



True North Organizing Network

True North supports families, elders, and youth of diverse traditions, races, cultures, faith and economic conditions—using the power of relationships and a disciplined community organizing model—to create change for racial, social, economic, and environmental justice. We work throughout northern California with offices in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. This region has some of the highest poverty rates and poorest health outcomes in the state. The productivity of this region’s ecology has been forever altered by a history of resource extraction industries inextricably related to the genocide, displacement, and disempowerment of indigenous people. The largest Tribes in California are based in our region (which includes the Yurok, Tolowa Dee-ni’, Wiyot, Hoopa, and Karuk tribes as well as others) – and the resilience of these communities is rooted in their historic role as responsible stewards of the land. As the only Native-led affiliate of the national network Faith in Action and a member of the statewide network PICO California, we focus on organizing members of indigenous communities as well as the general population. However, as a uniquely rural, multi-faith, multi-race organizing network led by varied cultures and economic classes, our power to successfully negotiate for the needs of underrepresented communities comes from our diversity and relationships.

True North’s 5 core issues, voted on by True North leaders and members, include:

- 1. Water & Environment:** These are cornerstones of equity and community health in our region, as well as long-time points of racial contention. Historically, local environmental policies have been closely connected to resource extraction industries. We call for responsible stewardship of the land and water.
- 2. Immigrant Rights:** We have led efforts to protect immigrants from deportation and to create sanctuary cities. In 2018, we launched a Rapid Response Network to address the fear and anxiety as a result of realized and potential increased immigration enforcement. Community members witness, accompany, and advocate for victims of raids.
- 3. Police and 1st Responder Accountability:** 1st responders exist to serve and protect communities. However, racial profiling and inequitable treatment of poor, disabled, and addicted individuals, as well as immigrant families, leaves many distrustful or even scared of law enforcement. Through close, respectful, and reciprocal relationships, we seek to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the communities they serve, and to hold our officials accountable to their mission to protect and serve.
- 4. Housing & Homelessness:** With one of the state’s highest homeless populations per capita, we are seeking sustainable solutions by rallying the community and critical stakeholders to this cause.
- 5. Strengthening Public Education:** Students in our region deserve to have healthy school lunches, accountable school board trustees, adequate recreation facilities, culturally appropriate curriculum, a restorative justice discipline model, and much more, so they can be successful in school and after graduation.

Improving and increasing voter and civic engagement is also a focus True North by combining candidates’ forums for tribal, city, county, and state governments as well as registering new voters, and encouraging voter engagement and census activities.

True North is also focused on assisting tribal and other local communities in accessing new financial resources. We have assisted the Yurok Tribe and the County of Del Norte to access HomeKey funding; Westside Community Improvement Association and Root & Rebound to access Community Reinvestment grants; and Del Norte Mission Possible Homeless Shelter to access CARE funding.

Our organizing work is ultimately focused on creating an inclusive, health-promoting environment in which the dignity of every person is respected, and everyone has access to housing, employment, education, healthy food, and clean water.