

VOLUME

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COPAL NEWS



NUMBER 3

Hello community,

As we set sail into March 2024, we are thrilled to have your ongoing support as we accompany our community in pursuit of a better life. Welcome all, to your central hub for updates, news, and highlights from COPAL. This month, COPAL advances our 2024 legislative agenda, hosts community health workshops and events, prepares for our demolition festival, and more!

Join Us: Building Demolition Festival

You are invited to our building demolition festival on April 10th from 4 to 7 p.m.! This building will be the future of the Latino Center for Community Engagement! (LCCE) which will serve as a dynamic hub of unity, celebration, and cultural exchange, embodying the transnational spirit of Latine communities.

Previously damaged during the 2020 summer protests in Minneapolis, the current building will be demolished so that COPAL can begin construction of the future LCCE. Join us as we embark on the next phase towards realizing our dream of establishing the LCCE!



Save the date and get ready to enjoy some family-friends activities, music by a local DJ, and food for sale! [You can RSVP here.](#)



WWW.COPALMN.ORG



Environmental Justice

COPAL kicked off Maple Syrup Season during the first weekend of March at Fort Snelling State Park. A group of COPAL members joined a naturalist at that park for a guided bilingual lesson (in English and Spanish) on how to make maple syrup! Participants learned everything from what is needed to tap a tree to processing the sap to make it into syrup. A member that participated reflected the following:

"I never knew such a beautiful and spiritual public space was right in our backyard! The maple syrup was sweet and delicious. I had a great time. Thank you, COPAL!"



This Maple Syruping event was part of COPAL's monthly outdoor events. We seek to provide free and engaging outdoor opportunities for BIPOC Minnesotans by removing barriers that prevent our communities from enjoying these spaces, such as language, transportation, and cost. If you want to be informed about our next outdoor event, sign up to receive [COPAL's Monthly EJ Newsletter!](#)



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WORK HERE





Health and Wellness

Our Health and Wellness team plays a vital role in the Minnesota community, focusing on community health education and providing essential resources to prevent hospitalizations, fatalities, and the spread of COVID-19. Through our continued efforts, we are dedicated to facilitating access to updated COVID-19 vaccines for Latines in Minnesota. We also began training for the second cohort of health promoters, with five individuals successfully obtaining their certification.



On February 10, 2024, we supported 100 individuals at the vaccination clinic hosted at the Workers' Center. Two days later, on February 12, we attended to 110 individuals at the vaccination clinic held at Folwell Elementary School. Towards the end of the month, on February 26, 84 individuals got vaccinated at the clinic held at the Consulate of Ecuador.

Last month, we launched a new series of preventive community health classes. The topics covered in the initial sessions included *Let's Talk About Heart Health and Understanding the Health System in Minnesota*



We also conducted two workshops for students on *Healthy Ways to Cope with Stress and The Importance of Understanding Our Emotions* at Washburn High School and South High School respectively, with a total of 30 youth participating.





“Thank you for providing us with this information because it helps us lead a healthier life. God bless you,” shared a participant in one of our community health events.

Thank you to M Health Fairview, Homeland Health, Folwell Elementary School, and the Consulate of Ecuador for collaborating with us as we work to improve the quality of life for Latine communities in Minnesota.





Southern Minnesota Rochester, Minnesota Health Promoters Program

The health promoters in Rochester began their training on February 1st, which spanned a total of seven workshops, now they are ready to start their work with the community on the first campaign focusing on health and workplace safety, which will begin in April and end in May.



Rochester Regional Committee

On February 24th, the regional committee of members met in Rochester. We had 16 attendees, and during this meeting, we presented COPAL's legislative agenda for the year 2024. We also discussed what caucuses entail in Minnesota, with the aim of ensuring our community understands the electoral process as well as how our voices hold power and can make an impact on issues that improve the quality of life of Latine communities in Minnesota.

The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 23rd at 5 pm.





Mankato, Minnesota

In the month of February, COPAL continues its COVID-19 prevention plan at community events. Thanks to the efforts of community partners, this month 27 community members received the updated COVID-19 vaccine in Mankato and Gaylord, Minnesota.



Additionally, in February, we hosted two informative community events on the [One Economy for Minnesota!](#) campaign, one in person in Mankato and one virtually. These events saw the participation of over 40 community members. We extend our gratitude to La Vida Digna coalition and community partners for their collaboration.

As part of our community engagement efforts, this month we met with St. Peter, MN City Representative and YWCA Director Cecil Polzin, and Mayor Nowell to discuss the *One Economy for Minnesota!* campaign and the Latine community in the city of St. Peter.





Organizing

This month, COPAL members and staff advocated to advance our [2024 legislative agenda](#), prioritizing issues that impact Latine, immigrant, and working-class Minnesotans. Alongside partners *Region Nine Development Commission*, *LatinoLEAD*, *HACER*, and *Equity in Place*, the [One Economy for Minnesota!](#) campaign passed our ITIN bill through committees in the Minnesota Senate and House of Representatives. This process of committees is one of the key stages to turn a bill into a law, prior to a full vote of the legislature. COPAL also supported efforts for justice in housing through [rallies](#), community listening sessions, and public letters of support.



COPAL continues to advance our vision for a dignified life in Minnesota through local community organizing. Here are some examples from this month!

- Emilio Rodriguez presented the North STAR Act in Mankato
- Kaitlyn Cebulla led a statewide virtual meeting about the rights of ITIN-holders
- Eduardo Peñasco shared an opportunity to support a minimum wage increase with members at the Primero de Mayo Workers' Center in Minneapolis
- David Perdomo trained Rochester members about the Minnesota caucus process
- David Rezzio continued to engage members over the phones, informing them of upcoming opportunities for action
- María Jose prepped for our upcoming Day at the Capitol on March 11th
- Monse Pérez began organizing students in St. Peter to participate in that day

We have truly built a statewide movement!





Primero de Mayo Workers' Center

In February, we facilitated a collective effort where members of the Ecuadorian community are organizing to support the push for TPS (Temporary Protected Status) for Ecuador. This collective gathers every Saturday from 3:30 to 5:30 PM. Recently, they had the opportunity to petition Representative Ilhan Omar, and they are gearing up for further legislative visits.



In addition, nine young individuals have been engaged in research through the [Met Council's program](#). In March, they will be making policy recommendations in the areas of economic opportunities for documented individuals, accessible and desirable housing.

Then, during our open hours, we continue to welcome individuals who are in search of employment. These days, we're receiving between 30-65 people per day, and as spring approaches, we're noticing more job opportunities emerging for the community. Our Youth Employment and Career Counselor spent February bringing resources from the Workers' Center to the Minneapolis School District. There, she connected with high school seniors who are either seeking employment or require assistance in navigating the path to college.

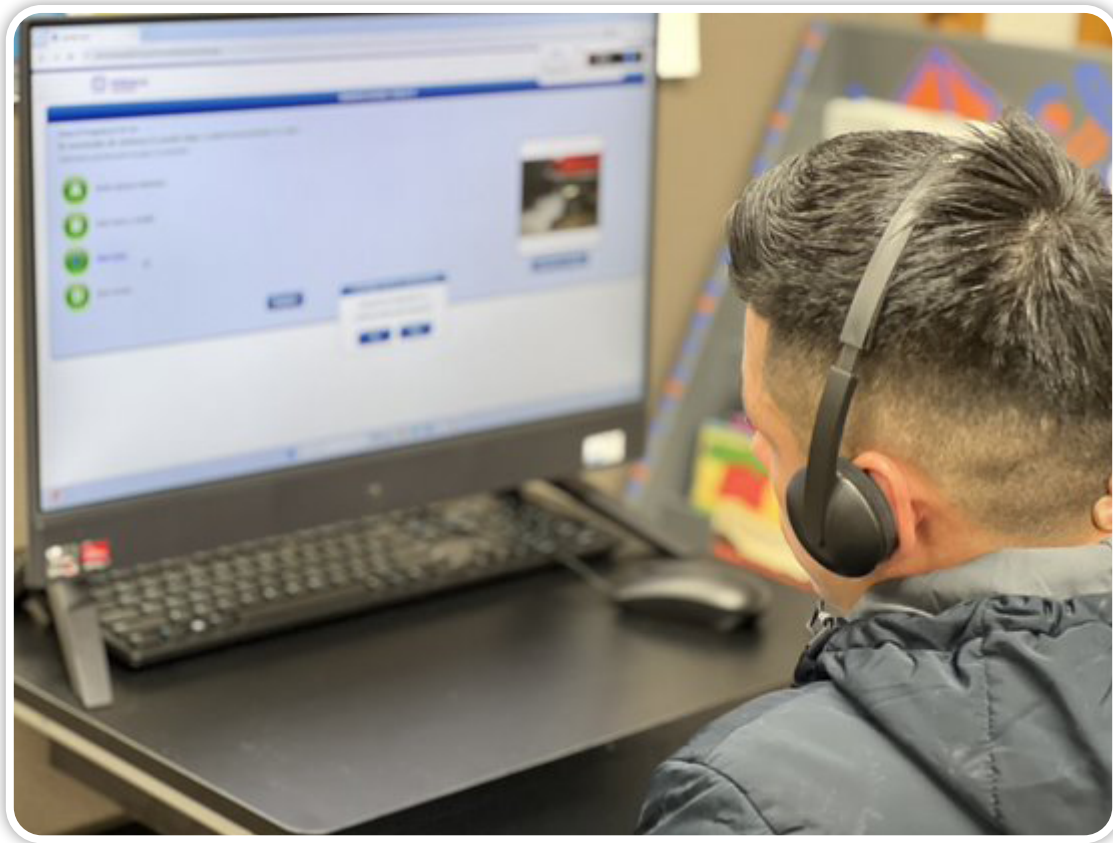
As part of the NDLO (National Day Laborer Organizing Network), we are dedicated to conducting workshops on workplace health and safety, including how to identify hazards and report to OSHA if necessary. In March, we will be hosting two training sessions for workers:

- Sunday, March 24th, from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM.
- Saturday, March 30th, from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PRIMERO DE MAYO WORKERS' CENTER HERE





Good news! The Workers' Center is continuing to facilitate the opportunity for our community to obtain their licenses by offering the written driving exam.

Some important details:

- This exam is only for the theoretical/written part and does not include the driving test.
- Please call in advance to schedule an appointment at (612) 249-8736.
- This offer is available for those taking the test for the first, second, or third time.
- We are asking for a donation of \$10 to cover administrative costs.

Contact us **at (612) 249-8736** for more details and to schedule a time to take the test!



It's tax season!

Did you know you may be eligible for the following credits?

- Child Tax Credit
- Renter's Income Tax Credit
- Working Family Credit
- Property Tax Refund
- K-12 Education Credit



(612) 249-8736

Call COPAL's Navigator Line at (612) 249-8736 to get connected to a bilingual tax preparer!

Service made available through a grant provided by the state of Minnesota.

m DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE



☆☆☆ TIP OF THE MONTH ☆☆☆



This Women's Month, prioritize your mental well-being

Research indicates that one out of every five women in the United States faces mental health challenges annually, including conditions like anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), eating disorders, and others. Unfortunately, a significant lack of awareness and accessible resources often impedes women from seeking support for their mental well-being. What actions can you take? Firstly, prioritize your well-being by making time for relaxation and engaging in activities that bring you joy. Additionally, don't hesitate to reach out and confide in trusted individuals about your emotions, whether it be a friend, therapist, or psychiatrist. Sharing your feelings with someone supportive can make a significant difference when navigating difficult times. You can call us at (612) 249-8736 and we will connect you to additional resources!

Let's work towards creating a world where mental well-being is prioritized, and where everyone has access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

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!



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COPAL

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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.