COLORADO IMMIGRANT FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE

IMPACT REPORT

INTRO AND OVERVIEW

The Colorado Immigrant Funders Collaborative (CIFC) was formed to engage and encourage Colorado funders throughout the state to support immigrant and refugee issues. Since the idea for the collaborative was seeded in 2015 and began distributing grants in early 2016, the Colorado Funders Collaborative (CIFC) has invested over $1,237,641 to local nonprofit organizations that provide community education, outreach and legal services for some of Colorado’s most vulnerable immigrant populations. Grantees assist dreamers on their paths to college, recently released detainees, Latinas experiencing domestic violence, and thousands of immigrants working on DACA paperwork, and more. These small grassroots organizations often serve as the one-stop-shop for immigrant and refugee communities in need of varied types of assistance.

FOCUS AREAS

The emphasis for funding for CIFC has shifted over the fund’s history. The three core focus areas of 2020, listed below, were created based on LCFC’s determination that the best way to build overall civic power in the Latino, immigrant and refugee communities was to strengthen the sector overall through a holistic power building model that:

- Increases the skills, capacity, and numbers of immigrant leaders who come from the communities they serve. These uniquely qualified leaders help shape better community environments and support improved models for immigrant integration
- Provides robust comprehensive general operating support to immigrant and refugee-serving organizations or capacity building efforts; ensuring sustainability
- Provides direct support to projects and activities that contribute to social cohesion. LCFC encourages interconnected work between organizations, individuals, and the community at large. This cohesion is a vital element of success in serving immigrant and refugee populations, particularly in rural areas

FUNDING 2016-2020

$1,237,641 distributed

- 2,500+ Events held
- 4,500+ Individuals received direct services
- 25,000+ Individuals were served by CIFC organizations

13.16% Western Slope
5.26% San Luis Valley
23.68% Front Range
57.89% Denver-Boulder Metro Area
FOCUS ON SERVICES (2015 -2017)

Created in 2015 as a response to Obama Administration DACA/DAPA announcements and the subsequent US v. Texas decision, CIFC began grantmaking in early 2016 with 14 Colorado funders and national partner Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR). Through pooled, matched, and aligned funding, during this period $400,000 was provided to immigrant and refugee serving community organizations.

Grantmaking in this period focused directly on project-based work, primarily in the Denver-Metro area, to serve the immigrant and refugee community, including assisting individuals in navigating low-cost legal services, educational workshops, and public education efforts.

“We have had the opportunity to use our voices to advocate for those who will be suffering the brunt of policy change.”

— Casa de Paz, Metro Area

Reporting from CIFC grantees in this period emphasized the need for emotional and mental health services for community members, a need to build the capacities of organizations, including additional staff and resource, and a need to work more to change policies rather than concentrate simply on direct services. This feedback would greatly inform future years of funding.

A NEW NORMAL (2018 - 2019)

In this period, a radically shifted political climate created unforeseen needs for rapid response work and an ability for organizations to pivot to unexpected challenges. Community members and grassroots organizations reported having adjusted to a "new normal"— what became a familiar day-to-day experience of being under direct and vigorous attack. The result is a move away from quick fixes and administrative work and instead a focus on resilience, sustainability, and perserverance in programming and services.

For this reason, in 2019 funding shifted towards general operating support. For many organizations working in the sector, this funding allowed them for the first time to fully evaluate services, be strategic about internal functions, and evaluate if services were ultimately strengthening and empowering community members in broader terms. This period saw a move towards more culturally responsive staff hires and programming at grantee organizations, the launch of new pilot projects, including one from La Cocina in Fort Collins Co (but working statewide) that focused on mental health for those seeking asylum. Already used to responding to crises, the learnings from this period would become even more valuable in 2020.
As 2020 began, CIFC's planned emphasis concentrated the three focus areas (see page 1). However, the scope of work expanded in this period to serve rapid response needs as COVID-19 took hold at a disproportionate level in the Latino, immigrant, and refugee communities of Colorado. 27% of Colorado's COVID cases impacted Latinos, but represent only 21% of the population.

The data below from grantees includes the usual scope of work plus COVID-response efforts:

**2020 FUNDING AREAS:**

- **Education and Outreach**
- **Legal Services**
- **Advocacy and Organizing**
- **Capacity Building**
- **General Support**

**KEY IMPACTS**

- **3700 individuals reached through educational events and outreach efforts**
- **1200 virtual/ in-person events held**
- **1830 individuals served via legal services**
  - DACA
  - Permanent Residence
  - Asylum
  - Family-Based Petition
  - Legal Permanent Residence
  - Special Immigrant Visa
  - Deportation Defense
  - Naturalization
  - Scholarships for undocumented Students
- **100 individuals served through staff-based capacity building centering wellness and mental health**

“This year we had several Undocumented students graduate college, one of them we hired as our Dream Director. She is an alumna of our program, where I met her during her Junior year of high school. During her Senior year, she lost her dad to suicide, and nearly dropped out of high school. She ended up going to Colorado State University on a full ride scholarship. Her last semester of college was upended by COVID-19, her family was one of the families we were able to provide cash assistance to, as they were all impacted by the pandemic. Her mom makes a living by providing child care to many teachers in the Commerce City, and since schools went remote, she lost most of her income. Our cash assistance allowed her to help pay their rent. She worked hard to graduate in 4 years, and was a highly accomplished student activists at CSU, and although she didn't get a college graduation she got a full time job. She is now working with students from her former high school. ”

—INSPIRE, Denver-Boulder Metro Area
THE FUTURE OF CIFC — 2021 AND BEYOND

As a response to COVID-19, LCFC launched Ayuda Colorado in March of 2020, providing $1.2 million to organizations serving Latinos, immigrants, and refugees. This grantmaking with an emphasis on general operating, technology, wellness, and community basic needs was a departure from LCFC’s general fundraising emphasis (outside of CIFC), which traditionally has concentrated on Latino-led and-serving organizations, rather than having an emphasis on refugees and immigrants of all races and ethnicities.

As we look ahead to 2021-2022 grantmaking, the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado plans to integrate CIFC funding into LCFC general grantmaking as these emphases have become so aligned over the past two years. We thank those funders who have contributed to Ayuda Colorado grantmaking and we invite others to join us as we continue to invest in and uplift Latino, immigrant and refugee communities.

THANK YOU TO ALL HISTORICAL CIFC FUNDERS:

- Anonymous Donor Advised Fund (July 2017)
- Aspen Community Foundation
- Brett Family Foundation
- Bamboo Foundation
- Colorado Health Foundation
- Colorado Trust
- Denver Foundation
- General Services Foundation
- Grantmakers Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR)
- Klondike Fund
- Lederer Foundation
- Latino Community Foundation of Colorado
- Mile High United Way
- RCG Fund
- Ready Foods
- Rose Community Foundation
- Simmons Foundation
- Two Lilies Fund
- Voqal
- Women’s Foundation of Colorado

"The Latina SafeHouse has literally saved me this past year with all their resources and all their help. The fact that I got chosen to be in the housing first is amazing and its literally a life-changing opportunity and I just think “This is a big blessing for me theres no words to express how grateful I am.”

Thank you to all our individual donors!