

COPAL

COMUNIDADES ORGANIZANDO
EL PODER Y LA ACCIÓN LATINA

2018 IMPACT REPORT



From left to right, top to bottom: Brenda Marquez, Francisco Segovia, Rico Durán and Marcos Carvalho

Estimada Comunidad, when we started Comunidades Organizando el Poder y la Acción Latina (or COPAL) we imagined an organization with a mission of uniting Latinxs in Minnesota through an active democratic grassroots community that would build racial, gender, social and economic justice across community lines. In January 2018 we officially began our activities as a small, yet mighty organization. The board members, staff and member-volunteers embraced our mission with enthusiasm and spirit, as we began building networks and improving lives.

COPAL had an incredibly busy, yet exciting first year in 2018. From securing space, conducting community meetings, hosting and facilitating candidate forums, developing voting guides, preparing people for their citizenship test to engaging thousands of Latinxs to vote in the midterm election, our team worked tirelessly to better engage our Latinx community in Minnesota.

While COPAL is a new organization joining the Minnesota social-ecosystem, staff and board members have significant years of experience and active participation in the community. We recognize the importance of working with organizations representing various groups to achieve our mission and to add to the vibrant community of organizers and activists both in the Twin Cities and in the greater state of Minnesota. To build relationships of mutual respect and integrity COPAL embraced and applied the six Jemez Principles of Democratic Organizing.

The six principles of democratic organizing are:

- I. Be inclusive;
- II. Emphasis on bottom-up organizing;
- III. Let people speak for themselves;
- IV. Work together in solidarity and mutuality;
- V. Build just relationships among ourselves and
- VI. Commitment to self-transformation.

COPAL closes 2018, its first year of existence energized, proud, inspired and ready to continue its journey toward the building of a more equitable society that supports the dignity and dreams of every person. Fed through collaboration, dedication, positive feedback and gratitude shared with us; we look forward to 2019 filled with progress, dignity and justice!

¡Seguimos Adelante!

Francisco Segovia
Executive Director

“

Many small people. in small places. doing small things. can change the world.

Eduardo Galeano

”

Plan of Action

COPAL founded in January of 2018 as an organization, but the idea of building a civic Latinx-led organization began a few years ago. For several reasons we decided to launch the organization in an electoral year. One strong reason was the recent election of President Trump in 2016 and the effect of his anti-immigrant rhetoric that ignited conservative politicians to run on a similar platform. In order to encourage people to participate in the electoral arena as an act of resistance but also as an opportunity to connect and transform our community, COPAL designed a 3-component electoral plan.

1. Build a political platform

COPAL assembled a political platform that reflected the values of our community. After consulting with community members, we identified the following areas of interest: access to health care, access to driver's licenses and state resources to train and hire teachers of color and American Indians. At the federal level, the community cared about fixing the legal status of latinx people under DACA and TPS status. COPAL connected the political platform with state and federal candidates. At the national level, COPAL organized congressional visits

with U.S. Sen. Tina Smith and Rep. Tom Emmer to speak about DACA and TPS. At the state level, COPAL organized a forum with gubernatorial candidates and led a TPS day of action at the State Capitol.

2. Activate our community

COPAL implemented a series of activities to engage people. COPAL published eleven weekly educational materials in local newspapers and talked to eligible voters in person and over the phone. In addition ran a TV commercial in Univision where young latinx leaders invited the community to get out the vote, and led a massive social media campaign. Our strategic use of media to share information, spark discussions and encourage participation was instrumental in achieving our goals. In the past 10 months, our website copalmn.org garnered over 14,000-page views from over 3,500 users. In a period of two months around election day (between September 11 and November 16), our twitter earned 16,900 impressions. And since its inception on March 25, our Facebook page has reached over 40,000 people, generating an average of 900 daily impressions.

3. Mobilize our community

By election day, COPAL had 6,400

pledges to vote. Each engagement was a conversation about an issue that mattered to our community.

Our journey ended this year with many victories. Initially, our goal was 10,000 pledges to vote, but the lack of financial resources limited our ability to achieve our desired goal. However, ending with 6,400 pledges or 64% of our goal, is a great place be for a young organization. COPAL built a statewide network of voters that will be instrumental in post-electoral engagement, as we look to transform our reality.



COPAL's community led forum gave me the opportunity to have my voice be heard.

Daisy Rivas



40,000

calls made to targeted
latinx communities

70+

events attended or hosted

2,850

one on one conversations

6,400

community members
who pledges to vote

1,200

hours of volunteer work

130

volunteers

COUNTLESS

community partnerships
developed

Thank you

2018 was a year of coalition building. In its first year, COPAL partnered with organizations that share a commitment to foster power, engage, and empower people in their community through volunteering, community service, and civic engagement.

Community Partners

Special thanks to The newspapers La Prensa and Revista Integra. Both media outlets, promoted our series of civic engagement posters that encouraged eligible U.S. voters to participate and cast their ballots leading up to the November 6 elections. La Prensa alone prints 40,000 weekly newspapers to be distributed several keys cities across the state of Minnesota. Additionally, we promoted the posters in targeted latinx areas, putting them up in restaurants, markets, and local shops because we know that awareness and education increase participation.

We are very proud of all the community partnerships created this year on the various campaigns and community initiatives.

- Alianza Americas
- Black Immigrant Collective
- Centro Tyrone Guzman
- Minneapolis Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
- City of St. Paul
- Ecuasonido Radio
- ICOM
- ILCM
- Indivisible MN
- La Prensa de Minnesota
- MCLA
- MxMX
- National TPS Alliance
- Our Minnesota Future
- Revista Integra
- University of Minnesota, Spanish class/ Professor Kathleen Ganley and students
- Univision
- Volunteer Lawyer Network
- Women's March MN

Donor partners

We extend our sincere appreciation to our donors, without them our work would not be possible. For a new enterprise, such as COPAL, to have a network of organizations that are willing to invest in its infrastructure is act of true solidarity. Thank you.

- CAPI
- Buymore Supermercado
- El Guanaco Bakery
- Minnesota Nurses Association
- MN State Voices
- MN Youth Collective
- Movement Voter Project
- SEIU State Council
- STILL AIN'T SATISFIED
- Take Action MN
- The Minneapolis Foundation
- The Saint Paul Foundation
- Unity Church-Unitarian of St. Paul
- VOQAL
- Women's March MN

Board of Directors

Thank you to our executive board of directors. We value every member and benefit from their expertise, leadership, compassion, and generosity.

- Carolina Ortiz
- Felipe Illescas
- Henry Jiménez
- Miguel Mejias
- Mónica Maria Hurtado

Thank you and we look forward to your continued partnership as we move into 2019.

“

La solidaridad es la ternura de los pueblos.

Gioconda Belli

”



What's Next

After completing our first year as a civic organization, we are closing 2018 satisfied by our achievements. 2019 will be a year of new challenges and new opportunities to advance our community. In 2019 COPAL will devote time to:

1. Consolidating COPAL as a state organization. We hope to obtain our C3 and C4 status, to establish ourselves as a nonprofit civic action organization.

2. To implement new civic campaigns. Some will be:

•The Minnesota TPS-DED campaign

In Minnesota there are more than 4,000 people under Temporary Protected Status or TPS scheduled to expire in 2019. The Trump administration has ended TPS for immigrants from 13 countries. COPAL is working to build the Minnesota TPS Alliance, which seeks to unite all sectors interested in obtaining permanent residence for those affected by the termination of TPS.

•Citizenship Now campaign

Minnesota is one of seventeen states in which the waiting time to become a citizen can take up to twenty months. Currently there are more than fifteen thousand people affected. The failure to

process citizenship applications in shorter time, becomes another form of voter suppression. In addition to the Citizenship Now Campaign COPAL offers citizenship classes. In 2018 COPAL graduated fifty-three students. About five submitted applications and are waiting for an interview.

•Licenses for All campaign

Staff and board members at COPAL have been working for many years to pass state legislation, which would grant a driver's license to our undocumented community. COPAL will work so that our community gets the right of driving with licenses.

There will be other campaigns, which will be made public at their appropriate time.

3. Facilitating Leadership workshops.

By 2019, we plan to implement leadership workshops to continue strengthening citizen participation. It is necessary to continue fostering visionary community leaders who believe in healthy leadership and participatory democracy.

In conclusion, we will continue to build and advance our social cause. After all, we'll strive to build a more just and humane society, in which we can live in justice.

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