

VOLUME

2

OCT 20 2023



# COPAL NEWS



N U M B E R 1 0

## Highlights from COPAL's First-Ever Gala and More!

Hello community,

Last week, the COPAL family came together for a remarkable evening at our first-ever fundraising gala. Thanks to all the nearly 150 partners and members who attended and contributed to making this night a resounding success!

As a young organization, this event is of enormous significance as we celebrate what we've accomplished-including helping pass legislation like Driver's Licenses for All, more than doubling our membership in the past year, and so much more. But there's more work ahead of us as we continue building a more prosperous and inclusive Minnesota.

We invite you to join us on this journey as we create meaningful change in our communities. [Donate to COPAL today to continue building community power, participatory democracy, and better quality of life for Latines in Minnesota!](#)

You can read more about some of the other highlights from the past month below. We also invite you to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



WWW.COPALMN.ORG



# Environmental Justice

This past month, a group of COPAL members participated in a March to End Fossil Fuels in New York. The purpose of the march was to pressure President Biden to declare a climate emergency, a crucial step that could pave the way for significant actions to combat the climate crisis in the United States. Over 75,000 people from organizations throughout the country joined the march, making it the largest climate mobilization since the start of the pandemic!

Additionally, COPAL is partnering with Huellas Latinas to bring more outdoor events to the community. Huellas Latinas is an organization created to empower Latine communities to participate in outdoor recreation as well as to promote well-being and connections with nature. Just this weekend, we hosted a hike, picnic, and games with Huellas Latinas. Our next upcoming outdoor event will be on October 29th from 10:30am - 12:30pm at Crosby Farm Regional Park located at 2595 Crosby Farm Rd, St. Paul, MN, 55116. [Secure your spot here!](#)



COPAL hosted a canoeing event in Fort Snelling State Park last month. We believe that EVERYONE deserves a dignified life on a prosperous planet and deserves to be able to enjoy the outdoors. That's why we are working to bring family events in nature to the community.



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WORK HERE



## Dignity and Democracy: A Night to Remember

Last week, COPAL celebrated its inaugural fundraising gala, *Dignity and Democracy*. With live music by the incredible Ecuador Manta, delicious food, powerful stories from our community, and inspirational insights shared by keynote speakers Edwin Torres DeSantiago and Analilia Mejía, the night was nothing short of spectacular! Thank you to everyone who graced the occasion and contributed to its success!

We also want to take a moment to extend our gratitude to our sponsors whose support is instrumental in making Minnesota a more prosperous state for all!

**Visionary:** LEDC, GED Works, & Minneapolis Foundation

**Changemaker:** US Bank, Alianza Americas, NewPublica, CERTS, VOQAL, Arc Initiatives, & HACER

**Advocate:** NDLOM, Take Action MN, & Land Stewardship Project

We invite you to join us on this journey towards a more inclusive Minnesota. [Donate to COPAL today to continue building community power, participatory democracy, and better quality of life for Latines in Minnesota!](#)







# South Central Initiative Mankato, MN

Last month, COPAL's Mankato team marked its second anniversary at the event *Celebrating Victories, Building Power*. During this milestone event, we highlighted our numerous achievements, including the recently implemented Licenses for All law. Additionally, we unveiled the campaign [One Economy for Minnesota](#) which seeks to create a more fair and inclusive economy for ITIN-holders. The celebration was made special by the presence of over 20 community member leaders who play a vital role in our work in the South Central region of Minnesota. [Read more about the event here.](#)

In the realm of health and well-being, our dedicated health promoters led several workshops as part of the nutrition and diabetes prevention campaign *Run, Move, and Prevent Diabetes*. The theme for these workshops was *Learning and Living in Community*. Over 24 community members participated in these educational sessions that took place in the Minnesota cities of Le Sueur, Madelia, and Worthington.



COPAL celebrates the second anniversary of its Mankato office and launches its Minnesota campaign One Economy alongside HACER, LatinoLEAD, and LEDC.



CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT LICENSES FOR ALL





## Rochester, MN

**Latino Heritage Event in Northfield, MN:** Last month, our team in southeast Minnesota had the privilege of participating in the Latino Heritage event hosted by the city of Northfield. At our COPAL resource table, we connected with nearly 50 attendees. Many individuals sought information on the process of obtaining a driver's license for all, inquiring about required documents, downloading the driver's manual, and scheduling appointments with the Department of Vehicle Services (DVS). Several people successfully scheduled their DVS appointments that same day. Our team also helped connect community members to educational resources including GED and citizenship classes.

**Health and Diabetes Workshop in Kasson, MN:** 18 participants joined COPAL organizer Carolina Perdomo at our first health and diabetes workshop in southeast Minnesota. Attendees not only enjoyed a healthy snacks but also gained valuable insights into making healthier food choices to manage and prevent diabetes.

**Vaccination Event in Elgin, MN:** Our team hosted a health event in Elgin, where we administered COVID-19 and flu vaccines to nearly 20 individuals, all of whom are temporary workers. In addition to providing vaccinations, we offered information about other COPAL resources and distributed free rapid home tests. Many of these families face challenges in accessing basic health services that are often out of reach. At COPAL, we remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that our communities have equitable access to the health resources they need. We are also dedicated to advocating for policies that address the urgent need for healthcare that is accessible and affordable for all.



COPAL in Northfield, MN celebrating Latine Heritage Month and providing information on community resources.



[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT LICENSES FOR ALL](#)





## Civic Participation and Leadership

Our organizing team has been hard at work this fall. In Rochester, we've been active throughout community events and are working to establish our Rochester member committee. Additionally, we have provided support for community health events and led workshops on Driver's Licenses for All.

In the Twin Cities, our focus has been on advancing worker's rights and salary recuperation initiatives, while also disseminating information about Driver's Licenses for All. Last month, our CLAP fellows returned to kick off the fall portion of their fellowships, where they will spearhead campaigns on their respective school campuses.

With November on the horizon, the organizing team is diligently preparing educational materials for the upcoming election. For comprehensive information regarding voting, elections, and candidates, please visit [mnlatinovote.org](https://mnlatinovote.org). Notably, the Driver's Licenses For All legislation is now in effect, and you can initiate the process of obtaining your license by clicking [here](#). In the coming month, we will continue to host community events and raise awareness about Driver's Licenses for All.



Eduardo Peñasco, a COPAL organizer, stands beside Keren, one of the first community members who successfully passed her driver's exam on October 1.



## Primero de Mayo Workers' Center

On October 1, Driver's Licenses for All was implemented in Minnesota, which has had a significant impact on the workforce across the state. This law enhances mobility, making commuting and accessing a broader spectrum of dignified job opportunities more attainable for many immigrants. Undocumented workers often face exploitation and unfair labor practices due to their legal status. Access to driver's licenses can empower them to assert their rights as workers, knowing they have a legal form of identification, and seek legal recourse against any mistreatment by employers.

At the Primero de Mayo Workers' Center, our doors are open to the community every Wednesday. Last month, we welcomed 62 individuals who visited us to find employment and information regarding driver's licenses. We have expanded our services to provide information about licenses and offer assistance in scheduling appointments to obtain a driver's license every Wednesday from 10am to 2pm.

We also hosted a resource fair last weekend in collaboration with the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, where attendees had the opportunity to learn about the U.S. citizenship application process, consult with legal providers about immigration-related questions, talk to city offices responsible for investigating wage theft and labor law violations, speak with Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) experts about Driver Licenses for All, and much more!

Here are some other updates from the past month at the Workers' Center:

- Last month, we kicked off a new session of classes including basic computing, software skills, and citizenship. You can [learn more about our classes and register for the next session here](#).
- We held a successful "How to Money" financial literacy workshop, drawing the participation of 17 enthusiastic young minds eager to learn about managing their finances.
- We joined Minneapolis Public Schools, Century College, and Hiawatha Academies to share resources and information.
- We celebrated a significant victory as one community member successfully recovered \$7,000 in unpaid salary.
- Our "Know Your Rights" meetings continue to empower our communities with knowledge every Sunday from 9am to 10:30am. For more information, email Eduardo at [EduardoP@copalmn.org](mailto:EduardoP@copalmn.org).

We remain committed empowering and supporting workers in our community so that everyone may lead a dignified life.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PRIMERO DE MAYO WORKERS' CENTER HERE





Join us at the Primero de Mayo Workers' Center on Wednesdays from 10am to 4pm. All are welcome, and no appointment is necessary. From 10am to 2pm, we have dedicated staff who can assist with the process of obtaining a driver's license.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PRIMERO DE MAYO WORKERS' CENTER HERE





We at COPAL can do this work thanks to your support.



Make a donation to increase opportunities and foster a dignified life for Latinos in Minnesota!



## Mental Health Resources

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, please contact the MN Mental Health Crisis Line:



**\*\*CRISIS or \*\*274747**

Dial from your cell phone and you will be connected to your county crisis team.

Please see the following summary of mental health, general health and dental services compiled by the Minnesota Department of Health for the lowest cost or at scale. Look at the column that specifies if they have interpreters or people who speak Spanish.

Low-cost healthcare resources



Radio Jornalera has grown and now has five weekly shows every day of the week and our daily morning show, *El Jornal de la Alegría* with Mike Castillo every weekday from 7 to 10am.



Tune in here



Download the app.

If you liked this newsletter, share it so others can read it!



SUBSCRIBE



# COPAL

[WWW.COPALMN.ORG](http://WWW.COPALMN.ORG)

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.