

Rural Health and Equity Learning Collaborative

Cultivating the Pathway to Community Wellness



Our Mission

Our community-engaged research & policy center advances rural health equity and well-being by improving social and economic mobility of families in rural America.

Our Vision

To activate a significant network of partners to support rural health equity, higher education, and economic growth through collaboration and innovation.

What is Health Equity?

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences.

About the Rural HEAL Collaborative

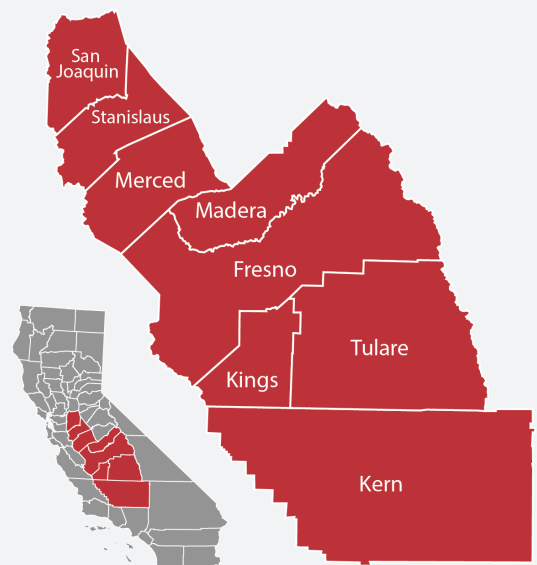
Rural HEAL Collaborative partners are passionate about improving health, education and economic outcomes in rural communities throughout America. Our methodology for engagement takes the shape of effective partnerships, which are essential for community-based solutions for advancing health equity. By facilitating a shared vision and values, we work to increase communities capacities to shape outcomes, and foster multi-sector collaboration for the benefit of all.

Located in an ethnically and economically diverse geographic region, the rural HEAL partnership offers the relevant research capacity and the ability to link to rural areas across the nation. Within our region, we understand how lack of access to education, food, and economic opportunities leads to medical deserts and chronic disease epidemics. As a result of our education, health, NGO, industry and political collaborations, we have experienced how collaboration begets innovation to tackle the challenges of building and sustaining healthy rural communities.

California's Central Valley

The 26,000-square miles from Merced to Kern counties constitute a significant population of low-income rural residents with the nation's lowest educational attainment. The lack of education translates to reduced employment opportunities, increased poverty, and limited access to healthcare. In California's Central Valley, like rural communities across America, residents encounter meager

resources to improve workforce and economic development. Likewise, they experience few opportunities to carry out research and evaluate failing systems or leverage social and political power to eliminate health inequities. Like rural communities across America, ensuring that California's Central Valley meets the workforce demands of industry is essential to the economic stability of our rural communities. In rural regions, where populations are more dispersed and farther from major job centers, labor markets face different challenges than those in metro areas, where people are closer to education, training, and employment options.



For more information visit
BakersfieldCollege.edu/President/HEAL



Strategic Priorities

Creating the HEAL Culture

Our short- and long-term strategic goals encompass an overarching commitment to serve as a catalyst for local, state and national collaboration and a progressive, creative force on behalf of all rural communities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Advocate for Rural Health and Healthy Communities by informing policy makers and stakeholders about Central Valley circumstances.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Launch pilot studies to create regional outreach toolkits and trainings addressing rural health, food security, and well-being.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Strengthen the regional workforce and economy.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Engage in regional dialog to engender policy creation at the national level.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

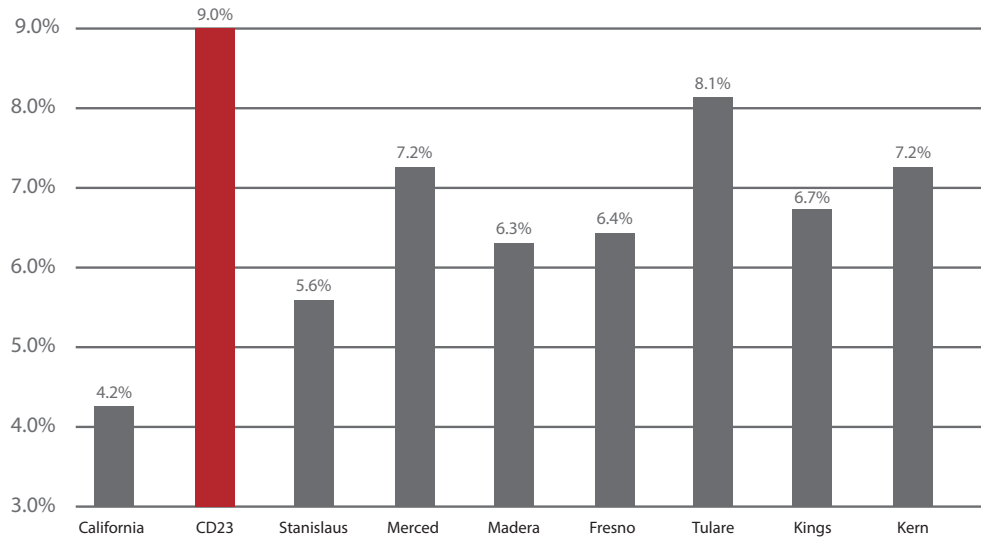
Enhance rural economic and community growth nationwide through a network of information, resources and political action.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

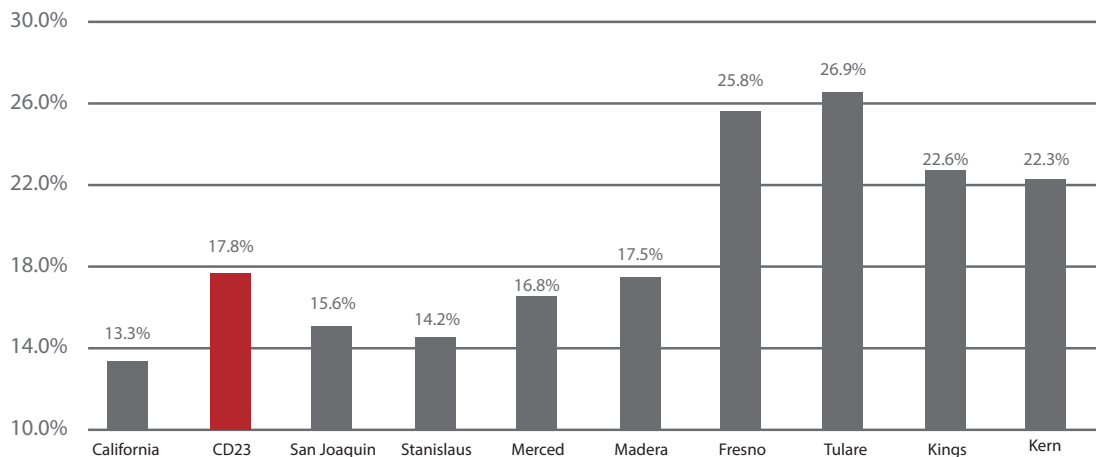
Generate funding to ensure that resources are commensurate with rural community needs.

Central Valley Unemployment and Poverty

Unemployment in the Central Valley



Poverty in the Central Valley



Source: California Employment Development Department Industry Employment & Labor Force Report June 21, 2019
 Source : <https://www.ppic.org/map/california-poverty-by-county-and-legislative-district/>