



2020 REPORT

Dear Community,

Without a doubt 2020 will have its special place in history.

In January, humanity learned of COVID-19. We quickly realized that the most vulnerable would pay the highest price, life. In the United States, there are more than a million infected and hundreds of thousands of deaths, most of these people being low-income and / or people of color. Through its Navigator program, COPAL has provided social services to thousands of people. **COPAL Present in the community!**

In April, the census began. Being counted would be impacted by the pandemic and President Trump's threats to add citizenship status to the census. Despite it all, we censused 3,000 people and as a result, 81 million dollars will come to our communities. **COPAL Present in the census!**

In May, the world learned of the death of George Floyd, a black man, at the hands of the police. This death adds to the long history of police violence in the United States. The streets of Minneapolis were battlefields demanding racial justice. Black lives matter. **COPAL Present in the streets!**

In June, COPAL launched its Latinx vote campaign: El Futuro Belongs to US. Our efforts generated 18,500 pledges to vote from Latinxs. No organization in Minnesota history has ever achieved such success. We defeated racial hatred and above all, we planted the seeds of hope. Building our community power is undoubtedly essential for a better life. **COPAL Present, building participatory democracy!**

In October, we launched Radio Jornalera Minnesota, a project that seeks to raise critical awareness and the participatory voice of the Latinx community in Minnesota. **COPAL Present, elevating our communities voice!**

In 2021, COPAL will be working on the issues of: Immigration, Environment, Education, Health and Social Services to people impacted by COVID-19. **COPAL Present, the future belongs to US!**

COPAL's work is paying off, but we cannot do it alone. Building individual power, participatory democracy, and a better quality of life requires resources. We need 400 people to donate \$10 or more per month to support our work. **Can we count on you?**

"Traveler, your footprints are the path, and nothing else. Traveler, there is no path. A path is made by walking."

Antonio Machado



Equipo COPAL

EL FUTURO BELONGS TO US!

COPAL organized our largest campaign yet for the 2020 presidential elections. **More than 18,500 Latinxs pledged to vote.**

Vanguard

Vanguard, adopted name by COPAL's youth collective who led tasks of promoting and defending the vote. The term vanguard is a political name given to progressive forces who are at the forefront of any social movement in a society.

Disinformation generates fear and apathy. To respond to rumors and concerns about threats of racist violence, COPAL organized an "Electoral Vanguard" to cover 15 electoral precincts. Its members, about 75 members were trained to report incidents of voter suppression and intimidation to the national line, 888-VE-Y-VOTA.

Navigators

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, about 49% of Latinxs in the United States have had their work hours reduced or have lost their jobs. Furthermore, thousands have been infected with COVID-19 and others have lost their lives. A large part of our community occupies jobs in essential areas such as the service industries, cleaning, and food production.

Faced with the health and social crises created by the effects of COVID-19, COPAL launched its program in May 2020. Since then, the Navigators Program has provided services and resources to more than three thousand families across the state.

We connect with the community at the state level through two areas:

A bilingual phone line: We offer information and registration for taking COVID-19 tests and obtaining access to social services.

Community Educators: We distribute masks, facilitate conversations on how to prevent COVID-19, and promote the COPAL helpline.

Radio Jornalera MN

On November 30th, we began our "Countdown to the Elections," and we presented our first radio programs. The radio became a vital tool to connect, inform and communicate with our community. After seeing the potential of the radio after the elections, we have worked to grow the radio audience with even more programming. Radio Jornalera Minnesota, your radio!

TPS Freedom Bus

In October, we welcomed the TPS (Temporary Protected Status) Freedom Bus. Members of the TPS Alliance toured the United States raising awareness about this issue that impacts thousands of families.

Citizenship Classes

In 2020, COPAL graduated 62 people in citizenship classes. Due to COVID-19, we adapted and offered virtual classes. COPAL has been offering citizenship classes for three years.

Many of our students voted for the first time in the elections this year.



• Leidy Antonio and Judith Hernandez, COPAL Organizers - Radio Jornalera MN

• OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2021

As a result of numerous conversations with the community, COPAL has identified a series of essential issues to improve the quality of life in our community.

Immigration Reform

Migrating to live a better life is a human right. Human beings, in many cases, are forced to migrate due to economic or political destabilization in their places of origin. At COPAL, we deeply believe in immigration reform. It can begin with providing a path to citizenship for the 1.5 million people with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and TPS (Temporary Protected Status) status.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is inspired by the principle recognizing that all people should have the same rights to the benefits of the planet's environmental and cultural offerings, regardless of race, income, or culture, among other personal traits.

At COPAL, we believe that all people should have clean and breathable air. COPAL is leading a coalition of 12 environmental organizations. Together, we are promoting the "Frontline Communities Protection Act". This bill seeks to allow communities to participate in deciding whether to grant or reject permits to potentially polluting companies that want to establish their operations in our communities.

Access to Healthcare

The right to health is indivisible from the right to life and personal integrity. In the area of health, Minnesotans face a series of disparities which reduce expectations and quality of life. As for the Latinx community, only 49% of Latinxs had private insurance coverage, compared to 75% of non-Hispanic whites (US Department of Health and Human Services Services). This severe inequality impacts the quality of life in our community. COPAL will continue to fight for a Minnesota where everyone has access to health services and healthcare.

Privilege to Operate and Own a Motor Vehicle

Prior to 2003, everyone living in Minnesota had the right to obtain state identification, access to a driver's license, and to own a vehicle in their name. After a series of anti-immigrant policies by ultra-conservative political sectors of the state, these privileges were removed. 18 years have passed, and these privileges have not yet been re-established. COPAL will continue to work in coalition to increase equitable access to transportation.

Education

The Minneapolis school district is the second largest in the state, after Anoka. At the same time, it is the district with the largest Latinx student population. Just over 6,000 Latinx youth attend Minneapolis public schools, not including public alternative schools. COPAL is organizing with parents of students attending Minneapolis Public Schools to increase the high school graduation rate of Latinx students.



• *Keith Ellison, Attorney General of MN and Carolina Ortiz - Community Event*

"If they have come here to help me, they are wasting their time, but if they have come because their liberation is tied to mine, then let's work together."

Lilla Watson

Our successes, as well as the construction and development of our young organization, are deeply connected to the acts of solidarity and commitment by numerous individuals and social organizations that have believed in our vision. Thank you for continuing to weave strong ties of solidarity with COPAL and for working with us to build a more dignified world where all worlds fit. The future Belongs to US!

Your support allows us to build independent power, tell our stories and change the social conditions that limit our dreams.

Together, we're building a movement to create a government and economy that is for us, by us. Donate now to join COPAL and build a Minnesota where everyone can live productive and dignified lives.

www.copalmn.org/donate

STORY OF LOURDES

Lourdes Menjivar, Community Educator - COPAL

Originally from El Salvador, she arrived in Mankato, Minnesota 16 years ago on December 24. The change in environment and especially the extreme change in climate did not deter her entrepreneurial spirit. "Since I came, I have lived in Mankato with my husband. We have grown our family; we have 2 sons" she says with great pride. According to the US Census, Latinxs represent 4.6% of the population of the city of Mankato.

Her Christian faith and social commitment have led Lourdes to become a community leader. One day a week, she spends time with her Christian congregation where she is the associate pastor. The rest of the week she works with COPAL doing COVID-19 education and prevention.

Her first day working with COPAL, she found out that Le Sueur County was announcing that it was offering COVID-19 testing. Upon checking the website, she discovered that the county did not have the same advertisement in Spanish.

Without hesitation, she called and asked why it wasn't in Spanish. Immediately the county staff, very receptive to the request, put the information in Spanish.

Lourdes has an extraordinary ability to build relationships. Every Saturday from 10am - 2pm, Lourdes, in coordination with Le Sueur County, takes time to provide Spanish interpreting at COVID-19 testing events. During the week, she visits churches, supermarkets, and community hubs to offer information about COVID-19 and to promote the COPAL helpline. Without a doubt, Lourdes and immigrants like her are changing the face of Minnesota.



"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept."

Angela Davis

• Lourdes Menjivar,
Community Educator
-Mankato, MN