

A Reflection:



10 Years of NALCAB's Pete Garcia Community Economic Development Fellowship



PETE
GARCIA
Community Economic
Development Fellowship

April 2021



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The recommendations in this report reflect NALCAB's own perspectives and opinions.



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The Pete Garcia Fellowship positioned me to be an asset to my organization and my community. It challenged me to revise my way of thinking and my perception of myself as a leader. In my classmates, I found the strength and safety to be vulnerable, transparent and entirely myself which allowed me to find my voice and gave me the confidence to use it.”

— YVETTE SEERDEN, CLASS OF 2018

I am in an executive role at my current organization, and the Fellowship has brought a greater ability for me to understand how to work with our Board and prepare for more Board interactions in a way I would otherwise have not had.”

— ALICIA MATRICARDI, CLASS OF 2014

ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP

Established in 2010, NALCAB’s Pete Garcia Community Economic Development Fellowship was created to support next-generation Latino leaders in building the personal and professional skills and networks needed to succeed in the community economic development field and other professional opportunities.

Many executive leaders within the community economic development field are trailblazers who founded their organizations or have led them for many years. These nonprofits are important conduits for capital and centers for asset building services in their communities. NALCAB recognizes that the organizational sustainability of nonprofits that provide culturally and linguistically relevant asset building services is crucial to continue building wealth in low-income communities. Next-generation leaders are key to ensuring these organizations carry on and increase their impact through strategic and innovative practices.

NALCAB is the only national organization that has developed culturally relevant curricula and training methods specifically aimed at building the capacity of up-and-coming Latino leaders in the community development and asset building fields. The year-long curriculum is specifically designed to prepare practitioners to step into leadership roles where they can most effectively serve their communities.

As of the end of 2020, the NALCAB Pete Garcia Fellowship has graduated 153 Latino Leaders from across the country, representing 90 unique nonprofit organizations in 24 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

The purpose of this report is to tell the story of NALCAB’s Pete Garcia Community Economic Development Fellowship and document its impact.

For more information about how to apply to the Fellowship, contact Natalia Chaves Larkin at nchaves@nalcab.org.

I loved visiting partner members. That was my favorite activity during the fellowship. I found it informative, engaging, and we could see current nonprofit leaders talk to us about real changes they were making, how their ideas flowed, the changes they were implementing and how they hoped those changes would benefit the organization as a whole, and the community they were serving. This was super impactful to me because it was real, it wasn't a presentation or a video; it was a person, an organization, showing us their way of doing things."

— EZEKIEL GORROCINO, CLASS OF 2018

ABOUT NALCAB

NALCAB is the hub of a national network of more than 120 mission-driven organizations that are anchor institutions in geographically and ethnically diverse Latino communities in 40 states, Washington, DC and Puerto Rico. Members of the NALCAB Network invest in their communities by building affordable housing, addressing gentrification, supporting small business growth and providing financial counseling on issues such as credit building and homeownership.

NALCAB's mission is to strengthen the economy by advancing economic mobility for Latino communities. NALCAB's vision is to dramatically scale the flow of public and private sector capital that responsibly meets the asset building needs and opportunities in the communities and families we serve. As a grant maker and US Treasury certified CDFI lender, NALCAB strengthens and coordinates the capacity of the NALCAB Network to deploy capital. NALCAB influences investors and policy makers with research, advocacy and technical advice. NALCAB pursues this strategy in three areas of work:

- Organizational Capacity Building for Nonprofits and Government Agencies
- Policy Advocacy and Field Building
- Impact Investing: Lending and Asset Management

The NALCAB Network serves hundreds of thousands of low wealth households and entrepreneurs. More than 70% of the people served by NALCAB members are Latino, more than half are immigrants and more than 20% are Black. Since 2007, NALCAB has provided its Network members with over \$20 million in grants and a wide range of technical assistance. With NALCAB's support, member organizations have secured more than \$400 million for affordable housing, small business and financial capability programs. NALCAB has also influenced how local and federal government agencies are deploying hundreds of millions of dollars for community development and disaster recovery. NALCAB is currently managing the largest and most targeted investment in Latino-serving nonprofits that are responding to the economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Pete Garcia (1944 – 2017)

Pete Garcia is among our nation's most notable civil rights and community development leaders. He was a lifelong activist for economic and social justice, especially in Chicano and Latino communities.

Pete grew up in the Marco de Niza public housing community in Phoenix. After high school, he volunteered to serve in the US Army. Upon honorably completing his service, he worked as a letter carrier for the US Postal Service while he went to college on the GI Bill. He earned a BA in Elementary Education from Arizona State University in 1972. Throughout the 1970s, Pete was a strong presence in his community. He worked at Chicanos Por La Causa focusing on economic development, he coached Little League and engaged in political activism. In 1980, he moved to Washington, DC, where he earned a master's degree from the University of Southern California, in conjunction with the US Dept of Health & Human Services. He returned to Phoenix to become the President & CEO of Valle del Sol, an organization focused on drug addiction rehabilitation. In 1984, he was named President & CEO of Chicanos Por La Causa and remained in that role until his retirement in 2008.

Under Pete's leadership for 24 years, CPLC's operating budget grew from \$3 million to over \$60 million. The organization expanded statewide and became the most important conduit for investment and services focused on low-income, Hispanic communities in Arizona. CPLC was recognized by Hispanic Business Magazine as one of the nation's largest and most consequential Hispanic-serving nonprofits.

Pete was instrumental in the founding of NALCAB and served as the first Board Chair, from 2002 to 2008. In his "retirement," Pete started a new foundation focused on creating educational opportunities for underserved students. He named it the Victoria Foundation in honor of his mother.

A significant element of Pete's legacy is in the people he empowered. Pete had a special ability to recognize leadership potential in others. He often called the people around him "Leader," especially when they were younger or did not think of themselves as leaders. Affectionately known to his colleagues as "Big Dog," Pete frequently hosted colleagues from around the country who wanted to learn from CPLC's success. This Fellowship was named for Pete Garcia in honor of his central role in founding NALCAB and his life-long dedication to developing next-generation leaders.

The first session we participated in [was] the sharing of our River Journey. That was significant because we had a chance to see beyond the resumes and bios of our peers and into the moments that made them who they are as a human being. I learned so much about the resilience of the group and the power that resilience brings to the work we do. It really set the stage for the entire fellowship.”

— JASON ESTREMER, CLASS OF 2017

I remember NALCAB Staff saying at the beginning of the fellowship program that fellows can be a little shy, but at the end you are like a family — and I said I won't see them as a family — but at the end it was true! You develop that close relationship, and it is great!”

— KERSY AZOCAR, CLASS OF 2014

I liked that the program posed questions to the group that really made us think and question our own opinions about certain things and open our minds a little bit more.”

— ANDREA BARELA, CLASS OF 2014

THE FELLOWSHIP EXPERIENCE

The Pete Garcia Fellowship program targets motivated individuals with 3-8 years of experience in the field who demonstrate creativity and a strong desire to further their knowledge of community economic development strategies. Previous Fellowship participants have held a variety of positions within their organizations including Program Directors, Managers, Coordinators, Housing Counselors and Loan Officers.

Each Fellowship class meets for four week-long convenings over the course of a calendar year in different cities across the country with virtual trainings hosted between in-person trainings. Training session topics vary, but focus on developing the practical, personal and professional skills needed to succeed in the community economic development field.

From the very first session, Fellows are focused on their Latino ancestry and culture and on how their community's values and characteristics can be assets in serving their communities. Fellowship class sizes are intentionally kept small to create intimate spaces where sharing is encouraged and a sense of familia can be fostered.

The Fellowship curriculum uses participatory training methods and supports active learning paired with interactive panels of leaders and Fellowship alumni to provide a diversity of experiences for the Fellows throughout the year.

Site Visits

The Fellowship takes advantage of the opportunity to travel by conducting site visits with NALCAB member organizations located in the cities where trainings are held. Executive leaders from the organization meet with the Fellows to share the history of their organization, growth and challenges over time, and the impact the organization has had on their community. Fellows learn about successful program models that serve the Latino community, prompting conversations and questions about how the Fellows might improve, change or identify resources for their own programs. These site visits offer an opportunity for Fellows to take theory learned in classroom training and see how its application looks out in the field as well as connect with other Latino leaders. They also offer opportunities to connect with the alumni throughout the country.

Community Development Projects & Graduation

In the last quarter of the year, the Fellows convene for a final time for training and presentations on their community economic development projects, which each Fellow develops over the course of the year. These projects provide the opportunity for Fellows to pitch a new or expanded program as if they were an executive director. Upon the completion of the presentations, the Fellows and NALCAB staff celebrate with a graduation ceremony to mark the completion of their time in the Fellowship. *More information about the Fellows' Community Development Projects can be found on page 14.*

Peer Networks

One of the most impactful aspects of the Fellowship program is the development of peer networks. The familia that develops among each cohort serves as a critical resource to the Fellows during their training year and beyond. The emerging leaders come from organizations throughout the US. The network established through the Fellowship allows them to bond with peers serving the Latino community and exchange ideas and program models. Alumni have provided guidance to each other when an organization is looking to start or expand a new program, or when a Fellow is looking to explore other career opportunities.

In recent years, NALCAB has hosted social and training events specifically for alumni, providing the opportunity for continued training and networking between cohorts. Additionally, NALCAB has begun to develop a mentorship system connecting current Fellows with alumni or leaders from the broader NALCAB Network. *More information about Fellowship alumni can be found on page 20.*

Partnership

The Fellowship has previously partnered with the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) Policy Studies Center to provide training on nonprofit management and traditional models of leadership throughout the year. Professors from partner universities teach various modules during the final in-person training in San Antonio and provide a certificate to each of the Fellows on behalf of the University.

Sample Training Sessions

Latino Leadership Culture and Values

Governance: Overview of Nonprofit Organizations and Leadership

National State of Latinos in the US

Program Evaluation and Sustainability

Challenges to Latino Leadership

Personal Leadership Paths

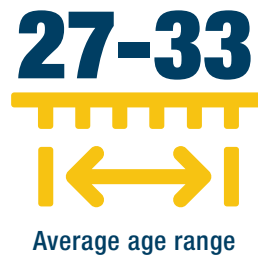
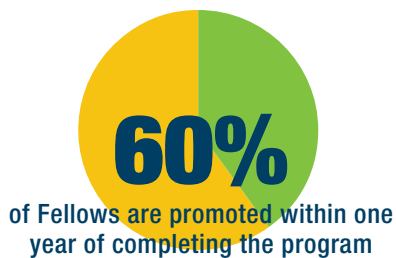
"The Fellowship enhanced and professionalized my leadership skills by teaching me to evaluate the organizational ebbs and flows from an operational perspective. I am immensely grateful for the investment NALCAB made in me and know this knowledge and the resources gained will continue to impact my career trajectory. The national network is invaluable and I'm extremely grateful for it. I could go anywhere in the country and know I can reach out to a friend and resource that will not hesitate to connect me to their network as we continue to grow the pie."

— KATY ARGUETA, CLASS OF 2016

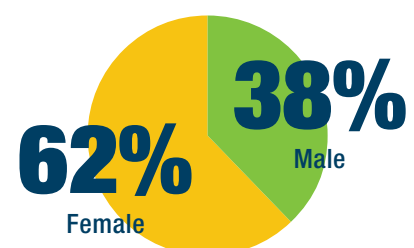
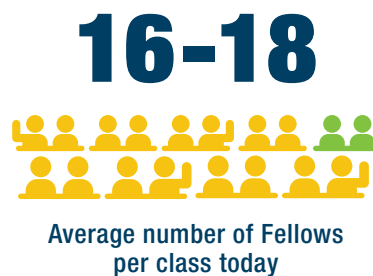
FELLOWSHIP BY THE NUMBERS

10 Years

153 Fellows



STATES WITH THE MOST FELLOWSHIP ALUMNI:



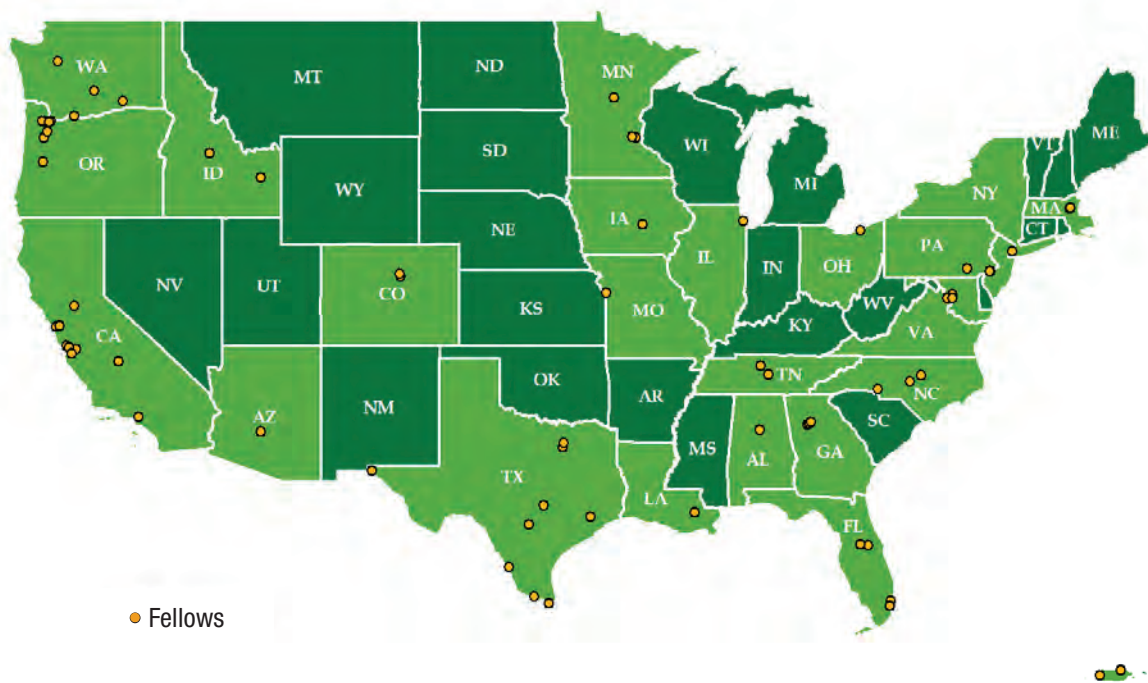
During all our trips and trainings, we met amazing people who have been fighting for the community. Learning that they started from scratch, building the capacity to serve the community, and developing the skills in the process, it was something very close to me because I am experiencing the same and at the end of the day, I realized I can do it too!”

— ANDRES SALINAS, CLASS OF 2016

When we launched the VITA program this year, the first person I called was Johanna at HICA (a former fellow) and asked about how they were structuring their program and whether she would be willing to mentor my program coordinator. She was more than happy to do it and shared spreadsheets for tracking. It’s really awesome not to have to reinvent the wheel every time I want to do something.”

— LINDSEY NAVARRO, CLASS OF 2015

Location of Fellowship Alumni Organizations



Adapting to Virtual Learning

As NALCAB pivoted to a virtual program in 2020, there was an opportunity to reevaluate how to best add value for the class. Personal coaching sessions were added to support the individual development of the Fellows. NALCAB also provided funding for Fellows to attend online workshops and trainings to support professional development. Moving forward, NALCAB is committed to be innovative in support of the Fellows.

BEYOND THE FELLOWSHIP: GROWTH & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

NALCAB prides itself on the Pete Garcia Fellowship program and continuously makes efforts to improve the curriculum and meet the needs of aspiring Latino leaders. Through training sessions and connections with leaders across the NALCAB Network, Fellows are exposed to culturally and linguistically relevant leadership development resources.

Professional Growth

NALCAB Pete Garcia Fellowship graduates have meaningfully contributed to their organizations and their fields. Individual leadership goals for many alumni include advancement into leadership positions within community development organizations and through civic engagement, entering graduate school, or achieving appointed or elected positions in the community. Following their time in the Fellowship, approximately 60% of Fellows are promoted within one year.

Overall Satisfaction:

- 100% satisfied with their Fellowship experience
- 100% felt the program provided the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and resources to be a successful leader
- 89% are interested in a Fellowship expansion or additional Fellowship program

Retention and Promotion:

- 78% have been in community and economic development field for 5+ years
- 59% have been with their organization for 5+ years
- 60% received a promotion within one year of graduating the Fellowship

Leadership Level:

- 58% of Fellows were in a leadership position within their organization during the Fellowship.
- Favorite topics: Latino Leadership, Culture and Values: The Power of Latino Leadership and Challenges to Latino Leadership; Technical Training in Community and Economic Development: Site Visits to Partnering Members; Leadership Development: Personal Leadership Path, Goal Setting.

Personal Growth:

- Of Fellows that pursued education following their program, 55% felt that the program influenced their decision to seek further education.

**Based on a 2020 survey, sample size of 43 respondents*

Success Stories



Kersy Azocar, Class of 2014

The Fellowship inspired a new sense of self-awareness within Kersy, which influenced a reinvention in how she presented herself and interacted with colleagues.

"I wanted to be a role model for other Latinos and Latinas in general. I realized that if I don't show my boss that I have what it takes to take over the department, be a better manager, and get along with everybody, then nothing was going to change," Kersy said. "So I made the conscious effort to be the best that I could be and that was a turning point."

Kersy has been with FINANTA since 2008 and is now the Senior Vice President of Microlending. In this position, Kersy manages FINANTA's Microlending Department for business and consumer loan programs including the organization's nationally recognized Affinity Group Lending program. Due to this program, FINANTA is one of the top five Small Business Administration Microlenders in the country.

"I'm very competitive and want to be number one, so I made it my mission to continue expanding the program and implement changes to make it better."



Jason Estremera, Class of 2017

Jason's experience with the Fellowship proved to be eye-opening, noting that the most valuable thing he learned during his time as a Fellow was how to understand his unique leadership style and how that style could be adapted to meet the needs of his organization, colleagues and clients. His exposure to the Fellowship training and network gave him the push needed to step out of his comfort zone and take a chance in an effort to challenge himself personally and professionally: "The Fellowship pushed me to start looking for the next step in my career and not to be so complacent." Jason committed to moving from Cleveland to Chicago to pursue "challenge, competition and fulfillment," and did so in 2019.

Since March of 2020, Jason has served as the executive director of Northwest Side Community Development Corporation (NWSCDC) in Chicago, an organization focused on providing the tools and resources necessary to preserve affordable housing, prevent displacement and support local small businesses. As executive director, Jason is responsible for the day-to-day operations of NWSCDC including managing staff, fundraising, implementing and evaluating programs, and coordinating strategic alignment with local nonprofit partner organizations.



Lindsey Navarro, Class of 2015

Lindsey's participation in the Fellowship gave her valuable leadership insight to pursue more ambitious projects while working at LiftFund.

"My time in the fellowship made me realize how important it is to work with your leadership and not be afraid to step into the role directly," said Lindsey. "It prompted me to envision a plan for the future."

In 2018, Lindsey took a leap of faith and founded El Centro, a nonprofit based in New Orleans that specializes in providing culturally competent financial literacy programming, business coaching and entrepreneurial training to Latino individuals and entrepreneurs in south Louisiana. Despite the demands that come with an executive director role, Lindsey felt well-prepared.

"I realized really quickly that I was no longer by myself. In the Fellowship, there was power in seeing other leaders at other organizations across the nation who all shared like a similar vision."

On the demands of a leadership position, Lindsey said, "As community leaders we don't have the option to back out. Our community needs us and we have to step straight into filling those shoes as fast as we can."



Nicole Marquez, Class of 2014

Nicole credits her experience in the Fellowship as giving her the push and courage to apply for a national position with NeighborWorks America.

"In that position I was able to realize all the goals that I set forth in the Fellowship from the day we spent asking 'where do you want to be in five years from a professional and personal standpoint,'" she said. "I really took that seriously and made it happen."

Nicole worked for NeighborWorks America for 2.5 years before obtaining her Executive MBA. She currently works as BBVA's local champion in the Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona markets leading community relations programs to support corporate responsibility initiatives, business development, fundraising and CRA compliance. Nicole also serves as the Chair of the Board of Directors for NALCAB member organization NEWSED.

I find that many of us end up in this route to helping the community by chance and the Pete Garcia Fellowship was a stepping-stone into forging my path to my own future. A month before ending the Fellowship program, I decided to apply to a social work program and am currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Social Work program with Portland State University. I am not sure I would have reached this point without the Fellowship experience.”

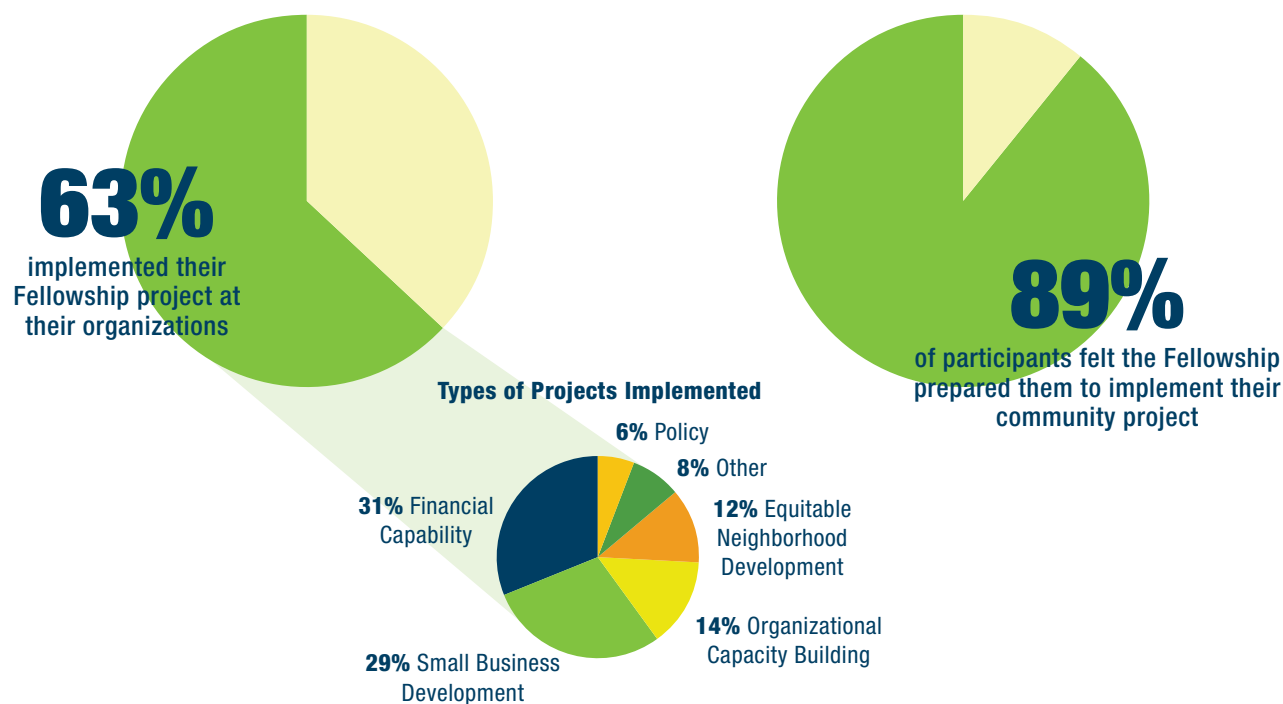
— ALEXANDRA PEREZ URBINA, CLASS OF 2018

Community Development Projects

When applying to the program, applicants are asked to identify a community development leadership project addressing an organizational need or challenge within the scope of their organization’s mission. The objective of the project is to provide Fellows with an in-depth program development learning opportunity.

The project is cultivated throughout the Fellowship experience using a logic model as a tool for planning and organization, along with continuous feedback and support from NALCAB staff. In addition, Fellows receive training in presentation skills to enhance the final presentation of their project. We also encourage guidance from their executive leadership and colleagues throughout the development of their project.

Previous Leadership Projects have included the following asset building programs: lending circles, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) certification, business incubators, commercial kitchens and mercados, creation of affordable housing, development of Spanish language curriculum, and policy and advocacy campaigns on student debt and predatory lending.



Success Story



Crystal Requejo, Fellowship Class of 2018 Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC) — San Antonio, Texas

Financial capacity building was at the heart of Crystal's community development project. The approach to support her organization, the Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC) was ambitious but simple: integrate financial counseling throughout all the programs they managed.

"We were having conversations with clients across the programs and financial stress kept coming up," said Crystal Requejo. "It's hard to talk about college readiness or purchasing a house when things like budgeting and saving aren't being adequately addressed."

Located in San Antonio, MAUC provides housing, education, and community and economic development services. Their broad reach of programs addresses topics related to anything from college readiness to senior assistance.

While enrolled in the fellowship, Crystal's title was Community Programs Manager. Since graduating from the program, she has been promoted to Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Programs & Development.

During her time in the Fellowship, Crystal developed a strategy to engage the clients at crucial counseling moments and developed training that would be the base of their financial capability program. Crystal then engaged her leadership by addressing the social determinants of health that she saw were impacting their clients. Reflecting on the financial aspect, she created a plan that would not only leverage but also create mobility to support families.

MAUC started the integration with one grant supported by Change Machine and developed financial workshops that could measure and support their goal of creating financial literacy as part of every program.

"We actually have the resources built in so that we're able to be a one-stop shop," said Crystal. "There's a seamless transition within the programs that happens because of the clients and their financial literacy. We're all on the same page."

MAUC has received interest in their comprehensive approach by organizations and foundations like the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, who visited their sites in San Antonio. As a result, MAUC has been invited to participate in conferences to showcase their work in the community.

"We're creating economic mobility within our community," said Crystal. "We're giving [our clients] the tools to plan financially that they didn't previously have. This is how we support generational wealth building: one family at a time."

Success Story



Cesario Ruiz, Fellowship Class of 2017 El Pájaro CD — Watsonville, California

Farmers markets are ideal places for food vendors to begin their journey. Unfortunately, a competitive market and understanding the complexities of the industry can be huge hurdles for a small business to overcome to do so.

Cesario Ruiz saw the opportunity to create a bridge through El Pájaro CDC's kitchen incubator for entrepreneurs to successfully participate and grow in farmers markets in Santa Cruz County. El Pájaro CDC works to promote equal access to economic opportunity and to transform people's lives through entrepreneurship.

By working with the local health department, Cesario was able to secure a permit that provided a rotation of different clients to enter the area's farmers markets. Cesario worked for four years to convince the health department that El Pájaro CDC could manage the permit by providing food safety education and training, resources, the commercial kitchen space for food preparation and manpower to oversee adherence to the permit requirements.

"It's an important program because it's getting your foot in the door without a making a huge investment," said Cesario. "There's a lot of training that goes behind it because California has a high number of regulations and requirements. We make sure clients are prepared so when the time comes, they can secure their own permits."

The program has now seen six to seven new businesses that have become independent and have their own permits for booths. They have also seen an increase in new clients because many are wanting to start their own businesses. El Pájaro offers orientation classes in English and Spanish to accommodate the growing need in the community. Orientation is now provided in two sections, the first being an online training that educates on the permitting process, services and what they get by participating in the program. The second part is an actual walkthrough the kitchen where entrepreneurs can see the kitchen and ask specific questions.

"This is a perfect little window of opportunity that they can access," said Cesario. "Once they are there, we also encourage them with their marketing and advocacy so that they become regulars."

There have been several lessons learned that are shared amongst the El Pájaro staff and the entrepreneurs they serve. For example, a client who sells pupusas recently learned that he sold more when his wife could be seen making the food on the grill in the tent rather than when they made them in their food truck. Another client who updated her food packaging learned from customers that the packaging, while eye catching, was too cumbersome to open and store. Both clients utilized this feedback and adjusted their strategies.

"Overall, the work that we do has been impactful for the entrepreneurs and our community," said Cesario. "In addition to the farmers market, we've been able to support our clients with Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans and get them the resources they needed."



Agency Success Story



Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA) San Francisco, California

Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA) currently has several Fellowship alumni on staff, including Juan Diego Castro (Fellowship Class of 2015), Ernesto Martinez (Fellowship Class of 2018) and Lucia Obregon (Fellowship Class of 2019).

Juan Diego Castro implemented his project five years ago when he saw a need to provide aid with affordable housing for the Latino community. Originally focused on homeownership and started as a three-hour open drop-in clinic, the project quickly filled a growing need for affordable housing in the Bay Area.

"[The clinics] were originally only offered by appointment with about 260 applications a year," said Juan Diego. "Then, demand grew. We ended up having housing clinics with 50-100 individuals coming into MEDA during 3-hour slots with one program manager and a few housing counselors. It was very difficult for a project seeing 100 people a day for a few days a week."

That's when the idea of using *promotoras*, or community outreach workers, came to fruition. Many of the *promotoras* had successfully accessed affordable housing through MEDA in the past. They started volunteering in the office and eventually visited schools and churches to encourage applications. The program has grown from 260 applications to over 10,000 applications a year.

"This is now a crucial part of our housing opportunities program," said Lucia Obregon. "Having the 3 hours open housing every Wednesday has done so much for our community."

Lucia's community development project was focused on policy. She recognized that MEDA's asset building programs were not actively integrated with policy. She began with a survey to understand the disconnect and begin a conversation with staff to address immediate needs and challenges. After analysis, she reached out to leadership to see how she could integrate policy throughout MEDA's programs.

"How do we mobilize our 8,000 strong base and be proactive in systems of change to help build Latino wealth and power?" asked Ernesto Martinez. "That was the question that Lucia's project was really focused on and that we as a team had to come together for."

As a result, MEDA now has a formalized policy department that works with every department to meet policy/advocacy goals to further its mission.

"We developed a voter guide, have policy sessions several times a year and make sure to ask about voter registration when working with community members," said Lucia. "We've integrated policy and advocacy throughout all of our work."

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, MEDA has pivoted to focus on how to provide most relevant services to the community and continues to implement community development projects. The organization continues to benefit from the ingenuity and talent of its staff who have become Pete Garcia Fellowship alumni.

"I think there are changes in levels of maturity that you can see in their work and in how they speak and behave," said Luis. "Several of our Fellows have been promoted and are in leadership positions right now. It has really helped our organization."

I have embraced my brown skin that I sometimes felt shame for, embraced my inability to speak without breaking into Spanish, and my unyielding attitude because that is what my raza brings to the table. I would have never felt this way had I not been exposed to the leaders I met here, the real conversations we had and the push from the staff and my fellows to see something in me that I could not see in myself.”

**— ROSIE PAPAZIAN,
CLASS OF 2019**

The fellowship makes you realize that Latino leadership is different because of the privileges and setbacks we experience as immigrants and children-of-immigrants. We have a community to look after and uplift. The network built during the fellowship is priceless.”

**— MILEYKA BURGO-FLORES,
CLASS OF 2019**

I was surrounded with an amazing group of like-minded, emerging leaders, and the curriculum was spot-on to help us develop and focus on our strengths, weaknesses and capacity in a culturally enriching and responsive way.”

**— AIYANA LONGORIA,
CLASS OF 2018**

The fellowship prepared me in two different ways. For one, it allowed me to reflect on my past leadership skills, re-discover them and start doing more for the community. It also made me very proud to be a Latino and not be ashamed of identifying from coming from an awesome culture. [It was] a cultural awakening.”

**— CHRISTIAN MORALES,
CLASS OF 2018**



FELLOWSHIP ALUMNI

The NALCAB Pete Garcia Fellowship has graduated over 150 Latino Leaders from across the country, representing 90 unique nonprofit organizations in 24 states, Washington, DC and Puerto Rico.

In addition to joining a diverse national network of Latino leaders, NALCAB Pete Garcia Fellowship graduates have meaningfully contributed to their organizations and their fields. Individual leadership goals for many alumni include advancement into leadership positions within community development organizations and through civic engagement, entering graduate school, or achieving appointed or elected positions in their community.



CLASS OF 2011



Claudia Cantu, CASA of Oregon; Claudia Montano, The Next Door, Inc.; Daniel Bonilla, Latino Economic Development Center — MN; Jaime Arredondo, Farmworker Housing Development Corporation; Leon Berrios, Conexión Américas; Lorena Vasquez-Oviedo, Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (HICA!); Roberto Valdez, Willmar Area Multicultural Business Center; Susana Jerez, Latin American Coalition; Yvonne Perez, Latino Economic and Development Center



CLASS OF 2012



Abel Valladares, CAPACES Leadership Institute; Carmen Lopez Palacios, Hispanic Economic Development Corporation; David Arroyo-Garay, Latin American Coalition; Diana Garcia, El Paso Affordable Housing CUSO; Edgar Barron, The Resurrection Project; Eduardo Corona, Adelante Mujeres; Maria DJ Rodriguez, Rural Community Development Resources; Martha Silva, Conexión Américas; Marucci Guzman, Latino Leadership, Inc.; Rudy Ulin, Hacienda Community Development Corporation; Sara Lopez, Latino Economic Development Center — MN; Scarlett Lanzas, Puentes New Orleans; Victor Corral, Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA)



CLASS OF 2013



Alejandro Valenzuela, Jr., Comunidades Latinas Unidos en Servicio (CLUES); Alison Moronta, Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation; Amelia Lobo, ISED Ventures (Women's Business Center); Corina Moran, Latino Economic and Development Center; Daniella Sawaya, La Cocina; Estella Gonzalez, SER—Jobs for Progress; Francisco Javier Reyes, Azteca Economic Development & Preservation Corporation; Gabriel Torres, Community Housing Improvement Systems and Planning Association, Inc. (CHISPA); Jamie E. Villalaz, Latino Economic Development Center—MN; Janet Licea, Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (HICA!); Jennifer Ramos, Merced Housing Texas; Jorge Fernando Guzman, Hacienda Community Development Corporation; Laura Delgado, Conexión Américas; Martha N. Zurita, LiftFund Women's Business Center



CLASS OF 2014



Aileen Cutz, MicroEnterprise Resources, Initiatives, and Training (MERIT); Alicia Matricardi, New Economics for Women; Andrea Barela, NEWSED Community Development Corporation; David Ruelas, Hacienda Community Development Corporation; Doris Aguirre, Merced Housing Texas; Felipe Perez, Catholic Charities Atlanta; Ivan Nordhausen, Affordable Homes of South Texas, Inc.; Javier Urenda, Adelante Mujeres; Kersy Azocar, FINANTA; Michael Romero, Chicanos Por La Causa; Nestor David Soto, Comunidades Latinas Unidos en Servicio (CLUES); Nicole Marquez, Community Resources and Housing Development Corporation; Oscar Hernandez, The Resurrection Project; Rossana Espinoza, Latino Economic Development Center—DC; Stephanie Cajina, Mission Asset Fund



CLASS OF 2015



Anastasia Mendoza, El Centro de la Raza; Cynthia Garcia, Affordable Homes of South Texas, Inc.; Davin Gordon, Guadalupe Centers, Inc.; Elisabeth (Lisa) Reyes, Puentes New Orleans; Erica Michelle Calderon, Hacienda Community Development Corporation; Gabriela Sanchez, Latin American Economic Development Association, Inc.; Johanna Alvarez, Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (¡HICA!); Juan Diego Castro, Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA); Lindsey Navarro, LiftFund; Lorraine Frias, El Paso Collaborative for Community Economic Development; Lupe Legaspi, East LA Community Corporation (ELACC); Maria Peck, Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs; Mariela Cedono, Mandela Marketplace; Michael Carmona, Hispanic Economic Development Corporation; Paul Landa, SER — Jobs for Progress; Pedro Diaz, The Resurrection Project



CLASS OF 2016



Ana Tapia, Coalition for Responsible Community Development; Andres Salinas, Latino Economic Development Center — MN; Carlos Moreno, Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber; Frederik Zavala, Rural Community Assistance Corporation; Gricelda Montes, El Centro de la Raza; Jonathan Bohorquez, Community Housing Improvement Systems and Planning Association, Inc.; Juan Muros, Hacienda Community Development Corporation; Karla Henriquez, Mission Asset Fund; Katy Argueta, Mi Casa, Inc.; Laura Gomez, Ventures; Laura Ospina Jaramillo, Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA); Patricia Colomo, PeopleFund; Rafael Medina, Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción; Sandra M. Achury, The Latin American Association; Walda Yon, Latino Economic Development Center — DC



CLASS OF 2017



Ada Recinos, Prospera Community Development; Alexis Rios, BakerRipley; Armando Ibarra, Community Development Corporation of Brownsville; Carlos Acosta, LiftFund; Carlos Espinoza, Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation; Cesario Ruiz, El Pájaro Community Development Corporation; David Mancera, Kitchen Table Advisors; Elba Schildcrout, East LA Community Corporation (ELACC); Gimena Olguin, Hacienda Community Development Corporation; Jason Estremera, Ohio Hispanic Business Center; Jose Fernandez, East LA Community Corporation (ELACC); Melissa Santiago, FINANTA; Monica Cucalon, Latin American Association; Richard Cisneros, Latino Economic Development Center—DC; Rodolfo Rodriguez, Denver City Council; Roxanna Encarnacion-Robinson, FINANTA



CLASS OF 2018



Aiyana Judith Longoria, San Antonio Housing Authority; Alexandra Perez Urbina, Huerto de la Familia; Christian Morales, Ventures; Cruz O. Correa, Business and Community Lenders of Texas; Crystal Requejo, Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC); Daniel Martinez, Self-Help Federal Credit Union; Dayiana A. Garcia, FINANTA; Diana Benitez, Raimi and Associates; Ernesto Martinez, Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA); Ezekiel Gorrocino, Center for Responsible Lending; Maria Godoy, Latino Economic Development Center—DC; Mercedes O. Fuentes, NEWSED Community Development Corporation; Monica A. Zambrano, Building Skills Partnership; Nini Diana Gutierrez, BakerRipley; Shea Flaherty Betin, Hacienda Community Development Corporation; Tiffany Galvan, San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside (SAGE); Yvette Seerden, Community Resources and Housing Development Corporation; Zurilma Anuel, Carolina Small Business Development Fund



CLASS OF 2019



Aldo Medina, Hacienda CDC; Alondra Rodriguez Aceiton, Latino Economic Development Center — MN; Angelica Rufino, Latino Economic Development Center — DC; Carla Chavez, Foundation for Puerto Rico; Carolin Jimenez, FINANTA; Celina Castro-Saelao, Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA); Cindy Adame, East LA Community Corporation (ELACC); Diana Caba, Hispanic Federation; Elias Barocio, Jr., San Benito County Community Development Coalition; Gloria C. Glassco, Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (iHICA!); Gustavo Martinez, Bienestar; Jacquelyn Janelle Ramos, PeopleFund; Jonathan Barona, Austin Community Foundation; Lucia Obregon, Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA); Luis Rodriguez, INDESOMI de Puerto Rico, Inc.; Luz Contreras, WiNGS; Mileyka Burgos, The Allapattah Collaborative Community Development Coalition; Rocio Andrade, El Pájaro Community Development Corporation; Rosie Papazian, New Economics for Women; Yasnay Montalvo, Branches, Inc.



CLASS OF 2020



Bridget Uribe, PeopleFund; Celsa Stallworth, Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (iHICA!); Christine Coronado, Branches, Inc.; David J. Zaccaro, Alternative Capital for Community Impact (AltCap); Erick Tenorio, MyPath; Gilberto Soria Mendoza, Opportunity Fund; Giovanni Valencia, Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation; Iris Nolasco, California FarmLink; Jessica Hernandez, Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES); John Ramirez, Latino Economic Development Center — MN; María Cristina Villegas de Martinez, Hispanic Unity of Florida; Maria Sennett, Credit Builders Alliance; Orneliz Michelle Torres Berrios, Foundation for Puerto Rico; Vanessa Bransburg, Democracy at Work Institute; Veronica Acosta, NEWSED Community Development Corporation; Yesenia Ochoa, San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside (SAGE)



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I was promoted from Compliance Specialist to Strategic Initiatives Manager a little less than a year after completing the fellowship. Working on the design of my community development project allowed me to understand the full process of turning a great idea into a project. I was able to gain the tools I needed to efficiently implement new organization initiatives which played a big role in my promotion.”

**– YVETTE SEERDEN,
CLASS OF 2018**

“This program is growing the Latino leadership network, but also encouraging leadership development. It’s invaluable.”

**– ERNESTO MARTINEZ,
CLASS OF 2018**

“NALCAB provided me with a platform to stand on. Through the logic model and discussion, I grew in confidence as I presented my project because I knew it was a proven formula to support real change.”

**– LUCIA OBREGON,
CLASS OF 2019**

“In the fellowship, I strengthened my planning skills and strategic knowledge to develop a new service in the program. And my ability to connect and build relationships with other organizations and professionals in the area became visible to the management who offered me to lead the growth of the program.”

**– JOHANNA ALVAREZ,
CLASS OF 2015**



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