

Reality Changers CEO Addresses Economic Inequalities in Education

NONPROFITS: Craver Raises \$2M for Organization; Helps San Diego Seniors with \$12.8M in Scholarships

■ By PAUL CRIADO

As President and CEO of **Reality Changers**, **Tamara Y. Craver** prepares young students to become first-generation college graduates as well as agents of change in their communities.

Under her leadership, Reality Changers has won countless awards, including **San Diego Foundation's** Inspire & Enable Award, the **San Diego Union-Tribune's** Community Heroes award, and Outstanding Organization for Diversity & Inclusion from the **Association of Fundraising Professionals - San Diego Chapter**.

Craver was named CEO of the Year by the **San Diego Business Journal** in the Nonprofit Organization Category.

Craver arrived at Reality Changers in 2019 already possessing years of experience and an astute knowledge of nonprofit management, leadership, and advocacy for education equity.

Before Reality Changers, Craver worked with **Torrance South Bay YMCA** as the Director of Development and Communications, as well as Director, Social Markets for the **American Heart Association**, Western States Affiliates.

Craver then served as the director of the **Posse Foundation**. During her tenure, the Los Angeles office more than quadrupled its annual revenue and grew its staff and budget to the second largest office within the Foundation.

Successful Fundraising

Reality Changers has thrived since Craver's arrival. In the past year alone, the organization won a \$2 million grant from the

foundation **Yield Giving**.

It graduated 203 high school seniors who earned \$12.8 million in scholarship collectively, as well as initiated new partnerships with **UC San Diego**, **University of San Diego**, and **Bank of America** that placed five paid interns with the organization. Reality Changers also raised \$210,000 with its new "gala-style fundraising event", moved its headquarters to downtown San Diego, and launched a new partnership with **Urban Discovery Schools**.

In the words of **Jordan Harrison**, Associate



IN HER OWN WORDS

"I am so proud of all that I have accomplished in my five years as CEO of Reality Changers. This award recognizes not just my efforts, but the hard work of thousands of students, families, volunteers, staff, and supporters. Together, we're building a brighter, more equitable future for San Diego."

Director Global Inclusion, Diversity and Equity at **Vertex Pharmaceuticals**, who nominated Craver for the CEO award, "college degrees make a huge difference for students from underserved communities; on average in San Diego County, a Bachelor's degree increases an individual's lifetime earnings by 125%. Her work helps to address economic inequalities, giving young people and their families a chance to thrive."

"Reality Changers graduates have gone on to own businesses that hire local youth, advocate for policy changes that make transit access more equitable, become physicians that provide healthcare in underserved communities, and much, much more," he noted.

Dedication to Community

In addition to her work with Reality Changers, Craver is the Education Chair of the Advisory Council for San Diego Foundation's Black Community Investment Fund, a charitable fund working to invest in initiatives that increase racial equity and generational wealth for Black San Diegans. She also currently serves on the Board of Directors for **LEAD San Diego**, as the Executive Committee Chairperson for the **Hoover Community Collaborative**, and as a member of the **San Diego Rotary Club #33**.

Craver is a graduate of the **University of California, Los Angeles**, with a Bachelor of Arts in history and psychology, as well as a 2020 graduate of **LEAD San Diego's** Influence program. ■