



**CAREER TECHNICAL  
EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION**

## Innovating the Education-to-Career Experience to Strengthen Student Success

**Want to speak with a student, educator or the  
Executive Director?**

Reach out to us for interviews, student success stories, program  
data or behind-the-scenes insights.

### **Media Contacts:**

Andriana Du Pree, Director of Development & Marketing  
[adupree@ctesonomacounty.org](mailto:adupree@ctesonomacounty.org)

Malloy Schaffner, Marketing & Communications Manager  
[mschaffner@ctesonomacounty.org](mailto:mschaffner@ctesonomacounty.org)

(707) 708-7080

### **Connect with Us:**

Website: [www.ctesonomacounty.org](http://www.ctesonomacounty.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SonomaCountyCteFund>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ctefoundation/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ctefoundation/>

# Who We Are



## About Us

Founded in 2012, Career Technical Education (CTE) Foundation is a Sonoma County 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission to innovate the education-to-career experience to strengthen student success. For over a decade, CTE Foundation has provided funding to schools to help them create and enhance more than 145+ CTE courses in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, engineering, healthcare and hospitality. The organization collaborates with education and industry partners to create countywide programs that provide students with a pathway to post-secondary education and careers.

Since its founding, CTE Foundation has invested more than \$18.2 million in local schools and career exploration opportunities for Sonoma County students, and has deepened its investments and commitment to student success through innovative, career-connected learning that increases student engagement, brings relevancy to classroom learning and gives young people hope for a future here in Sonoma County. For more information, visit [www.ctesonomacounty.org](http://www.ctesonomacounty.org).

---

## Key Programs and Services

### 1. Connecting Resources:

We provide funding to local schools to bring career-connected learning into the classroom, helping students build the skills they need for college and career success. Our support fills critical funding gaps, empowering schools and districts to innovate, adapt and respond to emerging needs with greater flexibility.

### 2024/2025 School Year Activities:

Nearly \$200,000 in funding was awarded to 14 programs in high school and middle schools across Sonoma County. These programs bring relevancy to classroom learning, as well as equipment, transportation and professional development for educators. This funding is just one of several areas in which CTE Foundation is deeply investing in the development of high-quality career pathways aligned with the region's economic drivers. An additional \$420,000 was awarded in the 2024-2025 school year through special initiative grants for specific career readiness programs.



# Key Programs and Services

## 2. Connecting Pathways:

CTE Foundation is the education-to-workforce intermediary connecting industry and local employers with teachers and schools to bring career-focused learning into the classroom and high-quality career exploration experiences like internships to students while in high school.

### 2024/2025 School Year Activities:

#### Path to Purpose:

CTE Foundation and Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE), with input from employers and community-based organizations around Sonoma County, have designed a cohesive, equitable internship program in Sonoma County. The program aims to establish a network where every high school student who desires an internship has access to a quality internship that enhances their education, builds essential skills and aligns with local workforce needs.

This framework serves as a centralized system featuring a single county-wide internship application, a streamlined vetting process and coordinated student placement. It also includes a range of supports for internship hosts - such as guidance on creating meaningful experiences for students, training staff to effectively mentor youth, navigating legal requirements and more.

#### SWITCH Electric Vehicles:

CTE Foundation partners with Sonoma Clean Power and SWITCH EV to provide hands-on STEM education that integrates electric vehicle technology. The program fosters interdisciplinary learning by bridging math, science and engineering concepts, helping students gain an understanding of scientific and environmental challenges. We currently support this program at 9 middle and high schools in Sonoma County.





# Key Programs and Services

## 3. Connecting Partners

We bring education, industry, community and political leaders together to align efforts and perspectives.

### 2024/2025 School Year Activities:

#### STEM Ecosystem:

In 2021 CTE Foundation set out to identify investment opportunities in STEM enrichment programs for Sonoma County's youth. As a result, we developed a community asset map and are exploring how to develop a comprehensive STEM Ecosystem and backbone organization to facilitate opportunities, year-round. We have an engaged coalition made up of K12, post-secondary, out-of-school youth programs and industry partners who are committed to helping youth in our community access STEM education opportunities.

#### Tinker Academy:

We partner with Sonoma County Office of Education, Sonoma State University and the Santa Rosa Junior College to provide a free STEM-focused summer camp for middle school students. Tinker Academy inspires those underrepresented in STEM fields, including girls and people of color, to stay engaged in math and science. During this two-week camp, students engage in hands-on maker activities including coding, robotics, sewing, 3-D modeling and crafting.

## 4. Connecting Policies

With 15 comprehensive high schools in Sonoma County, we continue to work to ensure a regional approach to building integrated pathways that connect to our local higher education institutions at Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University. In partnership with Sonoma County Office of Education, we are convening leaders from our K-12 districts with post-secondary to align policies, opportunities and systems that ensure smoother transitions out of high school and provide access to early college credits and dual enrollment for a broader range of students. CTE Foundation staff and leadership are active participants on SRJC Industry Advisories in Career Education, Construction and Wine Studies.



## Our Impact

- \$4.6M+ in grants directly to schools over 13 years
- \$18.2M raised to support career-connected learning
- 145+ CTE courses we've invested in, including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, engineering, healthcare and hospitality offered among 15 public high schools
- 29,000+ students directly impacted since 2012
- 250+ middle school students engaged in hands-on STEM education
- 300+ workforce partners engaged

## Notable Press Releases

<b>CTE Foundation Announces New Executive Director</b> <i>June 10th, 2025</i>	<a href="#">[Read the Press Release here]</a>
<b>Foundations from Across the Country Convene in Santa Rosa to Address Skilled Trades Education and Training</b> <i>May 7th, 2025</i>	<a href="#">[Read the Press Release here]</a>
<b>Close to Home: Creating paths from classroom to career</b> <i>February 9th, 2025</i>	<a href="#">[Read the Close to Home article here]</a>
<b>CTE Foundation awards nearly \$200K in grants for career-focused education programs at Sonoma County schools</b> <i>October 24th, 2024</i>	<a href="#">[Read the Press Release here]</a>

## Awards

- California State Senate Certificate of Recognition – Education Workforce Development Award (Ongoing & Long-Term Programs), presented October 19, 2023





# Our Executive Leadership

## Eli Weinzveg

### *Executive Director*

Eli Weinzveg grew up in Sebastopol and attended Santa Rosa High School. After graduating, he moved to Sacramento, where he earned his B.A., M.A., and teaching credentials from California State University, Sacramento. During that time, he married his wife, Nicollette, also a Sonoma County native, and the two soon returned home to Sonoma County to raise their twins in the community that shaped them.

He began his career as a teacher in the Roseland School District before moving into an administrative leadership role at Roseland Collegiate Prep, where he helped guide the school through the aftermath of the 2017 Tubbs Fire and the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, he transitioned to the nonprofit sector to deepen his commitment to educational equity, joining 10,000 Degrees as Director of College Pathways. In that role, he led teams across Sonoma, Napa, and Lake Counties, expanded the organization's reach, strengthened district partnerships, launched new professional development systems, and helped drive cross-program alignment to enhance student impact. Eli joined CTE Foundation in June 2025.



## Leslie Simmons

### *Vice President, Impact & Investments*

Leslie Simmons joined CTE Foundation in February 2019 and is Vice President of Impact & Investments. She is passionate about sharing the impact of CTE Foundation's work through storytelling and loves the opportunity to talk with teachers and students about the value of CTE in supporting students' excitement for the future.


Prior to her work for CTE Foundation, Leslie spent over a decade running a video and film production business in northern California, crafting engaging visual and written content to meet the marketing and branding needs for clients from billion-dollar corporations to grassroots nonprofits.

Leslie holds a B.A. in Community Studies from the University of California Santa Cruz, where she studied politics and economics with a social change lens. A native of Healdsburg, Leslie currently resides with her husband and kiddo in Santa Rosa.





## Visual & Supplemental Assets

Asset	Download Here
 CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION	<a href="#">Click here</a> <a href="#">White Version (Click here)</a>
<b>Our Strategic Plan 2023-2027</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>2025 Board of Director Roster</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>[VIDEO] CTE Programs in Sonoma County – Presented by Trojan Broadcast Channel</b> Description: CTE Foundation collaborated with Petaluma High School’s Trojan Broadcast Channel to produce a video centered around career-connected learning for Spark the Future 2025, our annual fundraising event.	<a href="https://youtu.be/k86OMn-2nrl?si=iTqXcebjpVJR5FBz">https://youtu.be/k86OMn-2nrl?si=iTqXcebjpVJR5FBz</a>
<b>[VIDEO] Empowering Students through Career Technical Education</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/sN9z3eKhVW4?si=wMD2igHvfdmi7-RI">https://youtu.be/sN9z3eKhVW4?si=wMD2igHvfdmi7-RI</a>
<b>[VIDEO] Building Healthcare Pathways at Elsie Allen High School</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/yRgOof1Ymks?si=iqp0cHRjF6VSzzxT">https://youtu.be/yRgOof1Ymks?si=iqp0cHRjF6VSzzxT</a>
<b>Executive Director Eli Weinzveg HQ Headshot</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>CTEIG 5 Year Legislative Report</b>	<a href="#">Link Here</a>
<b>2025 Youth Truth Survey Results</b>	<a href="#">Link Here</a>



## Testimonials and Success Stories

<p>"It all begins with showing up - with consistency, humility, and a deep commitment to service. When we lead with gratitude and center the needs of our local workforce and students, we build stronger partnerships, create meaningful opportunities, and help shape a more vibrant, resilient community."</p>	<p><b>- Eli Weinzveg, Executive Director, CTE Foundation Sonoma County</b></p>
<p>"CTE Foundation has been an invaluable partner in advancing construction and skilled trades education in Sonoma County ever since our partnership designing the North Bay Construction Corps. Their investments in career-connected learning help ensure that students not only graduate with purpose, but with the tools to thrive in industries like construction that are critical to our local economy. At North Coast Builders Exchange, we've seen firsthand how this work strengthens our future workforce and builds a more resilient community."</p>	<p><b>• - Lisa Wittke Schaffner, CEO, North Coast Builders Exchange</b></p>
<p>"I was really lost in high school. The only thing I knew as I was approaching graduation was that I needed to work and wasn't ready to enroll in college. My counselor told me about a program called Sonoma Corps, which gave me a chance to learn more about local careers and how to gain the skills I would need to pursue them. So, I took a gap year internship after graduating and worked at Costeaux French Bakery. This experience changed my life. Before participating in a program like this, I wasn't sure about my future. This program paved a path for me and now I'm pursuing a career in the food safety industry."</p>	<p><b>-Paloma G., Food Safety Leader and Project Manager, Costeaux French Bakery</b></p>



# Testimonials and Success Stories



<p>“My CTE Class is different because it’s more interactive. Now, I can see myself being in the medical field and pursuing healthcare once I graduate.”</p>	<p><b>-Betsaida, Elsie Allen High School</b></p>
<p>“Without this class, I don’t think I’d have the same goals and aspirations for my future that I do now... My pathway has become more than just a classroom - it’s become my passion.”</p>	<p><b>-Addison, Petaluma High School</b></p>
<p>"The reason we have professional development opportunities for us (teachers) and access to professionals is because of CTE Foundation. The school just doesn’t have the funds to provide that to us, so it’s extremely valuable that we gain access to those resources along with flexible grant funds."</p>	<p><b>-Peter Hansen, Digital Media Arts and Film Teacher, Sonoma Valley High School</b></p>
<p>“Our students and communities are challenged to meet the needs of an increasingly complex world and future. I’m proud to be part of a collaborative effort led by CTE Foundation across the county and region to inspire our systems to create new models of career-connected learning for our students. This collective North Star is defined by a vision of integrated instruction around specific industry pathways, high-quality work-based learning, early college credit, industry certifications and more - propelling our students into successful careers, rooted in local labor needs and evolving technologies.”</p>	<p><b>– Dan Ostermann, College and Career Pathways Coordinator, Petaluma City Schools</b></p>
<p>“We know that students engage more deeply in school when they feel what they are learning in the classroom connects to life after high school. That’s why CTE Foundation’s commitment to elevating the importance of career-connected learning is a game-changer for our students.”</p>	<p><b>– Dr. Amie Carter, Superintendent of Sonoma County Schools</b></p>



# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What does the CTE Foundation do?

CTE Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that strengthens the education-to-career experience for Sonoma County students. We invest in programs, equipment, and partnerships that expand access to high-quality, career-connected learning - from classroom instruction to work-based learning and internships.

## 2. What is Career Technical Education (CTE)?

According to the California Department of Education, Career Technical Education (CTE) is a program of study that involves a multiyear sequence of courses that integrates core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers. CTE programs help students explore industries like healthcare, construction, agriculture, digital media, engineering and more.

## 3. How does CTE Foundation support schools and students?

CTE Foundation provides direct funding to schools for CTE courses and career pathway development, sponsor innovative projects, fund equipment and transportation, support teacher training and connect students with local employers for internships and mentorship.

## 4. Where does CTE Foundation's funding come from?

Our funding comes from a mix of public and private sources, including local businesses, foundations, individual donors and government grants. We steward these investments with transparency and trust-based philanthropy to maximize impact.

## 5. How can businesses and community organizations get involved?

Local employers and community groups can partner with CTE Foundation by hosting student interns, serving as mentors, participating in career panels, providing funding, or co-developing learning experiences. We make it easy to engage with students and grow our local workforce.

## 6. Who benefits from CTE Foundation's work?

All Sonoma County students benefit, especially those from under-resourced or underserved backgrounds. Families benefit through expanded opportunities for upward mobility, while the local community gains a pipeline of skilled, job-ready workers that address labor shortages and support long-term economic growth. By sustaining vital programs and removing barriers, CTE strengthens the entire region - now and for generations to come.