



2010 – 2023

# Leadership Academy

Alumni Directory



# About Us



## Mission

To build the power, influence, and leadership of the Latino community through collective action to transform public policies that ensure the well-being of our community and society as a whole.

## Vision

The Latino Policy Forum envisions societal prosperity, unity, and equity in our nation and in the global community.



[www.latinopolicyforum.org](http://www.latinopolicyforum.org)



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## A Message From President & CEO Sylvia Puente

Dear partners,

Let me start by saying how incredibly proud I am of the ten-plus years that the Latino Policy Forum has conducted its leadership training program.

The Latino Policy Forum originally launched the program as a way to strengthen our Latino community organizations. The Forum has focused on countless policy issues over the years, but no organization has the capacity to be the experts on everything. With this in mind, we wanted a way to strengthen the parts of the community that we could not always support directly.

After six years of the Latino Leadership Academy, we took a step back to reflect on what we had accomplished and what was on the horizon. At this moment, we realized that it was time to pivot the program to focus on building trusted relationships between Black and Brown community leaders in order to strengthen the bonds between these communities. The Multicultural Leadership Academy was born.

I am so privileged to have been able to witness and nurture this program in all its iterations. Today, I stand in awe of all that has been created through it, of an entire generation of Black and Brown leaders who will remain connected for the rest of the public lives in Chicago. This directory reflects not only the names and titles of all those who have participated in the program, but also the collective breadth of what this program has birthed. It reflects the hearts and souls of leaders who are committed to transformative, ground-level change. I am so honored to stand alongside them.

Peace and justice,  
Sylvia



## A Message From Leadership Development Program Manager **NiCole Ward**

Dear partners,

Fellow Leadership Academy Alumni,

For over ten years, the Latino Policy Forum has been dedicated to training community leaders committed to social and economic equity, justice, and freedom. In 2018, I was one of the 24 community leaders that graduated from the Multicultural Leadership Academy. Since then, I have had the honor of serving as your program coordinator for the MLA.

One of my greatest joys in this role has been following you on your journeys to achieving equality in your communities. Each of you has catalyzed real change and made great strides in addressing the needs of our state's communities of color. We at the Forum are so proud to celebrate your personal and professional achievements with you.


We could not be more excited about the future of the Leadership Academy and, moving forward, we want to establish an even greater sense of solidarity among our over-230 leaders. That is why we are focusing on uniting our past cohorts through the Forum's social media networks.

I look forward to seeing you all again, and to another remarkable year of growth for our participants, for our program, and for our communities. Make sure to check your email and spam for additional information, upcoming events, and opportunities!

Sincerely,  
NiCole Ward



# Leadership Academy **History**



In 2009, the Latino Policy Forum developed the Illinois Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy. This year-long program provided intensive capacity-building training and one-on-one consulting to leading and emerging Latino nonprofit professionals. The Development Training Institute (DTI) provided technical assistance in the first year. The Forum built on this foundation for the next five years. The Academy offered skill-building opportunities to individuals working in Latino-led and serving organizations to foster, nurture, and support leaders as they moved their organizations to the next levels of excellence, sustainability, and impact.

In 2016, the Latino Policy Forum made a strategic decision to widen the scope of its Leadership Academy to a multicultural perspective.



**The Multicultural Leadership Academy would strengthen relationships among community leaders from diverse communities of color, focusing primarily on Latinos and African Americans.**

Fostering cooperation and leadership across communities of color via the Academy had never been more urgent. The twenty-four 2016 MLA participants were actively involved in social justice issues and sponsored by an Illinois organization engaged in social change/policy impact.





# The MLA Model

The model of the Multicultural Leadership Academy has led to strengthened leadership for community impact, increased cross-cultural understanding, bolstered community collaboration to address pressing social issues, and a network of diverse leaders who will be able to call upon each other in the future.



## Transformational Leadership

Uplifts others, creates motivating workplaces, communicates an inspiring vision, and establishes a compelling moral and ethical framework.



## Intercultural Understanding

Fosters an understanding of Illinois' diverse communities and identifies their common interests.



## Social Change/Policy Action

Participants will collaborate with their cohort on how to create a better, more equitable Illinois through social change and policy actions.



Since 2010, the Latino Policy Forum has **trained over 230 leaders**. In 2020, the Latino Policy Forum celebrated ten years of leadership development of African American and Latino/a/x/e leaders.

**We look forward to building a legacy of leaders by continuing to:**

**01**

Create a cohesive network of leaders committed to improving their communities through establishing intercultural relationships and trust.

**02**

Increase understanding of how racial and ethnic groups become assets to transformational leadership and collaborative social action.



# Meet the Current MLA Trainers



# Dr. Troy Harden

2023 MLA Trainer

Dr. Troy Harden has over 25 years' experience serving and consulting in social service and community settings. Dr. Harden currently serves as Northeastern Illinois University's Director of the Master of Social Work Program, where he is also an Associate Professor. Specializing in trauma and traditional and non-traditional interventions within community setting, he has worked as a clinician, administrator, educator, activist and community practitioner concerning community issues in diverse settings.

Dr. Harden has served as a consultant with such diverse institutions as the City of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, the Illinois Department of Human Services, and the Illinois African American Coalition for Prevention. He is currently a Co-Principal Investigator with DePaul University's Multifaith Veterans Support Project, an initiative in the state of Illinois to building community capacity to support veterans and their families.



# Richard J. Martinez

2023 MLA Trainer

Richard J. Martinez has over 30 years' experience in the field of housing and human relations. He is an accomplished facilitator, trainer and distinguished organizational development practitioner. His expertise is widely sought by both corporate and public entities. Mr. Martinez is the founder and President of the R.J. Martinez Group, a consulting firm specializing in change management, capacity building, leadership development and housing and economic development. Clients include Illinois Governor's Office, Chicago Housing Authority, The Center for Leadership Innovation, Bank of America (Neighborhood Excellence Program), The Latino Policy Forum's Latino Non-Profit Latino Leadership Program and the Multi-Cultural Leadership Academy, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, Native Americans in Philanthropy's Circle of Leadership Academy for 36 Tribal Leaders, National Center for Housing Management (NCHM), East Harlem Community Capital Corporation, League of United Latin American Citizens and the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

As Lead Faculty for the Center for Leadership Innovation's Latino Non-Profit Leadership Academy, Mr. Martinez successfully helped non-profits develop the organizational culture, chemistry and core competencies necessary for sustained success. He has served as Executive Director of the Contra Costa County Housing Authority in Northern California and as Project Director for NCHM Career Development and Training Institute in Washington, D.C.

As an expert in housing, he has testified before Congress and was asked to serve as a member of the House Democratic Caucus Housing Committee for the United States House of Representatives, and he has been published by the National Hispanic Center for Advanced Studies and Policy Analysis and the National Hispanic University. He is also an artist, poet, playwright and former owner of Mito's Art Gallery in San Antonio.



# Sylvia Puente

2023 MLA Trainer

Sylvia Puente is the Executive Director of the Latino Policy Forum and is a leading public policy analyst on issues impacting Latinos. She has been recognized as one of the “100 Most Influential Hispanics in the U.S.” by Hispanic Business magazine. In January 2009, Sylvia began serving as Executive Director of the Latino Policy Forum, the only public policy and advocacy organization in the Chicago metropolitan area working to improve educational outcomes for children, make housing accessible and affordable, promote just immigration reform, and build the influence and leadership of the Latino community. She is the convener of the Illinois Latino Agenda, where her collaboration and consensus-building skills are highly valued. Through the Latino Policy Forum, she works with more than 100 organizational leaders in the Chicago metropolitan region.

As a highly respected and thoughtful policy analyst, she is regularly called upon to provide perspective on the implications of the nation’s changing demographics; at conferences and meetings she often serves as keynote speaker. Puente is frequently cited in the media as an expert on Latino issues and has published numerous reports that articulate the vital role Latinos play in society.

Puente began her master’s degree studies at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and received her M.A. from the Harris School of Public Policy at the University of Chicago. She holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



# Sherida Morrison

2023 MLA Trainer

Nonprofit executive, social entrepreneur, and educator with over 25 years' experience in the philanthropic sector. Highly skilled in nonprofit management, coalition building, community engagement, theory-based program and curriculum design, data-informed evaluation, grant writing and management, org design, strategic development and planning, change management, and DEIJ (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice) practices. Significant contributions to the sector through published manuscripts, research and evaluation, CBPR, local and national conference and poster presentations. Able to integrate sociological frameworks and change management theories to develop innovative strategies to address org design, community engagement, coalition and partnership building, and diversity and inclusion.



**We graciously  
thank all previous  
MLA trainers!**





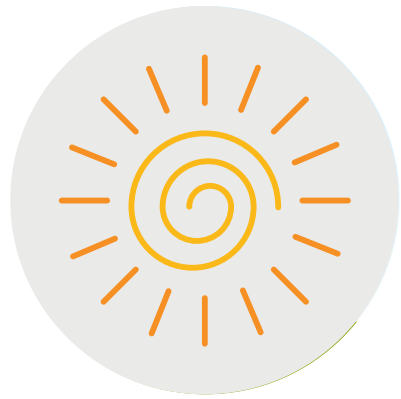
*Current as of September 2023*

# Alumni Directory



Click LinkedIn icon next to alumni name to view profile





**Ada Silverio**



**Carlos Hernandez**

Founder & Executive Director  
Puerto Rican Arts Alliance



**Dulce Quintero**

Assistant Secretary  
Illinois Department of Human  
Services



**Adam Alonso**

Chief Executive Officer  
BUILD, Inc.



**Carolina Duque**

Product Specialist  
Books del Sur



**Esmeralda Morales**

Graphics Specialist  
Thomson Reuters



**Alvar Ayala**

Chief of the Workplace Rights  
Bureau  
Illinois Attorney General's Office



**Cris Pope**

Independent  
Consultant/Director  
Interfaith Leadership Project



**Gonzalo Arroyo**

Retired/Formerly Center  
Director of Family Focus, Inc



**Bertha G. Magaña**

Nonprofit Consultant  
Bertha G. Magana Consulting



**Danielle Espinosa**



**Helen Valdez**

Retired / Former City Colleges  
of Chicago





**Israel Vargas** [in](#)

**Instructional Facilitator**  
Goodwill Industries of  
Metropolitan Chicago, Inc.



**Maria Garcia** [in](#)

**Educator and Consultant**



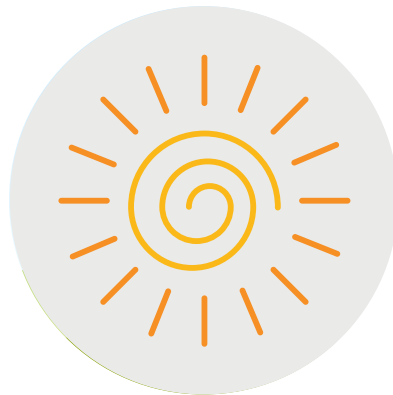
**Sarah Pegman** [in](#)

**Communications Specialist**  
Habitat for Humanity of Kent  
County



**Jaime Garcia** [in](#)

**Retired/Formerly Executive  
Director of Centro de  
Informacion**



**Mayra Mena-Garcia**



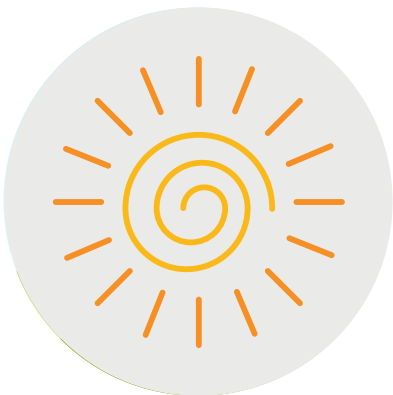
**Sol Flores** [in](#)

**Deputy Governor**  
State of Illinois  
Office of the Governor



**Jose Luis Alvarez**

**Town of Cicero**

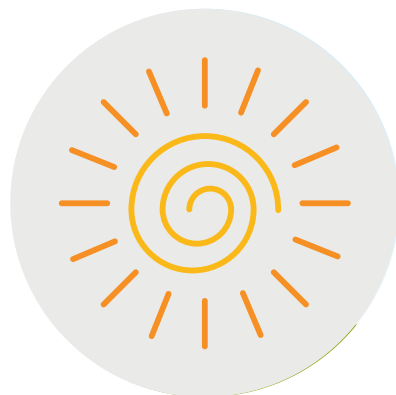


**Moira Pujols** [in](#)



**Tanya Jaramilla** [in](#)

**Chief Operations Officer**  
Urban Gateways



**Jennifer Vergara**



**Mireya Luna** [in](#)

**Community Mortgage Lender**  
First National Bank of Omaha  
National Urban Fellow





**Adrienne Lange**

Chief Advancement Officer  
Latinos Progresando



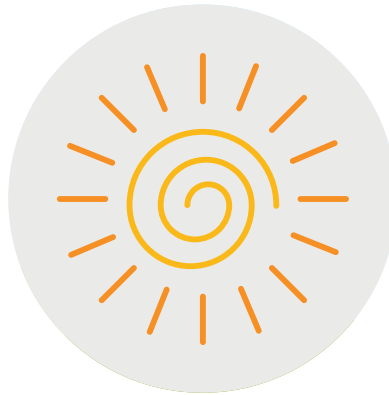
**Denise Dell Isola**

Senior Program Officer  
Irving Harris Foundation



**Marco Jacome**

CEO  
Healthcare Alternative Systems,  
Inc.

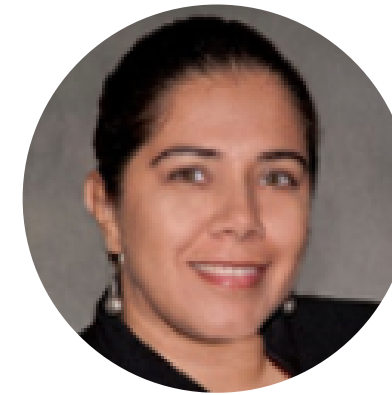


**Alheli Herrera**



**Griselda Guerra**

Program Director  
Maryville Academy



**Mariana Osoria**

Senior Vice President  
Partnerships & Engagement at  
Family Focus



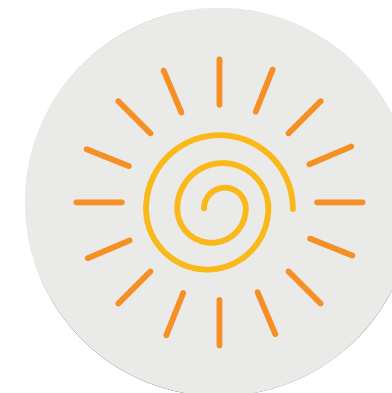
**Arturo Valdez**

Director of Division of Substance  
Abuse Programs  
Pilsen Wellness Center, Inc.



**Jose Ovalle**

Parent Liaison  
The Autism Program of Illinois



**Mario F. Garcia**



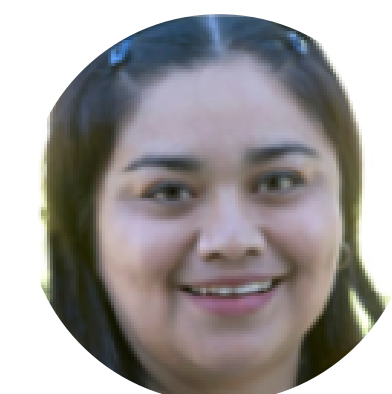
**Darica Charles**

Program Director  
Onward Neighborhood House



**Luis Gutierrez**

Founder & CEO  
Latinos Progresando



**Marselina Gonzalez**

Immigration Legal Services  
Program Director  
Latinos Progresando



# YEAR 2 COHORT

2011



**Matie Ovalle**

Parent Liaison  
The Autism Program of Illinois



**Rosa Garcia**

Director of Operations  
Hispanic Alliance for Career  
Enhancement



**Michael Rodriguez**

Alderman and Democratic  
Committeeman  
22nd Ward



**Velia Soto**

Senior Director of Curriculum  
and Assessment  
Accelerate Institute



**Nancy Rojas**



**Zulema Ortiz**

Care Coordinator  
UIC Central West



**Rosa Reyes-Prosen**

Retired



# YEAR 3 COHORT

2012



**Ana Guajardo**

Executive Director  
Centro de Trabajadores Unidos



**Elizabeth Arroyo**

Author | Administrative  
Assistance  
Cintas



**Katy Groves**

Therapist and Behavioral  
Health Consultant  
Access Community Health  
Network



**Carla Argueta**

Principal  
Ichor Strategies



**Elizabeth Nevarez**

Accounting Specialist  
Aimsourcing, Inc.



**Kenny Martin-Ocasio**

Senior Vice President,  
Health Services, Community  
Integration Aunt Martha's  
Health & Wellness



**Celena Roldán**

Chief Executive Officer  
American Red Cross of Greater  
Chicago



**Greg Van Hyfte**

Executive Director  
YogaCare



**Lorraine Guerrero**   
**Neumayer**

Trauma Therapist  
Will County State's Attorney

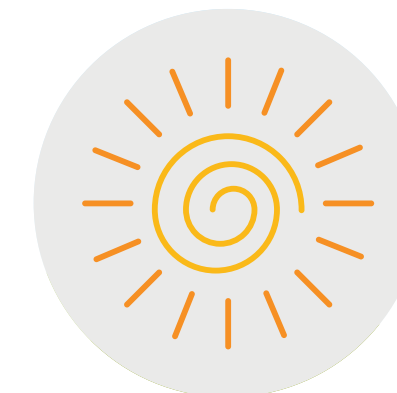


**Cristina Garcia**

Especial Services  
Prospect Aeropuerto



**Jaime Aguilera**



**Luz Medina**



# YEAR 3 COHORT

2012



**Maria-Guadalupe Canales**



**Rosario Sanchez**



**Maria-Elena Jonas** [in](#)

Executive Director  
HACES



**Yesenia Sanchez** [in](#)

San Diego State University  
Latinx Resource Center



**Michael Henderson** [in](#)

Area Manager  
Amazon



**Olivia Sánchez** [in](#)

Parent Outreach Coordinator  
State of Illinois - Illinois Student  
Assistance Commission



**YEAR 4 COHORT**

**2013**



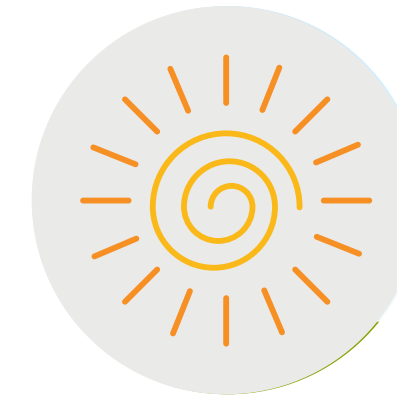
**Adam Avrushin**

Director of Strategic Performance  
Maryville Academy



**Carolina Gaete**

Co-director  
Blocks Together

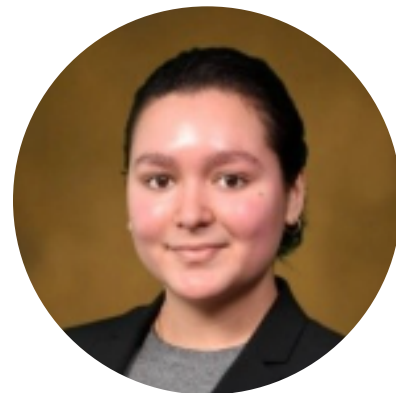


**Elisa Nigaglioni**



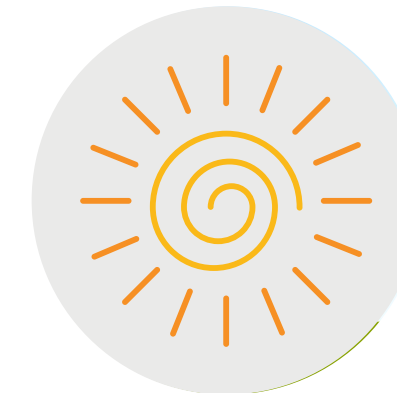
**Alicia Gonzalez**

Executive Director of Cubs Charities  
Chicago Cubs

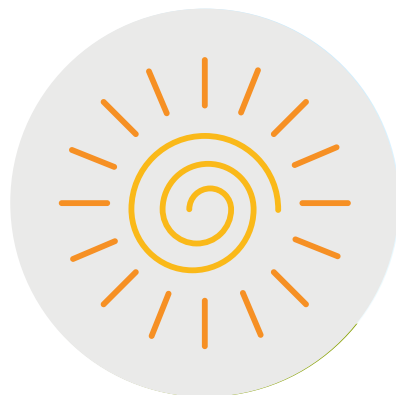


**Daisy Rivera**

Unique Marketing and Research Enthusiast with Brennan School of Business  
Dominican University



**Janet Ortega**



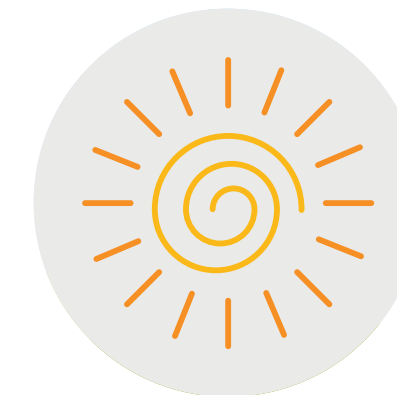
**Amy Witt**

Program Officer  
Crown Family Foundation



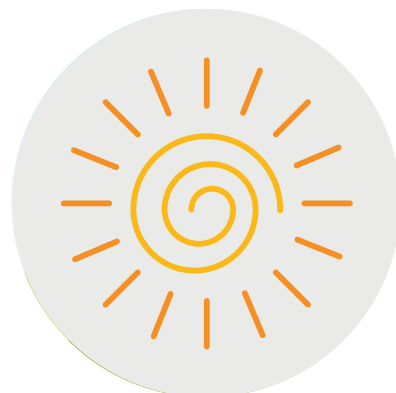
**Edgar Ramirez**

President and CEO  
Chicago Commons



**Jessica Carrillo**

Director of Programs and Services  
BUILD Chicago



**Carol Pico**

Supervisor  
Family Focus



**Elena Garcia Ansani**

Education Consultant/HETL Country Director  
USA - Southwest/JARHE Editorial Advisory Board

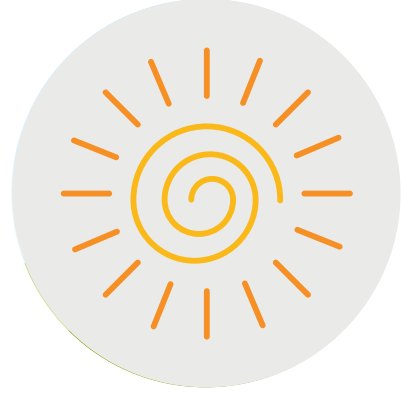


**Joe Hankey**

Sr. Diversity and Inclusion Manager  
CUNA Mutual Group







**Kimberly Johnson**



**Michael Guarrine**

CCAP Coordinator  
Chicago Commons



**Rodrigo Carrillo**

Director of Strategic Initiatives &  
Response  
Illinois Housing Development  
Authority



**Malachi Hoye**



**Patricia Vasquez**

Director of External Affairs and  
Communications  
Casa Central



**Rosaura Arellano**

Managing Director  
El Hogar del Niño



**Mario Perez**

Executive Director  
El Hogar del Niño



**Phillip Jimenez**

President and CEO  
The West Cook YMCAs. Inc.



**Tad Smith**



**Mercedes Murguia**



**Rebeca Mendoza**

Regional Grants Officer (Latin  
America)  
Rotary International





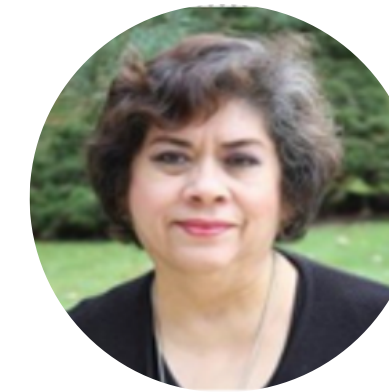
**Caritina Mayer** [in](#)

Director of Finance at YWCA of Rock County



**Derek Shouba** [in](#)

Derek Shouba  
Vice President of Academic Affairs at Calumet College of St. Joseph



**Graciela Contreras** [in](#)

Executive Director and Founder at Northern Alliance for Immigrants



**Carla Rosales**



**Esperanza Salgado-Rodriguez** [in](#)

Manager of TRIO, Student Support Services at Oakton Community College



**Irasema Gonzalez** [in](#)

Grant Writer at Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana



**Cristina Pacione-Zayas** [in](#)

Illinois State Senator



**Giselle Mercier** [in](#)

Emerging Voices Specialist at US Embassy in Panama



**Jackie Summerville**



**Denise Reyes** [in](#)

Project Manager at Full Circle Communities, Inc



**Grace Kozlowski** [in](#)

Account Executive at CISA Insurance



**Jacqueline Herrera Giron** [in](#)

Immigration Attorney at the Law Office of Jacqueline Herrera Giron





**Jeffrey Tinley** [in](#)

Director Of Institutional Research at Roane State Community College



**Laura Ramirez**



**Mariela Estrada** [in](#)

Public Relations Coordinator at the City of Chicago Office of the Inspector General



**José Eduardo Vera** [in](#)

Executive Director at Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project



**Luz Ramirez** [in](#)

CAO, YWCA Northwestern Illinois, YWCA La Voz Latina/ Owner, Sonoma Ramirez LLC



**Marlena Avalos** [in](#)

Director of Student Academic Success at Resurrection University



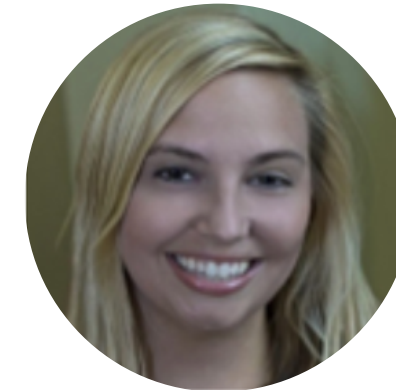
**Juliana Gonzalez-Crussi** [in](#)

Executive Director at Center for Changing Lives



**Marcela Rodriguez** [in](#)

Director of Finance at Enlace Chicago



**Mary Johnson** [in](#)

Chief Development & Strategy Officer at Lincoln Park Community Services



**Laura Bass** [in](#)

Director of Programs at Facing Forward to End Homelessness



**Maria Eugenia Cardona**



**Michelle Flores**



# YEAR 5 COHORT

2014



**Michelle Garcia** [in](#)

Senior Assistant Director,  
Marketing and Communications  
at University of Chicago



**Virgil Hernandez** [in](#)

Experienced Bilingual HR  
Manager



**Samantha Arroyo**



**Xochitl Espinosa** [in](#)

Founder and Executive Director  
of the Co-op Ed Center



**Tasia Stockstill** [in](#)

General Manager at J&B West  
Enterprises



**Yesenia Avalos** [in](#)

Lecturer at Purdue University  
Northwest



**Uriel Montoya** [in](#)

Owner / CEO at Montoya Electric  
LLC



# YEAR 6 COHORT

2015



**Beatriz Albelo** [in](#)

Residential Manager at Deborah's Place



**Delia Ramirez** [in](#)

Illinois 4th House State Rep.



**Flor Esquivel** [in](#)

Administrative Director for Higher Education in Prisons at Adler University



**Ashley Moy-Wooten** [in](#)

Skokie Dst 73-5 School Board Member



**Elizabeth Cervantes** [in](#)

Founder of the Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project



**Guadalupe Martinez** [in](#)

Internal Auditor at Blue Cross Blue Shield



**Carmen Carreno-Ziegler** [in](#)

Finance & Accounting Professional



**Esteban Rodriguez** [in](#)

Director of Community Schools and Youth at Northwest Side Housing Center



**Isabel Anadon** [in](#)

Research Associate at Dane County



**Cheryl Flores** [in](#)

Director of Academic and Social Emotional Supports at Golden Apple Foundation



**Estela Vara** [in](#)

Citizenship Coordinator at P.A.S.O



**Isabel Diaz** [in](#)

Director of Employee Relations & Equal Employment Opportunity



# YEAR 6 COHORT

2015



**James Rudyk**

Executive Director at Northwest Side Housing Center



**Kevin Frausto**

Freight Operation Generalist at McMaster-Carr



**Natalie Vesga**

Director of Chicago Early Childhood Preparation and Pathway and UIC College of Education



**Jessica Pérez**

Founding Partner of For the Culture Consulting, LLC



**Lissette Kuri**



**Rodolfo Yanez**

Student Life Coordinator at Elgin Community College



**Juan Carlos Linares**

President and CEO at Association House of Chicago



**Lucy Gomez-Feliciano**

Community Stewardship Program Manager at the Chicago Park District



**Rosa Nanez**

CSBG Director at Two Rivers Agency



**Julian Vargas**

Marketing Technology Operations Manager at Quartz Events



**Nancy Valentin**

Director of Health Equity at The Northwest Side Center



**Savannah Clement**

Founder at Savvy Transformations



# YEAR 7 COHORT

2017



**Aasia Castaneda**

Community Partnerships Manager at Chicago Food Policy Action Council



**Analía Rodríguez**

Leader, Organizer, and Mentor



**Asiaha Butler**

President and CEO of the Resident Association of Greater Englewood



**Abel Ochoa**

Executive Director of College Readiness and Access at U of C



**Angelica Rivera**

Director of Proyecto Pa'lante at Northeastern Illinois University



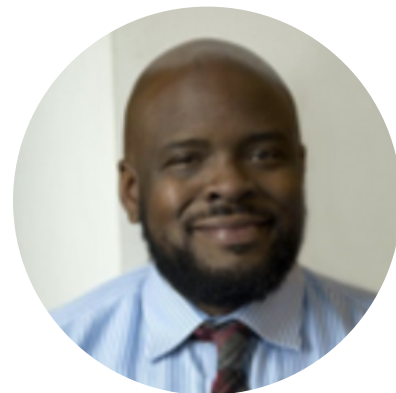
**Azalea Acuña**

Associate Director of Housing at A Safe Haven Foundation



**Adriana Díaz**

Communications Strategist at Peer Health Exchange



**Anton Seals**

Lead Steward (Executive Director) at Grow Greater Englewood



**Bessie Alcantara**

Executive Director at Alternatives, Inc.



**Alfredo Nambo**

Director of English Learners at Acero Schools



**Art Richardson**

Region Manager at Chicago Park District



**Bryan Johnson**

Senior Director of Evaluation & Outcomes at Metropolitan Family Services



# YEAR 7 COHORT

2017



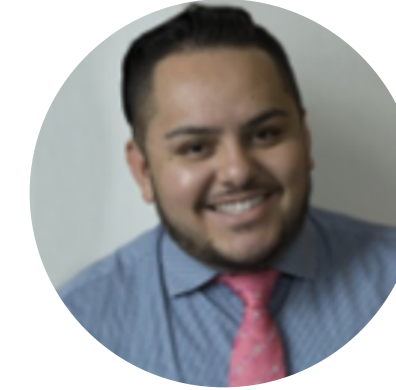
**Carman Weathington** [in](#)

Interim Chief People Officer at Flex Execs Management Solutions



**Erika Allen** [in](#)

Co-founder and CEO of Operations at Urban Growers Collective



**Luis Roman** [in](#)

Program Officer at J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation



**Carrie Brown**



**Henry Cervantes**



**Maritza Rocha** [in](#)

Nature Center Director at the Forest Preserves of Cook County



**Craig Stevenson** [in](#)

Designer



**Keith Lewis** [in](#)

Senior Director of Community Collaboration at the University of Illinois Chicago and Practitioner at Chicago Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation



**Oswaldo Alvarez** [in](#)

Chief Executive Officer at Chicago Workes Collaborative



**Ebony Campbell** [in](#)

Senior Director of Resident Services at Chicago Housing Authority



**Kimeco Roberson** [in](#)

Community Project Manager at Heartland Alliance



# YEAR 8 COHORT

2018



**Berto Aguayo** [in](#)

Executive Director at Increase The Peace



**Daris Jasper** [in](#)

Art Director at Culture Saving



**Jessica Cañas** [in](#)

Assistant Director of Education at Enlace Chicago



**Claude Robinson** [in](#)

Executive Vice President of UCAN Chicago



**DeeDee Pacheco**

Founder of Sol Coalition



**Jorge Valdivia** [in](#)

Director of Performing Arts at the National Museum of Mexican Art



**Cory Stevenson** [in](#)

Visual Arts Teacher/ Leadership Teacher/ Issues and Ideas Teacher at High Jump



**Evelyn Benitez** [in](#)

Youth Services Coordinator at City of Chicago



**Jose Abonce** [in](#)

Community Engagement Specialist at Policing Project



**Cynthia Nambo** [in](#)

Leadership Coach with the Network for College Success at the University of Chicago



**Itzel Lopez** [in](#)

Medical Student at The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine



**Judy Idrovo** [in](#)

Program Coordinator at Metropolitan Family Services



# YEAR 8 COHORT 2018



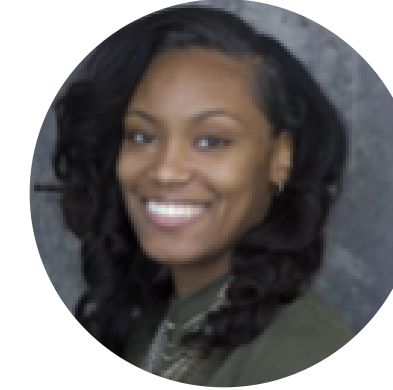
**Leila Rahravan**

Deputy Director at Northwest Side Housing Center



**Rafael Yañez**

Immigration Outreach Liaison Officer in the Hate Crimes/Civil Rights Unit with the Chicago Police Department



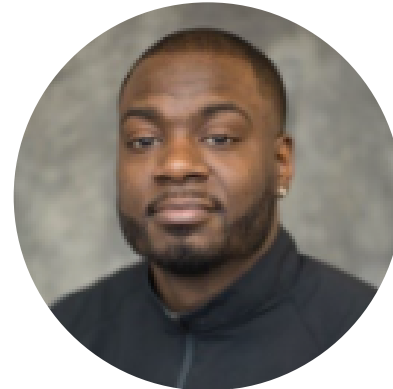
**Siemone Smith**

Infant Mental Health Specialist at Erikson Institute



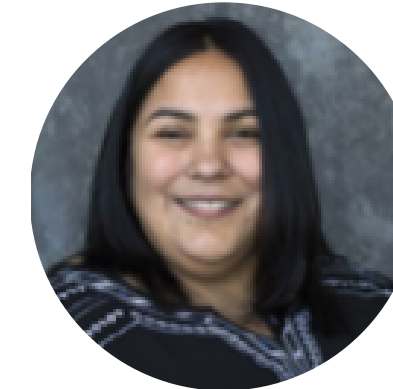
**Lilliane Webb**

Account Supervisor & Engagement Leader at Rudd Resources LLC

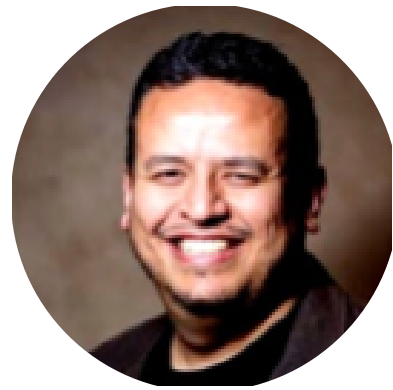


**Reco Bates**

School Culture Counselor at Chicago Public Schools



**Sonica Ruiz**



**Luis Narvaez**

Program Director At Chicago Public Schools



**Saeed Richardson**

Programs and Operations Officer at Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc.



**Teishetta Daniel**

Center Director, Northerly Island at Chicago Park District



**NiCole Ward**

Leadership Development Program Manager at Latino Policy Forum



**Shanavia Stevens**

Child Welfare Supervisor at SOS Children's Villages Illinois



**Tevonne Ellis**

Director of Programs at Claretian Associates

# YEAR 9 COHORT

2019



**Akeya Channell**



**Credell Walls**

Youth Outdoor Ambassador  
Program Director and  
Community Engagement  
Specialist for the Forest Preserves



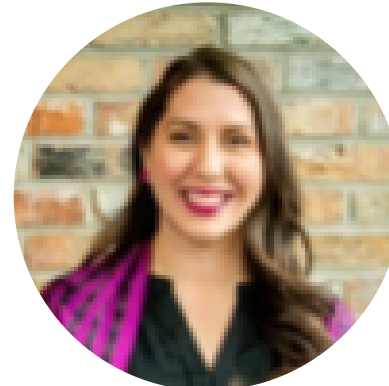
**Kathleen Badejo**

Grantmaking Specialist at Quad  
Cities Community Foundation



**Amy Diaz**

Chief Of Staff, Office of the  
Chancellor at Indiana  
University Northwest



**Eira Corral Sepúlveda**

Commissioner at the  
Metropolitan Water Reclamation  
District of Greater Chicago



**Latrice Davis**



**Ayom Siengo**

VP of Community Engagement  
and Strategic Initiatives at  
Skills for Chicagoland's Future



**Graciela Guzman**

Campaign Director at Healthy  
Illinois Campaign



**Lola Jenkins**



**Christian Diaz**

Youth Education Organizer at  
Logan Square Neighborhood  
Association



**Hector Torres**

Clinical Psychologist and  
Organizational Effectiveness  
Consultant at Colibrí  
Counseling and Consulting



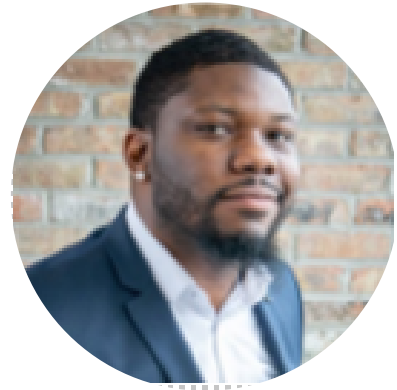
**Matt Woods**

Program Manager at Urban  
Gateways



# YEAR 9 COHORT

2019



**Maurice Perkins**



**Nancy Garcia**



**Tim Jones**

Vice President of Giving at  
Lawndale Christian Legal Center



**Melody Jackson**



**Paloma Arroyo**

Regional Organizing Director  
at Supermajority



**Wendy Williams**

Executive Director, Community  
Partnerships at University of  
Chicago



**Michael Tafolla**

Case Manager at Precious Blood  
Ministry of Reconciliation NFP



**Rodolfo De Jesus**

Community Engagement  
Manager at Ann & Robert H. Lurie  
Children's Hospital of Chicago



**William Sanders**



**Mireya Fouche**

Founder of One Heart One Soul  
and Co-Executive Director of  
Monarch Thrift Shop



**Sasha Pena**

Director of Career and  
Leadership Development at  
Chicago Scholars



**Willis Francis**

Managing Director of Supportive  
Service at Heartland Alliance



# YEAR 10 COHORT **2020**



**Barbara Goodall Meschino**

Dean of the West Side Learning Center at City Colleges of Chicago-Malcolm X College



**Cesar Nunez**

Management Specialist for the City of Chicago



**Floyd Stafford**

Program Officer at Steans Family Foundation



**Carina Ruiz**



**Diana Rubi**

Program Manager at Entrepreneurship for All



**Ja'Neane Minor**

Director of Government Relations at Advance Illinois



**Cason Brunt**

Director of College Success and Postsecondary Leadership Development at Chicago Scholars



**Ernesto Saldivar Jr.**

Director of Language Acquisition, Literacy, and Community Engagement at Proviso Township Schools



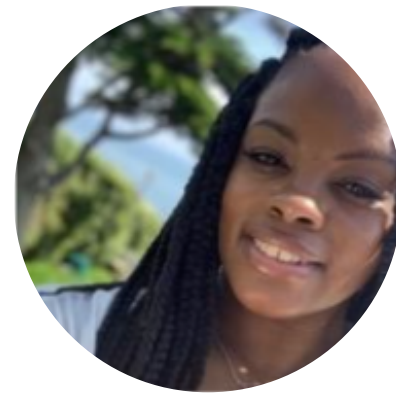
**Jaunita Pye**

Operations Director at YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago



**Cecilia Mendoza**

Immigration Services Coordinator at Family Focus, Inc.



**Farah Dioro Tunks**

Region Director (Central) at Chicago Park District



**Jennifer Baquedano**

Associate Researcher for Capacity Building in Early Childhood at Chapin Hall



# YEAR 10 COHORT **2020**



**Jonathan Fair** [in](#)

Interim Director of Planning and Design at the University of Illinois Chicago



**Militza Pagán** [in](#)

Staff Attorney at Shriver Center on Poverty Law



**Samantha Sherrod** [in](#)

Community Facilitator, Leap Ambassadors Support Team at Morino Ventures, LLC



**Lisette Arzuaga** [in](#)

Development and Communications Manager at Logan Square Neighborhood Association



**Paul Callejas** [in](#)

Director of Youth Arts Education at Chicago Center for Arts & Technology



**Shelby Chaney** [in](#)

Managing Member at Still We R.I.S.E., LLC



**Lyzeth Mondragon** [in](#)

Community Impact Director at American Heart Association | American Stroke Association



**Ray Arroyo**



**Te'Aira Malone** [in](#)

Clinical Program Director at Metropolitan Family Services



**Maria Pike**



**Roberto Mendez** [in](#)

Financial Aid Coordinator at Chicago Theological Seminary

# YEAR 11 COHORT

2023



**Aaron Cortes**

Northeastern Illinois University - Center for College Access and Success



**Edwin Ortiz**

Chicago Department of Housing



**Juanita Garcia**

Board of Directors, Rebuild Exchange



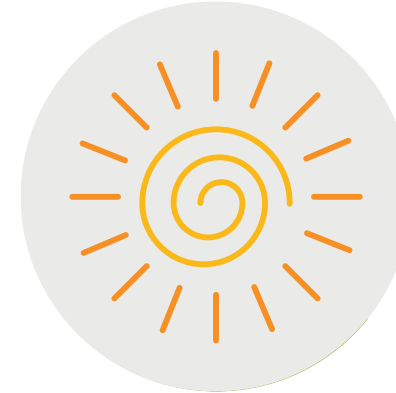
**Adam Gonzalez**

General Counsel & Senior Director of External Affairs, El Valor Corporation



**Jessica Taylor**

Director of Post Secondary Initiatives, Steans Family Foundation



**Khameron Townsend-Riley**

Community Affairs Specialist, University of Illinois at Chicago-Office of Community Collaboration



**Carlos Matallana**

Founder and Developer, Blok by Blok Podcast Club Chicago



**Jordan Esparza**

College of Lake County



**Kisha Ingram**

Dean of Enrollment Management, Malcolm X College



**Darion Crawford**

Compost Coordinator, Urban Growers Collective



**Jose Pizarro**

ALSO



**Manuel Hernández**

Executive Director, Association of Latinos/as/xs Motivating Action



# YEAR 11 COHORT

2023



**Marcus Samuel**

Impact Coordinator,  
The Community Trust



**Pamesha Robinson**

Youth and Family  
Program Coordinator,  
Claretian Associates



**Vanessa Melgoza**

Director of Health  
Programs, Corazón  
Community Services



**Maria Nava**

Warren-Newport  
Public Library



**Patricia Hernández**

Director of WIC and Women's  
Health Services, Roseland  
Community Hospital



**Vinita Voss**

District Director, U.S.  
House of Representatives



**Monique Draper**

Chief Program Officer,  
B.U.I.L.D



**Phasha Spencer**

Senior Specialist,  
Partnerships, Ed  
Reports



**Noelle Gipson**

Assistant Director,  
University of Chicago



**Rocío Pulido**

Program Manager, Immigrant  
Justice Partnerships, The  
Resurrection Project





**The Latino Policy Forum welcomes you to continue this journey with us through involvement and participation**

Contact NiCole Ward, Program Manager, for additional information at [academy@latinopolicyforum.org](mailto:academy@latinopolicyforum.org)

Update ILNLA and MLA Alumni contact information [here](#).