



**Event:** Kern Leaders Academy Celebrates 2023 Graduates at Commencement Dinner (Photo Attached)

**For Immediate Release:** Friday, December 8, 2023

**Contact:** Marlene Heise, 661.323.8594, [marlene@heisemedia.com](mailto:marlene@heisemedia.com)

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**Kern Leaders Academy**  
**(an innovative educational program for the development of visionary community leaders)**  
**Celebrates their Nine (9) Aspiring Leaders with 2023 Graduation Dinner**

Bakersfield, CA – Kern Leaders Academy has exceeded expectations as an innovative educational program. Graduates studied topics in ethics, critical thinking, the economy, education, healthcare, social issues, communication, leadership, the electoral process and became well versed on important topics in federal, state, regional and local governance.

Nine (9) aspiring community leaders celebrated the completion of Kern Leaders Academy's 72-hour community leadership program at a graduation dinner on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. Over Nine (9) weeks, class members participated in extensive training under the direction of prominent faculty members and community leaders. Thanks to the training and education gained from the program, these individuals are better equipped to serve our community by being prepared on how to face difficult issues that face our county.

The recent graduates, who come from a variety of business and service backgrounds, are prepared to elevate their leadership skills to invest back into our community. Kern Leaders Academy is designed to assist in the development of visionary community leaders who recognize that informed leaders and a healthy business climate lead to a strong community. The program is conducted by the Kern County Taxpayers Education Fund.

Kern Leaders Academy's Executive Director, Michael Turnipseed says, "I'm so pleased with the dedication and growth seen in nine (9) weeks. "When recruiting, individuals are carefully chosen to participate in this program. Our county faces challenges and we need to create an invested, powerhouse of leaders who are equipped to listen, analyze, and act accordingly. I am happy we were able to work with promising individuals who elevated their skill set and are now better equipped to lead our community and create a positive difference. On behalf of the faculty and staff at Kern Leaders Academy, we congratulate the dedication, resilience and achievements demonstrated by the 2023 class."

(Continued – Page 1 of 3; Class Picture attached)



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The graduates are:

- **Gabriel Adame**, Executive Director for Youth 2 Leaders Education Foundation
- **Jacqueline Aguilar**, Community Relations Associate at Providence Strategic Consulting
- **Malicka Almansoob (Mo Ali)**, Mentoring Specialist/Case Manager and Victim Advocate at Garden Pathways
- **Joe Arriola**, Senior Fiscal and Policy Analyst for the County of Kern
- **Marianna Buoni**, General Manager of Clean Harbors Buttonwillow LLC
- **John Frick**, Attorney at Klein DeNatale Goldner
- **Hernan Hernandez**, Deputy Director of Government Relations/Strategic Development for Kern Health Systems
- **Gurtar Kaur**, Construction Engineer at Atlas
- **Jenny Magana**, Owner of Posh Properties of California

Sponsors of the 2023 Kern Leaders Academy included Adventist Health Bakersfield, Chevron, Heise Media Group, Kern County Taxpayers Association, Kern Family Health Care, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Wonderful Orchards, WZI, Inc.

If you are interested in applying for the 2023 Kern Leaders Academy or wish to become a sponsor, please contact: Michael Turnipseed: 661-322-2973 / email: [Kerntax@kerntaxpayers.org](mailto:Kerntax@kerntaxpayers.org)

For more information: <https://kernleadersacademy.org/>

(Photo below)