



Mary Tran

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Mary Tran is CEO of EXP – The opportunity engine, a Southern California-based nonprofit organization focused on youth development and career education.



Founded as International Trade Education Programs, Inc. by maritime leaders in the San Pedro Bay and rebranded in 2018, EXP helps young people gain experience, unlock doors and build the confidence they need to succeed in school, career and life. In the 2022-2023 school year, EXP's programs were available to more than 8,200 high school students at 13 Southern California high schools. By bringing schools and industry together, EXP is creating new ways of learning, knocking down barriers, and bringing genuine opportunity to every student they can reach.

Named as CEO in August 2023, Mary is responsible for ensuring the ongoing sustainability of the organization and effective implementation of its mission delivered through 20+ staff members and over 400 volunteers from industry, education, and the public sector.

Before joining EXP, Mary served as the Executive Director for High School Inc. Academies Foundation. With her visionary leadership, Mary transformed the organization, serving over 1,700 students annually with an impressive 98% graduation rate. It's no wonder she was recognized as the 2023 Difference Maker for Small Nonprofit Leader of the Year by the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce for her unwavering commitment to uplifting the community. Mary also served as the Steering Committee Chair for the Orange County Community Foundation's Future is Working Giving Day and various initiatives such as the OneOC Nonprofit Advisory Council and NPO College and Career Readiness and Workforce Development Collaborative.

Mary is known for her dedication to professional growth and innovation. Her involvement in programs such as the OneOC Ready to Grow Program, Octane Nonprofit Accelerator Program and Institute for Community Impact Forum highlights her passion for pushing traditional educational systems' boundaries. As a member of the OCCF Workforce Development Initiative, Mary works tirelessly towards improving workforce opportunities and development.

Mary's journey as the daughter of refugee parents and a first-generation student drives her commitment to equity for all students. Her mission to challenge the status quo and reshape educational systems stems from her experiences, so she consistently fosters a culture of understanding, compassion and inclusivity.

Mary holds bachelor's degrees in Family Life Education and Child Development from California State University, Long Beach.