

A stylized sun icon with a yellow circle and radiating lines, positioned behind the letter 'o' in the word 'Latino'.

Latino

POLICY FORUM



PHOTO © OLGA LOPEZ

About the Latino Policy Forum

The Latino Policy Forum is the only Chicago-area organization 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.

The *Acuerdo* is the Forum's instrument for building the policy-making and advocacy capacity of the Latino community. (The Spanish word *acuerdo* means mutual understanding or accord.) *Acuerdos* engage diverse sectors of the community around specific issue areas. The Forum uses the model to unite the collective leadership and influence of more than 100 Latino-serving organizations in its *Education, Housing, and Immigration Acuerdos*, which function alongside its 47-member *Illinois Latino Agenda*.

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 the community and society as a whole

Vision: The Forum envisions societal prosperity, unity, and equity in the nation and in the global community.

Dear Friends,



PHOTO © OLGA LOPEZ

In October 2013, the Latino Policy Forum had the great pleasure to host San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro as keynote speaker at our annual *Latinos on the Move* policy breakfast. Elected at age 34, he is the youngest mayor of any top 50 U.S. city.

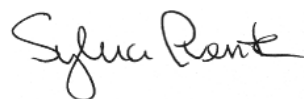
“The land of opportunity is tilled with education,” Mayor Castro said. “Let’s reap the fruits as Latinos by creating positive change.” In our fifth year, the Forum expanded its education agenda from birth to age eight — making a clear case for the importance of the early years.

Very soon, Illinois minority children will be part of an exciting new *majority-minority* in the United States. As a society, our willingness to invest in today’s multicultural children, especially our growing numbers of Latinos, ensures they have the opportunities to grow into leadership and public service—opportunities that will positively impact the nation as a whole.

As we closed out a busy 2013, a story Mayor Castro shared during his speech comes to mind. It was about growing up with an activist mother—a “hell-raiser” as he lovingly put it—who would take him along to meetings when he was still very young. As he grew older, he never thought he’d go into politics, but the seeds of social responsibility his mother had planted began to sprout once he attended college. His story resonates with us because at the Forum, our work in advancing our Latino community has been all about planting seeds of our own: in early education, immigration, housing and leadership. You can read more about these initiatives in the following pages.

This year we honored Hipólito “Paul” Roldan, president and CEO of Hispanic Housing Development Corporation for having served for the better part of three decades on the Forum’s board of directors. We thank Paul for his recent four-year tenure as president and his leadership and vision. He will continue to serve as a member.

Also this year we welcomed the talent and dedication of long-time community advocate Sol Flores, executive director of La Casa Norte, as our board president. We look forward to working together to continue the important work of the Forum.



Sylvia Puente
Executive Director
Latino Policy Forum



Sol A. Flores
President, Board of Directors
Latino Policy Forum



PHOTO © OLGA LOPEZ



Education

1 of 4 students new births in Illinois is to a Latina mother.

Source: Latino Policy Forum
Primeros Pasos

Latinos comprise a large and growing proportion of children in the early grades in school districts across Illinois and the nation. This trend is even more pronounced in preschools and among infants and toddlers. Advocating for educational achievement for Latino students is no longer simply a “Latino” issue. Given the demographic shifts and the trajectory of growth of this population, safeguarding their future ensures a prosperous future for all of Illinois.

Despite bringing well-documented linguistic assets and soft skills to their classrooms, the Latino student body faces obstacles in obtaining a quality education. Due to limited access, only one-third of Latino children enroll in preschool programs. Before children even enter kindergarten, a six-month education gap between them and their peers continues to exist and grow. The gap persists through third grade as Illinois Latinos are 31 percentage points behind white students in reading and 22 percentage points in math. This has serious implications for future academic outcomes since reading at grade level in third grade is an indicator of high school graduation.

The Latino Policy Forum, along with its 13-member Education *Acuerdo*, has crafted an education agenda to contribute to closing the achievement gap for Latinos. In 2013, the Forum expanded its agenda to include birth to age eight. This focus on the early years within the education continuum seeks to align and dedicate appropriate resources to set the foundation for all children to graduate from high school and to be college- and career-ready. Read more about the Forum's education [goals and strategies](#) or learn about the [Education Acuerdo](#).



Immigration

The *Promotores de Inmigración* training aims to develop community based trainers who have a strong understanding of immigration policy and its effects on immigrant communities.

While Illinois is home to the sixth-largest immigrant population in the country, positive public perception and social acceptance of immigration is challenged by fear, hostility and anti-immigrant, anti-Latino rhetoric. Despite coordinated and multiple efforts to pass immigration reform by national advocates, legislators and President Obama himself, reform remained stubbornly stalled in Congress in 2013. A number of House reform attempts failed throughout the year, despite the bipartisan Senate bill passed in June. The Forum remains steadfast in its belief that comprehensive immigration reform is a long-term goal and that “piece-meal” reform could provide immediate solutions and relief for a battered system and struggling undocumented population. But regardless of the expected outcome, the Forum and its [Immigration Acuerdo](#) plan to continue advocacy efforts into 2014 to encourage policymakers to act by monitoring rapidly-shifting developments in federal reform [legislation](#), and, in Illinois, continue efforts to [integrate](#) the entrepreneurial, linguistic, and economic assets of the state’s two million foreign-born residents into local communities.



PHOTO © OLGA LOPEZ



Housing

Given the growth of the Latino population in Metro Chicago and across the state, economic stability and future fiscal growth depend on the extent to which Latino families have access to an adequate supply of quality affordable housing in proximity to employment, public transportation, and community facilities. Quality affordable housing not only meets social equity goals for Latino families, but also ensures community viability and stability for everyone.

Alarming, discrimination, rising costs, and limited access to housing counseling, along with challenges related to the supply of and access to affordable housing programs, are all day-to-day realities in Latino communities.

In response, the Latino Policy Forum, along with its [Housing Acuerdo](#), works to ensure that all Latinos, including low- and mid-income families, have access to affordable housing. Read more about the Forum's housing [goals and strategies](#) or the [Housing Acuerdo](#).



Leadership

As the second-largest ethnic group in the state, accounting for 16 percent of the population, Latinos are participating civically in increasing numbers. The number of registered voters increased 47 percent between 2000 and 2008, the largest increase of any ethnic group during the same period—and nationally, 7 in 10 elected Obama to a second term in office, putting renewed focus on the political clout of this growing electorate.

But Latino demographic growth and economic contributions to the state haven't translated to adequate increases in investment in or representation for the community. For example, between Fiscal Year 2009 and Fiscal Year 2013, the Illinois Department of Human Services reduced grants to Latino-led nonprofit organizations by \$7.6 million, or 22 percent. In terms of state employment, only five percent of state workers were Latino.

The Forum believes that greater investment and representation are critical to meeting the needs and interests of Latino residents.

The Forum also works to build a strong Latino community, with thriving organizations able to meet their missions and work together to accomplish larger goals. Read more about leadership [goals and strategies](#) or learn about the work of the [Illinois Latino Agenda](#).

Now more than ever, Latino leaders require additional and ongoing support to bolster the sustainability of their organizations and to provide high-quality programs and services, particularly in suburban Chicago and downstate Illinois, areas of new growth for the community.

Via the [Illinois Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy](#), the Forum works to ensure nonprofit Latino-led and -serving organizations equip their leaders with the skills and networks necessary to achieve organizational success and reach high levels of excellence and sustainability. 2013 saw the largest class in program history go through the Academy. Thirty-four participants from 19 Illinois-based Latino-serving nonprofits participated in the intensive nine-month program.

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2013 Highlights and Accomplishments

INFORM

- Made a clear case for the importance of the early years with the publication of “*Primeros Pasos*,” the Forum’s first report on birth-to-three needs for Latino infants and toddlers, amplifying the agency’s national profile in the early learning arena.
- Provided credible, consistent information on the ever-changing landscape of immigration policy, including analysis and education around the provision of drivers licenses for all (SB957). These licenses— valid for driving privileges only — are now available to non-visa status individuals.
- Called upon as experts in education, immigration, housing and equity issues by journalists, the Forum increased Latino visibility through the placement of more than 100 print articles and broadcast segments in local, national, and international English- and Spanish-language media.

INFLUENCE

- Built positive relationships among community leaders and notable decision makers through a series of events. These included a meeting with 90 education leaders and the Chicago Public Schools CEO, which led to the creation of the CPS Latino Advisory Council; two forums for more than 300 people promoting the need for immigration reform featured a panel with an Illinois U.S. Senator.
- Grew the Illinois Latino Agenda, a coalition of nonprofits and civic leaders, by adding eight new organizations to its membership. The coalition also sponsored Latino Unity Day in Springfield, an event that brought more than 100 leaders to the state capitol.
- Successfully advocated for cultural competency and Spanish language access and inclusion in housing-related governmental services, including the hire of two bilingual positions in the Chicago Office of HUD’s Midwest Region and the translation of the Illinois Housing Development Authority’s Hardest Hit Fund website and application in Spanish.

LEAD

- The Forum’s reach, in all its key issue areas, strengthened leadership within the community: prepared parents to speak with public officials, coached Chicagoans in fair housing laws, and championed change by training grassroots immigration advocates. It empowered more than 1,800 community members by providing trainings, information, individualized referrals and technical assistance.
- Fortified the base of leadership in Latino-led, Latino-serving organizations by training the fifth and largest cohort of the Illinois Latino Nonprofit Leadership Academy. Thirty-four participants joined the Academy’s 100+ member alumni network.

Statement of Financial Position as of December 31, 2013

ASSETS

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Cash/Cash Equivalents | \$ 746,794 |
| Grants Receivable | \$ 95,366 |
| Other Receivable | \$ 18,600 |
| Prepaid Expenses | \$ 1,263 |
| Total Current Assets | \$862,023 |
| Certificate of deposit | \$ 32,758 |
| Property and equipment* | \$ 16,623 |
| Security deposits | \$ 9,500 |

Total Assets \$ 985,107

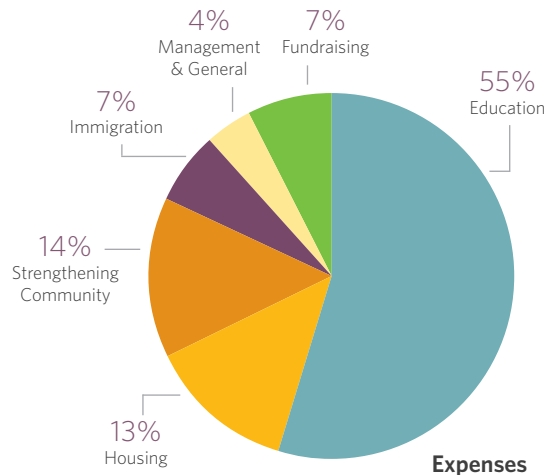
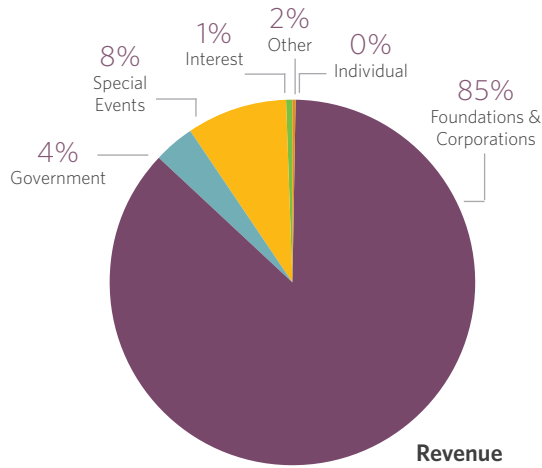
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Current Liabilities: | |
| Accounts Payable | \$ 39,706 |
| Accrued Expenses | \$ 21,023 |
| Total Current Liabilities | \$ 60,729 |
| Deferred Rent | \$ 22,488 |
| Deferred compensation plan liabilities | \$ 64,203 |
| Total Liabilities | \$ 147,420 |

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Net Assets: | |
| Unrestricted | \$ 609,519 |
| Temporarily Restricted | \$ 228,168 |
| Total Net Assets | \$ 837,687 |

Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$ 985,107

*At cost, less accumulated depreciation and amortization of \$106,607



Statement of Activities for the Year Ended December 3, 2013

REVENUE

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Individuals | \$ 8,352 |
| Foundations & Corporations | \$1,318,294 |
| Government | \$ 57,197 |
| Special Events | \$ 131,272 |
| Interest | \$ 8,468 |
| Other | \$ 32,730 |
| Total | \$1,556,313 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Education | \$ 786,325 |
| Housing | \$ 189,829 |
| Strengthening Community | \$ 203,962 |
| Immigration | \$ 91,729 |
| Management & General | \$ 58,772 |
| Fundraising | \$ 104,787 |
| Total | \$1,435,404 |

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

\$100,000+

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

\$10,000-\$99,999

The Allstate Foundation
Allstate Insurance Company
Alphawood Foundation
American Express Philanthropy
Blue Foundation
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Department of Housing and Economic Development -
City of Chicago
Evanston Community Foundation
Grand Victoria Foundation
Illinois Department of Human Service (IDHS)
Illinois Latino Legislative Caucus Foundation
Irving Harris Foundation
JP Morgan Chase & Co.
The Allstate Foundation
The Boeing Company
The Chicago Community Trust
The Field Foundation of Illinois
The Harris Family Foundation
University of California-Berkeley
Woods Fund of Chicago

\$1,000-\$9,999

Azteca Foods, Inc.
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois
BMO-Harris Bank N.A.
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council
Bruce and Diana Rauner
Centro Romero
Chicago Commons
ComEd
Crain's Chicago Business
Michael and Jacky Ferro, The Sun-Times Foundation
El Hogar del Nino
Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc.
Heather Steans
Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym Ltd.
John W. and Jeanne M. Rowe
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SPC Educational Solutions
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Steans Family Foundation
Tenet Healthcare Illinois
The Boeing Company
The Resurrection Project
The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
Walgreens
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Up to \$999

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Sol Flores
Monica Garza
Michael Golden
Mestiza Leadership International
Michelle Morales
National Alliance of Latin American & Caribbean
Communities (NALACC)
Northern Alliance for Immigrants
Virginia Ojeda
Pierce Family Foundation
Polk Bros Foundation
Prado & Renteria Certified Public Accountants
Robert R. McCormick Foundation
Silvia Rojas-Anadon
Rodrigo Sierra
Roy Stanley
Tasia Stockstill
Telemundo WSNS
The Chicago Community Trust
Thinkinc. Strategy
Victory Gardens Theater
Paula Wolff

In-Kind

Clear Channel Media and Entertainment
Crain's Chicago Business
Chicago Sun-Times
Hoy Chicago

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LATINO POLICY FORUM

180 North Michigan Avenue

Suite 1250

Chicago, Illinois 60601

312-376-1766 (phone)

312-376-1760 (fax)

www.latinopolicyforum.org

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