



Annual Report 2020 – 2021

Our mission is to build a welcoming community and create opportunities where Latino families can belong, contribute, and succeed.

Nuestra misión es construir una comunidad acogedora y crear oportunidades donde las familias latinas pueden pertenecer, contribuir y prosperar.

In This Moment



Artist Kristen Chapman, in collaborative art-making with the Conexión Américas community, presents “In This Moment,” currently on display in the Casa Azafrán art gallery.

Created in a year when we couldn't be physically together, we reminded ourselves that we all contribute to the beautiful, diverse tapestry that makes Tennessee home. How we each contributed during a pandemic, during a difficult political environment, and how we persevered.

Conexión Américas' team and Board of Directors, along with our partners at Casa Azafrán and program participants reflected on their commitments and chose materials to represent their contribution. During a staff event at Casa Azafrán, during program sessions and volunteer events, each person wove in their chosen material.

In one another we find our resilience and our reasons to keep creating beauty. Together.

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¡Hola, hola!

As I reflect on the past two years, I realize we have accomplished so much. Working with the organization's Board of Directors and colleagues, we reviewed systems and procedures, fundraised, grew our team, and ensured that growth was consistent with the organization's *cultura* and values. 2020 pushed the organization toward one of my main goals: to be even closer to the Latinx community—the heart of Conexión Américas. We faced a devastating tornado, the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, the murder of George Floyd and the urgent need to find our collective societal responsibility in the fight for racial equity, the 2020 election, the Christmas Day bombing, and damaging floods.

“...In the following pages, you'll get a glimpse of the work we did together in this fiscal year, meet our resilient program participants, and the Conexión Américas team who makes it possible.”

As Conexión Américas has done for the past 19 years, we rose to the challenge. Together with local and national partners, we distributed meals, financial assistance, and vaccines. We created a new system to recruit, train, and work with volunteers who contributed 1,132 hours of service to the organization and helped with events ranging from distributing food boxes to immigrant-origin families to translating documents into Spanish. We adapted and strengthened our core programs in a virtual setting and joined with school leaders, teachers, and students to ensure families had the tools, knowledge, and human connection to face the 2020-2021 school year. We took steps to address racial inequality and equity not just in our community, but in our own



organization, learning from community experts in the fields of education, social justice, social work, and voting rights. And, we witnessed history as our country voted to change paths and we began to reimagine our future possibilities.

In the following pages, you'll get a glimpse of the work we did together in this fiscal year, meet our resilient program participants, and the Conexión Américas team who makes it possible.

As I step down, I do so knowing that the work of the past two years has shown that we have the best team in Tennessee, and that Conexión Américas is financially stable, programmatically strong, and committed to our mission. I will be joining you, as part of the Nashville community, supporting and championing our beloved Conexión Américas.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliana". The script is fluid and cursive.

Juliana Ospina Cano
Executive Director

A Letter from Our Leadership Team



*Pictured left to right:
Andres Martinez,
Cheyenne Peters, Kara
Holzer, Ariel Safdie,
José González, Tara
Lentz, Maria Paula
Zapata, Juliana Ospina
Cano, and Martha Silva*

The past two years have taught us just how strong Conexión Américas is, and as the leadership team who saw Conexión Américas through its first transition, we approach the next transition with confidence. We are grateful for Juliana’s leadership, her steady presence, and the vibrant energy she brings everyday to the *lucha*, our fight to achieve our mission.

Conexión Américas intentionally invested in us, knowing the work we do and the institutional knowledge we hold are what keeps our organization running smoothly and

focused on the families we serve. We thank our Board of Directors for standing alongside us, and having the confidence to elevate our two colleagues, Tara and Martha, as interim Co-Executive Directors. With their combined experience and dedication to our mission, we know Conexión Américas will remain as stable as ever.

In this report you’ll see firsthand our colleagues’ work, and learn exactly what keeps us at Conexión Américas—the chance to build a welcoming community, and create opportunities where Latinx families can belong, contribute, and succeed.

[Andres, Ariel, Cheyenne, Kara, José, Maria Paula, Martha, and Tara](#)

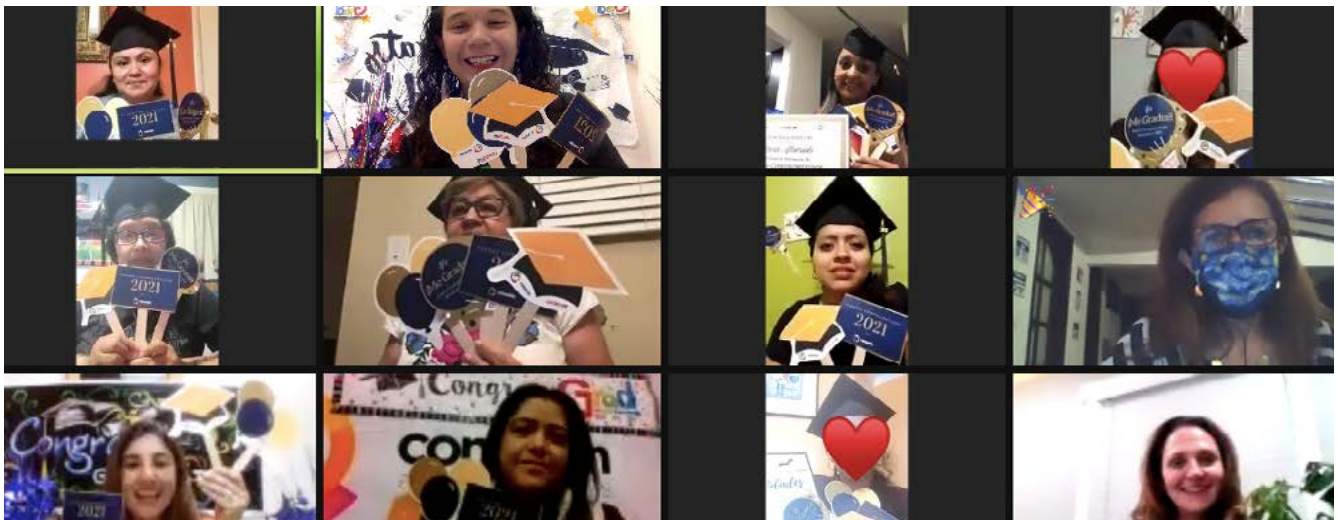
Education Programs

Parents as Partners

Immigrant parents come to the United States with dreams their children receive a great education, but the path to achieving that dream isn't always clear. Conexión Américas' nationally recognized Padres Comprometidos program, or Parents as Partners, supports immigrant parents

as they encounter and learn to navigate the American school system through a 9-week workshop led by volunteer parent facilitators. During the past year, we tailored our curriculum to support families navigating virtual learning and accessing resources remotely. Because

of the pandemic, we prioritized family wellbeing and worked with parents to manage stress and regulate emotions for themselves, and learn coping strategies and ways to care for their children's social and emotional needs during this stressful time.



103

parents participated in online workshops

6

virtual program series consisting of 9 workshops each

12

parent facilitators trained

35

MNPS schools represented

4

school districts outside Nashville



Abraham

While over 100 mothers participated in the three workshops we offered in the fall, Abraham was the only father to participate. Originally from Guatemala, Abraham primarily speaks his native, indigenous language, and despite speaking limited Spanish, he attended the workshops to ensure his daughter's success in school. "It helped me learn new words in Spanish, and I want to keep learning more in this country."

After-School Programs

Through our Nashville After Zone Alliance (NAZA) after-school program, middle school students receive tutoring, homework help, and fun hands-on activities throughout the school year.



Service Learning

Aware of the damaging effects of the pandemic, our middle school students decided to take a deep dive into the issue of evictions and homelessness. During a service learning project as part of the UnidosUS CASA (Cultura, Aprendizaje, Servicio, Acción) program, the students organized information sessions with elected officials and other experts to learn more about the issue and become better social

justice advocates in their community. The students met with Council Member Sandra Sepúlveda, Judge Ana Escobar, attorney David Esquivel, and moderated a panel with Diego Eguiarte—Mayor Cooper’s Director of Performance Management—and several Conexión Américas staff members. The students also organized a fundraiser for Safe Haven Family Shelter, a shelter that houses family units together.

223

recent arrival and English Learner high school students received educational support, mentoring, and referrals

52

middle school students participated in our NAZA virtual after-school program

99

middle school students and their families in our GEAR UP program

21

middle school GEAR UP students participated in a 2020 virtual summer camp

GEAR UP

Through a partnership with Metro Schools, Conexión Américas works with a cohort of future first generation college students from middle school until the class enters post-secondary education. GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. Through GEAR UP, we

supported Spanish-speaking families as schools transitioned to virtual learning, and connected families to our food distribution events and rental assistance program. In a virtual summer camp, students learned how to prepare for a successful high school career.

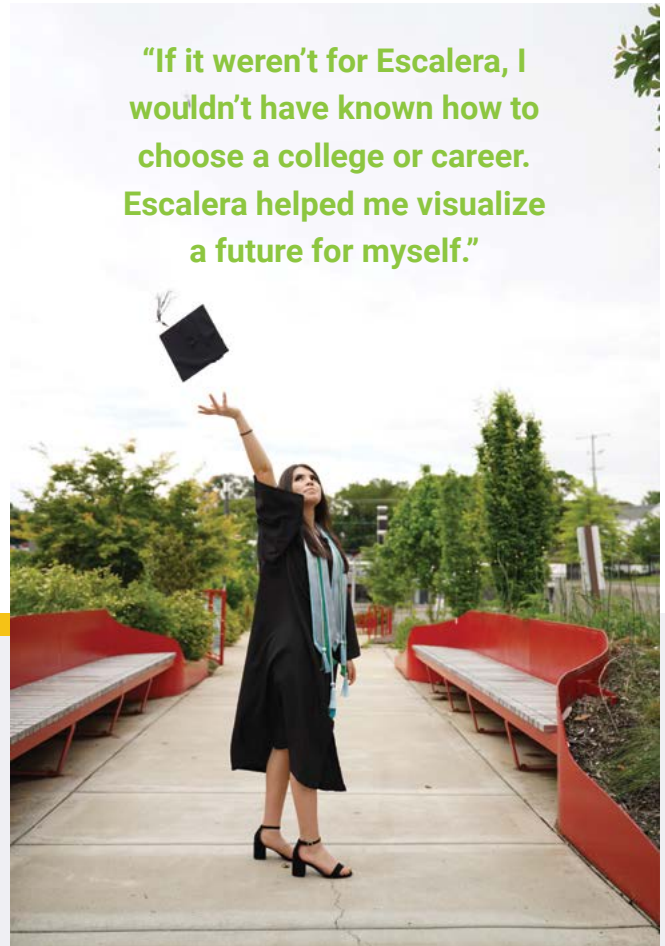
Escalera College Access Program

A national college and career readiness program, Escalera supports future first generation college students at Cane Ridge, Glencliff, and Overton high schools as they prepare for higher education and career opportunities after high school graduation. During the past year, we continued weekly group meetings, one-on-one case management appointments, virtual college tours, career panels, mock interviews, guest speakers, and a socially distanced drop-in graduation event.

Alondra

Alondra joined our Escalera program during her junior year at Cane Ridge High School. Now a student at Lipscomb University, Alondra transitioned to our College Success program.

“If it weren’t for Escalera, I wouldn’t have known how to choose a college or career. Escalera helped me visualize a future for myself.”



College Success

As graduates from our Escalera College Access program pursue post-secondary education, they receive one-on-one mentoring from Conexión Américas’ College Success Coaches who support the persistence and completion of college and post-secondary pursuits. Our college success coaches met with students weekly, and organized virtual college tours, mock interviews, career panels, and a drop-in graduation event.



Festival Familiar

Each year we host a Festival Familiar (Family Festival) for our community to share an afternoon of joy, participate in fun science and art activities, and provide a space where Latinx families can learn about school, community and nonprofit

resources. To continue the event during the pandemic, we connected with our community virtually with a series of short videos sharing activities families could do from home, information about community programs and resources and a

nightly book reading in Spanish. At the end of the week, we hosted a drive-thru Festival Familiar where over 300 families came to Casa Azafrán to pick up school supplies, fresh produce, prepared meals, and other information and resources.



107

students participated in our afterschool college access program, Escalera, at 3 high schools

42

students applied for and were accepted to at least one college or university

106

Escalera college students supported as the first in their families to go to college

9

college graduates completed their degrees in 2021

47

students participated in FAFSA preparation and college access workshops

51

community-wide college students supported, including high school students across the city, current college students, and adults pursuing higher education

✓ Economic Prosperity

Entrepreneurship

Our Negocio Próspero (Prosperous Business) program is an introductory business course providing aspiring business owners and entrepreneurs useful tools and skills to launch, or improve the management and profitability of their businesses.

The 10-week Spanish-language class series offers basic administrative knowledge for starting a

new business, or growing an existing enterprise. The classes, taught by experts in their field, focus on topics such as financial education, accounting, marketing, taxes, licensing, permits, insurance, contracts, and legal information. To further assist aspiring entrepreneurs, we organize specialized, one-time workshops focusing on starting cleaning, commercial

painting, and culinary businesses, and marketing best practices.

Our business course continued virtually during the pandemic, and reached Latinx entrepreneurs across the state. Additionally, we connected current and past participants to pandemic financial and technical assistance.

72

aspiring entrepreneurs participated in our 10-week small business course

10

participants expanded their business

2

participants started new businesses

114

entrepreneurs received one-on-one business coaching

4

specialized small business workshops assisted aspiring entrepreneurs

Homeownership

Puertas Abiertas (Open Doors) assists Latinx families in achieving the dream of homeownership by offering financial education, counseling, and access to financing.

9

families refinanced homes

1

new homeowner

Bernardo

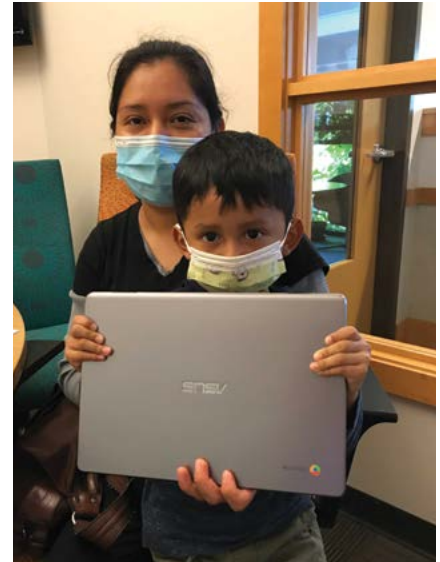
Bernardo Ramirez moved to the U.S. over 15 years ago from Mexico City. He accomplished his dream of being a homeowner back in 2006 with Conexión Américas' program Puertas Abiertas. In 2021, our Puertas Abiertas program helped Mr. Ramirez again with refinancing. His oldest son, Brandon, is a student at Belmont University and has been part of the Conexión Américas Escalera college access programs and our young professionals ambassadors, Conexión Next.



Adult Education

306 adult students honed their English speaking and digital literacy skills through online classes teaching basic computer skills, intermediate to advanced level Quickbooks and Excel, and essential virtual learning programs like Zoom. Through our online course series, we reached adult learners outside of Metro Nashville, since students

can access classes from wherever they can connect to the internet. As many of the participants only had internet access through their cell phones, we created an English learning resource center through which students can borrow Chromebook laptops and other technology for the semester to improve their educational experience.



217

adult English Language Learners

26

women participated in a Nosotras personal development workshop

7

digital literacy courses

89

adult digital literacy students

Information Hub

Providing information and referrals in Spanish for new residents from across the U.S. and across the world was our first offering when we started Conexión Américas in 2002. Our main phone line, along with social media messages and texting, continues to be a first point of contact for new residents as they look to find their way in Tennessee. The trust we have built in the Latinx community leads callers to reach out for information on how to apply for a job, enroll their children in school,

find help for a detained family member, get legal assistance, and navigate many systems. In the past year we have had an increase in calls related to food insecurity, families facing homelessness, domestic violence, and COVID-19 information.

6,804

calls for information and referrals

Mesa Komal Culinary Incubator

Our culinary incubator, Mesa Komal, provides food entrepreneurs with access to an affordable, licensed kitchen. Mesa Komal features immigrant and non-immigrant food entrepreneurs alike as they work to expand a food business—whether it be catering,

a food truck, or wholesale. During the pandemic, we secured opportunities for Mesa Komal chefs to work with relief organizations and provide prepared meals to the community, and connected them with financial assistance.

13

resident culinary entrepreneurs

11

new culinary businesses started



Financial Empowerment Center

Through a partnership with the Mayor’s Office and United Way of Greater Nashville, the Financial Empowerment Center at Conexión Américas provides bilingual financial counseling for community members experiencing financial trouble or those simply wanting to make sure they’re on the right track as they manage bills, work through debt, improve credit scores, create

a budget, or navigate financial insecurity during the pandemic. Limited digital literacy and access brought challenges, but our team addressed these by adding more personalized texting and phone support, creating informational videos, and expanding our outreach.

71

individuals participated in 141 one-on-one financial counseling sessions

7

individuals participated in a group financial counseling workshop

9

families assisted with powers of attorney

Taxes

Conexión Américas and a team of volunteers through VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) helped hundreds of families file their taxes virtually and in-person. Additionally, we assisted families in applying for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) – an essential component for tax paying residents without social security numbers.



Keila

“I took the initiative to learn everything about taxes in the U.S., but what motivated me to volunteer the most was the opportunity to help the Latino community.”



While assisting Keila in preparing her taxes, she mentioned she was a tax expert in her home country of Venezuela and wanted to learn more about the tax system here. Soon after, she began the training program to volunteer with Conexión Américas and help Spanish-speaking families prepare their taxes.

Since 2019, Keila has volunteered 40 hours, all while having a full-time job. “I took the initiative to learn everything about taxes in the U.S., but what motivated me to volunteer the most was the opportunity to help the Latino community.”

284

tax returns filed for 2020

\$381,000

in tax refunds

20

new individual tax payer number (ITIN) applications completed

51

ITIN renewals

✓ Tennessee Migrant Education Program 2020 – 2021

The Migrant Education Program addresses the educational needs of migratory children so that they have full opportunity to meet the same academic standards as other children. The team works to identify and recruit students that qualify for the program and connect them with education advisors and community services. Students receive one-on-one educational tutoring and literacy support, help navigating school systems and many other resources to ensure they can participate fully in their education. Since 2016 the Tennessee Migrant Education Program has been operated by Conexión Américas and has served migratory students from the United States, Mexico, Guatemala, Southeast Asia, Uganda, Congo, and more.



During the past fiscal year, our Migrant Education Program team worked to reach families in new and creative ways, and provided 3,685 educational services and 2,461 support services to students in a virtual format. The team held tutoring sessions and summer camp over video using smartphones, helped families enroll and participate in remote school, delivered essential school supplies, and provided resources to

help families navigate the challenges that arose during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

6,146

educational and support services

College Success and Family Engagement

This year over 30 parents participated in the State Parent Advisory Council, Local Parent Advisory Council and Parent Engagement Workshops, virtual spaces for migratory parents to not only take away a new understanding of the U.S. school system but also to share their expertise with the Migrant Education Program on how to continue serving rural students.

More than 26 migratory high school students participated in our Fall or Spring College Readiness virtual workshop series offered by our program, which aimed to help students prepare for education opportunities after high school.

792

students received educational services

242

students participated in virtual summer camp 2020, the Reading Treasure Hunt Challenge

38

school districts across Tennessee

Harvest of Courage

The Harvest of Courage 2020 exhibit, on display at the Casa Azafrán Art Gallery, is a culmination of drawings and words of wisdom by Tennessee's migratory students, who move with their families every three years or more as they pick the seasonal harvest across different towns

and states. Their lives are ones of constant change and mobility and these drawings showcase these students' strength and resilience. This year, students read the book *I Am Human* by Susan Verde, and then reflected on the characteristics that made them human, including

how they manage difficult moments in their lives. The exhibit displays drawings by students representing 16 different countries who shared advice with their peers on what they could do to have courage when things are hard or they are scared.



🔗 Tennessee Migrant Education Program **Celebrating Five Years**

This year we mark five successful years of serving over 2,428 migratory children through the Tennessee Migrant Education Program, many of whom we worked with over multiple years. We are grateful to the Tennessee Department of Education and our partners, including local school districts across the state, for the opportunity to serve and work with Tennessee's migratory students. We celebrate the program's impact and the team who has made this great work possible as the contract period ends this fall.

More than just expanding our organization's reach in Tennessee, we have expanded our *familia* to rural areas, working with students in their homes and schools. We are called to continue supporting the students and families who have welcomed us over the past five years. As we look forward, we will continue serving Latinx families across Tennessee through our education, economic opportunity, and civic engagement programs.

2,428

students reached over the 5-year
program contract

65

school districts

20,000+

educational services





✦ Pandemic Response

During times of disaster, we work closely with partner organizations to ensure the Latinx community is included in response efforts and receives necessary relief. Years of programmatic work has built trust and relationships in the Latinx and immigrant communities, and our statewide presence and strong partnerships enable us to respond in the moment and lead as a voice for equity.



Direct Economic Assistance



Luna

The pandemic affected every industry in our community, including the one our city is most known for: music. Lockdown shuttered music venues, restaurants, and private events—all places where musicians can play to make a living.

Luna, a Nashville entertainer, regularly performed at music festivals, corporate events, and restaurants until the pandemic started. Luna turned to Conexión Américas, the organization she trusts with her taxes each year, and where she once took our class for aspiring entrepreneurs. Through Conexión Américas, she received direct economic assistance, allowing her to pay bills and feed her family during the pandemic.

\$1.1M+

in rent and mortgage assistance

710

rent and mortgage assistance payments for families to stay in their homes

\$33,000

in direct economic assistance for 2021 flood survivors

66

flood survivor families assisted

46%

of applicants were single mothers, and over half were single parents*

70%

lost their job completely due to COVID-19 and 30% had a reduction in hours*

80%

worked in cleaning, hospitality, construction, or landscaping*

76%

needed rent or mortgage assistance*

*These numbers represent a sampling of economic assistance applicants.

Mabel

After contracting COVID-19, Mabel was let go from her job working in a restaurant kitchen and fell behind on rent. A single mother from Honduras, Mabel was focused on ensuring she had a home for her two children. After her apartment complex began to discuss

eviction, she was referred to Conexión Américas and was able to receive rent assistance to catch up.

“I am so grateful for Conexión Américas saving my home and my family.”

Small Business Economic And Technical Assistance

Owning a small business is a sign of the vitality of the American dream for the Latinx and immigrant community in Tennessee. But this year, small businesses across the state struggled to stay afloat. As businesses slowly reopened, they had to adjust to a new normal. Recognizing the need for economic and technical assistance, Conexión Américas stepped in and provided over \$175,000 in grant assistance and helped businesses pivot to virtual platforms during

the pandemic, implement marketing plans, and launch a web presence.

\$175,000

distributed to 50 Latinx and immigrant-owned small businesses

31

local small businesses received technical assistance



Maria's Snacks located at 5320 Nolensville Pike Nashville

Maria

Wanting to move to a new, busier location along Nolensville Pike, Maria Leonides, owner of Maria's Snacks, sought help from Conexión Américas. To facilitate Maria's move, Conexión Américas awarded her a small grant, which enabled her to break her lease.

Maria also took advantage of the free technical assistance, learning best practices for marketing and selling online. Now in her new location, Maria's Mexican street food shop continues to bring a taste of Mexico to southeast Nashville.

Casa Azafrán in Action

What started with a weekly food distribution event at Casa Azafrán while our office remained closed, grew into a sustained approach addressing food insecurity and distributing resources. In partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank, Nashville Noticias, and World Central Kitchen, since March 2020, Conexión Américas we continue to host weekly drive-thru events to distribute fresh produce boxes and warm meals to immigrant-origin families.

Collaborating with the Metro Nashville Public Health Department and Siloam Health, we created culturally-appropriate food boxes that provided fresh produce, eggs, milk, and staples for Latinx and Middle Eastern individuals and families quarantining because of COVID-19. 534 boxes were delivered directly to 267 homes by Community Health Workers and provided enough food for recipients to quarantine for two weeks without worrying about food insecurity.

31,520

food staples and
produce boxes

20,300

prepared meals
by Mesa Komal
Culinary Entrepreneurs

8,766

diapers provided by Mother-
to-Mother and Nashville
Diaper Connection

3,300

masks, thermometers,
and other health
safety items

Promoting Food Security

In coalition with the Tennessee Justice Center, we advocated for a more linguistically accessible and equitable Pandemic - EBT application process for Latinx children and families. P-EBT, a direct economic benefit for families who qualify for free or reduced lunch and missed these meals when schools were closed or operating virtually, provided much needed relief for immigrant-origin families who were largely left out of federal relief packages. As a deadline to apply approached, we organized a clinic with staff and volunteers to assist over 200 families with the application to receive hundreds of dollars in food benefits.



200

families assisted with Pandemic-EBT
food assistance applications

Real-Time Information

During the pandemic, Conexión Américas COVID-19 related health messaging across our communications platforms targeting Spanish-speaking individuals had over 200,000 impressions. Our dedicated websites for general COVID-19 information and COVID-19 vaccine information had almost 5,000 visitors.

Building on our 'Yo Sí Uso Mascarilla' (I wear a mask) campaign in early 2020, we created a 'Juntos y Sanos' (Healthy Together) COVID-19 health campaigns sharing targeted messages about keeping each other safe, with a special emphasis around the holidays. As the COVID-19 vaccine became available, we launched a 'Vacunémonos' (Let's get vaccinated) campaign to

provide accurate and culturally relevant information in Spanish. Information from the CDC and health care providers addresses frequently asked questions, specific concerns of immigrant communities, current vaccine eligibility requirements, and diverse vaccination providers.

We adapted and shared vaccine research and communications from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Metro Nashville Public Health Department, TN Department of Health, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, *The Economist*, A Safe Nashville Collaborative, and UnidosUS.



Spanish-language COVID-19 Information Hotline

As a partner agency of Metro Nashville Public Health Department, our team managed Nashville's Spanish-language COVID-19 hotline. To date, more than 9,800 Spanish-speakers called Conexión Américas seeking COVID-19 testing, vaccine, and referral information.

COVID-19 Vaccine

Conexión Américas is working in partnership with Neighborhood Health, the Federally Qualified Health Center co-located in Casa Azafrán, the Metro Nashville Public Health Department, and other local health providers, including Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Siloam Health, to ensure that immigrants and refugees have equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccine. We began hosting vaccination clinics at Casa Azafrán in March 2021. To date, we have welcomed 1,301 Latinx adults to our center in a culturally and linguistically responsive way to receive their COVID-19 vaccines.



11

vaccination events hosted at Casa Azafrán

1,301

vaccine shots administered at Casa Azafrán by healthcare providers such as Neighborhood Health and the Metro Public Health Department

1,042

COVID-19 vaccine appointments scheduled in Spanish for community members at Metro Nashville Health Department and other healthcare providers

4,863

website visits to COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccine information pages

9,800

phone calls to our COVID-19 Spanish Hotline in partnership with the Metro Nashville Public Health Department

200,000+

social media reach and impressions among Latinx individuals with culturally and linguistically tailored COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccine information



Next Generation

My Hispanic Roots, My American Dream

Every year as part of our annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration, high school students from across Tennessee are invited to participate in our essay contest for young

Latinx writers. The purpose of this contest is to listen to the voices of young people reflecting on the theme, “My Hispanic Roots, My American Dream.”

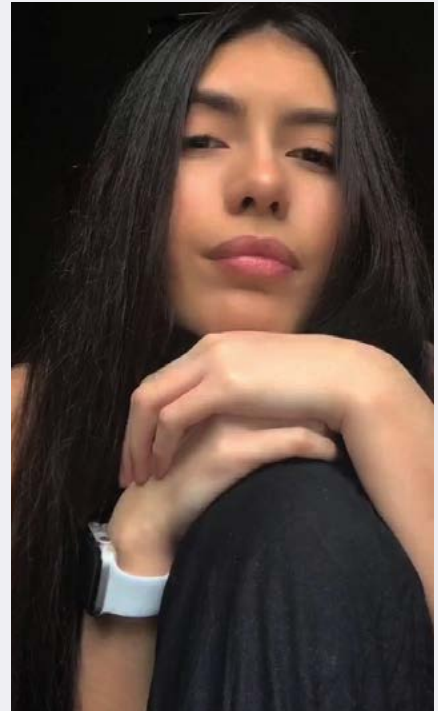
Finalists



Hanna Mijares-Tigrera,
junior at John Overton High School



Dalys Millanova Tzarax Torres,
sophomore at Lead Academy



Valentina Rodriguez Trujillo,
senior at McGavock High School



Winning Essay



*Laura Vega Perdomo,
senior at John Overton High School*

Laura's essay begins at the moment she and her family are leaving Colombia for the United States, and reflects on the diversity she finds here and learns to love.

"When my family and I left our dear Colombia, we took the essentials. We said goodbye to our house, to our jobs and schools, to our culture, and above all, to the family we left behind; leaving people and things behind and moving on had become common but the feeling never changed... I missed them all, but the future gave me hope. As refugees, we expected the best and always prepared for the worst but, when we received the news that we were allowed in the United States, we all felt relieved and happy that the wait

and the constant fear were over. I felt a great responsibility that would only increase over time, with my family needing English in very different scenarios; I had to quickly adapt to this new world I was thrown into, full of new habits and traditions, full of new expectations and stereotypes, full of new problems to overcome. My 'American dream' is actually an international one....I want to fill a gap in this world and my passion and dedication brought by my Hispanic heritage will help me thrive in this American world."

Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic Heritage Month Awards

During our Hispanic Heritage Month celebration we recognize several community members for their work supporting Tennessee's Latinx immigrant community.

Our Orgullo Hispano, or Hispanic Pride, awards recognizing unsung heroes in

our community: Latinx adults or young people who have been persistently working to better their immediate neighborhood, school, work place, nonprofit, or civic organization.

The Amigo/a We Love award recognizes a non-Latinx individual

whose meaningful work, efforts, or voice have promoted the vision of a welcoming Nashville and Tennessee where Latinx and immigrants are embraced as integral members of our communities.

Orgullo Hispano



Jacqueline Herrera, Advising and Retention Specialist at Christian Brothers University, for her work advocating for immigrant youth



Ana Ludi, Care Coordinator at the Sumner County Health Department, for her work connecting the immigrant community in Sumner County to healthcare and essential resources



Sandra Sepúlveda, Council Member for District 30, for her work ensuring her constituents, and the immigrant community in Nashville receive the resources they need during the pandemic

Amiga We Love



Molly Hegwood, Executive Director of English Learners at Metro Nashville Public Schools, for her work promoting the vision of a welcoming Nashville and Tennessee where Latinxs, and all immigrants, are embraced as integral members of our communities.

Conexión En Casa



Building A Welcoming Community
Early Voting

10,530

Nashvillians stopped by Casa Azafrán to vote early in the 2020 presidential election



Conexión Next



Conexión Next is a network of Nashville's young professionals committed to the mission of Conexión Américas. The group provides members with professional development and volunteer opportunities focused on inclusivity, diversity, and advocacy. Conexión Next Ambassadors also participate in career exploration panels with Conexión

Américas' College Access (Escalera) students. In 2020 the Conexión Next Young Ambassadors launched a Racial Justice Series, including a panel on voter suppression and an event educating members on the civil rights movement in Nashville.

Foundations

Berger Family Foundation	Middle Tennessee Donors Forum's Census Pooled Fund	The Core Fund of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Community Trust	Migration Policy Institute	The Dorothy Cate and Thomas F. Frist Foundation
Caterpillar Foundation	MSB Cockayne Fund, Inc.	The Frist Foundation
Comcast NBCUniversal Foundation	Nashville Predators Foundation	The HCA Healthcare Foundation
Dan and Margaret Maddox Fund	Quetzal Charitable Fund	The Healing Trust
Dollar General Literacy Foundation	Regions Foundation	The Joe C. Davis Foundation
First Horizon Foundation	Scarlett Family Foundation	The JPMorgan Chase Foundation
Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees	SmileDirectClub Foundation	The Memorial Foundation
Hispanic Federation Nonprofit Emergency Assistance Fund	The Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc.	The Tennessee Titans Foundation
Ingram Charities	The Center for Disaster Philanthropy	U.S. Bank Foundation
John and Natasha Deane Foundation	The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee	W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Corporations and Organizations

AllianceBernstein	HCA Healthcare/TriStar Health	Pinnacle Financial Partners
Amazon	Interfaith Youth Core	Quality Mortgage Services, LLC
Ask Chefs Anything	Interior Concepts & Designs	R.C. Mathews Contractor, LLC
AT&T	Jackson National Life Insurance Company	Regeneron
Bass, Berry & Sims PLC	LEAD Public Schools	Regions Bank
Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund	LP Building Solutions	Second Presbyterian Church
Bristol Motor Speedway	Mars Petcare	Skanska USA
CAT Financial	MP&F Strategic Communications	State Farm
Comcast South	Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp	Study Buddies 4 Equity
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.	Nashville Electric Service	The Peach Truck
Cummins	Nashville Welcoming Committee	UnidosUS
Dollar General Corporation	National Association For Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB)	United Way of Greater Nashville
Dozen Bakery	Neal & Harwell, PLC	United Way of Rutherford and Cannon Counties
Family & Children's Service	Neighborhood Health	Vanderbilt AMIGOS
FiftyForward	Nissan Americas	Vanderbilt University
Fifth Third Bank	People3, Inc.	Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Harpeth Hills Church of Christ		World Central Kitchen
Hastings Architecture, LLC		

Government Partners

Metro Nashville Airport Authority	Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency	Nashville Promise Zone
Metro Nashville Parks & Recreation	Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County	State of Tennessee Department of Education
Metro Nashville Public Health Department		State of Tennessee Department of Human Services
Metro Nashville Public Schools	Nashville After Zone Alliance	

In-Kind Partners

Adventure Science Center
Bongo Java
Book'em
Christ Church Nashville
Community Resource Center
Distribuidora Limeña, Inc.
Feed the Front Line
Ford Motor Company
Good360

Google
Mask Now
Mercy Chefs
Mother to Mother
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
Nashville Diaper Connection
Nashville Noticias
Nashville Public Library
Nashville Soccer Club

Patagonia Nashville
Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee
Soles4Souls, Inc.
Southwest Airlines
Summit Leadership Partners
Williamson County Social Justice Alliance

Casa Azafrán Resident Partners

American Muslim Advisory Council
Catholic Charities
Family and Children's Service

Global Education Center
Metro Nashville Public Schools

Neighborhood Health
Tennessee Justice for our Neighbors

Non-Resident Partners

Greater Nashville Regional Council
Hands On Nashville
Nashville Civic Design Center

Salahadeen Center of Nashville
Siloam Health

Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
The Equity Alliance

Board of Directors 2021-2022

Alexandra Spredemann, President
David Tuchman, Treasurer
Tina Garcia, Vice President
Merari Villatoro, At-Large
Laura Zapata, Secretary

Terry Maroney, Immediate Past President
Dr. Alison Asaro
Jacques Cartier
Eduardo Cruz
Lori Dunbar

Dennis Georgatos
Walker Mathews Jr.
Mozianio Samuel Reliford III ("Trey")
Saul Solomon
Brian Tate
Santi Tefel

Volunteers

1,132 hours of volunteer service, helping with distributing food boxes, delivering school supplies, translating documents, and much more.





✓ Finances

Financial Overview for Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

Operating Revenue	\$5,101,582
Fundraising Events	\$318,680
Casa Azafrán And Other Earned Income	\$313,751
Government Grants	\$1,144,384
Non-government Grants and Other Restricted Funding	\$2,950,646
Individual and Unrestricted Corporate donations	\$329,388
Operating Expenses	\$4,407,298
Direct Financial Assistance Distributed	\$1,358,010

Unaudited numbers through 6/21/21
Detailed information and IRS Form 990 available at givingmatters.com

Leadership Team

Andres Martinez

DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

As Director of Policy and Communications, Andrés helps tell the stories of the work we do, the families we serve, and the community we wish to see. He also serves as a liaison between the organization and policy makers at the national, state, and local levels on issues that affect the Latinx community.

Ariel Safdie

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, TENNESSEE MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

As Associate Director, Ariel leads the Migrant Education Team across the state, ensures compliance with federal and state program guidelines, and develops and implements the program's strategic plan to build a state in which migratory students reach challenging academic standards and complete high school to prepare them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.

Cheyenne Peters

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

As Associate Director of Economic Prosperity, Cheyenne oversees our information and referral services, and drives Conexión Américas' Economic Prosperity programs including our entrepreneurship class, home ownership program,

and free tax preparation service. Cheyenne joined us last summer as our Legal Advocate, supporting DACA recipients needing to renew their immigration status.

José González

CO-FOUNDER AND FINANCE DIRECTOR

José co-founded Conexión Américas 18 years ago! Over the years, he's enjoyed seeing the grit of program participants, the entrepreneurial spirit of Negocio Próspero entrepreneurs, and the compassion of his colleagues.

Kara (KB) Holzer

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

As Director of Marketing for the past seven years, KB's job is to make sure that Conexión Américas tells the stories of our work in an effective and consistent way to inspire supporters, engage program participants, and raise funds.

Maria Paula Zapata

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

As Associate Director of Education Programs, Maria Paula makes sure the Conexión Américas' education team staff feels valued, supported, and is continually developing their abilities to deliver high-quality, culturally-responsive, student-centered programming. Maria Paula considers her work a way of honoring her parents' stories and

likes that her job allows her to live into her two guiding values as a person: empathy and equity.

Martha Silva

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC PROSPERITY | INTERIM CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021

Martha joined the team over 11 years ago. In her current role as Senior Director of Economic Prosperity, Martha Silva oversees a number of Conexión Américas programs supporting immigrant families on their way to achieving their version of the American dream. Martha also ensures the smooth running of Mesa Komal, Conexión Américas's fully licensed commercial kitchen at Casa Azafrán, which serves as a culinary incubator for food entrepreneurs in Nashville.

Tara Lentz

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC GROWTH | INTERIM CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021

As Senior Director of Strategic Growth, Tara helps us think about where we've been, where we're going, and what it will take to get there. With 14 years on staff, Tara has seen Conexión Américas grow and change as Nashville changes. She focuses on strategic planning, data, fundraising, and development.

gracias
to the team that makes it all possible!





Casa Azafrán | 2195 Nolensville Pike | Nashville, TN 37211