Executive Summary

In our community, **10,940 families (17 percent)** do not make enough money to afford the essentials of life—food, shelter, clothing and utilities—and the added costs associated with working—childcare and transportation.

The struggle is not equally shared. Thirty-five percent of black families make less than $35,000/year, compared to 14% of white families.

Due mainly to the cost of housing, a single parent with a toddler in childcare needs to earn over $45,000 a year.

Network2Work@PVCC intentionally addresses these struggles. We have enrolled over 1,000 job-seekers, and 85% of those who complete secure employment. Fifty-nine percent of those jobs pay $25,000 or more. Fifty-six percent of our job-seekers are black.

Last year, Network2Work@PVCC provided job-seekers, on average, $750 in one-time emergency financial assistance, primarily for either housing or transportation.

In addition to expanding the reach of Network2Work@PVCC, there are ten additional steps our community could take to help our neighbors climb the economic ladder:

1. Increase local procurement.
2. Pilot Open Hiring™.
3. Provide universal pre-K.
4. Offer low-interest loans/grants to pay life expenses while attending school.
5. Pair subsidized housing with opportunities for economic mobility wherever possible.
6. Build more $800/month two-bedroom apartments for working families.
7. Create a community-wide employee assistance program.
8. Expand homeownership and wealth-building through purpose-built condominiums.
9. Make access to capital affordable by providing loan guarantees.
10. Lock shifts.