**The Village Project Founding/History**

TVPI was co-founded by Mrs. [Regina Mason](https://www.villageprojectinc.org/regina-mason) and Mr. [Mel Mason](https://www.villageprojectinc.org/melvin-mason). Mel serves both executive and clinical director.

The Village Project, Inc. was able to come to life as a result of the passage of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) of 2004. This Act was passed by the voters in CA and placed a special tax on millionaires in the state to fund special programs so that historically under-served and unserved communities could access mental health services.

Our services are based on community defined practices.

Prior to TVPI becoming a reality, focus groups were held with a myriad of community members, such as grandparents, social workers, therapist, relative caregivers, civic organizations, pastors and grassroots individuals. The initial focus group was held at the offices of the Monterey Peninsula Branch NAACP (now known as the Monterey County Branch NAACP as a result of the Salinas and Monterey Peninsula Branches merging).

The focus group was co-sponsored by Monterey County Behavioral Health Department and headed by Jesse Herrera, Monterey County Behavioral Health Division’s Ethnic Services Manager. As a result of input from individuals in the focus group, it was clear that the community wanted a place where Black people could go to work through the challenges they faced and do so with the help of trusted practitioners in the community who looked like them and understood their cultural dynamics.

Prior to TVPI becoming incorporated and receiving its 501c3, the agency’s fiscal sponsor was the Action Council of Monterey.