

Tech for Good: Families Using New Benefit Navigator Tool Average \$10,000 in Additional Public Benefits

Frustrated by a complicated public benefits system that makes it hard for families to get help, this nonprofit pivoted to tech, launching new online tool.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Families seeking public benefits are often frustrated by confusing and fragmented systems. Today, a new tech organization [Amplifi](#), started by nonprofit social service leaders, launched Benefit Navigator. The online tool helps simplify the process for case workers and families to find federal, state, and local public benefits and tax credits. In pilot tests, families using Benefit Navigator averaged \$10,000 in additional public benefits.



A case manager and a client at El Centro de Ayuda use the online Benefit Navigator tool from Amplifi to identify public benefits.

Amplifi was started by leaders from Imagine LA, a nonprofit working to break the cycle of homelessness through mentoring and other social services. In 2020, Imagine LA partnered with USC's Center for Social Innovation to map the labyrinth of benefits and tax credits, uncovering billions of untapped dollars and systemic barriers. Out of that research, the Benefit Navigator was born. The success of Benefit Navigator led Imagine LA to transition from a direct service nonprofit into a new tech nonprofit social enterprise called Amplifi, positioning the organization to expand nationwide.

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Although families were getting jobs, they remained stuck in poverty. So we looked harder at the issue. Federal, state, and local benefits are not coordinated. We created Benefit Navigator to fix that.”

Jill Bauman, CEO of Amplifi

Pilot tests uncover millions in untapped benefits

More than 60 agencies, 400 case workers working on

behalf of clients, and 17,000 households piloted the Benefit Navigator tool. In testing, Benefit Navigator uncovered \$184 million in untapped benefits and tax credits. Households saw an average increase of more than \$10,000 annually in benefits and credits, with 75% of families or individuals identifying additional benefits and 44% of families or individuals identifying additional tax credits.

Critically Benefit Navigator uncovers “benefit cliffs,” which occur when a small increase in income results in a large decrease in benefits. Fear of benefit cliffs, including losing housing and healthcare, previously discouraged households from earning more and eventually moving off public assistance. With clear information about benefits cliffs from Benefit Navigator, 43% of users in testing increased their income by an average of 24% (as compared to a 16% average decrease among the non-user control group over the same time period).

The path from social service nonprofit to technology organization

In 18 years as founding president and CEO of Imagine LA, Jill Bauman saw firsthand how difficult it was for her staff and families to find and apply for benefits and tax credits and to understand what would happen to those benefits as they sought to earn money.

“A few years ago, we realized that even though families were getting jobs, they were still stuck in poverty. So we looked harder at the issue,” said Jill Bauman, CEO of Amplifi. “Benefits come from federal, state, and local sources. They’re not coordinated. There was no single resource guide that explained what was available, nor a resource to show what would happen to benefits as wages rise.”

Frustrated, she teamed with social enterprise entrepreneur Brit Gilmore to create Benefit Navigator. The organization has grown to a team of 15, including experts in software engineering, AI, social work, benefits policy, immigration law, research, and data science, in addition to an advisory board with people with lived experience in homelessness.

Amplifi’s new Benefit Navigator version 3.0 is offered as a licensed Software as a Service. More than 60 nonprofit and public agencies across California use Benefit Navigator, including Los Angeles County (DHS and LAHSA), First 5 Riverside County (Riverside County Children & Families Commission), Alameda County, Mayor's Fund of Los Angeles, the City of Los Angeles, REDF, ALLHOME and the nonprofit Children’s Institute.

Integrating the power of AI

Amplifi is also partnering with NavaLabs on leading-edge AI pilots in the social service space. Amplifi and NavaLabs’ AI benefits navigation chatbot, funded by the Gates Foundation, has been successfully piloted with six agencies.

Also with NavaLabs, Amplifi received a Google.org GenAI Accelerator grant to prototype pre-

filling benefit applications with Agentic AI, reducing paperwork for case managers and their clients. The Agentic AI Application prototype is now being developed with First 5 Riverside County.

About Amplifi

Amplifi co-designs technology tools to simplify the complex process of connecting people to needed and available resources. Amplifi works with cities, counties, states, anti-poverty service and disaster response agencies to deploy tech that connects people to life-saving and empowering resources. In 2025, Amplifi launched Benefit Navigator – a trusted online tool to empower caseworkers and families to open pathways to lasting economic mobility. For more information, visit amplifi.org.

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