

THE MICHIGAN HISPANIC COLLABORATIVE

IMPACT REPORT

2021



paving
paths
for

La Próxima Generación

“YOU CAN’T BE WHAT YOU CAN’T SEE”

Our Founding Leaders
blazing a path
for la Próxima Generación



JoAnn Chávez
Founder and Secretary



Anita Martínez
Executive Director



Authenticity matters in Detroit, a city where people know hard work. Authenticity is a driving force behind the mission of The Michigan Hispanic Collaborative (MiHC), a Hispanic-led nonprofit organization founded in Southwest Detroit that creates equal education access for Latino students and introduces them to world-class colleges and careers.

"You can't be what you can't see," says MiHC founder and Michigan business leader JoAnn Chávez. Chávez knows the path to a prosperous future for Latinos in Michigan requires bold leadership and authentic support for students.

Chávez and Executive Director Anita Martínez have led the design and growth of MiHC's innovative programming focused on Latino cultural values and best practices in college access, leadership, and economic success.

When Martínez first met Chávez, she couldn't believe how similar their stories were. Both women grew up in Southwest Detroit, daughters of hard-working families who struggled to make ends meet.

Chávez and Martínez both knew early on they wanted to get an education. Seeing her hard-working family inspired Martínez's work ethic. Seeing their struggles inspired her drive for a more steady income and a college degree. Her parents encouraged her to get that degree and to work hard, no matter her chosen vocation.

While college is the road Chávez and Martínez took, it isn't easy for first-generation college students. To persist, graduate and thrive in powerful careers is considered a major accomplishment. Poverty rates and college education statistics haven't improved much for Latinos since 1981. Now, Latinos are one of the fastest-growing populations in the country. Yet, twenty-five percent of Michigan's 500,000 Latino residents live in poverty. In Detroit, the number is 40 percent. Detroit lags when it comes to preparing

Latino students for college and beyond. MiHC combats this by offering an authentic, culturally-driven approach to achieving success.

The dynamic leaders and student-success coaches of MiHC believe a bachelor's degree provides the fastest path out of poverty. In just three years, MiHC has begun turning dismal college persistence stats around with a unique program that blends their years of business, philanthropy and academic achievements to help support the next generation: La Próxima Generación (Próx Gen).

La Próxima Generación supports two generations with programs designed to assist students AND their families. MiHC also uses innovative technology to make the college process easier to understand within the context of Latino culture.

Experiences forged by bold community leaders like Martínez give heart and authenticity to MiHC's mission.

Martínez earned a bachelor's degree in Organizational Studies from the University of Michigan and an MBA from Central Michigan University. She had to walk the path alone. The struggles didn't end at graduation. Textbooks and classes can't teach what it feels like to come from a working-class family and ascend the ranks in a professional environment. Becoming the first, or the only, can be challenging for a young Latino professional. MiHC fills a desperate need as a model organization demonstrating what college and professional success looks like for students and their families.

Chávez, Martínez, the MiHC Board of Directors and coaches understand these struggles because they lived them. And they persevered. They are being what Latinos in Detroit need to see: bold leaders preparing la próxima generación for colleges and careers that will forever transform their communities and help shape our world.



EDUCATION AS THE PATHWAY TO PROSPERITY

Talent is spread equally. Opportunity is not.

MiHC leaders know how to change that. Latino families with a college-educated head of household earn more than twice the income and more than four times the net worth of those without a college education, so what's the hold up?

Only **16 percent** of Michigan's Latino residents, and **four percent in Detroit**, have a bachelor's degree, compared with the state-wide overall average of **29.1 percent** and **15 percent in Detroit**.

Latinos need equitable access to education.

Thirty-five percent of American adults have a bachelor's degree or higher level of education.

Yet just **18 percent** of Latino adults have a college degree.



The U.S. will need **11.9M** more Latino degree holders by 2050 to bring number to national average.

MiHC knows there is power in numbers – especially the youth

Young Latinos have higher levels of college attainment than older Latinos.

There are **120K** Hispanic school children in Michigan.



37K of those students are in high school, and nearly 10 percent of those students attend MiHC target schools in Detroit: Western International and Cesar Chávez Academy

did you know?

The leaders behind MiHC all either hail from, or have worked extensively, in Southwest Detroit. They don't just care about the community, they ARE the community.

MiHC USES GROUNDBREAKING TECHNOLOGY FOR EQUITABLE DIGITAL ACCESS TO STUDENTS

MiHC leaders JoAnn Chávez and Anita Martínez turned their challenges into stories of perseverance and success.

Unfortunately, not much has changed since their journeys began. Especially when talking about equal access to technology.

Their experiences helped fuel the creation of Próx Gen's impressive technological toolkit that includes **La Puerta**: a dynamic digital portal for students, parents and young professionals that makes navigating the college and career landscape more manageable. La Puerta, created exclusively by MiHC and a leading software development team, is a one-stop shop for students, their families and the professionals helping them.

MiHC uses La Puerta in concert with other technology like the following to help create a seamless experience for students:

Text Nudging Support – helps engage students and develop successful mindsets through regular informal check-ins, follow up reminders and behavioral economics tips

UStrive – Virtual membership program connecting students to Latino professionals for individual support and mentorship

CoPilot – case management and customer relationship management tool to support student success with coaches



did you know?

With nearly 60M residents, **Latinos make up 18 percent** of the United States population!

impact focus:

FAMILIES EMPOWERED BY GUIDANCE REALIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EDUCATION



Dario Gonzalez worked long hours to support his wife and two children. College education wasn't something he thought about much, even when it was time for his daughter, Rosalie Gonzalez, to begin applying.

Rosalie Gonzalez had joined the MiHC Scholars program as a high school senior. She received help and guidance from an MiHC college success coach. Her coach understood not just the complicated college application process, but what that process felt like to a first-generation student with parents who weren't familiar with navigating these systems.

At home, Mr. Gonzalez often felt relieved to see Rosalie taking the lead after joining the MiHC program. Like so many earning for their families, Mr. Gonzalez often worked late hours. He couldn't attend any of the 2020 Cafecitos meetings for family members provided by MiHC. But watching the process evolve for his daughter helped increase his *confianza* (trust, a *familismo* cultural value) in the program.

Pride and joy filled his heart watching Rosalie's face as she read her Michigan State University acceptance letter. It changed him. He realized the moment felt just as monumental as when his Rosalie was presented at her Quinceañera – one of the biggest moments of a young Latina woman's life. Many Latino families begin planning for this coming-of-age tradition the moment a daughter is born.

The planning that leads up to a young woman's 15th birthday is part of the joy. It's an elaborate process almost akin to planning a wedding.

Watching Rosalie power through the college application process felt significant, too. Mr. Gonzalez began to understand that the path to higher education was every bit as life-changing as an event like the Quinceañera.

When the time came for Rosalie's brother to apply for college, his father wanted to participate. Dario felt empowered by the guidance he received after making time to attend a parent session hosted by MiHC. He vowed to be there every step of the way moving forward to support the success of both of his children as they attend and prepare for college.

"I'm not going to make the same mistake with my son that I did with my daughter. This college process deserves to be celebrated just like the Quinceañera," Mr. Gonzalez said.

MiHC LEADERS: EXPERIENCED LEADERS, SAVVY SYSTEMS NAVIGATORS

Before MiHC, no programs existed that focused solely on harnessing the vast economic potential of Michigan's Latino population. MiHC supports students, student scholars and their families by providing a support network for educational and post-secondary success. By finding and fixing systemic gaps that MiHC leaders themselves had to combat, they've designed the blueprint for a college journey more equitable for all. It's their deeply rooted community ties and proven track record as business, academic and philanthropy leaders that boost the impact of MiHC's programs and success.

A RAPID RISE TO MAJOR SUCCESS

MiHC's agility and trusted community relationships allowed the organization to pivot when the Coronavirus pandemic made all the world stand still, especially in Detroit, where the virus hit especially hard. MiHC provided immediate help and support to students and their families. Using the ground-breaking tools that help MiHC stand out, the program focus shifted to providing the best virtual support possible.

Remember Mr. Gonzalez and the parent Cafecitos? The number of parent/student attendees soared to 1,500 – including so many who benefited from the bilingual support. MiHC even had parents from as far away as Utica reaching out for help!



*did you
know?*

Part of MiHC's revolutionary two-generational approach includes hosting Cafecitos meetings for parents, just like the ones Mr. Gonzalez began attending! The Cafecito sessions are a community of peers for parents to inform and support the often-overwhelming process of getting their students into and through college.



OUR MEASURABLE IMPACT

In just three years, the MiHC budget has grown to \$1.2M

MiHC went from helping 35 student scholars to nearly 300 and has impacted about 1,225 students and families

241 Latino scholar students served in the 2020-21 academic year.

244 Total scholar students served

685 Latino students served

821 Total students served

100 percent high school FAFSA completion rate

94 percent college retention rate

\$195K GRANT DOLLARS awarded to help families during the pandemic

did you know?

- MiHC students and scholars apply and are admitted to our program.
- Scholars and their parents receive individualized support.
- General student participants and their parents are provided with broader support through in school workshops, Cafecitos engagement, and access to our digital portal.

impact focus:

JAMILET ATTENDS ELITE NURSING PROGRAM

There's more to leaving for college than leaving for college



It took time to hear her story. Jamilet Villarreal only shared that she wanted to study nursing. She didn't say why she insisted she stay close to Detroit or what inspired her to enter the medical field.

Eventually, MiHC program manager and success coach Maria Lopez built trust with Jamilet. Maria learned not only the incredible drive that propelled Jamilet, but the circumstances that she had persevered over.

Jamilet's mother died when she was a young girl. Overcome with grief, Jamilet's father walked away from his three daughters. Jamilet is the middle child. Her eldest sister would go on to get custody of her sisters, working hard to support them. The girls were practically on their own. They didn't get much outside help.

But Jamilet battled past these obstacles. She excelled in school, and with the help of The Michigan Hispanic Collaborative, she began applying to college her senior year of high school. Counselors at MiHC work hard to help students eliminate road blocks and help coach students to find their best college match. Jamilet had several, but Maria didn't understand at first why Jamilet insisted she stay close to home. Maria helped her find an elite nursing program at Wayne State University. Although ecstatic to find a program nearby, imposter syndrome kicked in. What if she wasn't good enough? How could she possibly get in? Jamilet fretted over these fears.

Maria broke down the requirements, showing Jamilet that she WAS good enough. So she applied. She got in. By then, Jamilet had shared that her eldest sister was to be married. Now 18, Jamilet had taken over care for her youngest sister. Despite the elation of getting in to a top-notch program, Jamilet worried about having enough time to work to pay the bills. Once more, Maria stepped in, helping Jamilet navigate the complex world of scholarships and the like. Jamilet secured funding, including a grant from the DTE Foundation Endowment Scholarship to help alleviate her housing costs and more.

"Your future is only as good as the work you put into it," Jamilet said. "I have learned through my experience that as long as you put forth the effort you will realize there are opportunities and people to help guide you."

"I'm incredibly excited and nervous for my first year in college, but I know with MiHC, I will have the support I need to stay on track."

Now, Jamilet finally can begin to achieve a dream she's had since she a little girl – to become a nurse. Just like the one who helped her mother and family during their difficult times.

did you know?

In Detroit, just **30.3 percent of Latinos finish high school** and just **four percent graduate from college with a four-year degree**. MiHC, and students like Jamilet Villarreal, are defying the challenges and preparing to study at major universities and colleges ready to support the next generation of Latino professionals.

READY TO GROW FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

Since its founding in 2018, MiHC already has surpassed every key growth and impact milestone while embracing and staying true to the familismo culture. Today, MiHC has a goal of reaching a \$2M operating budget so its programs can keep elevating Michigan's economy by way of Latino economic empowerment. With additional and sustained funding, MiHC intends to offer services across the state as the economic footprint of the Latino community grows. At current funding levels, MiHC plans to add approximately 125 scholars and their families each year, helping to combat 40 years of lacking equity and disinvestment in the Latino community. The chart below shows MiHC's intention to double-down efforts in Detroit while expanding state-wide.

Target Service Area Student Data - SE Michigan

LATINO STUDENTS PER GRADE

	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
WAYNE:					
DPSCD (WIHS)	358	354	370	356	1438
CCA	182	167	159	153	661
Hope	73	66	47	39	225
Allen Park HS	45	55	40	26	166
Lincoln Park	147	189	119	132	587
	805	831	735	706	3077
% Latino	56.8	56.5	55.4	57.4	56.5
OAKLAND:					
Pontiac HS	119	116	94	89	418
% Latino	45.8	48.7	40.3	36.6	42.9
Total SE Focus	924	947	829	795	3495

Source: Mischooldata.org 2019-2020

did you know?

MiHC will expand across the state to other Latino populated communities such as: **Pontiac, Grand Rapids, Holland, Sturgis**, and others once funding is made available.



WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE LATINO COMMUNITY IS GOOD FOR MICHIGAN

The importance of Latino success relative to our state, national and local economies cannot be overstated.

- A 2019 report found that if the U.S. Latino gross domestic product (GDP) were its own country, it would rank as the eighth-largest GDP in the world.

Latinos now
account for

\$2.3
TRILLION
NATIONALLY

in economic activity.

In Michigan,
that figure is

\$24
BILLION.



- Latinos contributed to **more than 60 percent** of the increase in U.S. net homeownership.
- The Urban Institute projects that **Latinos** will soon comprise **more than half of all new homeowners by 2030**.
- Latinos own more than **4M businesses** in the United States.
- Nationwide, businesses with majority Hispanic ownership provide almost **2.7 million jobs** to workers in the U.S.

did you know?

By 2060, an estimated one in four U.S. citizens will have Hispanic heritage!





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