

# EVERETT FREEMAN PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD

## Corning Promise

In 2016, the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians made history as the first Tribe in the U.S. to receive a \$14 million federal Promise Neighborhood grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The vision of the grant *"is to ensure all children growing up in Promise Neighborhood communities have access to great schools and strong family and community support systems to help them attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career"*. This place-based investment, named the Everett Freeman Promise Neighborhood Initiative in honor of the former Tribal Chairman and education advocate, was designed to impact the cradle-to-college population living in the Rancho Tehama and Corning communities.

Today, the Everett Freeman Promise Neighborhood, or "Corning Promise" carries forward Everett Freeman's legacy, honoring his dedication to community, education, and the promise of opportunity for every child in the region. His work lives on, inspiring a new generation to reach higher, together.

Starting in 2017, Corning Promise partnered with local organizations to align, link, and enhance community services. The collaboration brought together diverse partners, including the City of Corning, Corning Union High School and Elementary Districts, First 5 Tehama, Northern California Child Development Inc., River Cities Counseling, Tehama County Department of Education, and the Tehama County Health Services Agency.

With this strong foundation, the work of creating the conditions for community success began to take shape. *"Our goal is ensuring that all children are set up for success, and that takes true collaboration,"* said Dawna Holiday-

Shchedrov, Corning Promise Director. Jared Caylor, TCDE Assistant Superintendent and former Corning Elementary High School Superintendent, emphasized how aligned resources like dual enrollment and CTE create opportunities for students. *"It's about creating pathways in our schools so every student has a chance to thrive."*

Early childhood education emerged as another cornerstone. *"When we support kids early, we set up the whole community for success,"* said Heidi Mendenhall, Executive Director of First 5 Tehama. Gary Fortenberry from River Cities Counseling connects mental health initiatives to community wellness, noting that programs like play therapy and no-cost school therapy services strengthen relationships and the system.

The focus on "creating conditions" extends beyond short-term planning and goals. As the partners agree, the aim is improving generational economic mobility, ensuring children and families are best situated to thrive. *"This is about more than just programs,"* Caylor reflects. *"It's about shaping the conditions across our schools and community to create lasting success for everyone."*

This commitment to lasting change echoes the legacy of Everett Freeman, whose vision for the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians went beyond individual gains to a collective strength for all. Everett worked tirelessly to build the sovereign nation and organize the Nomlaki community. His belief in cooperation and mutual support extended to the surrounding communities, creating a foundation for collaboration and unity that still guides Corning Promise today.

