

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



ANNUAL REPORT 2010

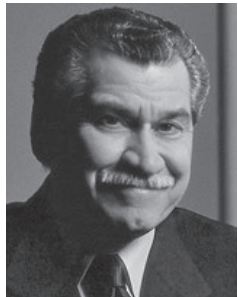
The Latino Policy Forum is the only organization in the Chicago area that facilitates the involvement of Latinos at all levels of public decision-making. The Forum strives to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies, and engage diverse sectors of the community. It does this by conducting analysis to inform, influence and lead, all with an understanding that advancing Latinos advances a shared future.



Dear Friends,



Three years ago, when the Latino Policy Forum was established with just three staff, we couldn't have imagined the reach and impact it would have today: Our network of hundreds of civic leaders, volunteers and advocates—*Acuerdo* work group members, Non-profit Leadership Academy alums, and Illinois Latino Agenda members—is growing every day, testament that the Latino Policy Forum is just that: A forum where various sectors of Latino leadership can convene to advance policies that move our community forward.



The Forum had a banner year in 2010, marked by significant advances in our early childhood education, housing, immigration, and community engagement efforts. The Latino Policy Forum is informing community dialog on these issues, influencing policy decisions in Springfield and leading the charge for change. Our work doesn't just advance Latinos; it advances a shared future for everyone. You'll read more about our achievements in the following pages.

For all of the Forum's successes, however, the call for our work to continue grows increasingly urgent: The state fiscal crisis is devastating Latino-serving organizations; foreclosure is decimating Latino neighborhoods; insufficient access to quality preschool education leads to stubborn achievement gaps in our schools; and partisan posturing keeps critically-needed immigration reform from moving forward.

As the Latino community continues to grow in numbers, our ability to tackle these issues depends on our commitment to work together and to solve local problems with system-wide solutions. Together, we can move *adelante*.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sylvia Puente".

Sylvia Puente
Executive Director
Latino Policy Forum

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hipolito Roldan".

Hipolito "Paul" Roldan
President, Board of Directors
Latino Policy Forum



PHOTO CREDIT: OLGA LOPEZ

“Some kids aren’t ready to learn...and it’s all because they didn’t have that experience before going to Kindergarten, the preschool experience.” – Eva, CPS teacher, commenting on the importance of preschool in closing the learning gap.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Illinois Latinos academically lag behind their peers before they even set foot in kindergarten. The gap persists as Latino students advance through the public school system. It's not surprising that these frustrating trends culminate with dismal high school graduation rates: These youth are almost as likely to drop out as they are to finish, a troubling statistic, as 1-in-5 students in Illinois schools is Latino.

But Illinois has recently upped the ante in addressing these stubborn achievement gaps, with legislation mandating that children have access to preschool programs in their native language. In a state where one-fifth of residents speak a language other than English, it's vital that its English-language learners—many of whom are Latino—have the best shot at building a solid academic foundation.

Lean economic times threaten funding for these vital programs, both at the state and federal levels. Budget cuts threaten to reduce the availability of quality, accessible preschools, already in short supply in Latino communities: Only 1-in-3 Latino children is enrolled in preschool in Illinois, compared with almost two-thirds of other children. However, research shows that early childhood education is a sound investment, with every dollar invested yielding a \$10 return in the form of increased school and career achievement as well as reduced costs in remedial education, health, and criminal justice costs.

What the Latino Policy Forum is doing to ensure that Latino children have access to high quality early childhood services that are linguistically and culturally appropriate:

- ◆ Advancing a collective policy agenda on issues that have an impact on young Latino learners with the Early Childhood Education *Acuerdo* (Accord) work group, and educating the field on the impact of new legislation, including Illinois' trailblazing new bilingual preschool mandate.
- ◆ Enriching civic understanding and media coverage of Latino children and families with the New Journalism on Latino Children project, coordinated with the University of California at Berkeley and the Education Writers Association.
- ◆ Promoting culturally-relevant education to parents in Latino-serving organizations with the *Abriendo Puertas* (Opening Doors) program.
- ◆ Providing recommendations to increase Latino access to quality early childhood education through analysis and policy reports, building on the framework of *Transforming Early Learning: Educational Equity for Young Latinos*.
- ◆ Advocating for administrative and legislative changes by participating in public policy decision-making processes and training community leaders and parents to participate.



PHOTO CREDIT: OLGA LOPEZ

"I still have some hope that the DREAM Act is gonna pass, and that I will be able to study and make my parents proud."
- "P," an undocumented immigrant youth whose college plans have been stalled because of her immigration status.

IMMIGRATION INITIATIVES

Not all Latinos are immigrants, and not all immigrants are Latino, but the terms *immigrant* and *Latino* have become nearly synonymous in the eyes of many Americans. While opinions on immigration—all passionate—run the gamut, it is clear that the US immigration system is broken and in need of urgent repair.

Unfortunately, the national immigration debate focuses largely on security and not on economic realities or the plight of the millions of undocumented workers currently living in local communities. And bitter partisan divides in Congress makes dialog on real fixes to the system almost impossible, as evidenced by the devastating defeat of the DREAM Act in 2010, and the worrisome trend of independent states—like Arizona—taking matters into their own hands with controversial, divisive legislation.

Despite the doom-and-gloom prognosis for immigration reform, there are still compelling reasons why it can and should happen. Research shows that reform would be a major stimulus to the US economy. By raising wages and increasing consumption—which, in turn, would create jobs and generate additional tax revenues—immigration reform could yield as much as \$1.5 trillion in gains over the next decade. With 2012 elections in sight, immigration will undoubtedly be a core issue for the many voters—particularly Latino voters—whose loved ones await decisive action.

What the Latino Policy Forum is doing to ensure individuals living in the United States are recognized as valuable and contributing members of society with equal access to equity and prosperity, regardless of their country of origin:

- ◆ Promoting a thoughtful approach to immigration reform and local immigrant integration issues through the community leaders of the Immigration *Acuerdo* (Accord) work group.
- ◆ Fostering equity and prosperity for immigrants through collaborative, *Acuerdo*-led efforts, most recently by promoting the DREAM Act as a first step towards incremental immigration reform.
- ◆ Providing credible, consistent information on the ever-changing landscape of comprehensive immigration reform and policy through regular communications and federal policy analysis.
- ◆ Balancing anti-Latino, anti-immigrant rhetoric in mainstream media and message boards by convening a group of Comment Corps volunteers to post fact-based, truthful commentary.



PHOTO CREDIT: OLGA LOPEZ

“How can we better the community? Not just for me. Everybody’s losing their homes here.” – Irma, a struggling homeowner in Humboldt Park, on the devastating foreclosures in her neighborhood.

HOUSING INITIATIVES

Homeownership has long provided a pathway to the American Dream. However, the ongoing foreclosure crisis, along with issues of housing affordability, discrimination, overcrowding, and predatory lending, keep that dream out of reach for many Latinos.

Illinois has been hit hard by recent mortgage foreclosures, with the ninth-highest rate in the country in 2010. While communities across the state are suffering, Latinos—who accounted for half of the overall increase in owner-occupied homes in the state over the last decade—have been affected disproportionately. Foreclosure filings were still on the rise at the end of 2010 in these communities, up 17 percent in Chicago and 29 percent in its suburbs over the end of 2009.

While foreclosure devastates Latino communities across the region, Chicago's suburbs face unique challenges: These communities are seeing unprecedented growth of Latino residents, but often lack the social infrastructure to support them. Violations of Fair Housing Law abound in suburban communities, with Latinos complaining about selective enforcement of municipal codes; landlords steering applicants to housing options in select neighborhoods based on race, income, or family size; and municipalities discouraging the development of affordable rental housing for minority, low-income or immigrant communities. Too often, Latino immigrants either don't know about their rights under the law, or are hesitant to complain because of fear of retaliation from immigration authorities.

What the Latino Policy Forum is doing ensure that all Latinos, including low- and mid-income families, have access to quality, affordable housing:

- ◆ Working with the leadership of the Housing *Acuerdo* (Accord) work group to create a policy agenda that will ensure Latino families have access to quality, affordable housing and other housing resources.
- ◆ Bringing attention to the devastating effects of the mortgage foreclosure crisis in the Latino communities through analysis and fact sheets.
- ◆ Educating consumers and service providers on Fair Housing Laws through events and workshops, particularly those held regularly at Chicago's Mexican Consulate and in communities with high concentrations of Latino households.
- ◆ Developing curricula to provide practical education to help people looking for housing acquire and keep decent housing.



“If I am able to implement 50 percent of what I have learned, then our organization will be 100 percent better.” – a 2010 Illinois Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy participant on the value of the time invested in the program.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Latinos are now the second-largest ethnic/minority community in the state, accounting for a full 16 percent of the population. In real terms, they are one-in-four children under age five; one-in-five public school students; and nearly three-in-five new entrants to the workforce. The community's growth—33 percent over the past decade—in an otherwise stagnant state means that Illinois' future economic competitiveness depends on full engagement of this population in political, social and economic activities.

Latino civic participation is steadily increasing with its population numbers. The number of registered Latino voters increased 47 percent between 2000 and 2008, the largest increase of any ethnic group during the same period. Latino population gains translate to economic and political gains for the rest of the state. If it weren't for Latino population growth, Illinois would have lost two Congressional seats, instead of just one. And Illinois' Latino population will bring a staggering \$30 billion in Federal funding to the state over the next 10 years—that's nearly \$1,500 per person per year for every one of the more than two million Latinos counted in the 2010 Census.

But Latino economic and political contributions to the state haven't translated to increases in investment in or representation for the community: In FY09, the State of Illinois awarded just 5.5 percent of all state grants through 120 Latino contracts. In FY10, that number had dropped to just 85 Latino contracts that collectively received 13 percent less in actual dollar

amounts. And in 2009, just 218 Latinos were hired to fill 3,681 state-level jobs, a far cry from the additional 4,560 Latino employees that would be needed to achieve parity.

What the Latino Policy Forum is doing to build a strong Latino community, with thriving organizations able to meet their missions and work together to accomplish larger goals:

- ◆ Leveraging the collective leadership of the Latino community by co-convening the *Illinois Latino Agenda*, a strategic alliance of nearly 50 Latino-serving nonprofits, along with *Acuerdo* (Accord) working groups of community leaders in immigration, education and housing.
- ◆ Encouraging sustainable leadership in Latino-led and -serving organizations by convening the second cohort of the Illinois Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy, engaging executive-level and emerging leadership in personal, professional and organizational development.
- ◆ Bolstering Latino participation in state-level decision-making by increasing placement of eight Latino advocates on committees and councils.



PHOTO CREDIT: OLGA LOPEZ

"You all do such amazing work and are positively impacting so many lives." -Coordinator of a program for under-resourced, high potential youth after visiting Latino Policy Forum offices with a group of Latina high school students.

2010 ACHIEVEMENTS

INFORM

- ◆ **Increased presence of Latino voice in mainstream media** through the placement of more than 120 print articles and broadcast segments in mainstream and community news outlets.
- ◆ **Conducted trailblazing analysis, “State Grants Through Latino Contracts,” on disparities in state investment in Latinos**, revealing that 15 percent of Illinois’ population constitutes only 4.4 percent of the state workforce and receives just 5.5 percent of state grants.
- ◆ **Produced the *Blueprint for Latino Investment: A Latino Legislative Agenda***, which highlights the vital role that Latinos play in fueling Illinois’ economy and articulates standards for investment for the distribution of state funding.

INFLUENCE

- ◆ **Authored the official comments on bilingual preschool rule changes** on behalf of the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee and the Illinois Early Learning Council. Also provided testimony to the Illinois State Board of Education in support of bilingual preschool, positioning Illinois as a trailblazer in providing bilingual education at the pre-K level.
- ◆ **Demanded accountability from mortgage lenders** by co-convening a City Hall hearing on the housing foreclosure crisis, giving Latino homeowners and elected officials a platform to voice their concerns with representatives from more than 10 banks.
- ◆ **Increased Latino participation in public policy** by testifying nine times in appropriations hearings and leading delegations to Springfield to advocate for maintenance of funding for early care and education programs as well as funding for Latino nonprofits.

- ◆ **Coordinated a local voice on federal immigration policy reform** by hosting a community information session attended by 100 individuals, coordinating vigils and press conferences in support of the DREAM Act, and tracking and analyzing local and federal legislation.

LEAD

- ◆ **Leveraged the collective leadership of the Latino community** by co-convening the *Illinois Latino Agenda*, a strategic alliance of nearly 50 Latino-serving nonprofits, along with *Acuerdo* working groups of community leaders in immigration, education and housing issue areas.
- ◆ **Encouraged sustainable leadership in Latino-led, Latino-serving organizations** by convening the second cohort of the Illinois Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy, engaging executive-level and emerging leadership in personal, professional and organizational development.
- ◆ **Bolstered Latino participation in state-level decision-making** by supporting placement of eight Latino advocates on several early childhood education committees and councils.
- ◆ **Doubled Policy Forum staff capacity and organizational budget** to effectively address communication and community engagement needs.

The Latino Policy Forum thanks the following individuals and organizations for their generous support of our work.

\$100,000 +

McCormick Foundation
Pritzker Children's Initiative
The Chicago Community Trust
The Joyce Foundation

\$10,000 - \$99,999

Alphawood Foundation
Bank of America
City of Chicago-Department of Housing and Economic Development, formerly Department of Community Development
Evanston Community Foundation
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Grand Victoria Foundation
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Illinois Latino Legislative Caucus Foundation
The Allstate Corporation
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The Boeing Company
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The Chicago Community Trust
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The Ounce of Prevention Fund
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Josie Yanguas

In-Kind Support

Café Media
Chicago Beverage Systems
Chicago Latino Network
CMAP
Coca Cola
Corona
Think Art!
Victoria

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010

ASSETS

Current Assets:

Cash/Cash Equivalents	\$ 628,671
Grants Receivable	\$ 69,203
Other Receivable	\$ 7,500
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 1,681
Total Current Assets	\$ 707,055

Certificate of deposit	\$ 31,903
Property and equipment*	\$ 12,605
Security deposits	\$ 12,980

Total Assets \$ 764,543

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable	\$ 31,627
Accrued Expenses	\$ 8,466
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 40,093

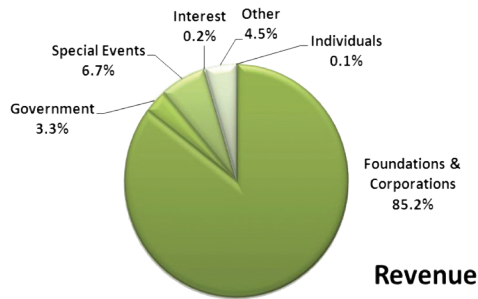
Deferred Rent \$23,848

Net Assets:

Unrestricted	\$394,470
Temporarily Restricted	\$306,132
Total Net Assets	\$700,602

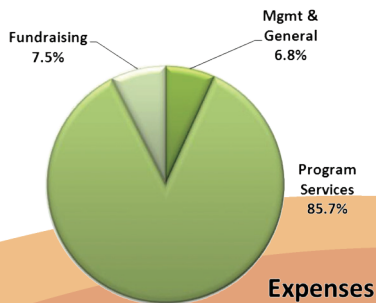
Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$764,543

*At cost, less accumulated depreciation and amortization of \$85,566



REVENUE

Individuals	\$ 1,550
Foundations & Corporations	\$1,003,226
Government	\$ 38,432
Special Events	\$ 78,481
Interest	\$ 2,788
Other	\$ 52,375
Total	\$1,176,852



EXPENSES

Program Services	\$ 791,993
Management & General	\$ 62,431
Fundraising	\$ 68,989
Total	\$ 923,413

2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

President: Hipolito (Paul) Roldan, *Hispanic Housing Development Corporation*

Vice President: Sol A. Flores, *La Casa Norte*

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