

# HerStory

50 YEARS IN THE MAKING

2022-2023 IMPACT REPORT



MUJERES  
LATINAS EN ACCIÓN

— EST. 1973 —



## 1973

Mujeres Latinas en Acción is established to meet the needs of Latinas in the Pilsen community.



## 1986

The Parent Support program begins to enhance parenting skills & communication between parents & their children.

## 1993

The Sexual Assault program is developed to assist Spanish-speaking victims of sexual assault.

## 2003

Mujeres becomes a program development grantee of the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, allowing the organization to expand services.



## 2013

After a successful pilot with the Women's Business Development Center, Empresarias del Futuro graduates its first group of entrepreneurs.



## 2014

After decades of advocacy, Mujeres launches what is to become the Community Engagement and Mobilization program.



## 2023

Mujeres honors one of the principal founders by launching the Maria Mangual Center to connect survivors of gender-based violence with resources to thrive and lead!

# *50 years* **Where We've Been, Where We Are, Where We Are Going**

Mujeres Latinas en Acción truly started as a grassroots movement. A group of Latinas that included Maria Mangual, Luz Maria Prieto, Gwen Stern and Maria Capoccia came together to address the needs of Latinas and their families in the southwest neighborhoods of Chicago.

Now, in celebration of our golden anniversary, we are reflecting and looking ahead. Over the past five decades, countless individuals left their mark on the organization and kept the vision alive. They led awareness campaigns, raised key funds, and provided services during even the most difficult of times. Today, we follow the path of these trailblazers and cultivate leaders who will take Mujeres to new heights. **We welcome you to join us!**



1973

## Then

In 1973, Mujeres Latinas en Acción is established to meet the needs of Latinas in the Pilsen community after “La Mujer Despierta,” a statewide Latina women’s conference.

The following year, Mujeres obtained a lease for a two-story building from Centro de la Causa.





# Now

50 years later, we have expanded to three offices, including our headquarters in Pilsen, our office in Brighton Park and an office in North Riverside that serves the western suburbs. This year:

1,145

survivors of sexual  
and domestic  
violence were  
served by our  
counseling services

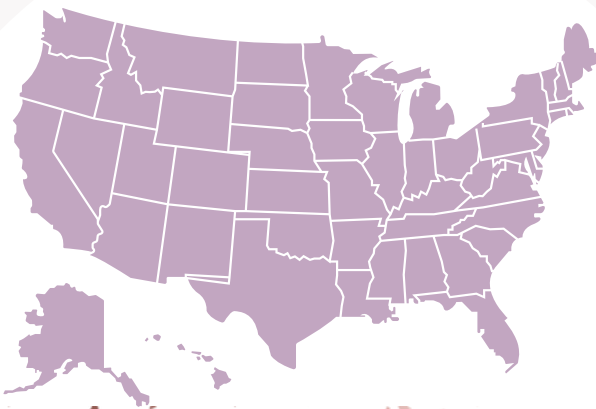
270

of those survivors  
come from the western  
suburbs, including  
Cicero, Berwyn and  
Stickney

125

children under the  
age of 19 were  
served by Mujeres’  
programs

**We are national!** Mujeres wants to create safer communities and work to meet the needs of survivors across the country. We are launching our training and technical assistance services for other nonprofits serving at a national level. This year, we will be working in California, New Mexico, Georgia, Wisconsin, Virginia, Iowa, Florida, New York, and we’re only expanding from there!



1983

## Then

Mujeres begins approaching foundations and new collaborations with community organizations. Mujeres joins with Southwest Women Working Together to open Rainbow House shelter.

## Now

Mujeres is still committed to fighting for fair housing for immigrant communities. Our first-ever position paper *¡Activate!* addresses the growing housing crisis that our communities are facing. Insufficient affordable housing was exacerbated by the pandemic, which caused more financial instability and thus issues with housing payments. Since April of 2020, Mujeres, along with our community partners, has connected families to **over 4 million dollars in cash and housing assistance.**





1986

## Then

Mujeres' Parent Support program begins with the purpose of enhancing parenting skills and improving communication between parents and their children.

## Now

In 2002, in partnership with the Department of Family and Support Services, Mujeres implemented the Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange (SVSE) program. The goal is to prevent violent and abusive behavior and prioritize the safety and wellbeing of the child. We help these families find a path forward.

Thanks to collective advocacy across the field, Mujeres expanded our SVSE program to serve more families in Chicagoland's western suburbs. This year:

**223**

individuals were served, including 70 families and 96 children

**475**

supervised visits were provided

**800+**

individuals were reached through our community education efforts on parental issues and supervised visitation

Mujeres is committed to comprehensive family support. Over the last three years, we have developed a robust partnership with Chicago Children's Advocacy Center, offering **75 families counseling and therapy.**

1993

## Then

The counselors in the Domestic Violence and Women in Transition programs noted a history of childhood sexual abuse and marital rape in many of their clients.

In 1993, the Sexual Assault program is formally developed to assist Spanish-speaking victims of sexual violence.





# Now

Today, our counselors and therapists serve adults and children. We also offer 42-hour trainings for volunteers who want to help prevent and better respond to sexual and domestic violence.

Mujeres does not back away from difficult subjects. **This year, we provided public education and professional trainings to 102 adults and over 60 children and youth.**

Mujeres continues to listen and learn from and respond to the community, finding innovation along the way. In April 2023, to honor the legacy of one of our central founders and her commitment to Latinas and their families, we launched the Maria Mangual Center. The new program initiative will focus on case management, internal and external referrals and provide support to survivors, who are ready and interested, to join the Survivor Financial Wellness and Survivor Latina Leadership Programs.

In the first three months of launching, the Maria Mangual Center provided:

**\$204,057**

in rental assistance  
to 80 families

**\$47,715**

in direct cash  
assistance to  
55 families

**110**

families with  
\$35,050 in value of  
food and hygiene  
items

2001

## Then

Mujeres partners with Chicago Foundation for Women to convene over 140 Latinas to partake in Latina Dialogue: Beyond the Kitchen Table, an open forum to find out what current issues Latinas are facing and to formulate an agenda to address Latinas' concerns in the new millennium.



# Now

In 2021, Mujeres launched a 3-year initiative to fight for Latina Pay Equity, both within the walls of Mujeres and across the field. Latina workers across the country face disparities in pay and inequities in the workplace:

- In 2021, Latinas made 54 cents for every dollar earned by a non-Latino white man. Immigrant Latinas were paid 46 cents to every dollar.
- According to the Department of Labor, the unemployment rate for Latinas is consistently higher than the average for all women (The 19th News).
- The Latina wage gap persists even after controlling for educational differences (U.S. Department of Labor).
- Latinas earn less than white men in every state, with the biggest disparities present in California, New Jersey and Texas (Institute for Women's Policy Research).

Mujeres recognizes the high value and quality skill sets our advocates, counselors and leaders possess, and the need to uplift Latina immigrants and survivors. We are proud to continue our commitment to Latina Pay Equity. **Since the start of this commitment, we have raised staff salaries by over \$500,000** and advocated for increased funding for all gender-based violence programs at the state level. We have made progress, but there is more work to be done.

With staff that is 95% women, 92% of who identify as Latinas, we are even more committed to doing our part towards an equitable future for Latinas. We want our sector to properly invest in the workforce that is uniquely women and uniquely Latina. In turn, Mujeres can further ensure a brighter future for all Latinas.

2006

## *Then*

The new headquarters opens on 21st Place. This much larger facility allows Mujeres to offer services to even more women and families in need.





# Now

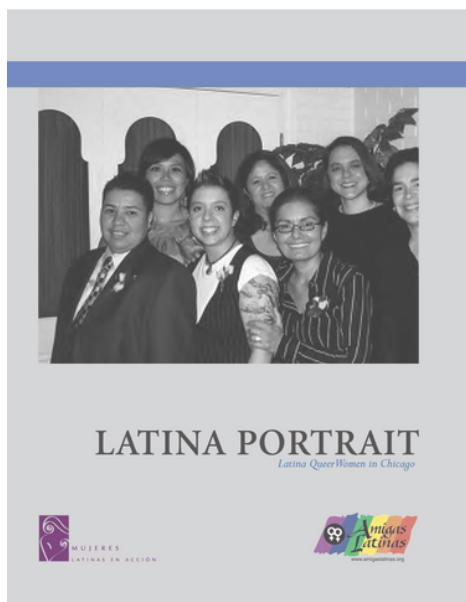
**Today, Mujeres has over 70 employees at our 3 offices.** Our headquarters are in Pilsen, with a satellite office in North Riverside, as well as in the southwest neighborhood of Brighton Park, which was opened in partnership with Esperanza Health Centers. Our programs include the healing & prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, Parent Support, Community Engagement & Mobilization, Empresarias del Futuro (Entrepreneurs of the Future), and Latina Leadership.



2007

## Then

In collaboration with DePaul University, Mujeres releases its second Latina Portrait, a study that examines how issues like healthcare, immigration, and education affect Latinas.



# Now

Mujeres has continued to examine key issues such as **immigrant justice**, **economic justice**, **women's health** and **gender-based violence** in partnership with Great Cities Institute at the University of Illinois Chicago. Through this collaboration, Mujeres launched ¡Actívate!, a community-based project which gathered data and lived experiences of community members. ¡Actívate! will lift the voices of our community and inform Mujeres' advocacy priorities at the local, state, and national level.

These advocacy recommendations represent the intersection of the four key advocacy areas mentioned above:

1. The need to remove barriers to U-visa approvals
2. The need for increased and consistent translation and interpretation within court systems for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault
3. The need for a non-police emergency crisis response, especially for immigrant and first-generation Latina survivors of gender-based violence
4. The need for access to health insurance and the issue of medical debt, both of which disproportionately impact low-income, Latina immigrants
5. Housing insecurity, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic
6. The need to address barriers to healthcare for patients



Scan for  
**¡Actívate!**  
report

# 2013

## Then

After a successful pilot with the Women's Business Development Center, *Empresarias del Futuro* graduates its first group of entrepreneurs. The *Empresarias del Futuro* program is designed to support budding Latina entrepreneurs across Chicagoland, especially those on the southwest side of Chicago and in the western suburbs. *Mujeres* saw the need for a culturally specific entrepreneurship program, one that would fit the needs of the populations the organization serves and that offers culturally competent curricula. By ensuring its programming is geared toward the specific populations *Mujeres* serves, *Empresarias del Futuro* is helping to build a more diverse group of entrepreneurs and business owners here in Chicagoland. *Empresarias* participants work in a variety of fields, including catering, artisan crafts, fashion and car detailing!





# Now

In 2023, Mujeres' Empresarias del Futuro program provided:

**246**

participants with classes on financial literacy and business development

**180**

participant referrals to financial coaching

**4**

types of networking opportunities: personal development workshops, a pitch contest, Charlas Empresariales and a winter bazaar

Before joining the Empresarias del Futuro program, many participants come to Mujeres for counseling services, then enroll in our Survivor Financial Wellness program to rebuild their financial stability. The Survivor Financial Wellness program started as a pilot in 2021 to help survivors of gender-based violence take steps towards financial stability and empowerment. The program's curriculum addresses six areas tied to financial stability, including financial security, budgeting, credit, savings, housing and educational and workforce opportunities.

In 2023, our Survivor Financial Wellness staff provided:

**40**

financial coaching sessions and 40 referrals

**\$22,000**

to participants through financial incentives, helping them to build savings

**35+**

participants with support to create financial safety plans

Economic justice is crucial for Latina survivors of gender-based violence, and our advocates are specially trained to work directly with survivors.

Then

A group of diverse women, many wearing purple shirts, posing for a photo outdoors. They are holding several signs. A large white banner in the foreground reads "MUJERES LATINAS EN ACCIÓN" and "EMPOWERING LATINAS AND THEIR FAMILIES". A yellow sign on the left says "SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT". Other signs include "HEALTHCARE FOR ALL" and "CHILD CARE FOR ALL". The background shows a city street with trees and buildings.

# Now

In 2023, Mujeres' Community Engagement and Mobilization program directly served 1,672 community members. Through Mujeres' efforts:

**100+**

participants were connected to Cook County's CareLink program

**742**

participants received a COVID-19 vaccine

**800**

people were helped on their path to U.S. citizenship through the New Americans Initiative

Community outreach and leadership are central components of Mujeres' work, and our promotoras de salud and *líderes* play crucial roles in leading these efforts. Our volunteers connect community members to Mujeres and our services and lead key campaigns regarding vaccinations, the U.S. census, and so much more!



2018

## Then

With a long-term commitment from Healthy Communities Foundation and Community Memorial Foundation, Mujeres expands its Promotoras de Salud (Community Health Worker) program in the Cook County Western Suburbs.





# Now

Today, *promotoras* engage in advocacy days and outreach activities to promote awareness about health determinants that are affecting the Latine communities.

What makes our *promotoras* unique is that they are a part of the communities they serve. They are deeply familiar with our local Chicago and suburban neighborhoods, engaging with local businesses, schools, and churches to inform them of Mujeres' services. They are essential in Mujeres' domestic violence and sexual assault awareness months and child abuse prevention month programming.

The most recent victories for our *promotoras* include:

- Achieving standardized licenses for undocumented immigrants in Illinois, so that one's immigration status would not be flagged by police officers;
- Addressing medical debt through compulsory financial aid assistance screening by hospitals – a critical win;
- Completing leadership and advocacy trainings through the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice, which will help them better advocate for their communities' reproductive health and rights.

2023

## Voces Unidas: A 50th Anniversary Celebration

On June 16th, 2023, Mujeres celebrated our signature Voces Unidas gala at the Chicago History Museum. Over 400 attendees, including donors, staff, founders, current and emeritus board members, came together to celebrate Mujeres' golden year. At the gala, we announced the creation of the Mujeres Advisory Trust, a campaign to ensure Mujeres' long-term financial stability.

### Meet the Mujeres Advisory Trust

Liz Bautista, *Chair*

Julie Abrams

Marisa Alicea

Alma Anaya

Ely Bahena

Ellen Benjamin

Rose Mary Bombela Tobias

Fanny Cano

Maria Capoccia

Laura Castellanos

Stephen Cornejo Garcia

Marta Delgado

Sunny Fischer

Nancy García Loza

Patricia Garza

Samantha Gardner

Cecilia Garibay

Patricia Garza

Maribel Gerstner

Aida Giachello

Elva Gonzalez

Juana Guzman

Rita and Arnie Jirasek

Tracey Kreiling

Sandra Magallón

Erica Marquez Avitia

Maria Ovalle

Virginia Oviedo

Diana Palomar

Maria Pesqueira

Luz Maria Prieto

Sylvia Puente

Roberta Rakove

Teresa Ramos

Amalia Rioja

Doris Salomón

Nancy de los Santos Reza

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# THANK YOU

for supporting Voces Unidas 2023

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Huntington Bank  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and  
Refugee Rights (ICIRR)  
Planned Parenthood of Illinois  
Sinai Chicago  
Luz Maria Prieto  
Maria Pesqueira

**Your support made so much possible in our golden year.** We invite you to honor this milestone by celebrating Mujeres' fortitude and innovations, and to look ahead and support the next five decades of services for Chicagoland's Latina and immigrant families.

# THANK YOU

to our Board of Directors

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GIVE TODAY

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