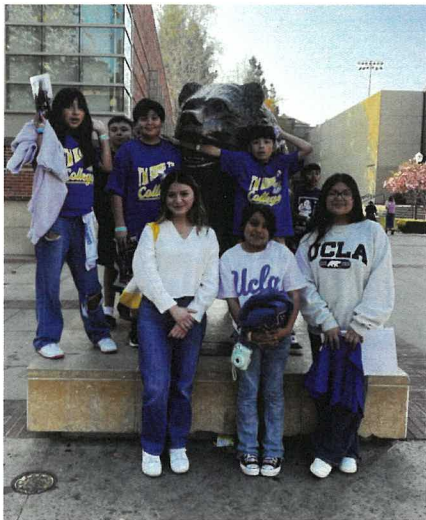




MEET HEATHER HATCHMAN

ALRIGHT – SO TODAY WE’VE GOT THE HONOR OF INTRODUCING YOU TO HEATHER HATCHMAN. WE THINK YOU’LL ENJOY OUR CONVERSATION, WE’VE SHARED IT BELOW.

Heather, so good to have you with us today. We’ve always been impressed with folks who have a very clear sense of purpose and so maybe we can jump right in and talk about how you found your purpose?



I discovered my purpose by reflecting on my childhood. I was blessed to have the unwavering support of my mother, who pushed me to be my best even during the toughest times. Alongside her, I had incredible teachers, coaches, and mentors who believed in me; often seeing strengths and potential in me that I couldn’t yet see in myself.

Their compassion, encouragement, and high expectations shaped me in ways that I carry to this day. There’s a saying: “Be the person you needed most when you were younger.” That idea guides my life. Because of the adults who invested in me, I knew I wanted to do the same for others.

That’s how I found my purpose. I dedicated my career to teaching and later founded my nonprofit organization to mentor youth in an

underserved community. Every day, I strive to give young people the same empathy, guidance, and belief in their potential that made all the difference in my own journey.

Thanks for sharing that. So, before we get any further into our conversation, can you tell our readers a bit about yourself and what you’re working on?

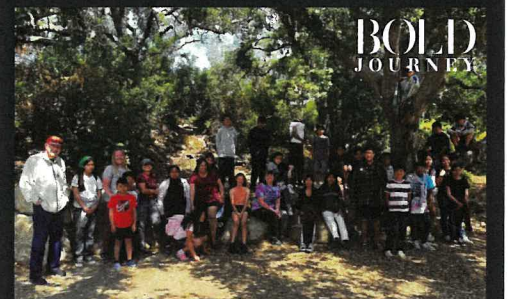
By day, I’m an elementary school teacher, but what I’m most excited to share about is my nonprofit organization, VISION Young Leaders’ Academy, which I founded in 2019. The inspiration for starting VISION came directly from my classroom experience.

I saw firsthand that my students needed more than academics—they needed mentorship, opportunities, and experiences that would broaden their horizons and show them what was possible for their future.

I chose the name VISION because, as a child, it meant everything to me to have adults who helped me look beyond my immediate circumstances and imagine a brighter future.

That’s exactly what we strive to give our youth: the chance to see into their own potential and believe in what they can achieve.

What excites me most is witnessing the transformation in the young people we serve.





Over the past few years, we've seen our members graduate from high school and move on to prestigious universities like UCLA, Berkley, and UC Irvine.

To know that we played a role in guiding and supporting them on that journey is the most rewarding feeling—it makes all the hard work worthwhile.

Our mission is simple but powerful: to create opportunities, build confidence, and mentor the next generation of leaders from underserved communities.

And while I'm proud of what we've accomplished so far, I'm even more excited about what's ahead as we continue to grow and expand the impact of VISION.

Looking back, what do you think were the three qualities, skills, or areas of knowledge that were most impactful in your journey? What advice do you have for folks who are early in their journey in terms of how they can best develop or improve on these?

Looking back, I would say the three most impactful qualities in my journey were education, resilience, and high expectations.

Education has been the foundation for everything I've built. It gave me the tools, knowledge, and confidence to pursue my dreams and, just as importantly, to help others pursue theirs.

Resilience has been another key. Life will always present challenges, but I learned to see obstacles not as roadblocks but as opportunities to grow stronger.

Every circumstance taught me something valuable and pushed me to keep moving forward.

Finally, I believe in the power of high expectations. When the bar is set high, it forces you to stretch yourself, to rise to the occasion, and to discover just how capable you really are.



WEBSITE:
VISIONYOUNGLEADERSACADEMY.ORG



My advice to anyone early in their journey is this: find your passion, draw from your experiences, and dive in with both feet. Don't let fear or setbacks hold you back. Yes, there will be hurdles, but with education as your foundation, resilience as your strength, and determination to keep striving, anything is possible.

One of our goals is to help like-minded folks with similar goals connect and so before we go we want to ask if you are looking to partner or collab with others – and if so, what would make the ideal collaborator or partner?

Yes, absolutely! Collaboration is at the heart of what we do, and the more people and organizations who get involved with our nonprofit, the greater the impact we can make together.

We are always looking for:

Mentors who can guide and inspire our youth. Coaches for our sports teams. Universities willing to host campus tours and experiences. Organizations and businesses open to showing our youth what's possible in the world of work and leadership. Scholarship partners to support our members in pursuing higher education. Companies and individuals who can provide financial support, resources, or even meeting spaces.

As a nonprofit, we rely on the generosity and partnership of others to continue creating opportunities that change young lives. If you're interested in collaborating, we'd love to connect. You can reach us through social media, by email at visionyoungleadersacademy@gmail.com or by phone at 805-701-8282.

Together, we can make a lasting difference for the next generation.



INSTAGRAM:
@VISIONYOUNGLEADERSACADEMY

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VISION YOUNG LEADERS' ACADEMY