



# WHERE WE BELONG



2024 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Report



**55**  
**YEARS**

*Home is just the beginning*



## WHERE WE PRACTICE EQUITY

For over half a century, Eden Housing has been committed to developing affordable housing communities that foster inclusivity and diversity. Our dedication to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) reflects our mission to create spaces where everyone feels they belong.

**We advocate** to eliminate the effects of racist, exclusionary land use policy and housing discrimination.

**We build** inclusive, high-quality, well-designed, affordable housing throughout California.

**We believe** that access to resident services and amenities allows people to live with dignity, experience lifelong growth and build financial security.

**We celebrate** our differences and strive to create change for good.

**We promise** to do our part, being mindful and consistent.

**We commit** to scrutinize and improve our practices, policies, and programs.

**We challenge** our partners to join us.



*View the full version*

# This is where you belong.

**This is where YOU belong:** in a community deeply committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Welcome to Eden Housing's third annual DEIB report—a testament to our dedication to sharing our progress and identifying opportunities for further improvement. We celebrate the stories, partnerships, and individuals featured in these pages, all while acknowledging the ongoing work needed to build a culture of equity and belonging. This report holds us accountable for our promises, ensuring we stay true to our commitments.



This year's report highlights our initiatives and accomplishments through spotlights, stories, and data. At Eden Housing, building a sustainable, equitable, and high-performing company committed to racial, social, and economic justice is our core mission. The annual DEIB Report serves as a crucial reflection point on our progress and areas needing more attention.

We are dedicated to creating a culture of inclusivity and belonging, underpinned by respect and fairness. Our goal is to cultivate a workforce that represents diverse backgrounds and viewpoints, reflecting the community in which we live, work, and

play. Although we are advancing in tracking and measuring the diversity of our vendors and suppliers, we draw inspiration from our partners who join us on this journey toward diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Supported by our Board of Directors, leadership team, staff, and DEIB Council, we remain steadfast in our pursuit of impactful initiatives that will help us achieve our aspirations. As you read through this report, reflect on our shared journey and the progress we've made together. If we didn't make it clear enough, this is where you belong, **this is where WE belong.**



*Linda Mandolini*

**Linda Mandolini**  
CEO and President



*Rudolph Johnson*

**Rudolph Johnson III**  
Board Chair



*Lorenzo Jones*

**Lorenzo Jones**  
VP of Diversity, Equity,  
Inclusion & Belonging



DEIB Survey Results

**84%**

of employees reported satisfaction with our diversity efforts

**75%**

found their colleagues to be helpful

**75%**

felt they were treated fairly

**74%**

felt they could be their authentic selves at work

“I let her [Alycia Anderson, ‘Disabling Ableism’ Meaningful Conversations Facilitator & Accessibility Changemaker] know that I felt so inspired and thanked her. After chatting with her, she gave me her number and said now you have another friend for life. Thank you Eden Housing for making me feel like I am at home.”

- Martha Cardenas, Assistant Manager



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# How your words shape our actions.

Our commitment to listening and learning is key to our DEIB strategy. We use surveys to gather feedback, address concerns, and ensure an inclusive environment. While recent DEIB survey results are favorable, we know there's more work ahead. Supporting staff career development and growth remains a priority.

Our DEIB newsletter, created by staff, shares diverse viewpoints and recognizes various holidays, fostering cultural awareness and inclusivity while balancing business needs.

We promote DEIB goals through training and conversations, ensuring open communication, continuous learning, and cultural humility.

## Our DEIB Commitment in Action

This year we conducted special DEIB trainings for our Staff, Board, Executive, and Extended Leadership Teams including:

**Belonging: The Eden Way** — Over 430 employees attended this staff training to boost recognition, acknowledgement of employee value, appreciation for accomplishments and to share honest opinions.

**Embodying Equity in Our Leadership Work** — This was for board members and leadership and facilitated by Dimensions Educational Consulting, a nonprofit led by Black women and people of color.

**Meaningful Conversations** — Developed by our DEIB Council, these quarterly conversations invite speakers to share their knowledge on relevant and engaging topics, supporting our employees. These included: *Listening Circle*, *Gender Identity & Pronouns*, *Disabling Ableism* and *Volunteerism: Changing Ourselves by Impacting Others*.









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# Benefits that grow with our staff.

We offer comprehensive benefits and support systems, from tuition reimbursement to 8 hours of paid volunteering annually. Volunteerism, exemplified by our volunteer Board of Directors, is a cornerstone of Eden Housing.

Our culture of support and teamwork includes a “gifting of sick hours” program, allowing employees to anonymously donate sick hours to colleagues in need.

We continually update our benefits to meet the diverse needs of our workforce, striving for a supportive, inclusive workplace. We want our employees to thrive, not just live.

## Benefits Offered to Our Employees



### Tuition Reimbursement

\$5,250 per year for accredited courses



### Paid Holidays

Eden celebrated 15 holidays and 6 early release days



### Paid Volunteer Hours

8 paid hours per year



### Employee Sick Time Donations

150 total hours contributed in 2023



### Wellness Program

Includes \$480 towards gym membership reimbursement per year and more.

“The tuition assistance program ... has played a significant role in enabling me to pursue a Master’s degree in Cybersecurity. If not for this program, it would have been a challenge to finance the degree. The knowledge and skills I have gained through this program directly apply to my current job, which helps strengthen our organization against potential threats.”

- Spence Gordon, Information Security Manager

“I am truly grateful to be a part of an organization that values its employees’ well-being and understands the importance of supporting them during challenging times. Eden’s [policy to gift sick hours] exemplifies the kind of compassionate and supportive workplace culture that makes a real difference in the lives of its employees.”

- Angel Griffin, Resident Services Coordinator - Senior Living





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# How we grow our talent.

Our training programs cultivate talent from diverse backgrounds, ensuring all employees can develop skills and advance careers. We actively recruit diverse individuals, enhancing our team’s strength and service to a diverse customer base.

At Eden Housing, we support and encourage career growth to retain talented employees and meet business needs. We provide clear and consistent support, recognizing career development as a shared responsibility between individuals and the organization.

### Key Initiatives

By prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging—we create a workplace that empowers every employee to thrive and contribute to our collective success.

#### Promotions

Ensure equitable advancement opportunities for all employees, leveraging our diverse workforce.

#### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Prioritize these principles in training, hiring, and promotions to create a valued and empowered workforce.

#### Inclusive Employee Handbook

Uses gender-neutral references (they/them).

#### Updated Hiring Process

Removed vehicle ownership requirement and focused on relevant experience over a four-year degree.

#### Education Assistance Program

Supports employees’ educational development to enhance their contributions to Eden Housing’s success.

### New Hires



### Promotions



“My promotion has allowed me to focus on the work I enjoy the most and it’s allowed me to be part of company wide discussions that impact the organization. It’s given me a renewed sense of responsibility that has energized me to perform at a high level.”

- Eric Tsai, Director of Strategic Initiatives

Where we CELEBRATE OUR DIFFERENCES

# What diversity looks like to us.

## Our Diversity

### Staff Metrics - Gender

**56%**  
Female

**43%**  
Male

**1%**  
Non-Binary

### Staff Metrics - Race

**39.4%**  
Hispanic or Latino

**19.7%**  
White

**16.7%**  
Black or African American

**1.1%**  
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**3.6%**  
Two or More Races

**15.7%**  
Asian

**0.2%**  
American Indian or Alaska Native

**3.6%**  
Declined to Answer

We celebrate our differences by ensuring diverse representation at all levels of our organization. Our board's composition reflects our commitment to gender and racial diversity. By embracing a wide range of perspectives, we foster a culture of innovation and inclusion. Each unique voice contributes to a richer dialogue, better decision-making, and more creative solutions to the challenges we face.

We do not set quotas or specific goals from the Board level downward, but we always explore opportunities that best represent diversity in all its important aspects.



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# by the Numbers

## Executive Team and Extended Leadership Team

**62%**  
Female

**38%**  
Male

**62%**  
BIPOC

**38%**  
White

## Board Members

**63%**  
Female

**37%**  
Male

**50%**  
BIPOC

**50%**  
White





EDEN HOUSING

Darnell Williams

MAINTENANCE of the YEAR 2023

*Kiejah Thomas*

In recognition of your contributions and dedication towards our goal of changing our world one corner at a time, and for exemplifying great qualities and embodying the Eden Way, we present to you this well-deserved award.

Lynda Maximilian  
President

Darnell Williams  
SVP, Property Operations



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# We strive for a culture of appreciation.

At Eden Housing, we strive to foster a culture of appreciation that underscores the value and dedication of our employees. Recognizing their hard work and achievements is a cornerstone of our culture and vital to creating a supportive and inclusive workplace. We dedicate an entire paid day for our appreciation events, ensuring every employee feels valued and celebrated for their contributions. Through these events, we reinforce our commitment to equity and respect for all, highlighting the importance of each role within our organization.

## Employee Appreciation Event

The annual Employee Appreciation Event is a significant celebration where we recognize the efforts and achievements of all our staff members. It is a time for everyone to feel valued and appreciated, reinforcing our commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive workplace.

**“When planning events, we take into account employees with different abilities to ensure all have an equitable experience.”**

*- Michael Dismuke, Vice President of Communication and Organizational Development*

## Maintenance & Janitorial Appreciation Event

Our Maintenance & Janitorial Appreciation Event is specifically dedicated to honoring the vital contributions of our maintenance and janitorial staff. Often the least visible yet some of the hardest workers in our organization, these employees ensure the smooth operation and cleanliness of our facilities.

**“This is the first company I’ve worked for that had [a] Maintenance and Janitorial appreciation event where they are just thankful because you do good work. They look out for you for doing such good work and give you extra days off. Can’t beat the extra days off per year.”**

*- Elvis Young, Maintenance I & Night Manager*



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**Vicente Guerrero**  
In recognition of 20 years of service  
With Gratitude and  
Appreciation for your 20 years of service

With gratitude and  
appreciation  
for your 20 years of service





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# We create a culture of recognition.

Creating a culture where employees are recognized not only by management but also by each other is crucial to our success. Often, it is colleagues who witness the day-to-day efforts and notice when someone goes above and beyond.

The Employee Recognition Program, featuring Bricks, Groundbreakers, and Cornerstone Awards, highlights the exceptional contributions of our team members and reinforces our culture of appreciation and recognition. These initiatives ensure that all employees feel seen and valued by both leadership and their peers, fostering a supportive and collaborative environment.

## BRICKS

**2,749 given by 242 unique staff members in 2023**

A unique way for colleagues to acknowledge the efforts and achievements of others through spontaneous “Thank you” notes for a job well done.



## GROUNDBREAKERS

**73 nominated in 2023**

Every employee has the opportunity to nominate a co-worker, detailing how the nominee furthered Eden Housing’s organizational goals.



## CORNERSTONE AWARDS

**10 awarded in 2023**

The highest level of recognition at Eden Housing, awarded to those indispensable to our success, selected by our Executive Team.



“I think the part that I appreciated the most with the Cornerstone award is how it made me feel as a valued employee of Eden Housing. Oftentimes, we are all so busy with the day to day, that the impacts and achievements that we make can go unnoticed and I think that the Cornerstone is a wonderful way to not let those moments pass by.”

- Stephanie Foster,  
Community Manager I & Night Manager





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# Empowering our residents.

At Eden Housing, we believe that home is just the beginning. Our commitment extends beyond providing shelter; it's about fostering environments where all community members can live full, thriving, and dignified lives.

Our mission encompasses a variety of programs designed to empower individuals across our communities. These initiatives support our broader goal of creating and sustaining high-quality affordable housing while promoting stability, economic mobility, and personal growth for everyone we serve.

## Key Programs That Support Our Residents

Below is a brief overview of our resident programs. For more detailed information, please visit our website.

### Scholarships

*34 recipients, \$107,778 in scholarships*

Empowers residents to pursue higher education and vocational training.

### Renters Advantage

*410 participants*

Provides knowledge and skills for navigating the rental market.

### Family Self-Sufficiency

*25 families participated*

Supports financial independence through job training and financial education.

### Eden Saver

*60 participants, 46 graduates*

Educates on saving and financial management for stability.

### Extended Learning Programs (ELP)

*603 participants*

Offers tutoring, adult education, and enrichment activities.

### Health & Education Assistance

*720 residents participated*

Supports health needs and educational pursuits.

### Food Distribution & Nutrition

*4,332 residents participated*

Addresses food insecurity and promotes healthy eating.

### Wellness Checks

*2,116 residents participated*

Ensures the well-being of senior residents.

### Exercise & Socialization Programs

*3,780 residents participated*

Promotes physical activity and social engagement.

### Adult Education & Resources

*1,149 residents participated*

Provides educational opportunities for adult learners.

### Parent Engagement & Support Programs

*759 residents participated*

Offers resources for parents to support their children's education.

### Digital Inclusion

*146 free devices, 1,122 individuals impacted*

*785 residents received tech support, 115 youths inspired, 222 seniors in digital literacy programs*

*785 residents received tech support, 115 youths inspired, 222 seniors in digital literacy programs*

Provides devices and digital literacy instruction in multiple languages.





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# Innovation through inclusion

At Eden Housing, we enhance diversity through need-focused housing projects and strategic partnerships, supporting minority, women, veteran, and disadvantaged group-owned businesses. This fosters innovation and drives economic impact, remaining a priority for years to come.

## Significant Strides in Vendor Diversity

This year, we co-hosted the inaugural NorCal Affordable Housing Supplier Diversity Summit with the Non-Profit Housing Association, attracting over 300 attendees to network and learn about increasing representation in affordable housing.

## Vendor Diversity Data

The number of diverse vendors we work with reflects our commitment to supporting the economic empowerment of historically marginalized communities.

**53**

Minority-owned

**68**

Women-owned

**18**

Veteran-owned

**33**

Small business-owned





Blue Oak Landing



Light Tree Apartments



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# Inclusive new properties!

## **Blue Oak Landing**

Located one-half mile north of downtown Vallejo, Blue Oak Landing (formerly Sacramento Street Apartments) is a new apartment community that provides high-quality affordable housing to lower-income households. Serves individuals, couples, and families currently experiencing or who are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

## **Mesa Terrace**


Provides high-quality, service-enriched housing to transition age youth, seniors and families in a beautifully designed, energy-efficient building. The project is conveniently located within walking distance of the Westfield Oakridge shopping mall and Almaden Lake Park. 23 units for Transition Aged Youth who have exited the foster system.

## **Light Tree Apartments**

A 94-apartment family community in East Palo Alto that nearly doubles the number of affordable homes that exist on the site today, providing 185 affordable homes to low-income families, people with disabilities, individuals who have experienced homelessness, and former foster youth.



Mesa Terrace



“Having my mailbox and being independent like I am now... This is a new beginning. I feel like this is now my home base. I know I can get out there and shine.”

- Jacqueline Edens, Eden Housing Resident



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