and employment prospects for OY, the Forum has made substantial contributions resulting in a national decrease of over one million OY.

The overarching objective of the Opportunity Youth Forum is to establish a body of evidence supporting the success of community collaboration strategies and to advocate for their wider adoption. Forum communities are dedicated to advancing five key levers of change: collaborative impact, the development of effective programs and pathways, data-informed decision-making and impact assessment, resource mobilization/leveraging funding, and developing supportive policies.<sup>3</sup> Phase 2 of our research builds on these principles and insights, aiming to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by young individuals in DNATL.



*Gathering space at the Taa-'at-dvn Chee-ne'Tetlh-tvm' Food Forest*

<sup>3</sup> Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions. (n.d.). Opportunity Youth Forum. Retrieved from <https://www.aspencommunitysolutions.org/opportunity-youth-forum/>

# Research Methods

Collaborating closely with local community partners who maintain strong connections with the young people in the area, the survey was distributed within the DNATL community. This phase of the project revealed several key learnings. Given our status as external participants within the unceded Wiyot lands of Arcata, Humboldt County, CCRP research staff learned about the importance of approaching our neighboring communities with sensitivity and a mindful approach. The research team worked to cultivate meaningful relationships with partners as a local organization involved in various regional initiatives. Establishing familiarity and reliability within this context proved crucial, emphasizing a willingness to participate and contribute beyond specific organizational needs.

The researchers strengthened community engagement by participating in local events, beginning with tabling at a College of the Redwoods (CR) career fair in Crescent City. We were able to share some of the useful initiatives CCRP and partners are involved in and offer young people hope and mentorship alongside other extraordinary community agencies. The day proved successful, so we continued to seek out other community days through our network of regional partners.

While engaging with students and career-seekers at our table, we received constructive feedback that highlighted the survey's length as a concern. The context of a career fair, where attendees are eager to network and explore opportunities, underscored the impracticality of requiring them to invest substantial time in completing a 50-question survey. Subsequently, we collaborated with our advisory committee, community partners, and the Aspen Institute to further streamline the survey instrument. This collaborative effort culminated in the development of a concise 15-question survey that could be completed in a matter of minutes while still gathering valuable information about the youth's concerns and needs. While the primary focus of this survey was to get a more accurate measure of youth disconnection in DNATL, it was equally important to better understand the factors that foster and sustain connectedness.

The revised survey focused on key aspects, including connection to work, school, and community, the youth's perspectives on supportive resources, a glimpse into their backgrounds, and notably, their aspirational career paths. This adjustment stemmed from the knowledge that despite being disconnected from conventional education and employment pathways, OY are individuals with dreams and aspirations. Their disconnection from these avenues does not equate to a disconnection from their ambitions. With this understanding, we adapted our survey again to ensure it accommodated time constraints, allowing us to uplift the voices of these young individuals and amplify their perspectives to the best of our abilities.



This project would not be possible without the individuals and organizations that played a crucial role in bringing the project to fruition.

To the resilient young individuals who contributed their time and insights by participating in the survey: your perspectives are a window into the promising futures of DNATL, and CCRP is happy to present this snapshot of your experiences.

### **Timeline of Survey Distribution:**

Spring 2023

- » College of the Redwoods: Career Fair @ CR Del Norte, Crescent City.
- » Career Fair @ Del Norte County Fairgrounds.
- » American Indian Career Fair: Hoopa Valley High School, Hoopa, CA (note: guardian consents were required but no surveys administered).

Summer/Fall 2023:

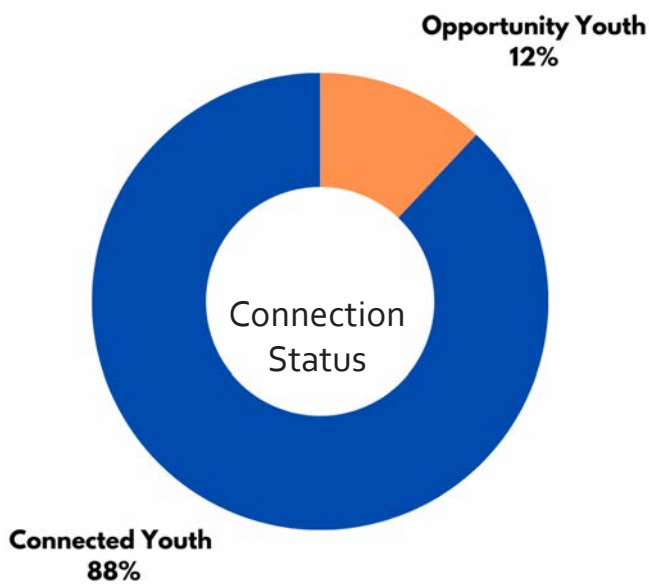
- » Gathering of Nations GONA Event @ Rowdy Creek Park, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation.
- » Coastal Connection, Del Norte.
- » True North Organizing Network Offices.
- » E3 Summer Youth.
- » Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation Back To School Day
- » Hoopa/2Feathers BBQ

The first round was conducted online and provided lessons to better approach the second round of survey work. Specifically, the first survey sample inadvertently did not include any Native American participants. The second distribution's approach aimed to ensure that our community partners, many from sovereign tribal nations, had the opportunity to participate. Participants were compensated with \$10 Dutch Bros Coffee gift cards, which was a fun way to connect and was also a big success with the participants. The survey was open to any DNATL person within the ages of 16-24, which resulted in a sample that included but was not limited to OY. This second round in-person survey distribution resulted in a final sample of 51 participants (n=51) who were verified to be within the target age range of 16-24 and from the local area. OY made up 12% of the sample (n=6), whereas connected participants made up 88% (n=45) of the sample.

# Who are OY in Del Norte and Tribal Lands?

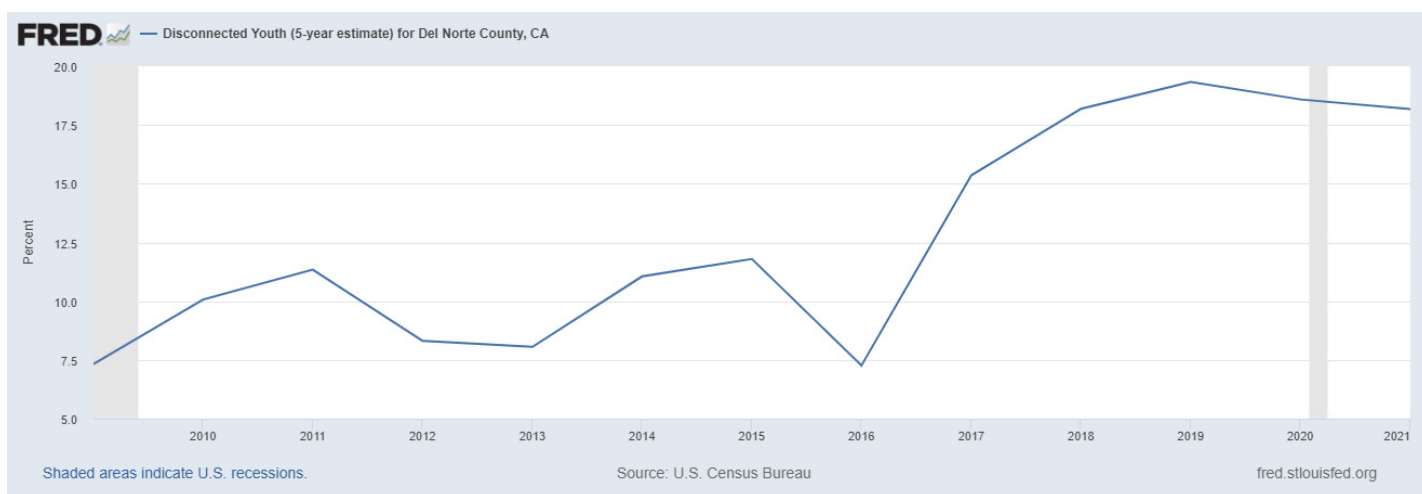
## → DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 1. OY (n=6) and Connected participants (n=45) percentages of overall DNATL sample (n=51).



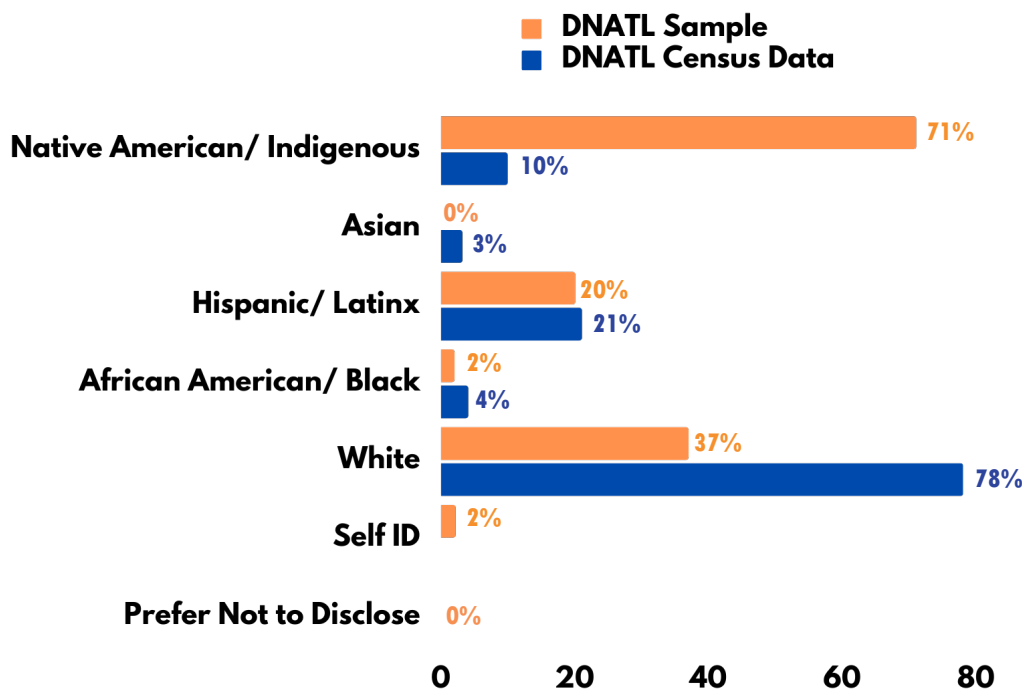
The sample from the second round of survey distribution included 12% OY (n=6) and 88% Connected participants (n=45). This differs from the American Community Survey (ACS) data for the region, which estimated the disconnection rate for 2021 at 18%. \*The ACS "Disconnected Youth" data represents the percentage of youth in a county who are between the ages of 16 and 19, who are not enrolled in school and are unemployed or not in the labor force.

Figure 2. American Community Survey (ACS) Disconnected Youth data for DNATL<sup>3</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Disconnected Youth (5-year estimate) for Del Norte County, CA, retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/B14005DCYACS006015>

Figure 3. Racial identities of OY participants (n=6), Connected participants (n=45) compared to Del Norte Census Data



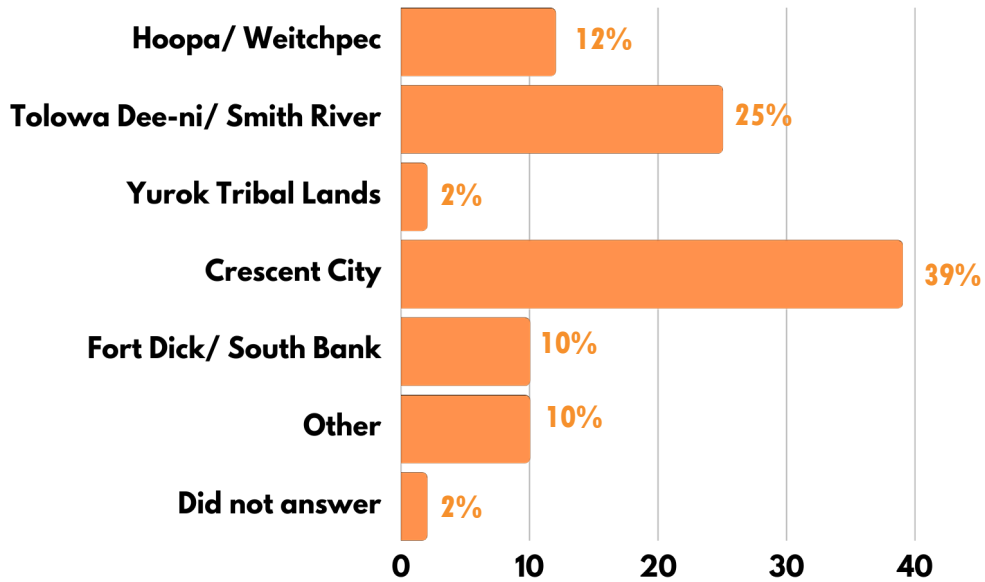
The race/ethnicity data for the DNATL sample differed from the census data of the overall DNATL population. According to the census data, Native American/Indigenous people make up about 10% of the population in DNATL. However, given the underrepresentation of this group in previous survey efforts, we committed to ensuring these voices were not left out of the work. Through community partnerships, and with gratitude, we were able to meet with and administer surveys with local youth from the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, the Yurok Tribe, and the Hoopa Tribe, resulting in the majority of participants in the sample indicating that they were Native American/Indigenous (n=36, 71%). Conversely, while less of the sample participants indicated that they identified as white (n=19, 37%), the census data suggests that 78% of the county population identifies as white. Similarly, the sample had an underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latinx (n=10, 20%), African American/Black (n=1, 2%), and Asian (0) participants when compared to the census data. Participants were able to indicate more than one racial identification.

## → LOCATION

The survey asked participants where they lived. The survey participants indicated that they live across a large region, the majority indicating that they live in Crescent City (n=20, 39%). Another large portion of participants indicated that they live in Tolowa Dee-Ni' (n=13, 25%), with others indicating they live in Hoopa/Weitchpec/Wautec (n=6, 12%), Fort Dick/South Bank (n=5, 10%), or Yurok Tribal Lands (n=1, 2%). Participants also used the write-in section to list additional places they consider home, as seen in figure 4.

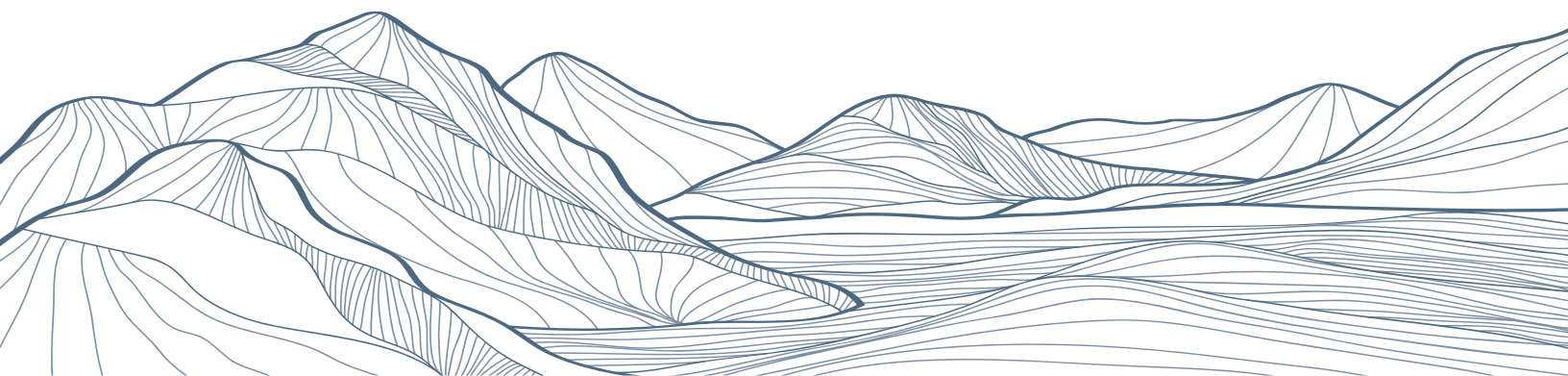


Figure 4. Residence location of DNATL participants (n=51)



Other locations mentioned:

- Brookings, Oregon
- Hiouchi
- T'uu-yaa-sdvm-dvn
- South Bank

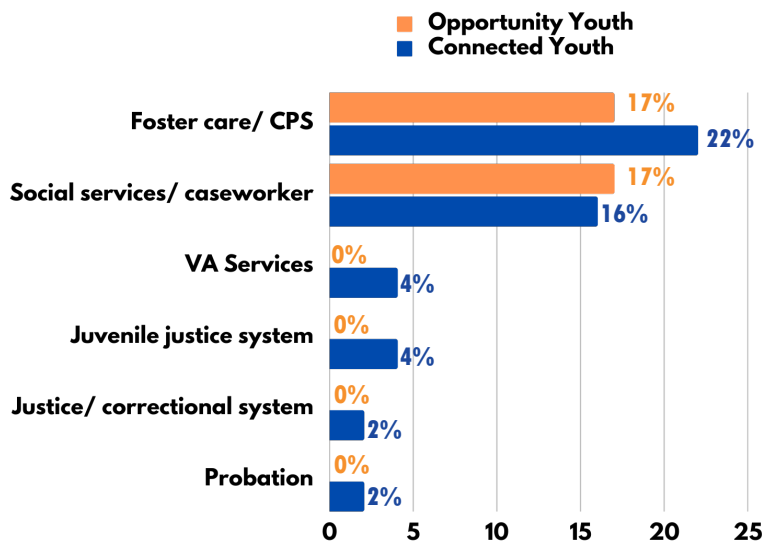


## → SYSTEM IMPACT

The survey measured participants' engagement with different social service, government, or justice systems. The majority of participants (n=31, 61%) indicated they were not involved with any of the listed systems. The primary finding regarding systems involvement is that both OY and connected participants reported involvement with these systems at similar rates.

The results indicate that involvement with foster care/child protective services (CPS) was the most prevalent among all respondents, with (n=1, 17%) of OY and (n=10, 22%) of connected participants indicating their involvement. Similarly, (n=1, 17%) of OY and (n=7, 16%) of connected participants indicated involvement with social services/caseworkers. Only connected participants indicated involvement with the other systems on the survey. Those included VA services (n=2, 4%), the juvenile justice system (n=2, 4%), the justice/correctional system (n=1, 2%), and probation (n=1, 2%).

Figure 5. System Involvement for OY (n=6) and Connected (n=45) participants



Coastal Connections office, Crescent City

# Findings

## RESOURCES FOR SCHOOL

When asked about the resources or services they thought could help them enter and stay in higher education, **participants were most likely to indicate that financial aid and scholarship assistance were the most likely to help them.**

OY participants identified financial aid and scholarship assistance (n=4, 67%), paid apprenticeships (n=4, 67%), cultural and language support programs (n=3, 50%), and mentorship opportunities with college graduates from similar backgrounds (n=3, 50%) as desired supports to help them enter higher education. Participants were able to indicate multiple selections. These findings provide valuable insights into the needs and preferences of participants in relation to resources and services that can facilitate their entry into and success in higher education.

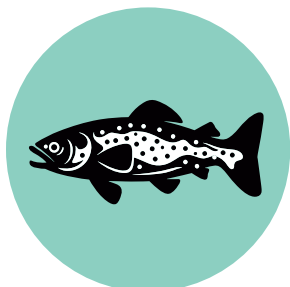
**Several key conclusions can be drawn based on the data:**

### Priority Resources for Higher Education



Financial aid and scholarship assistance emerge as a critical concern for participants across both groups. This trend is a clear signal that financial barriers are a significant hindrance to pursuing higher education. Additionally, the high interest in paid work-based learning opportunities (apprenticeships) underscores the importance of practical learning experiences that integrate education with real-world applications.

### Cultural and Language Support Needs



The strong emphasis on cultural and language support programs by participants indicates the importance of addressing these specific needs. For local indigenous youth, this response could reflect a desire to maintain a connection to their cultural heritage while navigating an educational system that might not always be tailored to their backgrounds. This finding highlights the potential effectiveness of cultivating inclusive educational environments that respect and incorporate diverse culturally rooted pedagogies.



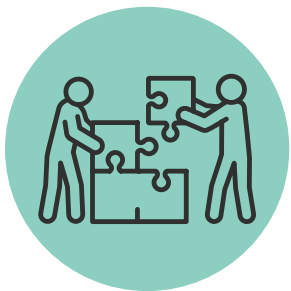
*Sunset High, Crescent City*

## Importance of Mentorship



The desire for mentorship opportunities with college graduates from similar backgrounds suggests that youth value role models who have successfully navigated similar challenges. This finding highlights the potential benefits of creating mentorship programs that can provide guidance, inspiration, and a sense of belonging to participants who might face unique obstacles.

## Community-Centric Approach



The emphasis on cultural support programs and mentorship opportunities aligns with the notion of community-based programming. This indicates that participants value resources and services that not only address academic needs but also foster a sense of community and belonging. Given the prevalence of participants from local area tribes, this finding underscores the significance of initiatives that connect with and support their cultural identities and experiences.

## Need for Tailored Programming in DNATL



Overall, the findings strongly suggest that young people in the DNATL area could benefit from more comprehensive and tailored programming that addresses their specific needs. Programs that focus on financial aid, apprenticeships, cultural support, and mentorship could significantly enhance their ability to access and succeed in higher education.

These findings about resources for education underscore the importance of community-based initiatives in nurturing local leadership within the DNATL region. The findings highlight the demand for comprehensive resources that empower young individuals to pursue higher education while staying connected to their roots. By addressing these specific needs, local initiatives can effectively “grow our own” leaders, equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and cultural awareness needed to contribute meaningfully to their communities and lead with a deep understanding of local contexts.

A table with the full list of possible selections, and the rate for all participants, is shown below.

Figure 7. Resources for entering school

	OY	Connected
Financial aid and scholarship assistance	67%	53%
Paid apprenticeships	67%	42%
Cultural and language support programs	50%	40%
Mentorship opportunities with college graduates from similar backgrounds	50%	29%
College advising and counseling services	33%	33%
College readiness programs, such as college preparation workshops	33%	31%
Assistance connecting to CTE programs	33%	18%
Assistance with transportation	33%	16%
Place-based learning opportunities	33%	7%
Assistance with technology	33%	7%



# American Indian Career Fair

## Presenter Tables will include:

FORESTRY \* YUOK TRIBAL POLICE \* CHP \* ACCOUNTING \* FINANCE  
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT \* FISHERIES \* TRIBAL PROGRAMS  
NATIVE OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES \* HEALTH FIELDS \* WATERSHED  
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS \* TRIBAL CASINOS & **MANY MORE**



**Please bring your resume, many programs will  
allow on site job applications!**

Hoopla High  
Friday April 7th  
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Del Norte Fairgrounds  
Wednesday, April 12th  
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

S. Aawok Bonnie  
Green Office  
Friday May 5th  
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM



### Return permission slips to your school office .

For more information, contact Yurok HR; TERO or **Tyler Mitchell, Jessica McKinnon, Ronny Davis, Pyuwa Bommelyn, Nick Corcovelos**  
**Chris McQuillen** at the **Yurok Tribe Education office** at **707-460-6910** ext. **1508.** or Ex. 1507

Sponsors: Yurok Tribe; Yurok Tribe Education Career Pathways Grants; Yurok Human Resources, Yurok TERO Program, U.S. Dept. of Education ACES & Promise Neighborhood Grants.

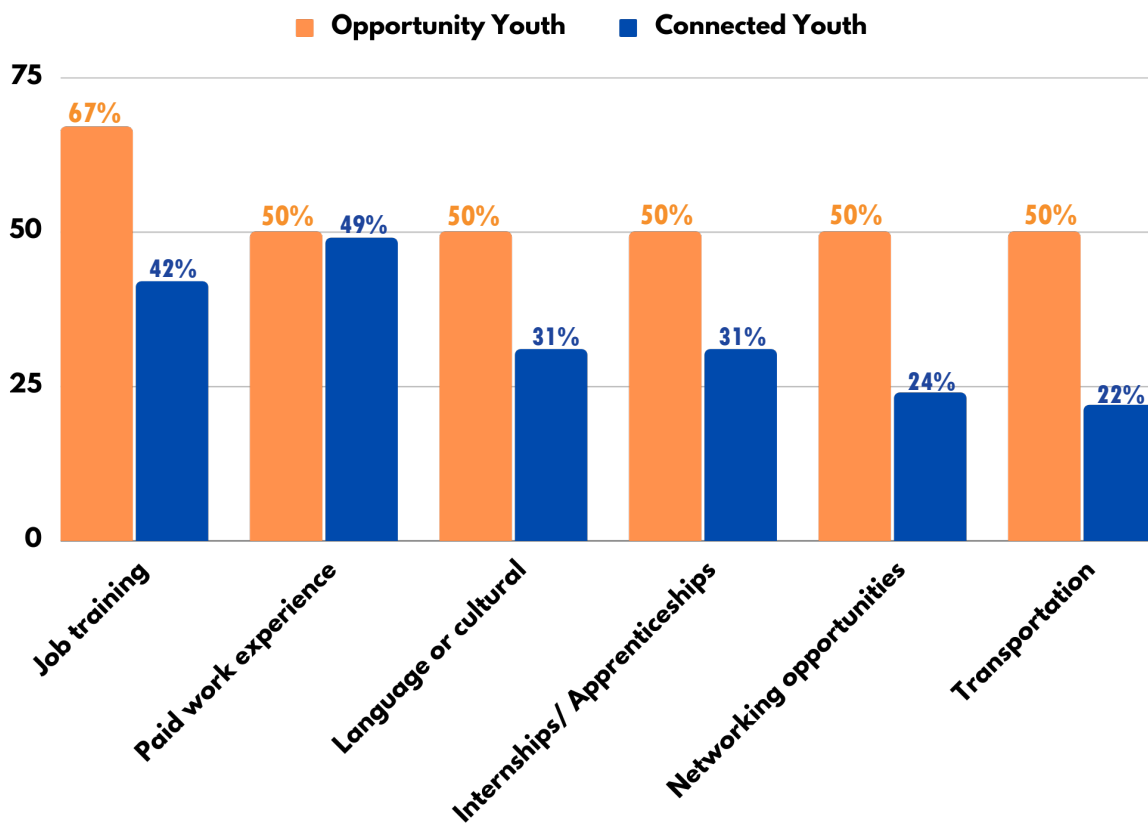
# RESOURCES FOR WORK

Similar to resources for school, we asked participants to indicate which resources/supports would help them enter the workforce. **The primary finding from this question is the imperative need for young people in DNATL to get some real job experience.**

Both OY and Connected participants selected job training the most frequently. OY indicated that job training (n=4, 67%), paid work experience (n=3, 50%), language and cultural support (n=3, 50%), internships/apprenticeships (n=3, 50%), networking opportunities (n=3, 50%) and transportation (n=3, 50%) were the most valuable supports to help them connect to the workforce. Their connected peers also indicated these resources as helpful, but to a lesser extent.

These data provide insights into the resources and supports that participants believe are essential for connecting to the workforce. **Below are key themes based on the responses.**

Figure 8. Workforce Support Services for OY (n=6) and Connected participants



## Job Training and Paid Experience



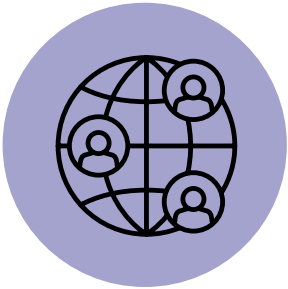
Participants, especially OY, consistently highlighted several key resources that are crucial for entering the workforce successfully. Notably, both groups expressed a strong interest in paid work experience. Participants' interest in internships and apprenticeships implies a recognition of the value of practical experiences that bridge the gap between education and work. This emphasizes the need for programs that provide practical work-based learning, allowing participants to apply knowledge in real-world settings.

## Language and Cultural Support



The desire for language or cultural support resonates strongly among the sample, which consisted predominantly of youth from regional tribes. This suggests a profound desire for resources that respect and integrate participants' cultural identities within their career pursuits, potentially bridging the gap between traditional values and professional aspirations.

## Networking Opportunities



The high demand for networking opportunities underscores the importance of connections and relationships in today's job market. This finding highlights the potential value of mentorship and guidance that extends beyond mere employment advice, emphasizing the significance of community-based networks.

## Transportation Considerations

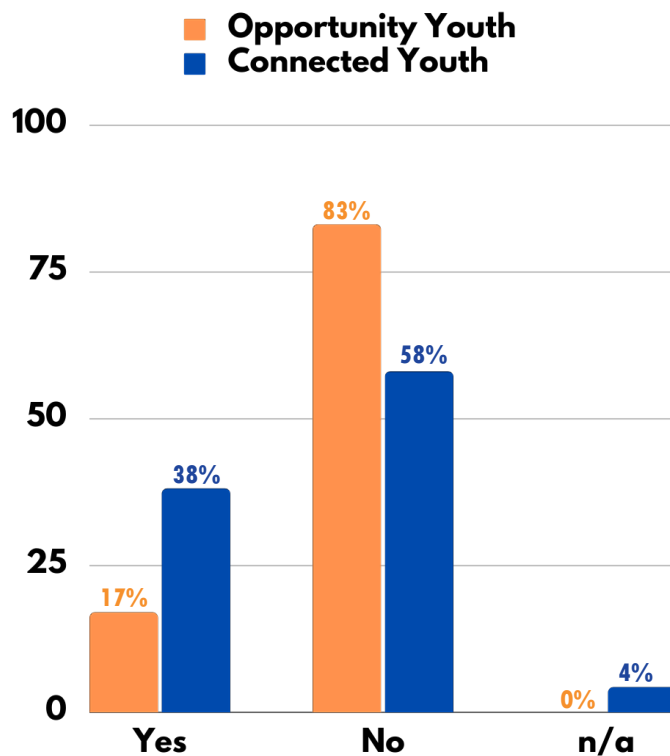


Transportation was noted as a desired resource, which suggests that logistical factors can play a role in participants' ability to access workforce-related opportunities in this rural region. Addressing transportation challenges could contribute to increased workforce engagement, ensuring that when opportunities are available, that young people are able to access them, regardless of location. There is room for improvement here, and for community wide collaboration to identify viable transportation partnerships and solutions.

Additionally, the data indicates that OY participants demonstrated a higher inclination toward indicating a need for these resources compared to their connected peers. This trend suggests that OY participants might have a heightened awareness of the importance of these resources in navigating the workforce transition, and potentially an eagerness to connect and stay connected.

The participant’s responses express a preference for human and cultural connection through their emphasis on resources like language support, internships, and networking opportunities. The selection of community-based mentorship and meaningful interactions highlights the pivotal role of personal relationships in their career aspirations, suggesting the importance of nurturing supportive human networks in facilitating their successful entry into the workforce.

**Figure 9. OY (n=6) and Connected (n=45) knowledge of local services**



Connected participants (n=17, 38%) were more likely than their OY peers (n=1, 17%) to indicate that they knew of local services that could provide them support for entering the workforce. This finding highlights the importance of promoting the available support programs and opportunities to young people in the region.

Figure 10. Dream Career Aspirations: Participant Visions



Youth in DNATL have dreams. When asked about their dream occupation, participants listed the following wide range of career dreams:

- » Health and Medicine
- » Medical
- » Arts
- » Marine Biology
- » Social Work
- » Therapy
- » Teacher
- » Nursing
- » Cosmetology
- » Heavy Equipment Operator
- » Lineman
- » Natural Resources
- » Sports Physical Therapy
- » Real Estate
- » Construction
- » Science
- » Contracting
- » Law
- » Beauty School
- » Dental Hygiene
- » Military
- » Laboratory Scientist
- » SFX Makeup
- » Psychology
- » Policy
- » Motorsports
- » Business
- » Marketing
- » Architect
- » EMT
- » Food Service
- » Veterinarian
- » Crime Scene Investigation
- » Forestry

Distributing this survey at career fairs, back-to-school nights, and community spaces has added significant impact as participants not only share their dreams of bright futures but also actively advocate for them. The listed career aspirations are diverse and highlight the dreams of these young people. This information can be used to assess the availability of educational and work-based learning opportunities that are available to help young people reach these dreams. To further support these young individuals in achieving their dreams, it is imperative that community organizations, schools, and funders collaborate to create accessible pathways to these career options. A concerted community effort can make these aspirations a reality for DNATL youth.



*Yurok Redwood Plank House at Margaret Keating Elementary School, Klamath*

# Qualitative Data from Long Version of the Survey

In addition to our primary, 15 question short survey, we also administered a longer version of the survey to a small group of participants. This survey contained space for write-in responses. The survey consisted of 50 questions. Given the time constraints, few participants were able to take the long version of the survey. In total, 20 participants completed the long version of the survey (n=20). Below are key themes as heard through their written responses.

Figure 11. Impact of Covid-19 on educational experience as reported by DNATL participants

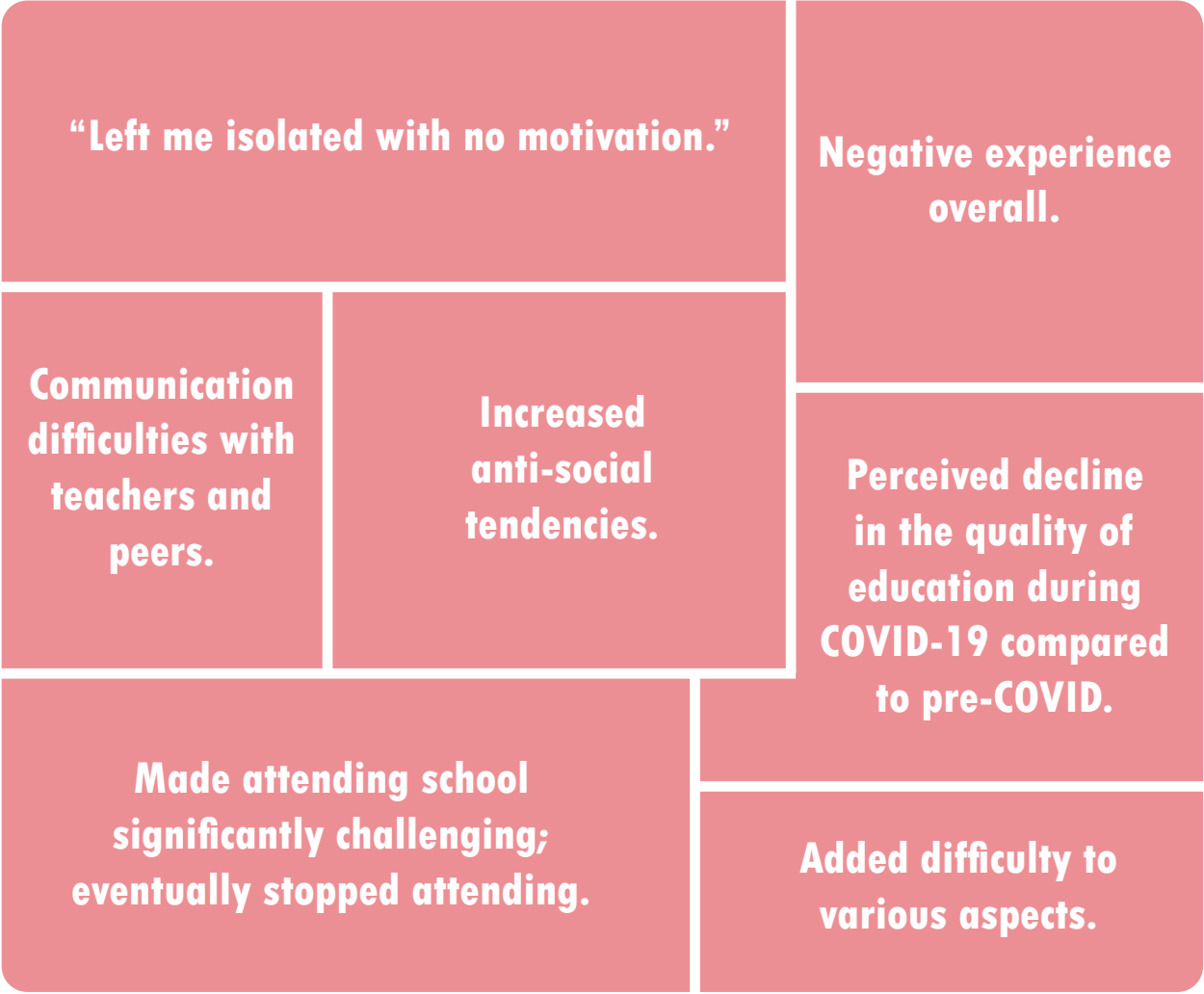




Figure 12. Desired Supports for Young People in DNATL Based on Lived Experience

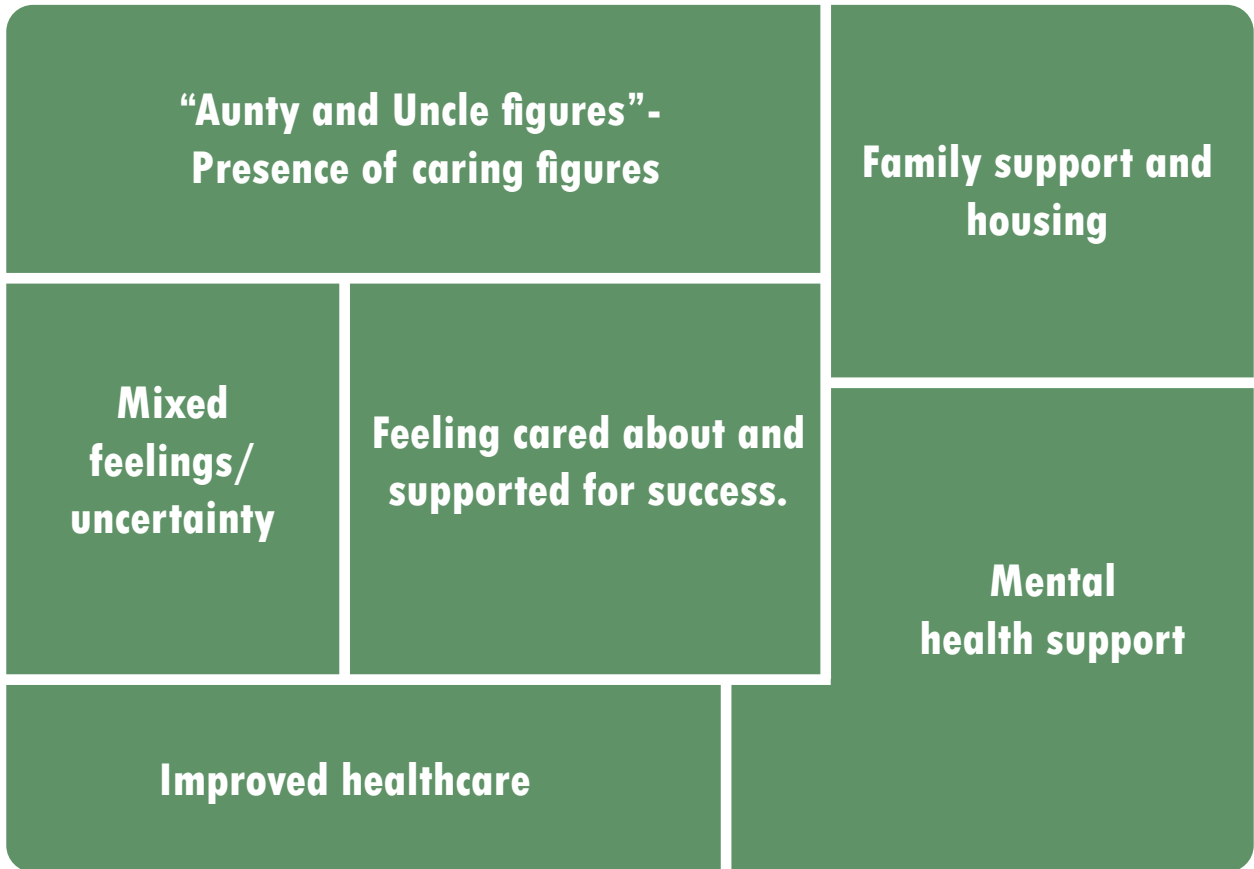
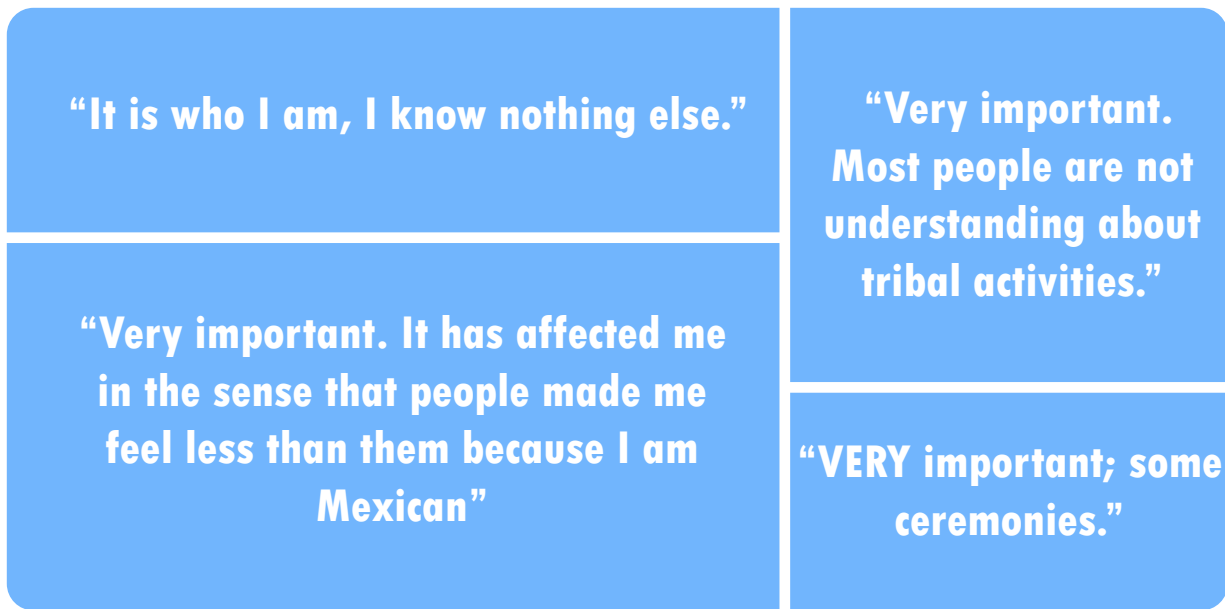




Figure 13. Importance of racial identity.



Additional responses that measured experiences with bias towards racial and/or gender identity indicated that these participants had experienced bias at school, work, and during housing searches.



Shipping container mural by Jessica Slayton at the Taa-'at-dvn Chee-ne'Tetlh-tvm' Food Forest

# Conclusion

In this study, we delved into the hopes, challenges, and necessities of young individuals within the DNATL region, illuminating invaluable insights. Notably, our findings emphasized the essence of upholding sovereignty and nurturing a deeper connection, not solely to educational and employment opportunities, but also to the vibrant community of DNATL.

A prominent finding from the research is that many participants expressed a sense of unfamiliarity with the local support systems available to them. This disconnect from local resources poses a barrier to their ability to access essential services and opportunities. To mitigate this issue, the development of a user-friendly online and offline directory that offers a comprehensive listing of available services, programs, and opportunities within DNATL is recommended. As seen in Appendix 2 of this report, several services and programs are available, and while many provide flyers and announcements of upcoming events, there remains a clear need for a centralized resource hub that allows young people to quickly access the support they require in one convenient location.

The participants shared their dreams and career aspirations, revealing a diverse range of interests and potential pursuits. Among the crucial resources identified were financial aid, scholarship assistance, paid apprenticeships, and cultural support programs, all of which hold the potential to strengthen connections to higher education while preserving cultural identity.

The participants also indicated an interest in job training, paid work experiences, and networking opportunities in bridging the gap between education and workforce entry. The participants' responses also indicated a desire for peer mentorship. Research on mentoring in rural settings suggests that it holds promise for promoting youth well-being in areas like physical health and academics, particularly for minority youth. Challenges in rural mentoring include resource limitations, mentor recruitment and retention, transportation issues, and differing outcome priorities to urban settings.<sup>5</sup> More support for internship programs that pair young people with mentors and training can help connect experienced young individuals with their peers to provide guidance and support in navigating educational and career pathways.

Our study underscores the importance of holistic, community-driven initiatives that address financial barriers while celebrating and preserving cultural heritage. Promoting local support services and increasing awareness among young people is a vital step toward nurturing a profound connection to both their aspirations and the community they hold dear.

<sup>5</sup> Ascenbrener, C & Edwards, K., Mentoring Youth in Rural Settings, National Mentoring Resource Center Evidence Review, February 2023. Retrieved from <https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/resource/mentoring-youth-in-rural-settings>

In conclusion, our findings stress the necessity of comprehensive programming that empowers DNATL youth to pursue their dreams while safeguarding their cultural sovereignty and fostering a deep, lasting connection to their community. By addressing their unique needs in this holistic manner, we not only enable individual success but also strengthen the fabric of the community, ensuring a brighter future for all.



*A local Del Norte and Tribal Lands youth working at Sutter Coast Hospital through the E3 Summer Work Program*

# Appendix I: Environmental Scan of Youth-Serving Organizations

## WHO WE MET WITH:

- » **Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation:** Krystal Woods, Tribal TANF Coordinator, Self-Sufficiency Division, Community Family & Wellness; Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation Summer Youth Interns
- » **Klamath Promise Neighborhood:** Josh Norris
- » **The Yurok Tribal Education Department:** Jim & Christine McQuillen
- » **Hoopa Valley High School**
- » **2 Feathers Native American Family Services:** Yvonne Guido & Kimora Van Pelt
- » **Coastal Connections**
- » **True North Organizing Network:** Denise Doyle-Schnacker
- » **Smart Workforce Center/E3 Summer Youth Internships:** Christy Hernandez
- » **Gateway Camp:** Ron Cole
- » **Tolowa Dee-ni' Community Food Garden:** Angela Grey

# Appendix II: DNATL Programs for Employment, Training, Education, Belonging, Meaning, Well Being, Purpose\*

- » **Family Resource Center of the Redwoods (FRCR):** The FRCR of the Redwoods provides a welcoming, safe, and nurturing environment to strengthen and support healthy relationships for children and families in Del Norte County. Programs offered by the FRCR include:
  - **Ages and Stages:** Developmental screening tool for children ages 0-5.
  - **Awaiting Arrivals:** Prenatal class to answer questions and connect new parents.
  - **Breastfeeding Support Groups:** Weekly support group for breastfeeding mothers.
  - **Community Events:** Free outreach events for the community, including baby showers and craft days.
  - **Community Food Council:** Working together to build a local food system for healthy, culturally appropriate food.
  - **Dedicated Dads:** Support program for fathers with workshops and classes.
  - **Family Game Night:** Quality time for families to enjoy board games together.
  - **Happy Toes:** Music and movement program including dance, singing, and exploring musical rhythms.
  - **Lunch with the Law:** Community outreach program for discussions with local law enforcement.
  - **Pacific Pantry:** Choice food pantry for eligible residents.
  - **Parent Café:** Conversations focused on strengthening families and the Five Protective Factors.
  - **Parent Education:** Workshops and classes on nutrition, healthy living, and parenting skills.
  - **Parenting Now! Play Groups:** Parent-led play groups with age-specific curriculum.
  - **Professional Development Trainings:** Various topics for personal and career growth.
  - **Resource and Referral Services:** Assistance in finding resources and referrals.
  - **Seamless Summer Meal Program Site:** Site for the summer meal program.
  - **Story Time:** Library sessions emphasizing the importance of talking, reading, and singing.
  - **Winter Break Meal Program Site:** Site for the winter break meal program.
  - **Youth and Family Fair:** Event focused on youth and family engagement.
- » **Del Norte Food Council:** The Community Foods Council (CFC) offers various programs to improve access to healthy food in Del Norte & Tribal Lands. These programs include food recovery, community food forests, Pacific Pantry, and more.
- » **CFC Food & Farm Camp 2023:** Taa-'at-dvn Chee-ne' Tetlh-tvm' (Crescent City Food Forest) Dates: August 21-25, 9am-4pm; Targeted towards younger youth, this camp fosters regional connection. Age group: K-8; Cost: \$300 per student, 50% off for siblings (scholarships available); Contact: agray@FRCredwoods.org, 707-464-0955 ext. 2109

\* This resource list, which provides a snapshot of some services that were available during Summer 2023, is not comprehensive and is subject to change

- » **Pacific Mobile Market:** Klamath: 1st Tuesday of the month; Time: 10am-12pm @ Steelhead Lodge, 330 Terwer Riffle Road; Time: 2pm-4pm @ Pem-Mey Fuel Mart— Smith River: 3rd Tuesday of the month; Time: 10am-12pm @ Howonquet Hall, 101 Indian Ct; Time: 2pm-4pm @ United Methodist, 121 N. Beckstead Ave
- » **Community Food Bank (Pacific Pantry):** Thursdays: 2pm-6pm; Fridays: 2pm-4pm; Note: The CFC partners with other organizations to enhance their programs and services.
- » **Sources of Strength (SOS) DNUSD:** Youth can apply to be an SOS Peer Mentor, an SOS Peer Leader and Peer Mentor Substitute, an SOS Peer Mentor, and an SOS Peer. These roles have varying levels of responsibilities, energy and time, as well as benefits, ranging from creating a district-wide program, to creating a self care plan & attending site campaigns. The 6-12 Program uses a nomination system to determine who is invited to be trained as a connector to hope, help, and strength.
- » **The Foster Youth/Homeless and Title VI** programs at DNUSD fund students that are trained as Peer Leaders to be hired as Peer Mentors! Peer Mentors receive an hourly rate of pay for services that directly support all DNUSD students.
- » **DNUSD Wellness Center:** strengths and supports available for DNUSD students.
- » **SMART Workforce Center E3 Summer Youth Program:** The SMART Workforce Center in Crescent City, California, plays a vital role in developing the local workforce. One of the programs offered by the center is the E3 Summer Youth Program. This program is designed for incoming high school juniors, seniors, and recent graduates. Participants have the opportunity to engage in a paid internship, earn wages, and receive up to 10 high school elective credits
- » **TrueNorth Organizing Network:** Develops leadership in communities with common values across Tribal Lands, Del Norte, and Humboldt Counties. True North supports families, elders, youth, and individuals of diverse faith traditions, races, cultures, and economic capacities working together for powerful change. United, using the power of relationships and a disciplined community organizing model, True North leaders are courageously challenging social, economic, and environmental injustice in our region.
- » **Summer Changemakers** - Funded by Klamath Promise Neighborhoods (Yurok Tribe)
- » **Coastal Connections:** Coastal Connections is a youth and young adult resource center funded through Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), staffed by Prevention Programs Staff. The Center serves youth and young adults from 14-25 years old. The center provides both prevention and early intervention services with resources and referrals for needs that cannot be met directly on site. Services offered:
  - Internet Access/ Computer Tech support
  - Snacks/Kitchen use
  - Recording Studio
  - Music Room/Instruments
  - Morning wake up \* exercise groups
  - Study room
  - Art Class
  - Youth Council
  - Social/Emotional support groups
  - Referrals to community services
  - Assistance to job search
  - Place to hold meetings for youth and young adults

- » **Del Norte County Department of Recreation:** Teen Sports: Programs for young people 13-18— Basketball; Adult Sports: Basketball, Softball, Volleyball. Contact: Holly Harrison
- » **GOAL:** Outdoor Equity Program: Del Norte County Office of Education— This grant was written by Del Norte County Office of Education in collaboration with Redwoods State and National Parks, Redwoods Parks Conservancy, and the Del Norte Unified School District with input of students, community members, and partner organization staff members. GOAL provides year round opportunities for youth, families, and senior community members to explore and experience the numerous state, national and local parks and recreation areas throughout Del Norte County and provide opportunities that many of our community members may not otherwise experience. Other benefits brought about by the grant include a portable outdoor education classroom, connecting youth with job pathways and career and technical education, enhancing community service and engagement by youth, and developing future leaders in the community.
- » **Yurok Tribe summer internship program:** The Yurok Tribe offers a summer internship program for high school, college, or graduate students, as well as recent graduates. The program aims to provide hands-on experience for students while benefiting both the Tribal government and the interns themselves. The internships are paid and require a commitment of 30 to 40 hours per week for a duration of 6 to 12 weeks. It is expected that interns have their own transportation to the worksite. The pay rates for the summer internships are based on a commitment of 30 to 40 hours per week for a period of 6 to 12 weeks.

The Yurok Tribe is the largest Indian Nation in California, with over 6,000 Tribal members. The reservation lands stretch from the mouth of the Klamath River and the Pacific Ocean, extending upriver for 44 miles on each side. The Tribal government, established in 1993, employs nearly 200 individuals across 10 departments, including fisheries, forestry, education, social services, housing, planning and community development, culture, and economic development.

The Yurok Tribe is dedicated to preserving the survival of their Tribe, upholding and protecting their Tribal sovereignty, reclaiming Tribal land within the Yurok Reservation, preserving and promoting their culture and language, providing for the well-being of their members, restoring and managing natural resources, and ensuring peace and harmony among their members and others under the jurisdiction of their Tribal government.

- » **GATEWAY EDUCATION** of the Wild Rivers Coast: GATEWAY EDUCATION of the Wild Rivers Coast offers a variety of outdoor programs designed to provide campers with unique experiences and valuable skills. These programs not only offer engaging and educational experiences for campers but also contribute to their personal development, fostering important skills and a sense of empowerment. Funding support for these programs enables us to provide these transformative opportunities to a wide range of campers within the community. Note, scholarship assistance is available for all programs. Here is an overview of each camp:
  - Summer Day Camp-Dates: June 26-June 30; July 10-14 Cost: \$425— Campers aged 9-12 (Week 1) and 13-18 (Week 2) participate in a wilderness exploration adventure. Under the guidance of skilled survivalists, they learn essential wilderness survival skills and gain knowledge that empowers them to teach others. This camp fosters resilience, self-reliance, and an appreciation for nature.

- **Advanced Camp**-Dates: July 25-27, Cost: \$425— Designed for campers aged 14-18, the Advanced Camp takes participants' survival skills to the next level. They learn how to fashion tools for survival and deepen their understanding of the natural world. Topics covered include identifying local edible plants, natural repellents, antibacterials, and other crucial skills necessary for thriving in the wilderness.
- **Disc Golf Camp**-Dates: August 7-11, Cost \$375— Campers aged 11-15 engage in an active and strategic camp centered around disc golf. They learn advanced motor skills, decision-making, and fitness while enjoying the beachfront disc golf course—the only one of its kind in the nation. Campers also have the opportunity to explore other disc golf courses, further enhancing their throwing skills and strategic thinking.
- **Wild Harvest Adventures**-Dates: August 20-Nov 13, Cost: \$350— This program provides an entrepreneurial experience for campers aged 11-26. Participants are given a \$1000 investment to start their own wild food business. Throughout the program, they learn essential business skills such as inventory management, packaging, invoicing, and contract negotiation. They also gain hands-on experience by operating a farmers market booth and developing a profit-sharing plan. This camp encourages creativity, critical thinking, and teamwork while giving campers a taste of running their own business.





# Appendix III: Survey Distribution Flier

**YOUNG PEOPLE AGE 16-24  
WHO ARE NOT WORKING & NOT IN SCHOOL:**

**WE NEED YOUR HELP**

Wild Rivers Community Foundation (WRCF) is conducting a survey to help us better understand the ongoing needs of young people age 16-24 who live in Del Norte and Tribal Lands (DNATL) who are not working and not in school.

If you are 18 or older, you can access the survey with this QR code & link:



[bit.ly/DNATL\\_OY](https://bit.ly/DNATL_OY)



If you are under 18, please have a parent or guardian contact us at (707-826-3400) to participate in the survey.

**ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A \$10 COFFEE CARD.**

# Appendix IV: Survey Instrument

## Del Norte Youth Survey

### Informed Consent for Participation

The following section describes the purpose of the survey and asks for your consent to participate. Please review and consent before taking the survey.

**Overall Description of Participation:** You are invited to participate in a survey to better understand Opportunity Youth and their needs in Del Norte and Tribal Lands (DNATL). Information from this survey will help community partners, including California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP) and Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF)/Wild Rivers Community Foundation (WRCF) develop strategies to better support Opportunity Youth reconnect with school and/or work. This study is made possible with funding from the Aspen Institute.

**Length of Participation:** The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

**Compensation:** Compensation will be provided for completion of the survey. Participants will receive a \$10 gift card for their participation in the survey.

**Volunteer Statement:** You are a volunteer. The decision to participate in the survey is completely up to you. If you decide to take the survey, you may stop and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be treated any differently if you decide not to take the survey or if you stop once you have started.

**Confidentiality Statement:** Your identity will not be linked to any information you provide in the survey. If results are shared with other people at meetings or in published articles, your name will be kept private.

**Rights of Participants:** If you have any concerns with this study or questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at [irb@humboldt.edu](mailto:irb@humboldt.edu) or (707) 826-5165. For specific questions about this study, you may contact the program principal investigator, Dawn Arledge, California Center for Rural Policy, Cal Poly Humboldt (707-826-3420).

**Statement of Informed Consent:** I have read and understood what it means to participate in this survey. I understand that the investigator or program coordinator will answer any questions I may have. I also understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I may decline to take the survey or may withdraw from it at any time without jeopardy. I understand that the investigator may terminate my participation in the study at any time.

**By agreeing to this informed consent question, I indicate that I would like to be a part of this project and consent to take the survey.**

- Yes, I consent and want to take the survey.
- No, I do not consent and do not want to take the survey.

## Qualification Page

2. What year were you born? Please enter your 4-digit birth year below (for example: 2001).

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3. Are you between the ages of 16-24 and living in Del Norte and Tribal Lands? (The North Coast).

- Yes, I am between the age of 16-24 living in DNATL.
- No, I am not between the age of 16-24 living in DNATL.

### Age Qual

4. Are you 18 or older?

- Yes, I am 18 or older
- No, I am not 18 or older

### Age Consent Qualification

5. If you answered no, and are not 18 or older, have your parents/guardians completed a consent form, and have you provided your assent to participate in the survey?

- Yes
- No

If you answered no to Question #5: To participate in this survey, you must be between the ages of 16-24. If you are 16 or 17 years old (under 18), you must submit consent from your parent/guardian as well as provide assent to participate. If you would like to participate, please contact Dawn Arledge at [dna2@humboldt.edu](mailto:dna2@humboldt.edu), or call (707)826-3420. If you already provided this information, please contact us so that we can help you participate in the survey. Please do not complete this survey unless you have submitted assent and a consent form.

If this question does not apply to you, and you are over 18 or have submitted the consent forms, you may proceed to complete the survey.

## School/Education Experience

These questions are designed to better understand your experiences with school in Del Norte and Tribal Lands (DNATL).

6. Are you currently in school? (If you are enrolled in school, but currently on spring or summer break, please select "Yes, I am currently in school.")

- Yes, I am currently in school.
- No, I am not currently in school.

7. Which of the following resources or services would assist you in preparing for and entering higher education?

- GED preparation
- Assistance with transportation
- Assistance with technology
- Financial aid and scholarship assistance
- College readiness programs, such as college preparation workshops
- College advising and counseling services
- Place-based learning opportunities
- Mentorship and networking opportunities with college graduates from similar backgrounds
- Cultural and language support programs
- Paid apprenticeships
- Assistance connecting to Career Based/Career Technical Education (CTE) programs
- None of the above
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## Work Related Questions

These questions are designed to help us get a better understanding of your experiences seeking work and working in Del Norte and Tribal Lands (DNATL).

8. Are you currently working?

- Yes, I am currently working.
- No, I am not currently working.

9. Do you know of any local services or community organizations that can provide you support?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please list the services that you know of:

---

10. What resources will help you in entering/staying in the workforce? (Select all that apply):

- Job training programs
- Paid work experience opportunities
- Career counseling
- Job search resources
- Transportation
- Technology access
- Interview and resume building
- Language or cultural support
- Networking opportunities
- Internships/Apprenticeship
- None of the above
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. If you could choose any career path, what field would you be interested in pursuing?

---

## Demographics

Almost done! These demographic questions help us understand the backgrounds of people who respond to the survey. Your responses are anonymous.

12. Where do you live? If your town or city isn't listed, please select the place closest to your home, or use "Other" to write in your home:

- Yurok Reservation
- Hoopa Reservation/Weitchpec/Wautec
- Crescent City
- Klamath
- Tolowa Dee-Ni Reservation/Smith River
- Gasquet
- Fort Dick
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is your age? Please provide below: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Have you been involved in any of the listed government systems? Check all that apply:

- Foster Care/Child Protective Services (CPS)
- Juvenile Justice System
- Justice/Correctional System
- Probation
- Transitional Living Program (TLP)
- Street Outreach Program (SOP)
- Social Services/Caseworker
- VA services
- None
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

15. What is your self-identified racial or ethnic background? Check all that apply.

- Native American/Alaska Native/American Indian/Indigenous
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latinx/Latino/Latina
- African American/Black
- White
- Prefer not to disclose
- Self-identify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your participation! Your participation is important and valuable to your community. Thank you for taking time to participate.**

Thank you for participating in the DNATL OY Survey. We appreciate your contribution. If you have any comments or questions about this study, you may contact the program principal investigator, Dawn Arledge, California Center for Rural Policy, Cal Poly Humboldt (707-826-3420).