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COPAL celebrated legislative victories with family event

Minneapolis, June 22, 2023 — COPAL, a member-based organization that leads social impact initiatives to improve the quality of life for Latine families and communities in Minnesota, celebrated legislative victories that will benefit the community with a family day in the park. On Saturday, June 17, COPAL members, families, partner organizations, and community leaders, including Governor Tim Walz, gathered at Longfellow Park in Minneapolis to recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of all who share the vision of continuing to build a stronger and more inclusive Minnesota. Likewise, it was a day to share and reflect on the challenges that are still pending to continue fighting to achieve a better life. “It is a pride for our community to have an organization like COPAL. Thanks to the Governor for being present today and for the great achievement that we all made to approve the law, *Licenses for All*,” said Georgina Olivera, who was with her family and friends at the celebration. “We’ll finally have our licenses in October,” she added, with a smile.

Between music and food, the family day included educational, cultural and fun activities. A day of celebration and reflection, the community talked about essential issues, such as education, work, health, social justice, and the work that needs to be done to continue improving the quality of life for all. “We can only change things if we do it collectively,” said Francisco Segovia, COPAL's executive director, inviting people to continue building community power.

In his speech, Governor Tim Walz provided his vision for Minnesota. He expressed his commitment to building a state in which all people feel welcome and safe.

Likewise, the governor mentioned that, thanks to the work that has been done, there will be a generation growing up without having to worry about how to get a driver's license, without worrying about health and work problems. “COPAL is building justice, economy and dignity, and that is very important. And they are not doing this work just for the Hispanic community, but for all ethnic communities in Minnesota. Minnesota is a fairer state, a more effective state, the state's economy is stronger, thanks to the work that COPAL did,” said Governor Walz, after his speech, while sharing with the community.

Francisco Segovia, executive director of COPAL, recognized the important effort and commitment of the community and many organizations that made these legislative victories possible, and the positive impact that the new laws approved will have, such as the law on Paid Family and Medical Leave, Cumulative Impacts law, and many others.

“What is happening in Minnesota right now is the opposite of other states, like Florida, where the immigrant community is leaving, due to anti-immigrant laws. In 2003, Minnesota went through the same thing, we had the largest raids in the history of the state. We have progressive forces that are trying to turn Minnesota around so we can live well, but there are also retrograde forces that are going to push to roll back our gains. The urgency of the moment is to implement, consolidate, and defend what we have achieved in this legislative session, otherwise there is a risk of losing everything”, said Segovia, prompting the community to reflect on the crucial importance of fighting together, to protect what we've accomplished, and continue making progress on immigrant rights.

This deep reflection was part of the day of family celebration: raising awareness in the community about the possible consequences that can happen when the work is not constant and by all. Along the same lines, the community had the opportunity to participate in Environmental Justice activities, guided by Carolina Ortiz, Associate Executive Director of COPAL. Families learned about the harmful impact of air pollution on health, and how each individual can take responsibility, through small daily actions, to help reduce air pollution, and leave a safer planet for future generations.

Education, fun, and action in an unforgettable family celebration. COPAL thanks everyone who attended this day that belonged to everyone. Thanks to the new 32 people who joined COPAL as members. The actions of today will be the fruit of tomorrow. “We have to stop surviving and build the life we want to live,” said Segovia, thus closing a fifth year of joint work for and for the community.

Download the Family Day photos here: [COPAL Family Day | Flickr](#)

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About COPAL

Established in 2018, COPAL is a member-based organization leading social impact initiatives to improve the quality of life for Latine families and communities. COPAL advocates for a legislative agenda and mobilizes the Latine community to take action on issues that impact their lives such as health care for all, dignity for workers, environmental justice, popular democracy, immigration and public safety, and education for all by building collective power, transforming systems, and creating opportunities for a dignified life. COPAL envisions a future where the Latine community thrives and is fully empowered to lead significant change in their communities and beyond.