

POLICY WATCH – April 2020

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Are you feeling more hopeful that the worst is behind us? It is wonderful to see more people getting vaccinated, more people going back to work, more kids in school and the economy picking up steam. As spring is the time of new beginnings, the world feels like we are finally ready for a restart. We still must take precautions until we hit herd immunity, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel now.

In this issue we look at some of the ways things have changed in the past year in three areas: workforce, education and housing. All these areas are critical for our recovery and require us to address inequities, find solutions and rebuild back better. We urge you to take a minute to read the article, [Irrational Covid Fears](#), it gave me a great perspective and perhaps it will help you, too.

NBLC is proud to welcome new member, B & L Glass. With new construction, especially of housing, we are excited to have B & L Glass as part of our membership to help inform our public policy work on how to encourage more housing to be built in the North Bay.

Best,

Cynthia

Pandemic Impacts Continue

Three areas where we are seeing big impacts from the pandemic are workforce, education and housing. We share some of those impacts in the articles below.

Workforce

Early retirement wave: The percentage of older workers participating in the labor force is near its worst level since the pandemic's start, signaling that many of these Americans may have permanently left the workforce.

Women leaving workforce and postponing their education: The New York Times reports, “Young Americans — particularly women 16 to 24 — have higher rates of unemployment than older adults, and many thousands, possibly even millions, are postponing their education, which can delay their entry into

the work force. New research suggests that the number of “disconnected” young people — defined as those who are neither in school nor the work force — is growing. For young women, the caregiving crisis may be a major reason they have put on hold their education or careers.”

“Researchers at Measure of America predicted that the pandemic could reverse much of that progress in reducing the amount of disconnected youth and even push up the number of disconnected youth to a record high of nine million people — or a quarter of America’s youth. Experts suggest that the same care crisis that forced adult women out of the work force may have spilled over to younger women, with many looking after their siblings or relatives, for example, so that their parents can work.” Click here for the full article [Link](#).

Employees are changing in reaction to the past year: PwC’s Workforce Pulse Survey ([Link](#)) found “the past year has prompted many employees to reconsider their values or make major changes in their personal lives, which is changing how they work and what they need to be productive. Our survey of 1,515 US employees found that:

- **Employees are on the move**, with almost a quarter considering or planning to move more than 50 miles away from a core office location. That’s on top of the 12% who have already made such a move since the start of the pandemic.
- **Employees deeply value extra paid time off**, including dedicated time to upskill or volunteer, as so important they’d give up part of their future earnings to get it.
- **The skills employees are most focused on building are clearly influenced by the lessons learned from the pandemic**, including adaptability and the ability to learn and apply new skills quickly.

These shifts are happening against a backdrop of nearly **3 million women dropping out of the workforce** during the past year and the number of long-term unemployed people (those who have been unemployed for six months or more) is at its highest level in 60 years.

To return to growth, business leaders will need to understand what employees really want and create policies and plans that allow for more flexibility and personalization. They’ll also need to continue expanding mental health support and develop pathways that make it possible for women to come back into the workforce.”

Education

California Sees More College Graduates, but Progress Is Uneven: The Public Policy Institute of California released a report finding that “The pandemic and recession have highlighted inequities in our state and the importance of a college degree. College graduates have fared much better than other workers, as they are more likely to be employed and able to work remotely. Over the long run, demand for highly educated workers has been growing and California faces a projected shortfall in workers with college degrees—a gap that has threatened to stall economic progress and leave Californians unprepared for the evolving job market.”

“The good news is that educational attainment is on the rise. In 2019, 34% of California adults 25 and older had at least a bachelor’s degree, compared to 30% in 2009. California is now on track to close the degree gap, which means more Californians can now take advantage of the higher wages and other benefits that often come with a college degree.”

“Encouragingly, educational attainment rose in the vast majority of California counties. However, progress has been uneven across the state. Bay Area counties had the largest increases in attainment, while rural counties were more likely to see declines.”

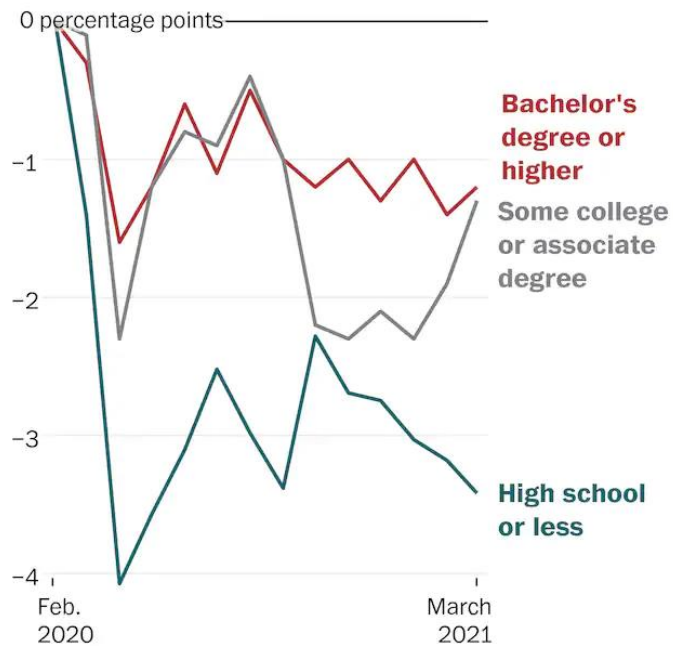
“Migration is another driving force. Recent immigrants to California are increasingly likely to arrive with college degrees. And in recent years, California has mostly gained large numbers of college graduates from other states while losing even larger numbers of people without bachelor’s degrees. From 2010 to 2019, California attracted almost 400,000 more college graduates from other states than it lost.”
Click here for full article [Link](#).

Workers without college degrees struggling: It is good that there has been a growth in college degree attainment in California because those without degrees are struggling. “Nearly 4 million adult workers without college degrees have not found work again after losing their jobs in the pandemic. Only 199,000 adult workers with a bachelor’s degree or higher are in the same situation. (About 2.4 million adults over 25 with associate’s degrees had a job in February 2020 and have not returned to work a year later.)”

Workers with no college experience are struggling

Change since February in the share of the population working or looking for work

Source: Labor Department
Note: Seasonally adjusted
THE WASHINGTON POST

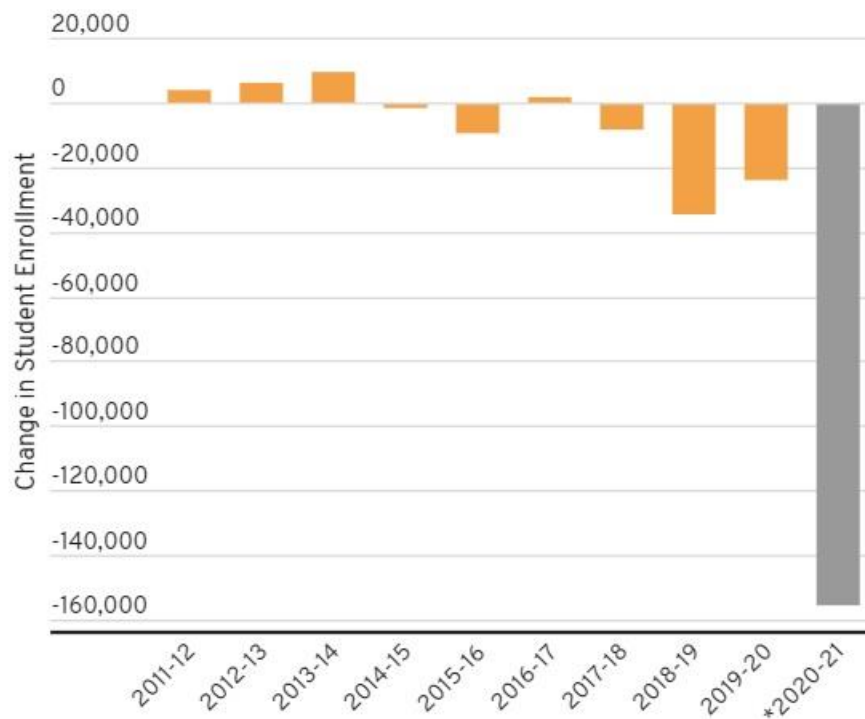


Enrollment drops in public schools: The San Francisco Chronicle ([Link](#)) reports, “California’s public schools lost more than 160,000 students amid the pandemic, a striking decline in enrollment that could have a long-term impact on the financial stability of districts across the state. The decline was mostly among kindergarten through third grade, which lost 107,000 students this school year.”

“The state data shows that about 30,000 students enrolled in new private schools registered this year with the state. The vast majority, more than 27,000, were in private schools serving five students or less, typically homeschool environments. It’s unclear whether those students were previously in private schools or in public schools.”

Tracking California's K-12 Enrollment Decline

K-12 public school enrollment has gradually dropped by roughly 58,000 students over the past decade to 6.1 million kids. But California's latest projection for 2020-21 far exceeds declines seen in previous school years.



Source: California Department of Education.

Housing

Could Bay Area home building be a COVID long-hauler? Mercury Times ([Link](#)) answers yes to that question. "COVID-19 spun up the perfect storm to batter the anemic pace of Bay Area home building in 2020. The health crisis slowed government responses, made construction materials and workers scarce, and added costly health and safety measures to projects."

"And the future looks bleak. Home production is expected to stall, and developers say new homes are likely to take longer and cost more in a region spiraling deeper into a housing shortage."

"Residential permits for new homes and apartments in the Bay Area plummeted 26% from 2019 to 2020, another shock to the home-starved region where demand has outstripped supply and home prices have

risen steadily for nearly a decade. The ripples from the pandemic have already reduced new construction and driven up prices an estimated 20% — a trend developers say could continue in coming years.”

“This year is bad. Next year is going to be even worse,” said Matt Regan, senior vice president of public policy for the Bay Area Council. Residential developers have told Regan “the pipeline is getting narrower and narrower” for smaller projects that provide most of the new housing in the region.

Study shows new low-income housing has no consistent impact on nearby housing values

What does this mean? *More recently built housing projects are designed to fit in much better with surrounding neighborhoods than in the past.*

Construction of low-income housing developments has had **no consistent impact on the sale prices of nearby homes**, according to an analysis of over 220,000 home sales in neighborhoods with low-income housing developments in 26 metro areas across the U.S. **from 2007 through 2019.**

- **In 18 of the 26 metro areas studied**, no significant difference was detected in the prices of nearby homes sold before and after the construction of a low-income housing development.
- **In four metro areas**, nearby home prices rose.
- **In four metro areas**, nearby home prices fell.

Source: Redfin

Despite recent improvements, millennial homeownership continues to trail previous generations, with 63% having no down payment saved

What does this mean? *With home price growth in 2020 far in excess of income growth, the share of millennials planning to rent forever has risen sharply.*

As young renters reel from an economy battered by the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more believe **they will never own a home**. In 2020, **18 percent of millennial renters say they plan to rent forever**, up for the third consecutive year from 12 percent in 2019 and 11 percent in 2018.

- Despite recent increases, the millennial homeownership rate **continues to trail previous generations**: At age 30, 42 percent of millennials own homes, compared to 48 percent of gen Xers and 51 percent of baby boomers.
- **Racial disparities in wealth are driven in part by racial disparities in homeownership**. Black millennials have not only the lowest rate of homeownership but also the largest gap between generations: At age 30, the white millennial homeownership rate is 2.5x higher than that of Black millennials.
- Affordability remains the biggest roadblock for millennial renters, especially as home prices **have risen throughout a pandemic that has been so damaging to low- and middle-class incomes**.
- Even among millennials who plan to buy a home, **63 percent report having no money saved** for a down payment.

Source: Apartment List

B & L Glass Joins North Bay Leadership Council

North Bay Leadership Council (NBLC) announced that B & L Glass is its newest member. With over 60 years in business at the same location in Santa Rosa, B & L Glass provides, installs, and repairs a variety of glass products and services for residential and commercial clients throughout the North Bay, including Sonoma and Napa counties. They are one of the largest glass companies in the North Bay.

Patty Garbarino, chair of NBLC's board and President, Marin Sanitary Services, said, "Construction, especially of housing, is a key priority for NBLC members and we welcome B & L Glass who will help strengthen our public policy advocacy to make new construction easier in the North Bay."

B & L Glass sells and installs everything glass for residential, commercial and complex specialty projects. This includes offerings for luxury residential home projects, low rise commercial projects and storefront windows. B & L Glass also specializes and has extensive expertise in "design build" complex projects ----- their experience includes winery building & cave projects, arts centers, custom built glass balcony & rails, custom glass staircases, massive skylights, heavy glass shower enclosures, etc. The company is Diamond Certified.

The member representative will be the CEO, Jeff Rowland, who is a seasoned, results-oriented, sales, marketing, and business development executive. Rowland has 30 years of experience in the high-tech world as an executive and senior level contributor to the worldwide sales and growth of global, multi-billion-dollar organizations and technology start-ups in the Americas, EMEA and APAC. He is a graduate of Southern Illinois University – Carbondale. He recently bought land in Santa Rosa to build a new home for his family, which includes his wife and three children.

Rowland said, "B & L Glass is a longstanding member of the North Bay community and we are excited to join other NBLC members in ensuring that the region regains its economic vitality, a large part of which will be from the construction of new housing for the North Bay workforce. We look forward to contributing our experience to help close the gap in much-needed new housing production and other types of construction."

As the new owners of B & L Glass since 2019, Rowland and his wife Jennifer are establishing industry partnerships and collaborating with likeminded business organizations. They are members of the Santa Rosa Chamber and Sonoma County Alliance and are both active in children's charities.

Irrational Covid Fears

The New York Times shares [Irrational Covid Fears \(Link\)](#) leading with a good analogy. "Guido Calabresi, a federal judge and Yale law professor, invented a little fable that he has been telling law students for more than three decades.

He tells the students to imagine a god coming forth to offer society a wondrous invention that would improve everyday life in almost every way. It would allow people to spend more time with friends and family, see new places and do jobs they otherwise could not do. But it would also come with a high cost. In exchange for bestowing this invention on society, the god would choose 1,000 young men and women and strike them dead."

"[Calabresi](#) then asks: Would you take the deal? Almost invariably, the students say no. The professor then delivers the fable's lesson: 'What's the difference between this and the automobile?' In truth, automobiles kill many more than 1,000 young Americans each year; the total U.S. death toll hovers [at about 40,000 annually](#). We accept this toll, almost unthinkingly, because vehicle crashes have always been part of our lives. We can't fathom a world without them."

“It’s a classic example of human irrationality about risk. We often underestimate large, chronic dangers, like car crashes or chemical pollution, and fixate on tiny but salient risks, like plane crashes or shark attacks. One way for a risk to become salient is for it to be new. That’s a core idea behind Calabresi’s fable. He asks students to consider whether they would accept the cost of vehicle travel if it did not already exist. That they say no underscores the very different ways we treat new risks and enduring ones.”

“I have been thinking about the fable recently because of Covid-19. Covid certainly presents a salient risk: It’s a global pandemic that has upended daily life for more than a year. It has changed how we live, where we work, even what we wear on our faces. Covid feels ubiquitous. Fortunately, it is also curable. The vaccines have nearly eliminated death, hospitalization and other serious Covid illness among people who have received shots. The vaccines have also radically reduced the chances that people contract even a mild version of Covid or can pass it on to others.”

“Major media outlets trumpeted new government data last week showing that 5,800 fully vaccinated Americans had contracted Covid. That may sound like a big number, but it indicates that a vaccinated person’s chances of getting Covid are about one in 11,000. The chances of getting a version any worse than a common cold are even more remote.”

“But they are not zero. And they will not be zero anytime in the foreseeable future. Victory over Covid will not involve its elimination. Victory will instead mean turning it into the sort of danger that plane crashes or shark attacks present — too small to be worth reordering our lives.”

“That is what the vaccines do. If you’re vaccinated, Covid presents a minuscule risk to you, and you present a minuscule Covid risk to anyone else. A car trip is a bigger threat, to you and others. About 100 Americans are likely to die in car crashes today. The new federal data suggests that either zero or one vaccinated person will die today from Covid.”

“Coming to grips with the comforting realities of post-vaccination life is going to take some time for most of us. It’s only natural that so many vaccinated people continue to harbor irrational fears. Yet slowly recognizing that irrationality will be a vital part of overcoming Covid. ‘We’re not going to get to a place of zero risk,’ Jennifer Nuzzo, a Johns Hopkins epidemiologist, told me during a virtual Times event last week. ‘I don’t think that’s the right metric for feeling like things are normal.’”

Redwood Credit Union Supports Financial and Emotional Wellness

Redwood Credit Union believes that financial wellness and emotional wellness go hand-in-hand. That’s why RCU has developed a series of free online resources supporting the financial and emotional well-being of its Members, team members, and communities.

This included a 60-minute webinar called *Self-Care and Stress Management: Tools and Best Practices for Coping with COVID 19 and Beyond*, featuring licensed therapist and self-care expert, Mary O’Neill.



They also hosted the Today Show’s financial editor, Jean Chatzky, whose webinar called [7 Money Moves You Need to Build Financial Resilience](#) provided helpful tips on how to manage money during times of crisis.



And most recently, RCU partnered with author and social emotional learning expert Jennifer Miller, M.Ed, and the long-standing, local mental health nonprofit NAMI Sonoma County to produce [several videos](#) for students at all grade levels, to help them and their families cope with the emotions of living through challenging times.



Don't Forget!

NBLC's Youth Power Teen Speech Competition is open for submissions. If you know an outstanding teen leader in your community, encourage them to apply today! Click [HERE](#) to download the form and entry instructions.

Nominations are open for the 2021 Leaders of the North Bay Awards! Take this opportunity to honor a leader in your community. Nomination form can be found [HERE](#).

Upcoming Events

2021 State of the North Bay **NBLC Signature Event**

Thursday, June 10, 2021

8:00 a.m. -9:30 a.m. Program

Ticket required for this event

NBLC Member Anniversaries

Thank you to the for being NBLC members all these years!

CannaCraft ~ 3-year anniversary

North Bay Children's Center ~ 3-year anniversary

Perry, Johnson, Anderson, Miller & Moskowitz LLP ~ 9-year anniversary

Members in the News

Buck Institute for Research on Aging Creates a New Predictive Model That Helps Identify Those at Risk for Severe COVID-19

Researchers at the Buck Institute analyzed data from the COVID-19 Symptom Tracker app used by 3 million people in the United Kingdom, adding the use of immunosuppressant medication, use of a mobility aid, shortness of breath, fever, and fatigue to the list of symptoms and comorbidities that increase the risk for severe COVID-19.

Becoming Independent is Creating the Future

BI is launching a campaign to transform 1455 Corporate Center Parkway into BI's Program Headquarters – a think tank for programs where innovative offerings is developed and experienced.

Redwood Credit Union's Brett Martinez Joins CUNA Mutual Group's Board of Directors

CUNA Mutual Group appointed two new members to its board of directors effective April 1.

Kaiser Permanente Donates \$500K To Rebuild Fire-Ravaged Park

As part of the ongoing effort to rebuild wildfire-ravaged Foothill Regional Park in Windsor.

CannaCraft is Honored to Announce Their Recent First Place Award Wins in This Year's Prestigious Emerald Cup Festival and Awards

Large-scale cannabis manufacturer CannaCraft is honored to announce their recent first place award wins in this year's prestigious Emerald Cup Festival and Awards.

Kaiser Permanente Countering the Surge in Asian American Discrimination

Kaiser Permanente, the nation's largest integrated, nonprofit health care organization, has committed \$5.4 million to combat the surge in violence against people of Asian descent and to support the rights, health, and wellness of the Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities.

Kaiser Permanente Announces Alena Wall Named Interim Public Affairs Director

Kaiser Permanente Marin-Sonoma bids farewell to Public Affairs Director Judy James as she moves on to greener pastures and celebrates her retirement.

Sonoma County Winegrowers' Karissa Kruse Selected as Congressman Mike Thompson's 2020 Woman of the Year

Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-05) announced Karissa Kruse and Letitia Hanke as the 2020 and 2021 Women of the Year in Sonoma County.

The Buck Institute is excited to offer Lifelong Learning courses on the Biology of Aging

The Buck Institute is excited to offer their Lifelong Learning course on the Biology of Aging.

Nelson's iWorkGlobal Acquired by Velocity Global

Velocity Global, the leading provider of global expansion solutions, today announced its acquisition of iWorkGlobal, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gary D. Nelson and Associates, and a \$100 million growth investment from private equity firm FFL Partners.

North Bay Children's Center's Susan Gilmore Chosen as Assemblymember Marc Levine's 2021 Woman of the Year

Assemblymember Marc Levine has honored Susan Gilmore with his 2021 Woman of the year recognition.

Comcast Commits to Investing \$1B Over Next 10 Years to Reach 50M Low-Income Americans With Tools and Resources to Succeed in Digital World

On the 10th anniversary of its Internet Essentials program, Comcast today announced it would invest \$1 billion over the next 10 years to help further close the digital divide and give even more low-income Americans the tools and resources they need to succeed in an increasingly digital world.



Who We Are

Over twenty five years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 54 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call 707.283.0028 / E-mail info@northbayleadership.org

www.northbayleadership.org