



Center *for*
Nonprofit
Management

2025 Social Impact Sector Summit

UNSTOPPABLE
OUR MISSION MOVES US FORWARD

PROGRAM AGENDA

To You—the Unstoppable,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my honor to welcome you to this year's Social Impact Sector Summit. Thank you for showing up—not just for this gathering, but for the communities you serve every single day. You bring more than your expertise; you bring your grit, your heart, and your unshakable belief that change is possible.

We don't need to pretend this moment is easy. Our sector is navigating headwinds stronger than ever—funding uncertainties, rising community needs, and relentless pressure to do more with less. Yet here you are. Here we are. And that is the power of this convening: proof that even in the toughest times, we rise by standing together.

This Summit is not just a meeting. It is fuel. It is where ideas are sharpened, partnerships are strengthened, and leaders like you stand in solidarity. Together, we carry a force that cannot be ignored. Together, we are unstoppable.

So lean in today. Ask the hard questions. Forge new alliances. Reflect on your leadership, and imagine boldly what is next. The future of our sector—of our communities—depends on the courage and creativity gathered in this room.

Thank you for being here. Your presence is proof that our movement is alive, resilient, and ready to meet the moment. May this Summit challenge you, recharge you, and connect you to a community that refuses to give up on what is right.

With resolve and gratitude,
Ellah Ronen
Chair, Board of Directors
Center for Nonprofit Management



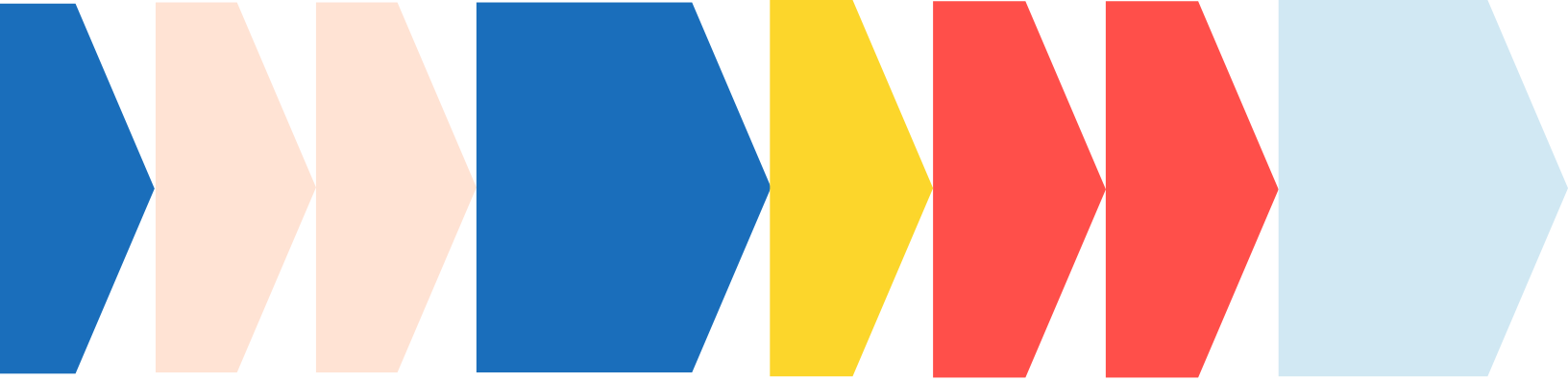


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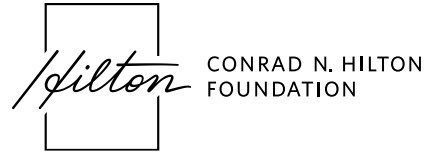




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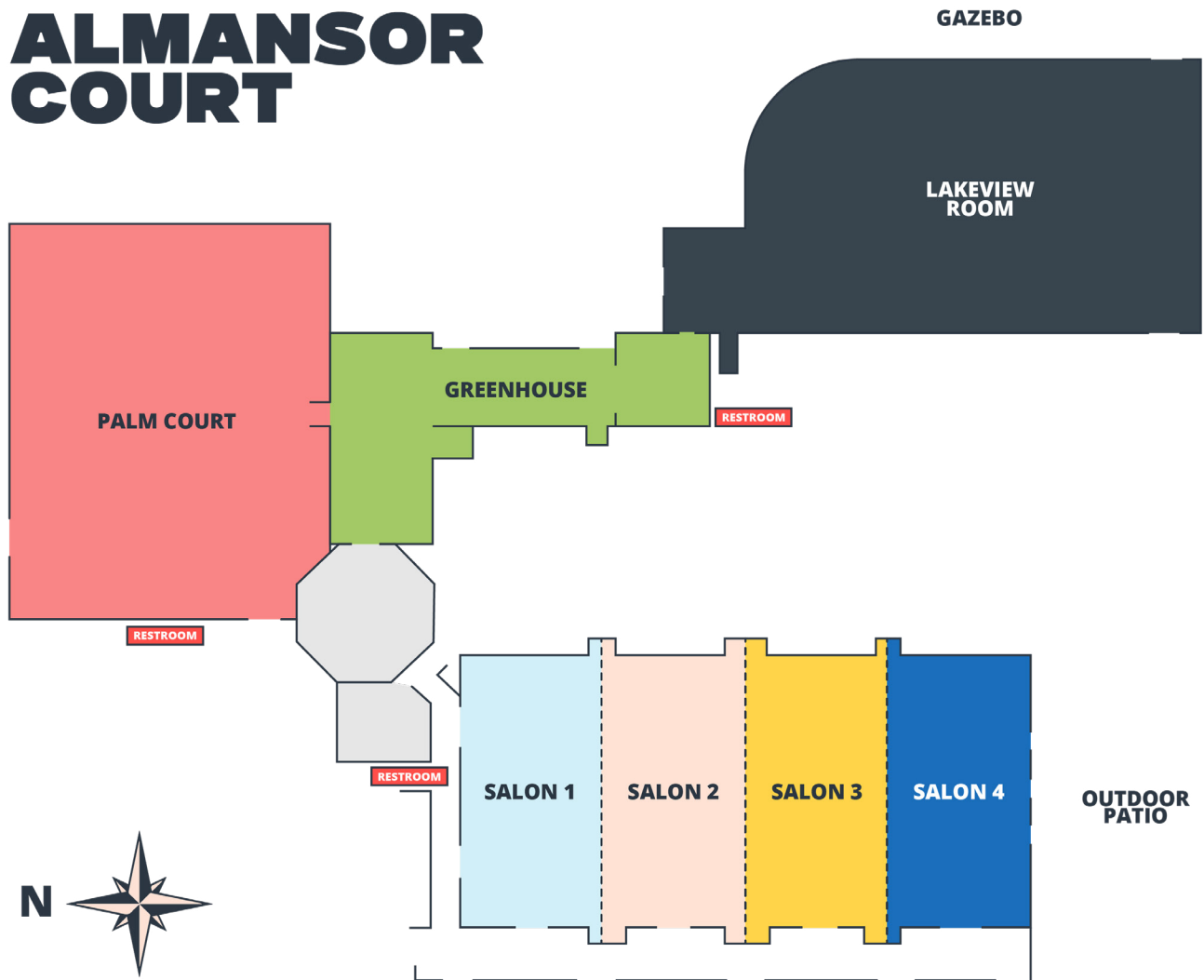
PROGRAM AGENDA & MAPS





MAP

ALMANSOR COURT



- LAKEVIEW ROOM
- PALM COURT
- GREENHOUSE
- RESTROOM

- SALON 1
- SALON 2
- SALON 3
- SALON 4



8:00am – 9:00am
Palm Court

BREAKFAST + NETWORKING

Summit Registration opens at 8am.

During this time, we invite you to check out the Impact Marketplace, nourish yourself with our Summit breakfast (found in Palm Court), and connect with others in this space.

9:00am – 9:20am
Lakeview Room

WELCOME REMARKS

We'll open the day by grounding ourselves and acknowledging the collective energy in the room. Together with CNM's President & CEO, we'll set the tone for moving beyond a charity mindset toward one of impact, power, and possibility—and preview the experiences that will guide us through the day.

This portion will be led by Michelle Escamilla, Engagement and Outreach Manager; Efrain Escobedo, President & CEO; Cynthia N. Cortez, Vice President of Learning and Innovation, from the Center for Nonprofit Management.

9:20am – 9:35am
Lakeview Room

KEYNOTE | Setting the Stage: A Call to Purpose and Possibility

Keynote:

- Brenda Solorzano | President & CEO, *The California Endowment*

The summit's keynote will be a powerful message from Brenda Solorzano, the President and CEO of The California Endowment. Part context setting, part uplifting, and wholly powerful, this address will invite attendees to critically explore what is possible given the current times. What does it mean to build something new? What pitfalls should we be mindful of? What could our work look like when collaboration drives our efforts?

9:35am – 10:15am
Lakeview Room

Philanthropy in Real Time: What Now, What Next

Moderator:

- Alicia Lara | President & CEO, *Community Partners*

Panelists:

- Jennifer Price-Letscher | President & CEO, *The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation*
- Joanna Jackson | President & CEO, *Weingart Foundation*
- Miguel Santana | President & CEO, *California Community Foundation*

Gain insight into philanthropy's response to a rapidly shifting nonprofit landscape. This dynamic panel features powerful philanthropic leaders, highlighting how they are navigating today's challenges and what nonprofits can expect from the philanthropic sector moving forward. The conversation will shed light on perspectives and recommendations that can guide nonprofits as they navigate today's challenges and strengthen connections with funders.



10:15am – 10:30am

Transition to Morning Concurrent Sessions

10:30am – 11:45am
Lakeview Room

CONCURRENT SESSION

Reimagining Fundraising Strategies for Today's and Tomorrow's Needs

Facilitator:

- Tammy Khan | Vice President of Operations, *SHEIKH/Impact*
- Linna Hanson | Senior Philanthropy Consultant, *SHEIKH/Impact*
- Sierra Smith | Executive Director, *Open Paths Counseling Center*

Nonprofits everywhere are feeling the squeeze in today's funding landscape, and it's clear we need to navigate this moment together. In this session, Sheikh/Impact — a social sector consulting firm — teams up with a long-time client organization to share a case study on how we've tackled these challenges head-on, together. The session will include a philanthropy perspective from one of our team members who has spent their career on the grantmaking side. They will share reflections, trends, and insights from decades in the field. Together, we'll explore practical tools and big-picture perspectives to help strengthen fundraising strategies for these uncertain times.

10:30am – 11:45am
Salon 1

CONCURRENT SESSION

Responsibly Using Artificial Intelligence to Maximize Equitable Outcomes

Facilitator:

- Sarah Kelly | Director for Outcomes AI, *Project Evident*

AI is powerfully shaping how nonprofits fulfil their mission, allowing them to scale impact, increase efficiency, and serve their clients in new ways. This workshop will showcase how nonprofits can leverage AI for mission impact, with a focus on how AI can help nonprofits leverage evidence and data more effectively. From using AI to improve program evaluation to leveraging risk factors surfaced through predictive analytics for program improvement to supporting coaches in building evidence plans, AI can be a critical tool for data-driven decision making. This workshop will introduce key ethical and socio-technical dimensions nonprofits must consider to make effective use of AI and feature case studies of nonprofits who have made particularly effective use of AI.



10:30am – 11:45am
Salon 2

CONCURRENT SESSION

First Generation Professional: Paving Leadership Through A New Reality

Moderator:

- Cynthia N. Cortez | Vice President of Learning and Innovation
Center for Nonprofit Management

Panelists:

- Brandon Dean Johnson | Executive Director, *CreateNow*
- Erica Bernal-Martinez | Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO)
- Jan Victor Fernandez Andasan | Development Director, *Legacy LA*

As First Generation Professionals (FGPs) continue to enter leadership roles, it is critical to pause and look at the bigger picture of the sector's financial landscape, pressures for right sizing, and hostility towards DEI efforts. Part wisdom sharing and healing, hear the experiences of this diverse panel standing relentlessly firm on their values. This session will also highlight the unique strengths of FGPs—proximity to community, cultural identity, and a social justice vision—while unpacking how these lived experiences shape leadership, organizational culture, and the future of the sector.

10:30am – 11:45am
Salon 3

CONCURRENT SESSION

Revamp Impact Narratives: Using Data to Creatively Tell Your Impact Story

Facilitators:

- Caroline Bhalla | Director of Civic Engagement
USC Lusk Center for Real Estate
- Cameron Yap | Systems and Data Manager
Neighborhood Data for Social Change

In this hands-on workshop, participants will learn how to transform raw data into compelling stories that inspire action. Together, we will explore strategies for collecting and analyzing meaningful data, crafting community needs statements, and weaving insights into narratives that strengthen programs, fundraising, and advocacy. Walk away with practical tools to showcase your impact and confidently communicate your organization's story through data.



10:30am – 11:45am
Salon 4

CONCURRENT SESSION

Crisis Response in Action: Strategies to Sustain Communities and Missions

Moderator:

- Jai Phillips | Senior Director of Special Initiatives
Center for Nonprofit Management
- Eric Derghazarian | VP of Research and Social Impact
Center for Nonprofit Management

Speakers:

- Andrew King | *Department of Angels*
- Kate Marr | Executive Director, *Community Legal Aid SoCal*
- Diego Cartagena | President & CEO, *Bet Tzedek*

From natural disasters to policy threats, nonprofits are on the frontlines of multiple crises impacting our communities. This session explores the impact of LA Wildfires, Federal DEI executive orders, and ICE raids as three recent crises nonprofits have had to quickly respond to. Learn how nonprofits are building sustainability in turbulent times. In this session, participants will engage with peers around their specific issue area, share practices that have served them well, and identify common themes that can inform future sector-wide strategies. Learn how nonprofits are building sustainability in turbulent times.

10:30am – 11:45am
Gazebo

CONCURRENT SESSION

“Coming Back to Center”: Breathwork, Energy, & Nature

Facilitator:

- Okha Shank Butler | Founder and Executive Director, *The Heart Center*

This outdoor session offers a gentle and restorative experience designed to help nonprofit leaders pause and recharge. Through mindful breathing techniques, grounding practices accompanied by the healing sounds of instruments, and quiet reflection in nature, participants will leave with simple tools they can carry into daily life. This space of respite welcomes anyone seeking calm and connection. Limited space, first come first serve.

10:45am – 12:00pm

Transition to Lunch

12:00pm – 12:30pm
Palm Court

LUNCH + IMPACT MARKETPLACE

Lunch will be available in Palm Court. We invite you to explore the Impact Marketplace, in the Greenhouse Room. This year, we are featuring fellow capacity building organizations to affirm that together, we are Unstoppable!



12:30pm – 12:50pm
Lakeview Room

Fireside Chat with Supervisor Hilda Solis

Join Supervisor Solis for a conversation during lunch hour on the critical role nonprofits play in shaping a stronger social impact sector across Southern California. She will share her perspective on this moment in time, the importance of public-nonprofit partnerships, and why working together is essential to addressing some of the region's most pressing needs.

12:50pm – 1:00pm

Transition to Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

1:00pm – 2:15pm
Lakeview Room

CONCURRENT SESSION

Boosting Up Your Financial Infrastructure

Facilitator:

- Jessica Huey | Director, *BDO USA*

As nonprofits confront financial forecasting challenges, tough decisions cannot be delayed. Come learn from BDO to understand mindsets, tools, and strategies to successfully lead your nonprofit forward. Special consideration will be given to the heaviness that comes with decision making that stems from unstable funding resources. This session will also focus on preparing organizations to remain grounded, inspired, and future-focused—equipping leaders with ways to carry vision and clarity into the next chapter of their work.

1:00pm – 2:15pm
Salon 1

CONCURRENT SESSION

The State of the Sector: Data, Trends, and the Road Ahead

Moderator:

- Eric Derghazarian | VP of Research and Social Impact
Center for Nonprofit Management

Presenters:

- Jessica LaBarbera | Chief of Staff & Vice President of Strategic Initiatives
Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)
- Shannon Sedgwick | Senior Director for Institute of Applied Economics
Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC)

Now is a pivotal moment to understand the realities facing nonprofits and identify how we can best sustain the organizations that anchor our communities. This session examines the current state of our sector through insights from two CNM-sponsored reports- the LA Nonprofit Sector Report from the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) and the LA nonprofit industry report from the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC). The session will spark a broader dialogue on where the sector stands now—and what lies ahead. Learn how peer organizations are navigating today's funding, staffing, and operational landscapes.



1:00pm – 2:15pm
Salon 2

CONCURRENT SESSION

Strategically Partnering with Consultants

Moderator:

- Alicia K. Avalos | Senior Learning Integration Manager
Center for Nonprofit Management

Panelists:

- Victor Lopez | HR Consultant, *Center for Nonprofit Management*
- Crystal Gonzalez | Founder & Principal Consultant, *RevComm Consulting*
- Sylvia Juarez-Magaña | Founder, *Juarez Consulting*

Consultants, subcontractors, temporary staff, and external service providers can help nonprofits gain real-time operational and program support. They can be very effective forms of capacity strengthening. To maximize resources, come learn when to hire staff vs. a consultant, strategies on how to best manage contracted support, and tips to regularly assess the effective use of these powerful resources. This session will also invite you to explore what's possible through consultant partnerships and provide tools to help determine if, when, and how this practice can strengthen your organization.

1:00pm – 2:15pm
Salon 3

CONCURRENT SESSION

Planning for Survival? Consider Impact Resilience Instead

Facilitator:

- Carrie Harlow | Director of Programs & Partnerships
Nonprofit Sustainability Initiative (NSI)
- Otha Cole | Director of Strategy of Communication
Nonprofit Sustainability Initiative (NSI)

The financial landscape has accelerated the need for thoughtful succession and scenario planning. As leaders face pressure to make the decisions today that will sustain their organizations, we invite them to shift their frame to impact resilience. Come learn about sustained collaboration models such as program transfers, shared service arrangements, co-location, parent/subsidiary agreements, and the creation of network backbone organizations. Hear from the Nonprofit Sustainability Initiative about when sustained collaboration is the right strategy, predictors of success, and how to access targeted funding for the exploratory process. Join us for a candid conversation about the tough decisions leaders are facing and the tools available to make them strategically.



1:00pm – 2:15pm
Salon 4

CONCURRENT SESSION

Reclaiming the Narrative: Repositioning the Social Impact Sector

Moderator:

- Angelica Frias | Vice President of Action & Engagement
Center for Nonprofit Management

Panelists:

- Geoff Green | CEO, *Cal Nonprofits*
- Cielo Castro | Chief Impact Officer, *California Community Foundation*
- Will Campbell | CEO, *Quantasy & Associates*

This high-impact session will ignite a conversation around one of the most urgent imperatives facing our sector: the need to rewrite the story of who we are and why we matter. As political scrutiny intensifies and outdated perceptions persist, it's time to stop playing defense and start shaping the public narrative ourselves. Through a two-part structure, we'll first frame the current landscape and challenges facing the sector, then shift into a collaborative visioning process to reimagine and reclaim how our story is told.

1:00pm – 2:15pm
Gazebo

CONCURRENT SESSION

“Messy & Meaningful”: Exploring Creative Expression

Facilitator:

- Ponti Lambros | Founder, *Art Rebel*

This outdoor guided session is a purposeful space to reflect, create, and connect with your intentions. Using art as a tool for storytelling, participants are invited to share their nonprofit journey, rediscover their purpose, and express what matters most—no skill required, all levels of creativity welcome. Space is limited, so don't miss this opportunity to explore your story through color, movement, and imagination.

2:15pm – 2:30pm

Transition to Lakeview Room



2:30pm – 3:30pm
Lakeview Room

The (Fun) Art of Networking

Facilitator:

- Michelle Escamilla | Engagement and Outreach Manager
Center for Nonprofit Management
- Patricia Navarro | Senior Learning Manager
Center for Nonprofit Management

After much learning and connecting, this space is to encourage thoughtful networking with colleagues. The session will start with an overview of the significance of networking as a key strategy for sector strength. Through an engaging activity, participants will have the opportunity to explore their own strengths, reflect on what fuels their purpose, and confidently share both what they bring to the table and what they need from their nonprofit peers in order to remain inspired and effective.

3:30pm – 4:00pm
Lakeview Room

Reflections and Next Steps

Facilitator:

- Cynthia N. Cortez | Vice President of Learning and Innovation
Center for Nonprofit Management

We'll close the Unstoppable Summit by coming together in dialogue and community, reflecting on the insights, stories, and commitments shared throughout the day. This final session offers a space to uplift one another and name the next steps—both personal and collective—that will carry our sector forward.

4:00pm – 5:00pm
Palm Court

UNSTOPPABLE TOGETHER: THE SUMMIT SOCIAL CLUB

Performer:

- Elektra Armenta | Drag Performer

Close out the day with joy, energy, and connection at the Summit Social Club—a space to celebrate and simply be. Witness an uplifting performance from drag performer Elektra Armenta. As we wrap up the day, let us never forget that even through the toughest moments, we are truly unstoppable together. Don't miss the opportunity to connect with peers and grow your network. It is an atmosphere you won't want to miss.



FAQS + NOTES



FAQS

What is the date, time, and location of the Summit?

The 2025 Social Impact Sector Summit will take place on Thursday, October 9, 2025 at Almansor Court (700 S Almansor St, Alhambra, CA 91801). Summit program is from 9am - 4pm with registration beginning at 8am and the exciting Summit Social Club happening from 4pm - 5pm.

Are there any recommended hotels nearby?

Yes! Hotels in the area that know about the Summit include Sheraton Los Angeles San Gabriel and Hilton Los Angeles/San Gabriel.

Is parking available at or near the venue?

Yes, there is parking on site free of charge.

Can I transfer my ticket to someone else?

If you would like to transfer your ticket to someone else, please contact us at impactsummit@cnmsocal.org with the new attendees information in order to transfer the registration.

Will there be networking opportunities?

Yes, there will be multiple opportunities for socializing and networking include our session at 2:30pm, titled The Fun Art of Networking. Make sure to join for this facilitated opportunity!

Will sessions be recorded or available afterwards?

At this time, we will not be recording sessions nor will we be providing recordings post-event.

What are the accessibility accommodations available at the Summit?

All spaces are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are wheelchair accessible. Please contact impactsummit@cnmsocal.org if you need other accommodations.



Will tickets be available at the door?

At this time, advance registration is required. We anticipate this event to sell out prior to the event date.

Will meals be provided?

Yes, breakfast and lunch are included with your registration purchase.



NOTES

EVENT LIABILITY AGREEMENT

By registering for this event, you agree to:

- Attend at your own risk
- Release the organizers from liability for injury or property damage
- Comply with all safety protocols
- Consent to emergency medical treatment if required
- Accept that media may be recorded during the event

If you do not agree or have any questions, please contact us before attending at impactsummit@cnmsocal.org

CODE OF CONDUCT

You will behave respectfully toward all attendees, speakers, and staff. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior may result in removal.

