



## MARCH FORWARD: MENTAL HEALTH, WOMEN'S STRENGTH & OUR PLANET'S FUTURE

March has been a month of transformation and growth. As we move forward, we continue to honor the strength, resilience, and leadership of women who uplift our communities every day. At COPAL, our commitment to justice, equity, and collective well-being remains steadfast—whether through political advocacy, education, or essential community services.

This month, we spotlight Jeanette Vizguerra, a renowned immigrant rights leader and mother of four, who was recently detained by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) after years of advocacy and seeking sanctuary to avoid deportation. Her unwavering dedication to the immigrant community has made her a symbol of courage and resistance.

As Jeanette has expressed: "I want you to know I'm not going to surrender. I'm going to keep fighting." Her relentless pursuit of justice embodies the spirit of resilience we honor and strive to emulate in our ongoing work.

This month, we're excited to share powerful initiatives that strengthen our community, from mental health resources to organizing efforts that ensure our voices are heard. Keep reading to discover how we're making a difference together—and how you can be a part of it!

### Mental Health Insights – Your Well-Being Matters!

At COPAL MN, we believe mental well-being is a right, not a luxury. That's why we're thrilled to welcome Ana Mariella Rivera, a distinguished mental health professional with over 18 years of clinical experience. She is the founder of a successful psychotherapy and consulting practice and an adjunct professor at Saint Catherine University.

With a Healing-Centered approach, Ana Mariella encourages us to move beyond trauma and cultivate joy, self-agency, and collective well-being. Her mission is clear: to democratize mental health by making healing tools, self-awareness, and intentional leadership accessible to all—especially our Latine community.

**Don't miss this new series**, you can [see our Facebook Live here](#), and continue to see the clips in our social media where we'll explore how to heal, grow, and lead with awareness and purpose. **Your mental health matters!**

## When We March, We Carry Generations With Us

On Saturday, March 8th, 2025, two powerful voices from COPAL took the stage at the Women's March at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul:

Wendy Zúniga, our Communications Director, and Eva Peña, our U of M Fellow, stood proudly to represent our members and our mission.

They carried with them the voices of our Latino ancestors—voices that have long fought for dignity, justice, and the right to simply be seen.

Because in the United States, women of color have always had to show twice the strength, twice the grace, and an unshakable grit to claim space in a system not built for them.

At COPAL, we rise with them—uplifting women's rights, demanding dignity, and moving forward together.

### ORGANIZING

#### **COPAL MN's Day at the Capitol: A Powerful Display of Unity & Advocacy**

On March 10, 2025, Latine communities from across Minnesota came together for COPAL MN's annual Day at the Capitol, a day filled with celebration, advocacy, and action. This powerful gathering gave community members the chance to connect with elected officials, share their stories, and push for legislation that truly reflects the needs and aspirations of immigrant and Latine communities.

The Capitol Rotunda came alive with energy during the Orgullo y Poder Rally, featuring electrifying Bomba performances by Tearra Oso, Ra Cole, Sensae Da Waelaah, and Alexis Santos. The rhythmic beats and storytelling through dance set the tone for a day of empowerment and unity, followed by inspiring speeches from local leaders.



After the rally, participants took action, meeting with legislators to advocate for Education, Environmental Justice, Healthcare for All, Immigration Reform, Housing, and Dignity for Workers.



"Today, we are not just celebrating our resilience—we are making sure our elected officials hear us loud and clear. Our communities deserve policies rooted in justice and dignity, and we will continue fighting for them," said Ryan Pérez, COPAL's Organizing Director.

"We're here to demand a future where justice, dignity, and opportunity are a reality for all. Walking into those offices, sharing our stories, and making sure lawmakers understand the urgency of these issues is how we create real change," added Carolina Ortiz, Associate Executive Director at COPAL.

COPAL's Day at the Capitol was a powerful step toward advancing the community's legislative agenda for 2025, ensuring that the voices of Minnesota's Latine communities are heard. Want to be part of this movement? Join us in future actions, advocacy efforts, and [community events](#). Your voice matters—together, we create change!

## PRIMERO DE MAYO WORKERS' CENTER

In February, the Worker Center provided services to 998 individuals through our various programs.

We kicked off tax season with a dedicated group of trained young volunteers who are now assisting the community with tax preparation. Some individuals who came to us in 2023 seeking employment returned this year to learn how to file their taxes for the first time. Thanks to our **VITA Site Clinic**, our team successfully guided them through the process.



In just our first month of VITA operations, we have already helped 40 families file their taxes. Additionally, we continue to collaborate with the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry and the Department of Revenue to expand our support. Our computer classes are also thriving, thanks to three dedicated volunteers from the University of Minnesota.

### Get Involved!

We are looking for volunteers to help with resume building and to assist first-time tax filers in understanding the process. If you're interested in making a difference, **please call our Navigator Line at (612) 249-8736.**

## South Central Initiative MANKATO

On February 27, we hosted a community event in Mankato focused on long COVID, vaccine access, immunizations, influenza, and local resources. Additionally, 14 members of the regional committee participated in a Know Your Rights training, where we shared information and dramatized real-life scenarios to better equip our community and allies.

In the spirit of solidarity and creativity, on February 12, community members came together to create artwork expressing love and support for their immigrant neighbors. This led up to our Love Your Immigrant Neighbor Action Day on February 14, where 20 people gathered at the Veterans Memorial Bridge in Mankato to show unity and raise awareness.



On February 17, we held an event on Parental Delegation of Authority (DOPA) forms and notarization, in collaboration with the Tyrone Guzman Center. Looking ahead, in March, we began offering driver's license written exam preparation at our Mankato office.

The South Central Regional Committee invites you to get involved! Contact [Dmesta@copalmn.org](mailto:Dmesta@copalmn.org) or [register for the regional committee!](#)

## SOUTHEAST INITIATIVE ROCHESTER

In February, COPAL Rochester took action to support and advocate for immigrant rights through art, direct action, and legal assistance. On February 11 and 12, we invited community members to create messages of love and support for immigrants at events held in Austin Public Library and COPAL's Rochester office. These heartfelt expressions became powerful symbols in our fight for justice.

### **Taking Action: Love Our Immigrant Neighbors**

On February 13, over 50 people gathered at Peace Plaza, braving subzero temperatures (-10°F), to protest ICE detentions of individuals with no criminal record or deportation order. Faith communities and organizations, including ISAIAH, INDIVISIBLE, and SMILLD, stood with us.



Community members creating messages for our immigrant neighbors

The next day, February 14, Rochester residents braved the cold to spread messages of love through the We Love Our Immigrant Neighbors campaign. Holding handmade signs, they stood on the Highway 52 bridge and downtown, reminding everyone that immigrants belong.

### **Defending Immigrant Rights & Reuniting Families**

Our team has worked tirelessly to connect detained individuals with legal aid, ensuring they have representation in court. Thanks to these efforts, six of the seven people detained on February 12 have been released, reuniting with their families and returning to work.

Faith communities, including United Methodist Church, First Unitarian Universalist Church, and Congregational Church UCC, have stepped up to provide food, transportation, and essential assistance to impacted families. SMILD has been instrumental in connecting detained families with legal support. **A Special Thank You to Phil Wheeler, Chair of SMILD, for his unwavering commitment to our immigrant community.**

### **Community Involvement is key!**

We encourage you to get involved by joining the Southeast Regional Committee. This committee provides amazing opportunities for individuals to participate in monthly events, take action toward creating a more inclusive and livable Minnesota, and develop leadership and organizational skills. We invite you to attend our monthly meetings and join us in this exciting effort! For more information, you can contact the COPAL Navigator Line at (612) 249-8736.

For information about upcoming events, please visit our website at COPAL Events. Stay tuned for more ways to get involved!

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

### Podcast: Women's Resilience & Mental Health

In our continued effort to support and empower our community, we're providing important updates on vaccines, health resources, immigration information, and more. We're committed to raising awareness about Long COVID and ensuring that everyone has access to the health resources we deserve. Together, we can make sure our community stays informed and protected.

Here are some highlights:

In honor of **International Women's Day**, our podcast *La Voz de la Comunidad Latina* brings you: **"Resiliencia, Identidad y Salud Mental en Mujeres Latinas en EE.UU."**

Dulce De La Rosa and Dr. Francisco Ramírez sit down with María Cervantes and Alexa Rodríguez from Raíces Sagradas to talk about mental health, identity, and resilience. [Listen now!](#)

### Missed our Long COVID Live Event?

Catch up on our latest discussion, [Watch now](#), and join us again on April 7 at 11 AM for a special conversation on vaccination for children—your voice matters!



### Dulce's Radio Program: La Voz de la Comunidad

As mentioned above, our radio program **La Voz de la Comunidad** keeps you informed on health and wellness topics. Tune in and spread the word! Listen here:

[RADIO JORNALERA MN](#)



## Upcoming Events – Join Us!

### Círculo de Sanación Healing Circle



Saturday, March 22  
1:00 - 3:00 PM CT



Primero de Mayo Centro de  
Trabajadores, Minneapolis

A space for healing, reflection,  
and community.

[SIGN UP](#)

### Vaccine Clinic



Monday, April 28 | 9:00 AM -  
1:00 PM CT



Consulado de Ecuador,  
Minneapolis

Get your vaccines and stay  
protected!

[SIGN UP](#)

### Citizenship Clinic



Saturday, March 22  
1:00 - 3:00 PM CT



Primero de Mayo Centro de  
Trabajadores, Minneapolis

**Need help with your  
citizenship application?**  
Our team is here to guide you!


[SIGN UP](#)

## JUSTICIA AMBIENTAL

### Save the Date: Festival del Sol (Earth Day 2025)

This year, COPAL will be hosting an Earth Day event: Festival del Sol on Saturday, April 19th. As we get closer to the date, we will have more details about the event. You can expect music, food, cultural performances, vendors, and community as we come together to celebrate our Earth and environmental justice. In the meantime, please save the following date and details:

 **Date:** Saturday, April 19th

 **Location:** 2905 E Lake Street,  
Minneapolis, MN 55407

[Register here](#)

[Sign up to receive COPAL's Monthly EJ Newsletter here!](#)



**FESTIVAL DEL SOL**

**APRIL 19 ABRIL**  
10 AM - 2 PM  
2025

**2905**  
E LAKE STREET  
MINNEAPOLIS

**Celebrate Latin American culture,  
Earth Day, and  
community connection!**

**¡Celebremos la cultura  
latinoamericana, el  
Día de la Tierra y la conexión comunitaria!**

 **COPAL**

www.COPALMN.org



 **Environmental  
Justice** 

**COPAL NEWS**

[Sign up to receive COPAL's Monthly  
EJ Newsletter 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.